Dear Parents and Friends,

Once again, it was great to be part of our school’s senior swimming carnival. The day ran very smoothly, which was a credit to the preparation and organisation of the staff and students, particularly the house captains. The highlight is the willingness of all the students to have a go, regardless of their abilities. Well done to Tony O’Connell for all his work in organising another highly successful swimming carnival.

Thanks to the Parent Club for again running the barbecue and ice block stand. From the number of trips back to the shops they had to do to replenish supplies, it proved to be very popular. Thanks also to all the parents and friends who came along to support; and to those who helped out with timing and finishing. Finally, Congratulations to Woods for winning the 2015 Apex shield.

A full report will be on the back page of this newsletter.

Playful Learning

Along with McKay Children’s Centre, we have been very fortunate to secure the services of Lisa Burman, an Early Childhood Education Consultant, for teacher professional development. The first of these sessions was held last Monday, followed by teacher consultations on the Tuesday. Throughout the year, Lisa will be working with all staff to help develop pedagogies that promote powerful learning the development of key learning dispositions in students. These dispositions include:

- Creativity
- Curiosity
- Resourcefulness
- Purposeful and Persistent
- Confidence
- Cooperative

The work with Lisa Burman followed on from school visits undertaken by the Junior Primary Teachers. They visited Brighton PS and Alberton PS to see how other schools had adapted their learning environments to cater for the changing needs of student learning. The rest of the staff will visit Brighton PS next term.

We are planning to have a parent workshop next term with Lisa. At this session, Lisa will reinforce the philosophies behind Playful Learning and changing learning environments. Educators from McKay and Penola PS will also present some of the work they have doing. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions in relation to the learning philosophies. The following quote sums up in the purpose for our work.

“The illiterate of the 21st Century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.”

Alvin Toffler
Cybersafety Workshops
The three schools in Penola have joined forces to secure the services of Susan McLean to present to all students in Penola from Year 4-12. This is a fantastic opportunity to educate our students on the dangers of social media and the online world. Our year 4/5 and 6/7 students will combine with Mary MacKillop to have sessions on Friday March 12th at Penola PS. A free parent session will be held at Mary MacKillop on Thursday night. See the flyer attached for details. These sessions are also subsidised by the Penola and District branch of Bendigo Bank

Environment Officers
Last Friday, Ebony and Angus announced the 2015 Environment Officers. Congratulations to Matthew Perry, Beccey Robinson, Brady Pahl and Sophie McDonald who are this year’s representatives. Their first engagement was to attend the Youth Environment Forum with Matt at Naracoorte Caves. We look forward to seeing what initiatives the group come up with in 2015.

Alpha presents Cinderella
Yesterday the students were entertained by the Alpha Production of Cinderella. The crew always put on a great show which was enjoyed by all. This performance was funded by the performance levy paid as part of school fees.

Governing Council
In the last newsletter, I inadvertently left out Sandy Moorhouse as one of the councillors for 2015, apologies Sandy! We also welcome new councillors, Megan McGuinness and Ulrich Grey-Smith. We look forward to having them on board! We would also like to thank retiring councillors, Darren Skeer, Silvana Stephens and Louise Perry for their contribution to the council over many years. Thank you also to Heidi Boyd, who has retired after serving on the council in 2014.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday March 24th, with Education Director, Adam Box, in attendance. A merit selection training session for parents has also been booked for Tuesday 31st March for Governing Councillors.

Parent Club
Thank you to all those who helped out at the Swimming Carnival and / or manning the gate at the Rodeo. These events are all part of a busy term for the Parent Club. We also have coming up:
- A food stall at Lucindale Field Days
- The Open Day at Wagner’s Rose Farm

Notes will be distributed to ask for donations and assistance with these days. Your contribution is very much appreciated.

UNINSW Competitions
Thank you to all those who have sent in money and notes for UNINSW Competitions. Please note that next Tuesday(10th March) is the last day for these to come in.

Millicent Athletics Tryouts
We will be holding tryouts for SAPSASA Athletics District Day next Wednesday (11th March) between recess and lunch. This will be for all students who turn 8 in 2015 and older. Events will be Long Jump, High Jump, Shot Put and Discus. Tony will hold track event tryouts for each class over the next few weeks.

Canteen News
Thank you to all the parents who have contributed to Munchies on Tuesdays so far this term. There has been a great selection of snacks for the students to purchase. Look out for Frittata Fridays, with slices of home made frittata being sold at recess and lunch for $1 until sold out.

Next Wednesday we will be having a student lunch special of homemade Chicken and Leek Pies for $3. An order form will go home soon, and will also be attached to the electronic version of the newsletter.

Scholastic Book Fair
The Year 3 class is holding its annual Book Fair from next Wednesday, 11th March, until Friday, 20th March. There will be the usual huge selection of books as well as novelty stationery items for sale. Credit card facilities will be available.

Due to changed room/teaching circumstances, the Book Fair will be held in the Library with restricted sales times. They will be:
- Wednesday 11th, 18th - 1:30 -2 (lunch)
- Thursday 12th, 19th – 5pm-6pm
- Monday 16th , Friday 13th, 20th – 3:15-4 pm

We hope you will be able to support us as much as you have in past years.

