A rich learning environment - for our teachers as well!

We are very fortunate to have experienced and professional teachers who have achieved some great things this year, ensuring a smooth start in classes that offer great learning environments for our students. It has been inspiring to have been able to see first-hand the enthusiasm, effort and knowledge that goes into developing our school programs.

One of the structures we have implemented to support this collaboration is stage team planning days, which are happening this week.

Twice a term (except Term 1), the teachers from each of our stages (i.e. Kindergarten, Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, Years 5 and 6) are released from class to collaboratively plan and assess, to provide consistency of instruction across all classes and to best allow for innovation and professional improvement. Each team decides where their students are currently at, where they need to get to and the best pathway to lead them there.

As well as providing good learning conditions for students, we also seek to provide good learning conditions for teachers too. If our teachers aren’t continually developing, then our school does not move forward. Our planning days are a valuable structure for us to have in place. To inspire lifelong learning and a love of learning, teachers must also be learners. It is always impressive to see the intense focus on student learning and the professional manner in which these sessions are conducted.

We understand that at times parents become concerned when teachers are not ‘on class’ but you can be assured that the time teachers invest in teacher professional learning is all about making a difference for your children. The advantage we have in the way we structure these days, is that other teachers within the school take classes when that team is planning, meaning there is no disruption to normal class programs and routines.

It is certainly a rich learning environment for everyone at Narrabri West. Our feature article this fortnight ‘Focus on Learning,’ expands on our approach to learning.
In 2015 we are again really raising the bar in regards to our focus on learning, as outlined in our 2015-2017 Strategic Plan (available on our website). Whilst it might seem strange to say that we are increasing our focus on learning, as this is the job of all schools, in traditional schools whilst saying the focus is on learning, the focus is actually on teaching.

At Narrabri West we will be increasing our focus on learning at all times. This means that we will judge our success, not by the fact that the skill or knowledge has been taught, but on whether the students have actually learnt it.

We see our core mission as being not simply to ensure that students are taught, but to ensure that they learn. Whilst this might seem a very simple shift – from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning – all research shows that it has a fundamental impact on the achievement levels of students.

Research highlights that successful schools are those that make learning their highest priority all the time. In establishing the structures and processes which will guide our endeavours in 2015, we will continue to use four basic questions which will guide the work of all teachers at the school. These questions continue to be:

- What do we want each student to learn?
- How will we know when each student has learnt it?
- How will we intervene for students who struggle and enrich the learning for students who are proficient?
- How can we use the evidence of student learning to improve our individual and collective professional practice?

In a traditional school a teacher teaches an outcome, knowing that at its conclusion some students will have mastered the knowledge and skills and some will not. Traditionally the teacher then feels compelled to move forward to ensure that they teach the content of the course, even if many students haven’t learnt it.

Again in 2015 as we shift our focus from teaching to learning, we will be endeavouring to ensure all students master the necessary skills and knowledge before moving on. To ensure this can happen in 2015, we will also be continuing a wide range of intervention strategies to assist those students who are not achieving at the required level. We will also be ensuring that those students who already know it, are moved on to the next level of learning, thereby ensuring that the needs of our more capable students are also catered for.

We will be judging our effectiveness as a school on the basis of results rather than on the basis of having taught the content. As such, teachers will be stringent in their use of timely assessment strategies to ensure that students who are not mastering the required skills and knowledge are identified as soon as possible, as are the students who already know the skills and knowledge about to be taught. This will allow the teacher to directly intervene as quickly as possible to ensure the student has every chance of successfully mastering the skill or knowledge, or being moved on to the next stage of their learning.

As you can imagine this focus on learning and the accountability we place on teachers eventually has to translate into hard work. It requires teachers and all school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, to work cooperatively on matters relating to learning and to be held accountable for the kind of results that show continued student learning improvement.

This means that we will minimise the impact of interruptions to the academic learning program as much as possible.

