

The **WATTLE** Newsletter



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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Families,

WELCOME

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to the 2009 school year to the entire Wattle Park School community and in particular to our new children, their families and our new teachers. I hope it is a positive experience for everyone and I hope that we as a school offer the very best educational programs possible for our students.

The year has got off to a wonderful start, our pupil numbers were 353 on Tuesday morning when our Prep children joined us, up from 346 in 2008. This is the largest the school has been, reflecting the regeneration of the Burwood area. This year we have 56 children beginning Prep. I have met them all and their parents during our transition to school program and I am confident that they will receive a first class educational program during their seven years at Wattle Park Primary School.

Michelle Wridgway has once again ensured that the children look wonderful in their school uniforms. My thanks go to Michelle for all her work, ordering and providing our families with the opportunity to obtain their uniforms in time for the first day of school.

STAFF NEWS

The school staff enjoyed a very successful three day professional development program beginning on Wednesday 28th January 2009. My thanks go to the whole staff for the thoroughly professional and positive way they approached this program with special thanks going to Randal Symons for organising the three days.

Katherine Trigg is currently on leave and will make a short return to school before she goes on maternity leave at the end of the month.

COMING UP

MOVIE NIGHT – Friday 13th March.

Please read the accompanying information about the forthcoming Movie Night. I urge all parents to respond to the request for volunteers to help in organising this wonderful school event.

To all parents and your friends, please keep this date free as we can guarantee a great evening for the whole school community. This year's film is **Madagascar 2**.

SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS

School Council elections are upon us once again. There are four parent positions available to parent members of the school community. These are 2 year terms – with the successful candidates taking up their positions from March 3rd 2009. Nomination forms can now be obtained from the school office and if parents would like to find out more about the role of School Council I am only too happy to discuss their nomination with them. Nominations close on Tuesday 17th February at 4.00pm. All nominations should be returned to the school office. If an election is required all parent members of the school community will receive ballot papers, each candidate will be required to provide a one paragraph biography for the electorate. Voting will close at 4.00 pm on Tuesday March 3rd. All votes are to be returned to a ballot box that will be displayed in the school office. The successful candidates will be announced at the Annual General Meeting which will be held at 7.00 pm on the 3rd March.

SCHOOL CONTRIBUTIONS

School families will have received our Contributions Letter and Excursion Levy Notice earlier this week. The school has created two tax trust funds – Buildings & Library, to help reduce the total cost of the contributions to families. The Federal government has now introduced a new Education Tax Refund. Parents should make themselves aware of this refund as it too is designed to help them reduce expenses incurred whilst educating their children.

The School Council has budgeted for 100% collection of these contributions and thus provide the excellent educational programs and resources that the school offers. I look forward to your support with this matter.

THE WATTLE ON-LINE

Just a note that Wattle Park has a commitment to the environment. As a result our Newsletter, The Wattle, is accessed each fortnight through links to our website. (This will be the only Wattle printed in 2009.) If you are not familiar with our site please make the time to browse at www.wattleparkps.vic.edu.au. You can also register to receive reminders that a new Wattle is available. We thank-you for your support of this initiative.

Once again I hope that it is another wonderful year at Wattle Park for children, parents and teachers alike.

Nick Farley
Principal

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

WELCOME BACK

What a great start it has been to the 2009. Welcome back to our WPPS team and to the new members of our community. I hope it's a great year for everyone.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Education Committee at Wattle Park performs three main roles. 1. To develop policy for our school's operations, 2. Organise Parent Forums for our community (usually one per term) and 3. Act as a conduit between parents and teachers in regard to educational programs. We meet throughout the year (approximately once a month) and our meetings run from 7.30 – 9.00 p.m. in the staffroom. If you would be interested in joining the committee please fill out the tear off form and return it to the office.

NEW COMPUTERS – HELP IN SETTING UP

This week our new computers arrived. Huge thanks goes to students in our Year 5/6 classes and our band of parent helpers for their great support in organising their installation. Next week our technicians move in to complete the process. We are very excited about the program we will be able to offer our students in the area of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

Last week we received new video flip cameras. These devices take high quality video that is easily downloaded to a computer via a 'flip' USB connection. Thanks again goes to Nicky Telios for our application through the Telstra Kids Foundation grants.

OLD COMPUTERS

We have 24 computers for sale.

