2016 school leaders – it is election time!

Our Year 5 students have been given the opportunity (in a secret ballot) to nominate students who they think would be suitable candidates for captain or prefects. The boys and girls who received the most nominations were invited to stand for election. This process allows those children who their peers believe are best suited to these important positions to have the opportunity to be elected. Candidates standing for election are -

Girls: Audrey Atkinson, Ella Charlton, Jemma Dafter, Montana Olding, Emma Richardson, Addison Russell, Sarah Stiller, Hope Westman

Boys: Jeremy Alexander, Will Bennett, Rhys Butler, Jye Cuell, Alex Dean, Leo Hall, Riley Longworth, Tim Shields

All students in Years 2-6 vote, as do all staff members. All votes are equal and the students elected are the four boys and four girls with the most votes. The two with the highest number of votes are elected captains. A simple and fair process, so good luck everyone.

Elections will be held tomorrow, Wednesday 25th November following an assembly (9:30 in the hall) where all candidates will be able to speak about their personal qualities to the rest of the school. Results will be announced on Wednesday 2nd December in the hall at 9:30am. No matter the result, we know that Narrabri West will have outstanding school leaders yet again in 2016.

We are now entering the 8th week of Term 4 and the year is disappearing quickly with school life starting to get very hectic. There are lots of great things to look forward to as we enter this busiest time of the year. With the end of the year in sight, some students on occasion begin to lose their focus and determination to do their best. It is now that we expect students to put a concerted effort into making the end of year the best it can be. We regularly remind students that their actions should be helpful and cooperative toward others.

When students are asked by their teachers to put in a better effort, or make a better decision we expect them to comply. We only have 17 days of school remaining this year!
Feature Article

Students work on their portfolios throughout the year and take them home at the end of Term 4. They contain work samples and a selection of other activities completed. All teachers and students have spent many hours preparing these. Please take the time to sit down and go through them with your children. They have been looking forward to showing them to you.

They are an important element of the curriculum and an important support for student learning.

A portfolio offers teachers, students and parents a broad view of student learning by documenting the learning process as well as students’ final products. Teachers are able to use portfolios to make meaningful and accurate assessment decisions. Portfolios actively promote student involvement in and responsibility for, their own learning.

For teachers, portfolios:
- make assessment and reporting integral to teaching and learning;
- provide the opportunity for teachers and students to collaborate;
- provide concrete examples of student work which have clear, direct links with syllabus outcomes as evidence for assessment decisions; and
- provide evidence to support reports to parents.

For students, portfolios:
- enable them to actively monitor and reflect upon their achievements and progress;
- acknowledge that students are individuals who learn at different rates;
- give all students the opportunity to demonstrate achievement of syllabus outcomes;
- provide the opportunity for self-assessment;
- provide evidence for the work towards and achievement of syllabus outcomes; and
- help students to become responsible for their own learning.

For parents, portfolios:
- involve them in their child’s learning;
- allow them to see their child’s achievement and progress over time;
- provide concrete evidence for assessment decisions made by the teacher; and
- provide evidence to support student reports.

2015 will be the last year we use our portfolio folders. In 2016 we will have digital portfolios using the ‘SeeSaw’ app which we have been trialling this year. Many of you would already be familiar with it. We will have more information on this for you early next year.

Student Reports

Staff are finalising these in readiness for their upcoming distribution on Friday 11th December. Semester 2 reports are an indication of your child’s achievements during the past two terms and our teachers have been assessing students according to curriculum outcomes which generally allow two years for students to progress through each stage. The report will give you information about their academic, physical and social development at this point in their education. They will include:

- Clear, accurate information about the performance of each child;
- Information on what the student can do well and on areas still developing; and
- Information about the student’s social skills and commitment to learning.

