PRINCIPAL’S REPORT:

Welcome back to the 2013 school year. What a fantastic start to the year we have had!

All the children have settled in beautifully to their new grades and all teachers have commented on how happy they have been and how well they are working. Congratulations and well done to all. Thank you also to all the parents for supporting their children and preparing them so well for the school. Our three little prep students – Mackenzie, Ari and Lee have settled in to school routines with ease and it is wonderful to see all the other children, from grade 1-6, looking out for them and making sure they feel happy and safe at school – it is a pleasure to see.

Communication between home and school is vitally important to ensure the best possible learning for all children and I encourage families to please talk to their child’s teacher if you have any concerns or if you have any positive feedback you would like to share – it’s great to hear when things are going really well as well as when something might need to be addressed. Teachers, as always, will try and touch base with you all in the next week or so to let you know how your children are travelling.

I have attached a copy of the school timetable to this week’s newsletter for your reference. As you will see we are continuing with the specialist subjects of LOTE, Music and Drama this year as well as MARC VAN every second week. LOTE will be taken on a Friday by Mrs J for 1.5 hours for all students which allows for a very comprehensive Indonesian curriculum, including more cultural awareness as well as language development. We have been lucky enough to acquire Mrs Tonzing every Tuesday this year and she will be providing both Music and Drama to the students over 1.5 hours every week.

Our values focus for Term 1 is ‘Care & Compassion’. At assembly each week we will be acknowledging students who are working hard to be caring and kind towards others at assembly every week. To go along with this we have introduced a ‘Random Acts of Kindness Box’ that can be found on the green table in the foyer. The idea is for students, teachers and parents to write about Random Acts of Kindness that they have witnessed and place in the box. Some of these will be shared every Monday at assembly and will also be placed in the newsletter. We are really encouraging students to show kindness and empathy towards others and to do good deeds without needing to get anything back in return. Please read the attached article which explains the many social and emotional benefits for children who perform ‘Random Acts of Kindness’, it’s a very interesting read.
We have taken new photographs for some of our newsletter folders and we would like to remind families that these folders need to be returned to school by Friday of each week. The newsletter folders make the communication between home and school far easier.

Swimming starts next week on TUESDAY and then Monday for the two weeks following that and then we have a week off and the last session for Term 1 is on Tuesday 12th March (the day after the public holiday). We are very lucky to have the Carlton football players coming to the school this Thursday afternoon to do a clinic with the children — thanks so much to Ms Hartney for organising this and we also have a special Hockey Clinic for the grade 3-6 students next Monday afternoon. Active After School begins next week on Tuesdays (Netball) and Thursdays (Gymnastics). The term is certainly shaping up to be very busy already!

We have decided to offer some alternative programs at lunchtime and recess for those children who would like something quieter to do. Ronda will be opening the Library every recess from 11.15-11.30am allowing children to come inside and read quietly. Ash will be organising board games in the Serenity Garden for the second half of lunch for any children who would like to play. It has been fantastic to see the children playing so well together in the yard — we had some very exciting tennis matches happening last week!

Have a great week everyone. Mrs Ryan

Congratulations to the following students who received awards this week …

Brionee for her excellent work in maths and a great start to the school year
Angus for settling in well to the new school year and working really hard
All Grade 5/6 students for their wonderful work habits and great start to the school year.

Values Award was presented to Nikiah for being kind, caring and thoughtful.

Happy Birthday to …

Reuben—January 2nd
Ty—January 13th
Silver—January 23rd
Harmony—February 6th

Acts of Kindness … (the following comments were drawn from the ‘Random Acts of Kindness’ box)

30/1/13—Today in sport Kobi went around congratulating everyone after every round (Abby)
Nikiah was kind and caring towards Lee on his first day helping him put his lunch box away (Mrs Ryan)
Jordan and Riley organised an extra tennis-net so Henry could join in playing tennis with them
Nikiah helped Jordon put the tennis net up
**IMPORTANT DATES**

