Principal’s Report

School Council Elections.
We have 6 parent, 4 staff and 4 community positions available on our school council. This year 4 parent positions and 1 staff position become vacant. Parent members Doug Horsfall and Meagan Ferguson, Department members Colin Macgowan and Anthony Briggs were elected last year and they will continue in their positions this year.

If as a parent / guardian you would like to nominate yourself or nominate another parent / guardian, nomination forms are available from the front office.

Nominations close 4PM Monday 16th February.

Changes to the Education Maintenance Allowance
From 1 January 2015, the government will provide extra financial support directly to Victoria’s neediest schools instead of providing the Education Maintenance Allowance directly to parents. Parents will not be able to apply for the Education Maintenance Allowance in 2015.

The money will be allocated to eligible schools through schools’ core operational funding mechanism, with the neediest schools receiving the most funding. Not all schools will be receiving funding in 2015.

This change to how the money is distributed was required by the funding agreement with the Commonwealth government to make sure Victorian schools receive increased funding that will benefit all students and, in particular, those from schools with concentrated disadvantage.

The majority of parents who received the EMA payment already elected to provide the money directly to their school.

The end of the EMA direct payments to parents will not affect any other payment you may be receiving such as the Schoolkids Bonus, which is provided directly to eligible parents to assist with education costs.

If you are experiencing financial hardship, ensure you are accessing all the available assistance you are eligible for. Details of the various options are in this newsletter.

Branko Lukic Principal

Parents’ Club

Big thank you for all the help on Friday at the swimming sports. NCD Swimming will be on the 16th February and we will be holding a BBQ and canteen. Any help would be appreciated. Please contact Darleen.

Our first meeting and AGM will be on the 2nd of March (not the 9th) at the Botanical at 7pm. Please feel free to bring a friend. New members welcome.

Darleen Baldock
0408518889
**** Year 7 News ****

I would like to start by congratulating the Year 7 students on their fantastic start to the year. After a Year 7 meeting last week it was really pleasing to hear lots of positive comments about the students’ work ethic, their level of cooperation and respect for one another as well as their responsibility for their own personal learning. I have tried to speak to each student this week to praise their efforts thus far and hope that you will follow this up at home also.

I would like to thank all Year 7 parents for their support of our Swimming Sports last Friday at the Pool. It was a very warm day for all involved which made it even more meaningful to have such wonderful parent and family attendance. Our students demonstrated wonderful participation and all had a really ‘red, hot, go’ at their races. I always particularly enjoy the 25 metre events as they allow non-confident swimmers to still participate and earn house points.

Student diaries are their most important resource at school and it is imperative that these are viewed and signed by parents/guardians each week. Our form assembly is held on a Friday after lunch and students must have their diary signed.

**IMPORTANT DATES**
NCD SWIMMING – MON 16TH FEB – notes will be sent home if your child is involved
IMMUNISATIONS – TUES 24TH FEB – please return all notes regardless of consent
HALLS GAP CAMP – 2ND TO 4TH MARCH – notes need to be returned ASAP
YR 7 FAMILY BBQ – WED 11TH MARCH – please return confirmed numbers attending
NDC TRIATHLON – THURS 19TH – students are encouraged to begin arranging their teams

Please feel free to contact me at any time in order for me to provide the best support for your child’s education. It would be fantastic for all parents to provide their emails to me so that I can regularly update you on your child’s progress and important school events. Please send the small form below back to school with your child and hand to Mrs Egan.

**Homework Reminders**
*English* – English Basics Unit 2 (English Basics will occur every fortnight
*Maths* – MathsMate sheet every week
*Study sessions* – these will be held Tuesdays after school in the library from 3:30-4:30pm

Roxanne Egan (Yr 7 Coord) on 54 951811 or egan.roxanne.j@edumail.vic.gov.au

**PARENT EMAIL ADDRESS**

Name _______________________________________________

My email address is ____________________________________________________
SCHOOL IS BACK

As Gary says, it’s like a box of pencils!

Or, should that be chocolates?
The annual House Swimming Sports for St. Arnaud Secondary College were held on Friday 6th February.

Sports Coordinator, Maddi Lonergan, congratulated all those students who participated and gained points for their house.

Ned Jackson broke Ben Spiteri’s 1994 record of 30.95s for the 20 years 50m Free, with a time of 30.22s. In the girls 15 years 50m Fly, Maddison Hendy broke her own record by 2.16s with a time of 40.94s.

Morshead again proved too strong at the end of the day, winning their fourth consecutive swimming sports.

Ms Lonergan also said that she appreciated the staff for their assistance on the day as well as the parents who came to support the students. She was especially impressed by those students who led by example, especially the house captains, who did a great job to ensure that as many students as possible represented their house.