Learning is continuous and children learn at different rates. However all children need encouragement and praise to be confident, happy learners. Some children try very hard and find learning difficult. They deserve your praise and encouragement. Some children find learning easy and often don’t try as hard as they could. Your encouragement here is critical as well. For those students who have no difficulty learning and put a lot of effort into their work, they need continued acknowledgement and praise to keep this level of enthusiasm and commitment. For those students whose effort is minimal, closer home and school partnerships are an important key to improvement.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of these, please arrange a suitable time with your child’s teacher.

Narrabri West in Sydney

Our visit to Sydney schools Colyton, Ruse and Mt Annan was very successful and informative. We were able to bring home some very good ideas to introduce in our classrooms, especially those based around the use of technology to enhance student learning and engagement.

We are looking forward to implementing these … and look, we already are! Montana and Charlotte are coding (programming) on the computer and all Stage 3 have been introduced to this. This was a great learning experience we saw at Mt Annan PS.

Being introduced to coding gives students an appreciation of what can be built with technology. We are surrounded by devices controlled by computers. Understanding how they work is enhanced by understanding coding, which draws on the skills of design, predicting, collaboration, problem solving and computational thinking.

We are going to continue this partnership with these three schools in 2016, with further visits to each school involving a team of our teachers going there and some of theirs coming here.
Parent Survey 2015
Recently we sent home a newsletter with results from our 2015 parent survey. We have now received data which compares our survey results to those from the 1,000 NSW public schools who also used this survey. As you can see Narrabri West compares exceptionally well to this significant sample size.

The survey was based on a questionnaire covering several aspects of parents’ perceptions of their children’s experiences at home and school. The survey also provides feedback to schools about the extent to which parents feel the school supports learning and positive behaviour and promotes a safe and inclusive environment. It included seven separate measures, which were scored on a ten-point scale.

The scores for the questions (i.e., strongly agree to strongly disagree), have been converted to a 10-point scale, then averaged and reported by question and by topic. A score of 0 indicates strong disagreement; 10 indicates strong agreement; 5 is a neutral position (neither agree nor disagree).

Our results (the blue line) are summarised in the graph below, along with those for all schools who participated in the survey (the green line).

How we form our classes
We are presently organising our class structure for 2016. One part of this is the allocation of students to each of the new classes. I would like to point out a few facts about the assigning of students to class groups and ultimately, teachers to classes. This process is always a complex issue, which the school takes very seriously and parents usually understand how difficult the issue of assigning students to classes can be.

For those new to the school, I thought it was worthwhile again outlining the school’s procedures for this very important task. Literally dozens of hours of work go into the formation of classes and looking at the students that are placed together to make a class. We ensure that all necessary factors are taken into account during this process and try to take into account the following factors:

- The number of classes in each stage of learning (i.e. Early Stage 1, Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3);
- An equal division of students as possible in each year level into the number of classes;
- Balance of gender in the class;
- Spread of students with additional needs;
- Friendships of students;
- The issue of siblings being in the same class;
Mix of independent and dependent workers; and
Whether students have had the teacher before.

To ensure that we develop the optimal balance in classes, we also use a range of assessments and information to base our decisions on as well.

As you can see, the allocation of students to class groups is not a simple process where students are thrown together in a haphazard manner. It is a task which we tackle with great thought and consideration.

The development of class groups precedes the actual allocation of the teacher to the class, as often final staffing is only known in the last week of term or at the beginning of the year (which will probably be the case again this year).

2016 planning
If you are not going to be at Narrabri West in 2016 could you please let us know ASAP as this may impact on our class plans for next year.

As we have already mentioned in previous newsletters, this is extremely important in 2016 as we are hoping to be able to form another (our 14th) class. Due to some unexpected departures from our school for 2016 in recent weeks, we now DO NOT have enough students to do this.

The impact of this will be 13 classes, the same as this year, but with over 20 students more than we currently have (due to 30+ leaving Year 6 and 50+ coming into Kindergarten). Consequently class sizes will be bigger. Hopefully some new families will arrive in Narrabri which will enable us to have 14 classes, which will assist all children as we will be able to have smaller classes and more options for our class structure.