Community News
Karate
There will be no Karate this Monday due to the Public Holiday. Lessons will resume the following week.
An informative & entertaining session for Parents and carers is delivered with Susan’s famous 'no nonsense' approach & will cover the positive benefits of technology as well as what parents need to be aware of:-

- What are kids doing online – The popular social networking sites and apps. What they are, what are the legal ages to use them & why these rules should be obeyed. The difference between an 'online friend' and a 'stranger'.
- Online Grooming – What is it and when/how does it occur? What are the warning signs & what to do if you suspect this is happening to your child.
- Cyberbullying - What it is, where it happens, what it looks like, how to prevent and what to do if it occurs. Also the legal consequences and the possible criminal charges.
- ‘Sexting’ – the taking and sending of explicit images...what are the REAL consequences. (Primary school kids to).
- Potential dangers and safety tips – how to assist the children in your care to stay safe online via parental controls and restriction passcodes.
- Learn the lingo.......be able to converse with your children in the language of cyberspace.
- Be confident in setting rules and boundaries around internet use in the home. It's OK to say NO!
- The session will conclude with time for Q's. Susan also provides a range of useful handouts and information about where to go to access further up to date information.

For Parents & Guardians

Thursday 12th March
Mary MacKillop School Hall
7:30 – 9:15pm
Free session

Susan Mclean is Australia’s foremost expert in the area of Cyber safety and young people. She is a mother of three and was the first Victorian Police Officer appointed to a position involving Cybersafety and young people. She took her first report of cyberbullying in 1994 and since then she has conducted extensive research and has completed advanced training in this area in both the USA and UK and is a sought after presenter and advisor to Schools, elite sporting bodies such as the AFL, GP’s, and both State and Federal Governments. She is a member of the National Centre Against Bullying (NCAB) Cybersafety Committee and is afforded ‘expert’ status on the Safer Internet Programme Data Base. She is also a member of the Australian Government’s Cybersafety working group and a published author. Her book 'Sext's Texts & Selfies', is the definitive parents’ guide to helping their children stay safe online.

What Susan doesn’t know about Cybersafety is not worth knowing! She is absolutely brilliant and her presentations are dynamic and entertaining. She has the unique ability to connect with each audience from young people to adults.

(Prof Dr Michael Carr-Gregg Adolescent Psychologist)
PENOLA PRIMARY SWIM CARNIVAL 2015

In ideal weather conditions, Penola Primary School conducted a most successful swimming carnival for its Years 3 to 7 students at the Penola Swimming Pool last Friday in front of a large contingent of parents, relatives and friends.

Children demonstrated their skills in freestyle, breaststroke and backstroke, along with a variety of novelty events, including the ‘rope rescue event’, the ‘tube race’, and ‘dress the captain’.

Events are tailored to cater for swimmers of all abilities, with 96% of the children competitively swimming at least one of the 3 major strokes as well as participating in 2 or more of the novelty events.

The championship races were hotly contested in all divisions. In the Junior Girls section, Georgia Winter (15 points) took out the title with newcomer, Lucy Catlin in second spot on 11 points, whilst in the Junior Boys, Anders McShane (11 points) proved just a little too strong for his opposition with Jake Klemm and Lachie Croser sharing the runner’s-up prize with 10 points apiece. Skye McLachlan (15 points) was crowned Senior Girls Champion after finishing runner-up last year to Katie Dent, with Lucy Sharman (11 points) taking out the runner’s-up trophy just one point in advance of her team mate, Annie Pollard. Angus Croser scored 14 points to take out the Senior Boys Champion title with Kaleb Messenger the runner-up for the second year in succession on 12 points.

Coming into the final event of the day, the Open House Relay, Woods held a narrow lead over Gordon and Dickson. Dickson won the relay with relative ease with Gordon in second spot. Woods managed to hold onto third spot in front of the fast-finishing Rymill. Finishing third was crucial as it enabled Woods to narrowly defeat Dickson and take out the Apex Shield for the first time in 5 years. Gordon was close behind in third spot with Rymill finishing fourth. The Woods House Leaders, Sophie McDonald, Amy Whitehouse, Caleb Lythgo and Sabastian Hamilton, accepted the shield on behalf of their jubilant team, paying particular thanks to the Penola Primary School Parent Club, the Penola Amateur Swimming Club, and their teachers for the roles that they played in preparing for and conducting the carnival.

Each carnival the teachers vote for the team which they believe has displayed the best leadership, organization, initiative and sportsmanship. Gordon scored a unanimous decision and their leaders Ally Jones, Zac Currie, Skye McLachlan and Angus Croser are to be congratulated on an outstanding effort.

The Gordon Bannister Cup event (‘Treasure Hunt’), always a crowd favourite, was won by Dickson, their fifth victory since the event was instituted in 2009. The team, which consisted of Lucy Sharman, Tyler Batt, Joel Dent, Kaleb Messenger, Trish Brand, Matt Crewe, Nicole Lear and Tony O’Connell was never seriously threatened, hitting the finish line strongly, several seconds in front of its nearest rival.