It is very easy for schools to be deflected from a focus on learning and return to a focus on teaching without the full support of parents. If we define our school’s primary purpose as ensuring all students learn to a high level, then we cannot allow other issues to deflect us from this. Issues such as student misbehaviour, non-attendance and so on have to be minimised to ensure that we can spend the maximum time possible on learning.

Given the challenges that students face in the future if they do not master the necessary skills and knowledge, I am sure parents will be supportive of our approach.

At Narrabri West we are committed to ensuring the highest possible level of learning for all students. We will only be successful in this endeavour if we have the full commitment of our whole community and our whole community becomes as obsessed and pre-occupied with student learning as our teachers are.

We are looking forward to the learning ahead of us this year.
each Thursday we also have the concert band, drum group and guitar group continuing their practise and instruction.

Classes under the spotlight of some very tough judges!

Our SRC representatives have commenced their duties for the year, with one of these being their weekly visits to classrooms to judge the ‘Class of the Term’ Award.

These very tough judges have a keen eye for detail as they walk around the school and score each class and their classroom on a category that they determine. Weekly scores are then added and at the end of each term an overall winner is announced, with the winning class receiving a free lunch from McDonalds.

This week it has been the turn of Zahli and Larnie to perform this task and they have carefully looked at rooms, judging them on such things as the number of students in full school uniform and how tidy each classes rooms or verandas have been. And then they add up the scores!

School Photos – coming soon!

Tuesday 24th March is school photo day. Please make sure all students come to school in school sports uniform, which means the photos will look especially colourful. We look forward to receiving the photos sometime after the upcoming school holidays.

Parent Information Session
Well Attended

Last week we held the first of our parent workshops for the year. This one covered Learning Goals and Success Criteria and information was presented on how we use these in the school. We had a good attendance and we thank all those parents who were able to come along.

MySchool 2014

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) has released the MySchool 2014 website update – you can find it at: www.myschool.edu.au

The MySchool site is complex. It provides profiles on each school and includes information about the school such as numbers of students and staff, attendance rates and results from the national literacy and numeracy tests (NAPLAN). The website also includes information about school finances and student growth in NAPLAN. It shows comparisons between our school’s NAPLAN results and those from schools serving students from (supposedly) statistically similar backgrounds across Australia. We can see how our school is performing against other schools with statistically similar students. From this, we can see in what areas our school is doing well and where we need to look to make improvements.

The information MySchool provides is just one source of information about our school. For further information on our school’s performance, parents and community members are encouraged to look at our website, read our annual report (on our website now), or talk to your child’s teacher or me.

Classroom Painting

Painting has commenced this week in most classrooms in our brick buildings. This is long overdue and will certainly enhance our learning environments. Whilst this may provide some inconvenience, the end result will definitely be worth it.

ANZ Citizenship Award - rewarding excellence!

Our first winner of this award for 2015, generously sponsored by the ANZ Bank, is Ashley Johnston. Ashley is always an outstanding citizen and student at school. Ashley received her award at last Fridays’ assembly. Ashley also received the 2B Star of the Week award at the same assembly – a complete coincidence and reinforces what a ‘citizenship star’ Ashley is! Well done!

P&C News

Last week our P&C held their first meeting for the year and it was pleasing to see some new faces attending. Our P&C is an extremely vital component of our school. The role of the P&C is to:

- Represent the views of all parents in school decision making and policy development;
- Support the school, the Principal and school staff in the implementation of school policy;
- Promote the school; and
- Support school programs through fund raising activities.

At Narrabri West our students benefit from the fantastic support of our parents and others within our community. It is always great to have adults around, working together with the staff and students of the school. There are so many people who spend hours and hours, in various ways, for the students of the school.

Every time you help your child with their homework or home reading, every time you complete permission notes and return them on time, every time you support any fundraising opportunities or come to one of our special events – you are supporting our school and your children. Thank you for this.