If we do not get to 14 teachers, we may have to consider funding the additional teacher ourselves, which will cost the school $102,000 (teacher salary plus on-costs). This is money that could otherwise be spent on resources for students. So, fingers crossed!

Presentation Night 2015
This year’s presentation night will be held on Thursday 10th December. Together our school community will celebrate the many successes and achievements of not only those students who will receive awards, but the achievements of all who have tried so hard, ensuring that 2015 was an outstanding year for our school and students. I would encourage all families to join us and acknowledge and celebrate what was a year of learning.

Year 7 Orientation - Narrabri High here we come!
We are preparing to farewell our Year 6 students who will soon embark on the next stage of their education, as they prepare for Year 7 in 2016. The Year 7 Orientation Day will be held at Narrabri High School on Monday 30th November.

School Fees and Contributions Reminder
You are reminded that any outstanding amounts can be paid up until Wednesday 16th December. Thank you to all parents who have settled accounts since our last newsletter.

School Hats
Next year we will again supply all students in the school with a free blue broad brimmed hat. Caps are not permitted and only children wearing school hats will be allowed to play outside. Students representing the school in out of school events must also wear the school hat. We thank every student in the school for their continued support of this policy.

Pull out your favourite board shorts, grab your zinc and get ready for our fast-approaching Beach Party on Friday 4th December! We will have a sports afternoon of fun water based games at school - so we all need to wear our swimmers to school, (with beach type clothes of course), have a big hat, plenty of sunscreen and sandals or thongs (yes thongs will be allowed for just this one day!).

Most importantly, everyone will need to be prepared to get wet … very wet!

This year attendance at our Beach Party is through invitation only and students will have to earn this through appropriate behaviour. Teachers have already handed out many invitations and we hope (and expect) that all students receive one.

See the note attached to this newsletter for more details and don't forget the canteen’s special meal deal. The notes regarding this have already gone home.

Library Books
Please make sure all library books are returned to the school library by the end of this week so our stocktake can be undertaken.

A busy end to the year
It is that time of the year when everything is happening at once. The children are working hard to finish their years’ work. The teachers are finalising their assessments and are writing student reports. There are exciting things happening each day. Coming up is:

- Presentation Night (Thursday 10th)
- Special Assembly (Friday 11th)
- Platinum Badge Assembly (Tuesday 15th)
- … and our end of term BBQ and last day of school (Wednesday 16th)

We will all definitely need a well-earned rest after all of these activities!

School finishes for 2015 on Wednesday 16th December. School recommences for children in Years 1-6 on Thursday 4th February 2016. Kindergarten students will start on Monday 8th February.

Our 2016 swimming carnival will be held on Friday 5th February. The Narrabri Zone PSSA Swimming Carnival will be held on Friday 19th February.
Class Requirements 2016
We have included with this newsletter the class requirements for each grade next year. This is so you can plan ahead and take advantage of the usual January back to school sales.

Best wishes
Stephen Maher
Principal

2015 Music Shield Results

We held our annual music solo competition on Monday 16th and Wednesday 18th November.

We were treated to two afternoons of wonderful music. Congratulations to all students who performed - it was obvious you had all put in many hours of rehearsals at home.

Thank you to Rosemary Smith for all of your effort in teaching the students. Thanks also to the parents that were able to come in and watch.

The results are as follows:

Beginner Brass
1st Bradley Miller
2nd George Bennett
3rd Isabel Graham

Brass
1st Jemma Harvey
2nd Grace Hardy
3rd Paige Russell

Beginner Woodwind
1st Zahli Olding
2nd Harmonie Dhu
3rd Rosie Ross and Laura Flower

Woodwind
1st Emily Redman and Alexandra Bennett
2nd Maddie Richardson, Zara Bennett and Elsie Ford

Beginner Recorder
1st Lily Grist
2nd Taryn Kirk and Imogen Conomos
3rd Claire Graham, Tayla Nott and Isabella Keys

Descant Recorder
1st Elsie Ford and Alexandra Bennett
2nd Sarah Stiller, Erin Flower and Emily Redman
3rd Zara Foley, Jemma Harvey and Paige Russell

Alto Recorder
1st Grace Hardy
2nd Jemma Harvey
3rd Paige Russell

Tenor Recorder
1st Elsie Ford and Erin Flower

Mrs Sarah Smith

Reminders

Year 6 will be having another fundraiser for their gift to the school on **Tuesday 8th December**. Any parents who would like their car washed (under very close supervision of course) can bring their cars to school on this day and for a cost of $10 they will get a great clean. More information will go home about this closer to the date.