The school is also thankful to the Parents’ Club for running the food and drink stand, and also to Weir’s IGA for supplying fresh fruit. This, as always, was much appreciated on the day.

**Final scores:**
1st Morshead 650
2nd Willmott 568
3rd Holmes 537

**Age Group Champions:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOYS</th>
<th>GIRLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 &amp; 13 years Tyler Baldock (M)</td>
<td>Lucy Gorrie (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 years Kai Bloomfield (H)</td>
<td>Imogen Amos (W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 years Aidan Burke (W)</td>
<td>Maddison Hendy (H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 years Toby Pickthall (H)</td>
<td>Ellen Prestwood (H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 years Patrick Knights (M)</td>
<td>Belinda Burke (W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20 years Thomas Bertalli (M)</td>
<td>Taylah French (M)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pictured**

**Age Group Champions:**

**Back row from left**
Maddison Hendy, Kai Bloomfield, Thomas Bertalli, Taylah French, Toby Pickthall, Patrick Knights, Ellen Prestwood,

**Front row from left**
Lucy Gorrie, Aidan Burke, Tyler Baldock, Belinda Burke, Imogen Amos.

**Morshead House Captains:**
Taylor Forster & Ned Jackson
COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR LOW INCOME FAMILIES

The Commonwealth Government provides a range of payments and services to help families look after their children’s education, health care and other family issues. See page 10 for links to key Commonwealth Government websites.

FAMILY TAX BENEFITS A AND B

This is a two-part payment to help with the cost of raising children. To be eligible for Family Tax Benefit Part A, the parent must care for a dependent child who is:

- aged 0-15 years, or
- aged 16–19 years, paid until the end of the calendar year in which they turn 19, and:
  - undertaking full-time education or training in an approved course leading towards a Year 12 or equivalent qualification
  - with an acceptable study load, or
  - has been granted an exemption from education or training requirements

Parents also need to satisfy an income test, meet residence requirements and be caring for the child at least 35 per cent of the time. The amount paid for Family Tax Benefit Part A depends on family income, the number of children in the family, and how old they are. The maximum rate per fortnight for a child aged 0-12 years is $176.82 or $4,597.32 per year. The maximum rate per fortnight for a child aged 13-19 years is $230.00 or $5,980.00 per year.

Family Tax Benefit Part B gives extra help to single parents and families with one main income. An example of this may be where one parent stays at home to care for a child full-time or balances some paid work with caring for a child. To be eligible for Family Tax Benefit Part B, the parent must have care of a child for at least 35 per cent of the time who is:

- a dependent child under 16 years of age, or
- a dependent full-time secondary student up until the end of the calendar year in which they turn 18.

The rate of Family Tax Benefit Part B is based on an income test and the meeting of residence requirements. The amount paid for Family Tax Benefit Part B usually depends on the age of the youngest child in the family. The maximum rate per fortnight for a child aged 5-18 years is $105.00 or $2,730.00 per year.

If a parent/family qualifies for Family Tax Benefit Part A or Part B, they may be entitled to other payments and services such as the SchoolKids Bonus (see below), Parenting Payment, Child Dental Benefits and many others.

HEALTH CARE CARD

The Health Care Card provides help with the cost of prescription medicine under PBS, Australian government funded medical services, and access to state, territory and local government concessions. Families may be eligible for a Health Care Card if they get specific Commonwealth payments or supplements or the maximum rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A.

SCHOOLKIDS BONUS

The Schoolkids Bonus is a Commonwealth Government payment to assist eligible families with education costs. The Bonus is automatically paid by the Commonwealth Department of Human Services in two instalments each year. Parents do not need to make a claim for this payment.

To be eligible for the Schoolkids Bonus, the parent/carer must:

- receive Family Tax Benefit Part A for a dependent child in primary or secondary education
- have a primary or secondary student turning 19 years or younger in the calendar year, who receives certain government payments
- satisfy an income test (applicable from 1 January 2015)

From 1 January 2015, eligible families will receive the Schoolkids Bonus in:
- 2 instalments of $211 for each child in primary school - a total of $422 each year
- 2 instalments of $421 for each child in secondary school - a total of $842 each year.

**CHILD CARE BENEFIT**
The Child Care Benefit helps eligible families with the cost of outside school hours care, vacation care and registered care.

**CENTREPAY**
Centrepay is a free, voluntary service for Centrelink customers to pay expenses as regular deductions from their Centrelink payments. Deductions can be started, changed or cancelled at any time to suit the family’s circumstances.

The types of expenses that can be paid using Centrepay include education fees and expenses, child care, private rent including community housing, telecommunications, electricity, gas and water, ambulance costs, home care services, rental of household goods, and medical services and equipment.