Easter Eggstravaganza - keep this date free!

We will be celebrating the last day of Term 1 with a number of special events. All children will soon be sending an invitation to their grandparents, family or special friends, inviting them to visit the school on Thursday 2nd April.

We will be having our Easter Tabloids (10:00am), Bronze Certificate assembly (12:30), as well as the opportunity for grandparents or uncles or aunts or family friends or mums and dads (or all of them!) to have a
picnic lunch with their children. Our canteen will have plenty of food available for everyone! Please keep this date free and we hope to see many visitors to our school.

Expression of Interest Year 7 2016
All Year 6 students will have received an Expression of Interest form for Year 7 2016. This is the first stage of enrolment to high school. Narrabri High School is the local high school. Please complete the form and return it (if you have not already done so), to the school office before Friday 20th March.

Please note: If your child is not attending Narrabri High School, the Expression of Interest needs to be returned and marked appropriately.

Term 1 is disappearing quickly!
They say time flies when you're having fun and with the first six weeks of our school year nearly over I think it must be true. Of course there has been an awful lot of hard work undertaken in that time too and I want to thank our teachers for the dedication they show to your children and their learning.

Our school calendar is continuing to fill at a rapid pace. Please ensure that you keep an eye on the newsletter calendar and our web site calendar to ensure you have all the upcoming events noted.

Thank you for your continued support of your school. Thank you also to the students of Narrabri West who on a daily basis make the school such a wonderful place to be a part of. We certainly enjoy helping you all to learn!

Best wishes
Stephen Maher
Principal

Five Cent Fridays
Our SRC is organising a special and brand new fundraiser. Students are asked to bring in any loose five cent pieces that you are willing to donate and place them in a special money box in their class – they can do this anytime during the week.

Each Friday the class totals will be tallied and we will have a running tally on display on the noticeboard near the canteen. At the end of Term 2 and then again at the end of Term 4, the SRC representatives will decide on something that they would like to buy for the school using the proceeds.

There will be a special surprise for the class that has raised the most money after Term 2 and Term 4.

Thanks to NAB Narrabri for donating the moneyboxes.

Finally ... a fun way to get rid of those pesky five cent pieces that weigh down your purse or wallet and put them to good use!

Parents are reminded you remain legally responsible for your children prior to 9.00am when supervision begins. Please try to avoid having your children arrive at school before 9:00am.

We are presenting a series of workshops designed to assist parents in understanding various aspects of the curriculum and how we teach it, as well as how you can assist your child at home. Our next workshop is ...

Learning Goals & Success Criteria
(Recommended for Kindergarten to Year 6 parents)

Wednesday 18th March
Narrabri West Public School Hall
9:30am to 10:15am
The workshop will include the opportunity to visit classrooms and watch the use of Learning Goals and Success Criteria in action and see how they assist students to engage and interact with their learning.

Asthma Puffers
All children who suffer from asthma should have their own puffer that can be kept in Sick Bay at school. This is the responsibility of parents and it is not the responsibility of the school to supply these. We noticed that during the fires last week the heavy smoke required a number of children to seek assistance and it was concerning to see the number of children who we have been advised suffer from asthma, that did not have a puffer at school. Each child's puffer will be labelled and used only for your child.

Have you lost an iPhone 5?
An iPhone 5 has been found on our school bus that does the town run. Contact Wolters Bus Service if this could be yours.
Parents or carers are required by law to provide an explanation to the Principal to say why their child was absent from school. A note of explanation should contain:

1. Date that the note was written
2. Child's name
3. Days/dates the child was absent from school
4. The reason the child was absent
5. The signature of the child’s parent or carer

If more than one child from the same family has been absent a separate note for each child should be written.

A note should be brought to school on the first day the student returns to school after an absence. We are required to investigate all unexplained absences (where a child has been absent and no explanation has been received) within two days.