Please mark your diary

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<td>Prep Students Day Off</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>Carlton Football Club Players visit</td>
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<td>Friday</td>
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<td>LOTE CLUBS</td>
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<td>DRAMA HOCKEY CLINIC (Grade 3-6)</td>
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<td>Swimming Active After School Program School Council Meeting</td>
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<td>Prep Students Day Off</td>
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<td>School Photos DRAMA</td>
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<td>Prep Students Day Off</td>
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<td>Friday</td>
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<td>LOTE CLUBS Responsible Pet Ownership</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
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<td>Swimming Parent Club AGM</td>
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<td>Prep Students Day Off</td>
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<td>LOTE CLUBS</td>
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**PREP STUDENTS**

A reminder to families that Prep Students do not attend school on Wednesdays during the month of February
SWIMMING PROGRAM

Our Term 1 swimming program commences next week and will run for four weeks (Tuesday 12th February, Monday 18th February, Monday 25th February and Tuesday 12th March).

Students will travel by bus to YMCA Eaglehawk Pool and lessons will be conducted by qualified instructors.

It is recommended that students bring extra food for recess and lunch on these days.

The cost of the program is **$48.00 per child for the four weeks** – this amount was included in the booklist at the beginning of the year.

This program is part of our school curriculum and with so many water accidents being reported in the media, we feel it is vital that all students take part in the program, learn to swim and become confident in and around water.

It is the policy of the YMCA that we pay for the number of students booked no matter how many attend on the day.

Permission forms attached—please fill in and return to school by Friday 8th.

ALLOWANCES

*Application forms for the following allowances are available from the school office*

**EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE**

The Education Maintenance Allowance provides assistance to low-income families by helping with the costs associated with the education of their children.

EMA applications are made by parents/guardians and submitted to schools.

The Government has restructured the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) for 2013 to better provide education support to families on a low income.

Payments made direct to parents have been increased for eligible recipients at all year levels, with an additional increase for parents with students in Years Prep and 7 to support transition costs.

The changes to the EMA starting in 2013 include:

- The School Start Bonus will be discontinued.
- EMA payments to parents increased from:
  - $117.50 to $200 for parents of eligible Prep students
  - $117.50 to $150 for parents of all other eligible primary school students
  - $235 to $300 for parents of eligible Year 7 students
  - $235 to $250 for parents of all other eligible secondary school students up to the age of 16.
- School-based EMA payments will be discontinued ($117.50 per primary school student; $235.00 per secondary school student)

The EMA is paid in two instalments annually (70% in March and 30% in August).

**To be eligible for the EMA:**

- Your child must be under the age of sixteen; and
- Your child must be enrolled at a primary or secondary Government or registered school in Victoria
- be a parent or legal guardian of the student; and
- be an eligible beneficiary within the meaning of the *State Concessions Act 2004*, that is, a holder of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or be an eligible Health care card (HCC) or Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) holder or
- be a foster parent.

Submit your application to the school by the due date

The Pension Concession Card (PCC) or Health Care Card (HCC) is subject to electronic confirmation with Centrelink to verify that the cardholder is receiving a benefit
CONVEYANCE ALLOWANCE - Families may receive an allowance if students live more than 4.8km from their nearest school and there is no school bus service operating.

To be eligible for conveyance allowance:

- Must be school age (between 5-18 years old)
- Must attend an eligible school within the conveyance area
- Must live 4.8km or more from the school by the shortest practical route
- Must attend the closest same type school as designated by Victoria Registrations and Qualification Authority (VRQA)

A private car or private bus conveyance allowance is not available if the journey could have been made using a Department-funded school bus or public transport service.

Reimbursement is calculated on the basis of the one-way distance travelled.

Distance is measured by the shortest practicable route between the student's place of residence and their school.

The residential address should be based on the Rural Road Numbering System. Mailbox and PO Box addresses cannot be used. You can use Bing Maps as a reference: [http://www.bing.com/maps/](http://www.bing.com/maps/)

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**PANCAKE LUNCH—FRIDAY 15TH FEBRUARY**

$1.00 PER PANCAKE (LIMIT 2 PER PERSON)

3 different topping are available ...

- Fruit
- Lemon & Sugar
- Maple Syrup

Order forms attached. Money and forms must be returned to school by Wednesday 13th February.