Their details are:

ACER POWER SK20, 38 GB HDD Maxtor, 1.44 RDD 3.5", Windows XP Professional, 133 MHZ, 262 MB RAM, 17" screen, keyboard and mouse. \$30.00. Drop by my office if you're interested.

CURRICULUM DAY

We had an excellent first three days of professional development to begin the school year. Day 1 saw Julie Shepherd working with the staff. The focus was reading. This was a follow on from the work Julie has already undertaken with the staff on Spelling and Writing. Day 2 saw the staff investigating our new School Strategic Plan, developing our learning community through our school norms and the integration of both ICT and thinking into the classroom programs. Day 3 was a planning day where the teams planned the teaching and learning which will occur in all areas of the school for this term.

The staff has spoken of how beneficial these days were. Their impact is evident in the classroom programs already in place.

Our school norms are:

Respect
Encourage
Value
Care
Challenge
Responsible

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING – Important Dates

GETTING TO KNOW YOU FAMILY TEACHER MEETINGS

In previous years we have held Information Nights for each of the levels of the school. This year we will not be conducting these sessions but instead send a comprehensive Information Package. This will be followed up by our individual Family Teacher meetings on February 27th (Levels 3 and 4 – Years 3-6) and February 28th (Levels 1 and 2 – Prep – Year 2), 2008. More information on this will be sent home shortly.

STUDENT SUPPORT

This year we have a new guidance officer (school psychologist) Kate Darling and speech therapist, Kate Grieve. We welcome both Kates to Wattle Park.

SCARECROW

For those parents who are new to Wattle Park, our school has made a commitment to becoming a Sustainable School. We have a dedicated group of parents and teachers who form the Scarecrow group. As well we have had student Scarecrow monitors throughout the school. Some of our initiatives have included our vegetable garden, water storage, a solar powered water pump and successful grants for the use of rain water to operate our toilets as well as a 27,000 litre tank from Bluescope Steel.

Rubbish Free Wednesday is an initiative all can be involved with. This means that students bring lunches to school which have minimal packaging. Any packaging that is brought to school is taken home. We have also instigated not taking any wrappers into the school yard. The purchase of a lunch box with separate compartments assists here.

John Davey will head this team in 2009.

We look forward to involving and sharing these initiatives with you.



The Scarecrow logo is all about looking after our environment.

WATTLE PARK DRINK BOTTLES

Would you like your own Wattle Park drink bottle? They're \$5.00. See me with your money if you're interested.



Again welcome and welcome back. It looks like a great year ahead.

Randal Symons
Assistant Principal

**** EDUCATION COMMITTEE ****

I would be interested in being/continuing to be a member of the Education Committee for 2009.

Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

Child's Class: _____

Contact Number: _____

Email address: _____

Join Council's Free Sustainability Workshop Series

Whitehorse Council is beginning its popular Sustainable Ambassador program this month, and there are still a few places remaining to join the program. Are you interested in sustainability and wanting to make a difference in the community? Then this innovative program is for you. Over the course of 4 evening workshops, participants will learn how to live more sustainably in an interactive and enjoyable way through the *Living for Our Future* workshops.

These workshops are one aspect of the Sustainable Ambassador program in which residents can participate as either workshop participants, or as Sustainable Ambassadors. Ambassadors attend the *Living for Our Future* workshops as well as four additional behaviour change specific workshops accredited through Swinburne University and undertake a small sustainability project in the community. Previous Ambassadors have completed a range of interesting projects including assisting schools to be more sustainable.

Register now by contacting Council's Environmental Project and Education Officer, Kate Patkin on 9262 6159 or greencity@whitehorse.vic.gov.au.

Prep News

The Prep Team wishes a very warm welcome to all the new Prep families to Wattle Park and welcomes back those families with siblings in other grades. We look forward to an exciting and successful year. It is wonderful to see such a smooth transition of the Prep

students into school routine. Everyone appeared very at ease with the situation and enthusiastic in their approach to the varied tasks they were experiencing. Our Tea and Tears mornings were a great opportunity for parents to share some time together while the children settled in their classrooms. Over the next few weeks the Preps will meet their Buddies, complete the School Entry Assessment and explore the wonders of the playground as well as commencing their learning journey at primary school. It is great to report on such an excellent start to Term 1.

From the Prep Team.