Uniform Room Opening Times 2015
There has been a change this year to the opening times for our Uniform Room. Times are:

- Monday: 9:00am – 9:30am
- Friday: 3:00pm – 3:30pm

Head Lice
Several cases of head lice have been detected at school. Please check your child’s hair regularly and treat accordingly.

1K, 1S, 2D & 2B
Term 1 is certainly going fast! We are pleased to report that all Year 1 and 2 students have been working very hard over the past six weeks.

Our COGS unit for the term has been ‘Local Places’ and we are now able to identify some natural and built features in our school and local area. We also investigated how maps are used and had some fun learning about a compass. The Hi Five song ‘North South East West’ was helpful in teaching us about direction.

In our English sessions we have read ‘Farmer Duck’ and are currently reading and writing about ‘Alexander’s Outing’ by Pamela Allen. We have been learning about orientations (when, who and where) and time connectives to write a recount.

All of our classes have guided reading sessions each day and it is great to see all the parent helpers. If you are able to assist with reading groups, please speak to your child’s teacher. Reading group times are:

- **1K and 1S**
  - 9:30am - 10:00am (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday)
  - 10:30-11.00 (Thursday)
- **2B and 2D**
  - 12:20pm - 12:50pm (Monday to Friday)

In Maths the Year 1 children have investigated capacity and practised the ‘count on strategy’. We have even learnt about ‘turn around facts’. This week we are looking at solving subtraction problems.

The Year 2 children have been learning about 3-digit numbers, solving addition and subtraction problems using related facts and working with mass. This week we will be looking at addition strategies with doubles.

Toward the end of this term we will be holding three-way interviews with students and parents. We are all looking forward to meeting with you and chatting about your child’s progress. These are a rewarding and informative way for parents to discuss their children’s schooling and see how they are progressing.

The children have been looking forward to showing you all of the clever and exciting things they have been doing.

**DID YOU KNOW?**
Research shows that children who are in school most of the time do better on state tests. Studies also show that kids who are absent more often score lower on state tests.

Being late for school hurts a child’s learning, too. A student who is 10 minutes late every day will miss 30 hours of instruction during the year.

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**Children working with computers**

- **Blake Carter making great strides in reading**
- **Chrissy Baldwin 2B**
- **Jane Dafter 2D**
- **Jodie Keys 1K**
- **Sarah Smith 1S**
The children continue to enjoy a variety of activities at Pre School. Activities are thoughtfully planned, with the children's interests in mind, to provide a variety of learning experiences and opportunities. An underlying thread in all activities is an emphasis on social development, with experiences being designed to promote and extend the children's growth in this area. Developing social relationships is an important aspect of the children's learning. Over time the children will develop empathy and understanding of socially acceptable behaviour, which includes turn-taking, sharing and conflict resolution.

We will enjoy celebrating St Patrick’s Day this week on Friday for Blue Group and Tuesday next week for Red Group (which is actually St Patrick’s Day). Please remember to dress your child in something green for these days. If any parent has a talent or skill that they would like to share with the children about Ireland, please see us (does anyone play the tin whistle or another Irish instrument?).

We have now planted vegetables and herbs in the vegie garden. These included beetroot, silverbeet, tomatoes, rosemary, sage, carrot and a curry plant. All the children have helped in the planting and this was a great experience for them. The garden now looks wonderful and provides an ongoing opportunity for them to continue in the care of our environment. This is fulfilling an Early Years Learning Outcome, where children show a growing appreciation and care for the natural environment and increased understanding of the interdependence between land, people, plants and animals.

We are excited to know that Costa, from the show ‘Gardening Australia’ will be visiting on Friday 20th March. This will be a wonderful experience for the children and we will proudly show him our garden. If parents would like to bring in their children from Red Group, you are most welcome. Please see us so we can advise you of the time.