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**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of Parent Club** will be held in the staff room on **Monday 25th February**. This is a great opportunity for all families to be involved, share ideas and help support our school. All welcome.

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**COMMUNITY NIGHT—Friday 1st March**

A wonderful opportunity to come together and celebrate the start of 2013 school year.

The evening will commence with a shared meal. Families are asked to bring a main dish & salad or a main dish and dessert (suggestions .. cold meat, lasagne, crock-pot meals, quiche)

- Families with surname A-M—main dish and salad
- Families with surname N-Z—main dish and dessert

BYO plates, utensils, cups, drinks

Family BINGO, Cricket Match and lots of fun will be included in the evening.

Families are asked to donate a small item or two to be used as prizes. Items can range from a chocolate bar— small toy car—can of baked beans. Items will be wrapped and it will be a ‘lucky dip’ for the prizes.
FREE FRUIT FRIDAY – this program is no longer Government funded, however School Council decided last year to continue with it so this means that each Friday the children will be served fresh fruit at recess.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE is available Monday to Friday from 3.15 pm – 5.30 pm. Parents who wish to use ASC must fill in separate enrolment forms (available from office) for their children before they can take part.

ACTIVE AFTER SCHOOL COMMUNITIES
The Australian Government's Active After-school Communities (AASC) program is a national initiative that provides primary school children with access to free sport and other structured physical activity programs in the after-school time slot.

The program aims to engage children in sport and other structured physical activities and through a positive and fun experience, develop a love of sport that inspires them to join a local sporting club.

The Australian Sports Commission manages the AASC program nationally through a network of locally based regional coordinators. The coordinators assist schools and after-school care centres to facilitate the program, recruit/train community coaches and work with local sporting clubs and organisations to increase junior membership.

AASC Regional Coordinators coordinate the delivery of the program in primary schools using local sporting clubs, volunteers, private providers, teachers and OSHCS staff, retirees, senior secondary and tertiary students, and parents, brothers or sisters.

The cornerstone of the AASC program is the involvement of the local community in the delivery of the program. This involvement will offer opportunities to support and strengthen community cohesion and development.

Here at Eppalock Primary this program runs on a Tuesday and Thursday after school for 7 weeks of each school term from 3.30-4.30pm. This term the program will commence Tuesday 12th February (Netball) and Thursdays (Gymnastics).

There is NO cost to families for this program. However if children are not picked up at 4.30 pm they will be place in After School Care and families will be invoiced for the cost.

Please fill in the attached form and return it to school by Monday of next week.

PUNCTUALITY - It is vital that students arrive at school on time so that they receive the important instructions for their learning for the day. Please assist your child by having them at school on time.

LATE ARRIVALS - If your child does arrive late we ask that you come via the office and complete the late arrival book. This is necessary as class rolls are marked by 9:10 am and if your child is not in class at this time they will be marked as absent. By signing the late arrival book we are able to adjust our records so your child is then marked as late rather than absent.

STUDENTS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL - A reminder to parents of arrangements for children being absent from school - Please ring or email to advise that your child will be absent or if parents know in advance of a child’s absence from school on a particular day/s, then a note prior to the absence would be great.

LEAVING EARLY - If for some reason your child needs to leave the school prior to the end of the school day, we ask that you come via the office and complete the sign-out book. These requirements are necessary to comply with Department regulations, minimize legal liabilities, assist with emergency management and to provide adequate duty of care.

PERSONAL GOODS BROUGHT TO SCHOOL AT OWNER’S RISK – A reminder to all that the Department does not hold insurance for personal property brought to schools and it has no capacity to pay for any loss or damage to such property. Personal property can include mobile phones, electronic games, calculators, jewellery, toys and sporting equipment. Students and staff are discouraged from bringing any unnecessary or particularly valuable items to school.
Youth Ambassador Competition

Do you have children between the ages of 10 – 18 years and believe they could do more for other young people with asthma? Would they be interested in making a video and win some awesome prizes?

Then don’t let asthma hold them back! Your child could be The 2013 Youth Ambassador for The Asthma Foundation of Victoria. The competition is now open and closes 29th February 2013.