**RELEVANT COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS:**

**COMMUNITY INFORMATION AND SUPPORT VICTORIA**
Community Information & Support Victoria (CISVic) is the peak body representing local community information and support services. Its member agencies assist people experiencing personal and financial difficulties by providing information, referral and support services including emergency relief. Approximately 30% have programs directly related to education expenses.

**CRIS (CRISIS REFERRAL INFORMATION SYSTEM) ONLINE DIRECTORY**
The CRIS (Crisis Referral Information System) Online Directory contains comprehensive information on a large number of Victorian community-based support services and other organisations providing support in respect to accommodation, domestic violence, drug and alcohol treatment, health, material aid and mental health. Detailed information of services and organisations listed include contact and location, service description, specific service hours, eligibility and service criteria and any referral requirements. The directory can be searched by service or organisational name, type of service or organisation and by suburb & local government area.

**ER VICTORIA**
ER Victoria is the peak body for the Victorian emergency relief (ER) sector, with 115 member organisations offering material aid and support to individuals and families who are experiencing a financial emergency or crisis. Some people access ER to help them through a ‘one-off’ episode, while for others ER becomes part of their solution to dealing with ongoing financial disadvantage. The aim of ER is to assist people experiencing financial crisis in a way that maintains dignity and encourages self-reliance. Assistance may vary from agency to agency and can include:
- the provision of food parcels or vouchers
- household goods or clothing
- rent assistance
- payment of bills such as electricity or gas
- money to buy a meal
- medicine and medical costs
- education costs
- transport assistance
- hot meals.

GOOD SHEPHERD YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICE
Good Shepherd supports people, especially women and girls, battling poverty and disadvantage in Australia. It is part of a network that reaches across the country, helping women and girls to be safe, resilient and self-sufficient.

State Schools’ Relief
State Schools’ Relief (SRR) is a not-for-profit Victorian charity supported by DEECD that provides government school students with financial assistance for uniform and footwear. SRR responds to requests from principals, assistant principals and welfare coordinators, and supports any student attending a Victorian government school if parents or carers are facing one or more of the following:
- health issues resulting in serious financial difficulty
- house fires where school clothing is lost
- independent living/homelessness
- natural disasters
- serious financial difficulty.

Applications from schools for assistance are processed within 24-48 hours.

click2sell, an initiative of State Schools’ Relief, is a smartphone solution to buy and sell second hand school uniforms. This easy to use app helps to make it simple for families and young people to buy and sell school uniforms within their local school community.

THE SMITH FAMILY
The Smith Family is a children's charity helping disadvantaged Australian children to get the most out of their education, so they can create better futures for themselves. Its programs increase school readiness and provide support to disadvantaged primary and high school students to close the gap and create greater educational equality.

SAVER PLUS
Saver Plus is a matched savings and financial education program that can assist low income families to:
- reach a savings goal
- become regular savers
- build money management skills.

Saver Plus provides an opportunity to have every dollar saved (up to $500) matched with an additional dollar for the family’s education-related expenses.

Saver Plus is an initiative of Brotherhood of St Laurence and ANZ, delivered in partnership with Berry Street, The Benevolent Society and The Smith Family and other local community agencies. The program is funded by ANZ and the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, with ANZ providing matched savings for participants.

Farm Household Allowance
Help for farmers and their families experiencing financial hardship. The Farm Household Allowance replaced Interim Farm Household Allowance on 1 July 2014.

Eligibility basics:
- you must be a farmer or the partner of a farmer. If you are the farmer you must contribute a significant part of your labour and capital to the farm enterprise based on specific criteria
- meet an income and assets test
- be willing to enter into a Financial Improvement Agreement to help you improve your financial circumstances

(Farmers should discuss their application for the Farm Household Allowance with their Accountant.)

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS – COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT
Centrepay
Child Care Benefit
Child Care Rebate
Family Tax Benefit
Health Care Card
SchoolKids Bonus
Farm Household Allowance

Key links and references

DEECD WEBSITE
Education Maintenance Allowance

Equity funding

Financial policy and guidelines

Parent payments

Parent payment categories flowchart

Principals Page

School Funding Reform Agreement factsheet

Student Family Occupation Prep-12

EDUGATE
Circular S339-2014 Release of Indicative 2015 Student Resource Package

Student Resource Package

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS – VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT
Changes to the EMA

Costs and Financial Assistance

Education Maintenance Allowance (FAQs)

Financial Assistance for Families

Parent Payments in Victorian Government Schools (FAQs)

School Charges and Costs

OTHER
CLK2SELL
http://www.clk2sell.com/

Community Information and Support Victoria

CRIS (Crisis Referral Information System) Online Directory
http://cris.crisisservices.org.au/

ER Victoria
www.ervictoria.com.au

Low Income Awareness Checklist for Schools

Saver Plus

Social Inclusion at School: How to help low-income families booklet

State Schools’ Relief
https://www.ssr.net.au/

The Smith Family
ESSENTIAL EDUCATIONAL ITEMS
Parent Charges 2015

To reduce the number of requests for payment throughout the year, a single charge has been applied to all parents/guardians of students attending St. Arnaud Secondary College. This is the Essential Educational Items charge.