Thank you to the wonderful dads, Aaron, Rob and Scotty, who came to our working bee, as well a special thank you to Nimrod and his children (past pre-schoolers Eden and Neeve) for erecting a tepee for us. The work that was accomplished that morning was amazing and makes our Pre-School look great. Thank you also to Ian Duffy who provided the tepee poles and logs.

We will soon be preparing for our Easter Hat parades. The children will make their own hats for the parade.

Our parades will be on:
- Tuesday 31st March 2:00pm: Red Group
- Wednesday 1st April 2:00pm: Blue Group

Parents, grandparents and friends are invited to come and join us. We are asking parents to provide food and a list of suitable things to bring will be near the sign-on book soon.

Kate Dhu will take our Pre School photos again this year. We are looking forward to this as Kate can be flexible in working with us on the days the children attend and she provides a relaxed atmosphere for the children. She has a variety of packages with the added bonus of donating money to the Pre School from the purchases made, which is most appreciated. Brochures have now been given out.

Photo days will be:
- Blue Group Friday 19th March
- Red Group Monday 23rd March

Have a great fortnight
Louise Stewart & Tricia Lawty
2B
Karl Harvey, Ella Magann, Millie Collins, Mathew Jones, Summer Fernance & Samantha Westman

2D
Chelsea Smith, Riley Bruce, Imogen McGuinness, Jacky Ham, Ben Shields & Taylor Kay

2/3C
John Ojo, Laura Flower, Matthew Todd, Grace Westman, Grace Gaynor & Lily Campbell

3/4F
Mikayla Smetanin, George Bennett, Bridie Russell, Ryan Thomas, Zoe Dumble & Brock Mallows

3/4W
Davina Leabon, Holly Ford, Damon Russell-Tuhura, Chelsea Wallace, Noah Dickinson & Chloe Mason

4/5K
Rhys Butler, Hope Westman, Connor Schatz, Will Bennett, Jemma Harvey & Pippa Smith

5/6P
Juwan Tovehi, Baillie Hughes, Hannah McKnight, Gus Knight, Zara Foley & Karl Schlack

5/6S
Klowie Rose, Ethan Morris, Alex Hall, Ellie Suckling, Riley Dickinson & Zara Bennett

Community News

CITIZENSHIP AWARDS & STARS OF THE WEEK

LUCAS DUFF KG
SOPHIE BROWN KL

KENDAL KELLY 2D
ASHLEY JOHNSTON 2B

JORDAN KAY 3/4W
ROSIE ROSS 3/4F

CLAIRA BARLOW 5/6P
ALEX HALL 5/6S

K-2 SUPER WESTY
Riley Kelly & Domenic Browning

3-6 SUPER WESTY
Jack Large & Jackie Collett

Week 7

Wed 11th C Hennessy
Thu 12th J Anderson
Fri 13th J Hill, A Smith, J Cameron

Week 8

Mon 16th Amber Fitzgerald
Tue 17th Vanessa Collins
Wed 18th Jenny Kirk
Thu 19th Marijke Griffiths
Fri 20th Sharon Burley

Week 9

Mon 23rd Christy Browning
Tue 24th Gai Leech
Wed 25th Clare Hill
Thu 26th Jess Davison
Fri 27th Gordon, Coreena Hill

Kick Start your Rugby Union Season with the Narrabri Junior Blue Boars in 2015. Learn basic drills and skills by playing Rugby.

Venue: Narrabri Rugby Club – Dangar Park

Date: 3 nights: Wednesday 18th March Wednesday 25th March and Wednesday 1st April

Time: 5:15 – 6:30pm

Age Groups: Boys & Girls 5-14 years

Under 6’s, Under 8’s, Under 10’s,
Under 12’s and Under 14’s

Cost: $15 per player

Free BBQ available

2015 Full Season registration is $50 & will be taken on all 3 Try Rugby nights

New players registering for the full season receive a Junior Blue Boar rugby bag, cap, water bottle & other merchandise.

Enquiries: Jason Elms 0403 336 449
Amanda Goulden 0408 455 018

 практичесное родительство

FREE Practical Parenting

Yes?