WHAT’S ON

November
26 2016 Captains and Prefects Elections 9:30am
27 Beach to Bush Surf Lifesaving Presentation; NO ASSEMBLY – PRESENTATION NIGHT PRACTISE
30 Year 7 2016 Orientation Day – Narrabri HS

December
4 Beach Party
7 Pre School Red Group Beach Party
8 Year 6 Car Wash

10 Pre School Blue Christmas Party; Presentation Night 7:00pm Narrabri HS
11 Presentation Assembly 12:30pm
14 Stage 2 Genius Hour Fair; Year 6 Farewell (Chan’s @ 6:00pm)
15 Platinum Badge Assembly 12:30pm; Pre School Red Christmas Party
16 Sausage Sizzle 11:30am; Last day of school 2015

February 2016
3 Staff return
4 Years 1-6 return
5 Years 3-6 Swimming Carnival
8 Kindergarten start
9 Pre School Red Group starts
11 Pre School Blue Group starts
19 Narrabri Zone PSSA Swimming Carnival

March 2016
23 School photos

This year in KG I have enjoyed learning...

- CVC words and I really want to learn about monster trucks. One more thing, being appropriate and inappropriate – Lucas
- How to make 3D art pictures. Hunter
- How to make a goblin. Levi
- How to read books. Cindy
- To read instructions in the book and make a person. Nathan
- I like learning reading groups and I like reading The Hungry Kitten. Kaleb
- How to sit properly and how to tell news. Ava
- I like reading. Liam
- How to do brain-breaks and doing craft. Hayley
- How to write a sentence and I have been enjoying learning about words
This year in KS I have enjoyed:

- I have enjoyed writing sentences – Haylo
- I have enjoyed reading ‘The Gingerbread Man’ – Jack J
- I have enjoyed learning my ABC – Jonothan
- I like when we do craft – Skye
- I like when we read stories and write about the story – Hannah
- I have enjoyed learning Maths – Ben
- I like doing Sport – Sophie
- I like when we were learning about ‘The Very Cranky Bear’ – Imogen
- My favourite part has been learning how to write a sentence – Ruby
- My favourite thing was learning about the book ‘Who sank the boat?’ – Hope
- I have enjoyed learning about the ‘Gingerbread Man’ – Jason
- I like when we sing songs – Rya
- I like reading books with Mrs Davis in Reading Groups – Edward
- I like doing craft – Jack T
- I liked learning about ‘The Green Sheep’ – Ehren
- I like playing sight word games – Noah
- I have enjoyed craft and learning to spell and count – Savennah
- I enjoyed learning about growing patterns in Maths – Aiden

This year in KL I have enjoyed:

- Writing. Alexie
- Writing sentences. Douglas
- Learning how to skip count. Chayce
- Drawing and I enjoyed learning about numbers. Lachlan
- Drawing. James C
- Playing games and activities. Cameron
- Learning how you count numbers. Sophie
- Learning how to write the ‘a’s and ‘t’s and ‘j’s like on the learning goals. Ava
- Doing painting and learning about ‘Who sunk the Boat’. Brayden
- Colouring in the Goblin and doing the activities and Maths. Cruz
- Learning about drawing in Art. Xanthe
- Learning about the story the Gingerbread man and doing the craft with the Gingerbread man. Hayleigh
- Learning about Maths and reading groups and the Gingerbread man. Lilly
- I liked counting by 2’s. Allira
- Learning about counting backwards to 1. Khushi
- I liked listening to people’s news. Koby
- I liked learning everything. Kaden
- I have enjoyed learning Maths – Ben
- I have enjoyed learning my ABC – Jonothan
- I like when we do craft – Skye
- I like when we read stories and write about the story – Hannah
- I have enjoyed learning Maths – Ben
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- I have enjoyed craft and learning to spell and count – Savennah
- I enjoyed learning about growing patterns in Maths – Aiden

The children continue to be actively engaged in a variety of learning experiences at Pre School with an emphasis on becoming ‘effective communicators’ and developing ‘confident and involved learners’.