The funds collected from families for this charge contribute directly to your child's educational experiences and make it possible for St. Arnaud Secondary College to continue to provide an excellent range of services including travel to sporting venues, sporting equipment, school magazine, Student ID, photocopying, library resources, subsidize class materials for practical subjects (eg: Art, Woodwork, Food Technology), access to computers/printing, and many other items – all of which improve the quality of education available. In some classes, class sets are used instead of asking parents to purchase textbooks.

The College Council, of whom the majority are parents, is mindful of the costs incurred by parents/guardians. After careful consideration, it has been determined that the annual Essential Educational Items 2015 charge will be:

Year 7 & 10 - $80.00
VCE – $90.00
VCAL – $45.00
Years 8, 9 & 10 Maths Homework Book—$15.00
North Central Cluster Fees – Enrolment fees range from $25.00-60.00 per subject each Semester
Invoices are sent out to Families of students attending.

Other Charges
These items have been classified as an Optional Extra and available on a user pays basis. Non-payment of these elective charges may result in the student not being able to participate in the activity.

Optional Extra charged throughout the year to cover costs, if applicable, such as:
Year 7 Halls Gap Camp
Year 8 Rubicon Camp
Middle School Camps
Driver Education
Faculty Excursions
Cost of providing specialist materials (ie photography printing, woodwork items, food materials)
Materials charge on completion of item that is taken home.

PAYMENT OPTIONS
Payments may be made at any time using cash, cheque or BPay. Family Invoices will be sent out at the start of the 2015 year.
All Family Statements include BPay reference details. To ensure the correct allocation of payments, parents using this facility are kindly requested to forward to the school General Office, the remittance advice from their Family Statement with the charges being paid clearly marked. Payments by Instalments can be arranged—please contact Business Manager, Kerrie Swanton.
MUSIC NEWS

The College has again been allocated a substantial amount of teaching time by the Departmental Region for instruction in practical music. The instrumental program is open to all students and places are filled on a first-come-first-served basis, according to the availability of instruments and the size of classes.

Instruction is offered in nine instruments and lessons are free of cost, except where a school-owned woodwind instrument is being hired. Hire fees are spent on the maintenance of these instruments and remain at the 1998 level of $40.00 per term.

Instrumental lessons are weekly, and students are withdrawn from class on a rotating timetable to minimise disruption. Students who participate in the program are reminded that the Region requires them to be available for performances as directed by the music coordinator.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to discuss the program with their children and complete the form below if they are interested. Places are limited, so make sure to return the completed form as soon as possible. Please do not hesitate to contact me at the college if you wish to discuss the program.

Anthony Briggs
Music Coordinator

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC NOMINATION FORM – 2014

Name of Student _____________________________ Form group ____

Place numbers (1-3) to indicate preference of instrument:

____ Flute       ____ Guitar       ____ Keyboard

____ Clarinet   ____ Bass guitar    ____ Drums

____ Saxophone  ____ Ukulele       ____ Voice

Parent/Guardian signature _____________________ Date ____________
Calendar 2015

Term 1 Semester 1

Monday 16th February
Tuesday 24th February

Thursday 26th February
Monday 2nd-4th March

Thursday 5th March
Monday 9th March
Tuesday 10th—13th March
Wednesday 11th March
Friday 13th March
Tuesday 17th March
Thursday 19th March
Tuesday 24th March
Friday 27th March

NCD Swimming
Immunisations Years 7-10
Year 12 Studio Arts Excursion
Investiture Day PM
Year 7 Halls Gap Camp
Parents’ Club meeting Botanical Hotel at 7pm
Year 12 Physics Excursion
Labour Day Holiday
Year 8 Rubicon Camp
Year 7 BBQ 6 pm
Interim Reports Distributed
LMR Swimming
NCD Triathlon
House Athletics
School Photos
End of Term 1 2.0 dismissal

Term 2 Semester 1

Monday 13th April
Wednesday 15th April
April 20th—24th
Wednesday 29th April

School Resumes
SSV Swimming
Boys Work Experience
Parent Teacher Interviews

MATHS TUTORIALS/help
IN LIBRARY

TUESDAYS: 3.25PM-4.30PM
All welcome!!