Send in the Parenting New Gear

When: Wednesday 25th March
Time: 12.00 to 3.00pm
Where: Centcare Narrabri
111 Barren Street
Registration is essential - the course is subject to numbers.

For more information or to register, contact the lovely Rebecca or Centre through Centcare Narrabri 4775 9300 1800 372 826

SOUTH OF THE NAMIBIA PRESENTS

INOSH FILM MAKING FUN FOR KIDS 8-13YO
BACK AGAIN BY POPULAR DEMAND

SATURDAY 21 MARCH

FAMILY EVENT
3.00 - 4.00pm

SEE YOU THERE!
NARRABRI WEST PUBLIC SCHOOL
6 COOMA RD
P.O BOX 3121 NARRABRI NSW 2390
Phone: 02 67922377 Fax: 02 67924395
Email: narrabriw-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Web: www.narrabriw-p.schools.nsw.edu.au
Facebook: www.facebook.com/NarrabriWestPS

NARRABRI WEST PUBLIC SCHOOL

ABSENCE NOTE

Students Name: ........................................

Class: ........................................

Absent or Sick Date From: __ __ / __ __ / __ __ __ 15 to __ __ / __ __ / __ __ __ 15

Absent or Sick Reason:

Parent / Carers Name: ........................................

Signed: ........................................

Date: ........................................
## March

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Stage 2 Rugby League Gala Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>K-6 Assembly 1:00pm; 5 Cent Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Narrabri War Memorial Dedication – RSL 11:00am</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Circus Skills Performance 9:30am P-6</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Royal Far West Hearing Screening</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Parent Information Session – Hall – 9:30</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Girls Cricket Knockout v Gunnedah South (Gunnedah)</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Costa Georgiadis visit 10:20am; K-6 Assembly 1:00pm; 5 Cent Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>NOSH on the Namoi</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Three Way Interviews commence</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>School Photos</td>
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<td>25-26</td>
<td>NSW PSSA Swimming</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>K-6 Assembly 1:00pm; 5 Cent Friday</td>
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## April

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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Last day of Term 1</strong>; Family &amp; Friends Day; Easter Tabloids; Bronze Assembly 12:30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-17</td>
<td>Autumn holidays</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>School Development Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td><strong>Term 2 commences</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>K-6 Assembly 1:00pm; 5 Cent Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>ANZAC Day</td>
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## May

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cross Country; K-6 Assembly 1:00pm; 5 Cent Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Leadership Course – Tamworth – School Captains &amp; Prefects; Fete Meeting 6:00pm; P&amp;C AGM 6:30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>K-6 Assembly 1:00pm; 5 Cent Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>12-14</td>
<td>NAPLAN (Years 3 &amp; 5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>K-6 Assembly 1:00pm; 5 Cent Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>Narrabri Eisteddfod (Speech &amp; Drama)</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>K-6 Assembly 1:00pm; 5 Cent Friday; Narrabri PSSA Cross Country – Bellata; Narrabri Eisteddfod (Dance)</td>
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<tr>
<td>25-27</td>
<td>Narrabri Eisteddfod (Music)</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>K-6 Assembly 1:00pm; 5 Cent Friday</td>
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## June

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<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>P&amp;C Meeting 6:30pm</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>K-6 Assembly 1:00pm; 5 Cent Friday</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Long Weekend</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>North West PSSA Cross Country; K-6 Assembly 1:00pm; 5 Cent Friday; Narrabri West Horse Sports</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>K-6 Assembly 1:00pm; 5 Cent Friday</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Semester One Reports</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Silver Badge Assembly 12:30pm; Sausage Sizzle 11:30am; <strong>Last day of Term 2</strong>; 5 Cent Friday</td>
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<td>29-30</td>
<td>Winter holidays</td>
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## July

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<tr>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>Winter holidays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>School Development Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td><strong>Term 3 commences</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>