The children making bread was an amazing experience which involved all levels of learning and discoveries. Just to see the surprised look on the children’s faces as they saw the risen dough was just a treat, let alone the process of kneading, shaping, then eating the bread! This will lead us to other dough making experiences.

Our water experiments where we tested objects for floating and sinking sparked curiosity and interest and really made the children think about the properties of objects.

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The children have learnt some interesting things about the USA, such as landmarks including the Statue of Liberty and the Grand Canyon. We have had fun learning the song, ‘She’ll be Comin’ Round the Mountain’.

December is almost here and so we shift our focus to another country, which will be Spain. We will explore some interesting Christmas customs and places of interest with Mrs. Phillips’ help. This will help in achieving the outcome, ‘children respond to diversity with respect’ by exploring different cultures and becoming aware of connections and similarities and differences between people.

By now you would have received a Calendar of Events and a class list to help you with names for our Card giving day. We hope this helps to keep you on track.

This is our 2nd last newsletter for the year. Time goes fast when you’re busy!

Louise Stewart & Tricia Lawty

Award Winners

KG
Lilly Thompson, Lucas Duff, Hunter Smith, Levi Browning, Hayley Gordon & Lucas Griffiths

KL
Cruz Ryan, Cameron Winter, Ava O’Connell, Sophie Brown, Lachlan Smith & Xanthe Kirk

KS
Michelle Gordon, Jason O’Neill, Jack Jolliffe, Ben Bland & Noah Dhu

1.K
Domenic Browning, Mackenzie Fenwick, Ashley Hanslow, Adriann Phillips, Nate Wilkins & Sienna Earle
<table>
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<th>Roster</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 25&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>K Mason</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 26&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>B Finn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 27&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>M Richardson</td>
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<td>Tue 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Dec</td>
<td>N McCauley</td>
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<td>Wed 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>C Hennessy</td>
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<td>Thu 3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>K Butler</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>J Geal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>J Michell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 11&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>G Westman, F Kerr</td>
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**Holiday Tennis Clinics in Narrabri**

**2 clinics these holidays!!!**

**Clinic 1:** 3 day clinic before Christmas – Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December through to and including Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2015.

**Clinic 2:** 4 day clinic in the New Year – Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January to and including Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2016.
When: Friday 4th December 2015 - for K-6 & PS Blue (PS Red - Mon 7th December)

What to Wear: Your boardies (or swimmers), clothes to wear over your swimmers, a big hat, sunnies and thongs or sandals. Bring a towel, plus plenty of sunscreen, or your brightest coloured Zinc!

What’s Happening: We are having a beach party to have some fun and celebrate the end of the year. We are also making a gold coin donation to the Year 6 fundraising efforts.

Our plan for the day is:

11.00am - Recess
12.20pm - Lunch (the canteen has a special beach meal deal)
1.00pm - Beach Party Games
3.15pm - Assembly

Attending the Beach Party is by invitation only and children need to earn their invitation which will be given to them by their teachers.

(Mums and Dads are invited to join us for lunch and the Beach Party games!)
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<th>Kinder</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
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** NO FELT TIP PENS

Book covering needs will be advised by class teachers

We are hoping to have slip-on book covers available for purchase next year.

For Years 3-6, please provide the necessary items in a clearly labelled pencil case

Thank you for providing the items listed for your child's class.

PLEASE LABEL ALL ITEMS SENT TO SCHOOL - CLOTHING AS WELL