For more information, please contact the Asthma Foundation of Victoria on 1800 278 462 or email sflanagan@asthma.org.au

COMMUNITY NEWS

EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF HOSTING

World Education Program (WEP) is inviting you to experience another culture in your own home by becoming a volunteer host family to one of our international students arriving in July 2013. Our students from Italy, Belgium, France, Switzerland, The Netherlands and South America are looking forward to experiencing life in Australia, making new friends and becoming a member of an Australian family soon.

Getting to know your student before he or she arrives brings fun and joy to everyone involved.

Take the next step and contact WEP today to receive a full information pack for your family.

Contact—Sylvia Kelly, Manager - Inbound Exchange Programs
Phone: 1300 884 733 Email: info@wep.org.au Online: www.wep.org.au

Open your home and hearts to an international exchange student!
It’s easier than you think and a fantastic experience for all!

GIRLS’ BRIGADE

Girls’ Brigade is an international and interdenominational faith based youth organisation in 56 countries around the world. Girls from prep to year twelve may be members. Girls are offered challenging, rewarding and fun activities for which they earn badges, while exploring how God fits into life and all the things humans do. In their teenage years, girls have opportunity for leadership training and achieving the highest international youth award, the Queen’s Award, as well as the Pioneer Pin, the highest National award a girl can earn, and Duke of Edinburgh awards.

Further information can be obtained from the following ...
Mrs Jenny McWilliam—Captain 7th Victoria Bendigo Girls’ Brigade—telephone 5439 7557
Email: bendigoGB@gmail.com

The Bendigo East Baseball Club’s Come and Try nights for all ages of boys, girls and adults interested in playing Baseball will be at the Ken Wust Oval, Quarry Hill, on Wednesday the 6th and 13th of February at 4.30 to 6pm.
A registration night for all previous and any new junior and senior players for the 2013 winter competition will

AUSKICK ALF FOOTBALL SUPER CLINIC
WITH THE CARLTON FOOTBALL CLUB
WILL BE HELD AT THE QEO
THIS THURSDAY 7TH FEBRUARY FROM 4.30 PM—6.30 PM.
THE CLINIC IS FOR 5-12 YEAR OLDS.
Catch the savings bug with school banking every Tuesday.

Bendigo and Adelaide Bank Limited, ABN 11 068 049 178. AFSL 237879. (S28523) (04/10)

INFORMATION AND APPLICATION FORMS AVAILABLE FROM SCHOOL OFFICE
“Talking with other parents and carers makes you realise you are not alone”

If you would like to talk to someone who has been through a similar experience with managing their children’s asthma, or need support to live well with your own asthma, we would like to connect you with others for mutual support via the phone, internet or face-to-face groups.

Peers Leading Peers will link you to a trained volunteer who can listen to your concerns and help you to manage.

This is the first program of this kind to be available for asthma in Australia. We are grateful to the Victoria State Government Department of Health for their funding support.

The program is available for anyone with asthma or parents, grandparents and people who regularly care for a child with asthma.

If you are interested in accessing support or becoming an “Asthma Peer Support Volunteer” contact Belinda at The Asthma Foundation of Victoria on 1800 278 462 or binglis@asthma.org.au

Spacers and Schools/Preschools: Reminder for Parents & Carers

Schools/preschools in Victoria have been informed by The Asthma Foundation of Victoria about new guidelines regarding the use of spacers for children with asthma. Spacers are essential equipment when following Asthma First Aid best practice, however schools/preschools will no longer be able to wash, sterilise and re-use spacers from their asthma emergency kits when assisting students with asthma symptoms.

Asthma first aid kits should only ever be used as a back-up for when a student does not have their own spacer available, if it is a first asthma attack or the cause of breathing difficulty is unknown. Some schools/preschools may implement a policy where parents/carers are responsible for the cost of the spacer if one must be used from the asthma emergency kit.

Even if your child has mild asthma, it is essential that their medication and spacer is always available to school/preschool staff. Please make sure your child always brings a spacer with them to school, or has one that stays at school.

For more information, please contact the Asthma Foundation of Victoria on 1800 278 462 or email schools@asthma.org.au