On Wednesday 17th February the school’s Inter-house Swimming Carnival took place. Congratulations to all students who came along and swam to support their House. Participation was at a record high this year. It was also wonderful to see parents coming along to support the event. A big thank you to the Mareeba Swimming Pool and Mareeba Swimming Club for their support. Also thank you to all the teachers who helped the carnival run smoothly. The results of the carnival are as follows:

**AGE CHAMPIONS**

**13 years**
- Girls – Erin Phillott (M)
- Boys – Omar Myrteza (G) and Bradley Davies (K)

**14 years**
- Girls – Carla Newlands (M)
- Boys – Jackson Brown (L)

**15 years**
- Girls – Jodie Lea (L)
- Boys – Marcus Lea (L)

**16 years**
- Girls – Reegan Phillott (M)
- Boys – Damien Barbir (K)

**Opens**
- Girls – Candice Mulcahy (K)
- Boys – Jason Lea (L)

1 Record broken this year by Jodie Lea, 100m Freestyle for 15 yrs Girls.

**Boys Aggregate Trophy** - Leichhardt

**Girls Aggregate Trophy** – McKinlay

**OVERALL WINNERS** **LEICHHARDT**

(by only 14 points)
We are more than half way through first term and the first interim report card will be issued in about a month. I have been impressed with the quality of the teaching/learning that I have been seeing in classrooms.

I have also looked at our attendance data and there are many unexplained absences. A considerable number of students across Australia have their educational progress adversely affected by parent-condoned absences. These absences are more often than not, unnecessary and for reasons fairly low on the ‘important to my future’ scale. Once it was the case, that students only missed school when they were genuinely ill, but now that has changed. Students are being allowed to stay away from school for an ever increasing number of excuses including:

- a day off for their birthday
- a day or days off because relatives are visiting
- a day off to be with parents at home
- a day off to look after younger brothers and sisters, or
- a day off to go shopping

Every day a student is away, they are losing a learning experience. Over time, their knowledge base will be full of holes. Learning is sequential and attending three out of four lessons leaves gaping holes. To reach their potential at school, students need to attend regularly.

A few days off per year due to genuine illness may be necessary. However a sobering fact is that in Australia today, if a student misses 16 days/year for any reason he/she will lose one year of education (200 days) over their school career from Prep to Year 12. How could any student be expected to keep up with work in such circumstances?

As parents you have a critical role to play in protecting your own child’s future. Absences can be minimised by arranging dental and doctor’s appointments after school or during the holidays – book ahead for school holidays later in the year. Shopping, helping at home, and visiting relatives may all seem important at the time — but not as important as a person’s future.

We need to work together to help students to understand the importance of being at school whenever possible and that trivial reasons for absence are not sufficient to discharge a parents legal responsibilities. Schools and parents have a legal responsibility to account for the whereabouts of young people daily (and in the evenings as well). After love and care the most important thing that we as parents can give our children is an education.

We all can work together to make a difference to your child’s future.

A report will be posted home in the next few weeks that shows your child’s attendance so far this year. My expectation is that there are no unexplained absences for our students and hope that the reasons for the absence show reinforce to our young people that their education is important.

Warm regards,

Jo Soothill
School Based Youth Health Nurse Programme

The Youth Health Nurse at Mareeba State High School is a Registered Nurse who works within Community Health and is placed in the school Monday, Tuesday and Fridays to work with students, school staff and parents to promote health and wellbeing.

Part of the nurse’s role is to support the health of the school environment through the Health Promoting Schools initiative. The nurse can also connect people to other support services inside and outside the school.

The Youth Health Nurse can see people in private to talk about Health concerns / Healthy Eating / Personal and family problems / Smoking, alcohol or drug use / Healthy skin – Sun safety / Puberty, Growing up, Sexual Health / Getting in touch with the right services. Feeling unhappy or stressed / anything that affects health and wellbeing.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Youth Health Nurse works in the school but is employed by Old Health. The Nurse is required to keep information confidential, unless the person agrees the nurse can do otherwise. If the nurse thinks it’s best to talk to someone else about the problem, she will explain the reasons why and talk about this prior to discussing the problem with others due to person being at risk of being hurt or hurting someone else.

GETTING THE BEST HELP FOR YOUR HEALTH NEEDS.

As a general rule the Youth Health Nurse does not provide ongoing Treatments e.g. Medications, injections, first-aid/Physical Examinations/ Ongoing counselling for psychological or educational problems. These are best for the young person to see another professional for further assistance such as a guidance officer, doctor, alcohol and drug counsellor or psychologist.

WORKING WITH STUDENTS, STAFF AND PARENTS FOR A HEALTHIER AND SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL.

Apart from seeing people on an individual basis, the Youth Health Nurse works with the school community to identify and act on issues that may affect the health of students and the school community as a whole. This includes helping with curriculum, teaching and learning activities, supporting the development of an environment and school culture that supports health and wellbeing plus working with the community and other services.

Programs such as Black Chics/Boys Yarning, Core of Life, Helping Friends designed and run to help young people deal with life’s problems all part of School Nurse’s Role.

Please feel free to contact the school if wishing to speak to School Nurse or students may see the nurse on the days available in room FO1.

Chris Gray SBYHN

Year 8 IMMUNISATION PROGRAM

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Vaccine</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>HPV (2)girls</td>
<td>30/04/2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>VzV(chickenpox)</td>
<td>30/04/2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>10dTpa(Boostrix)</td>
<td>30/04/2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Hepatitis B</td>
<td>15/10/2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>HPV(girls)3</td>
<td>15/10/2012</td>
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</tbody>
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Year 9 Circus Challenge

Recently all of year nine participated in Circus Challenge for 2012. Students were privileged to work with Ritchie and Phil, two experienced circus performers.

The year 9 students are to be congratulated on their efforts and overall enthusiasm. The participation and effort shown by students in all of the workshops was of a very high standard.

Although there were many dropped spinning plates and diablos, students persisted and kept learning. I was particularly impressed with the way students shared equipment and were able to help one another when the circus tricks they were learning turned out to be much harder than first thought.

At the end of the day all year nine students came together to watch the final show. Thank you to presenters, students and staff for their involvement on the day.

Ms Lambert HOD Visual and Performing Arts

Year 11 and 12 1:1 Laptop Program

Year 11 and 12 students now have access to their own student laptops. These devices are starting to be integrated into classroom and homework tasks and those students who have joined the take home scheme now have 24 hour access to excellent learning opportunities via “eLearning”. Senior Science students have especially taken to eLearning and are completing a significant amount of their work through virtual classrooms, which includes accessing interactive tutorials, quizzes, simulations, blogs and wiki’s.

The students are enjoying using their devices for learning and look forward to continuing this throughout the year. For those that have not joined the laptop take home scheme, forms are available at the office.

Jason Richardson eLearning Key Teacher

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New School Shorts

It is now compulsory for all students to be wearing the new school shorts. This change to the uniform was endorsed by the Mareeba State High School Parents and Citizens Association at the end of 2009. There has been a two year phasing in period and now all students should be wearing the shorts with the blue strip embroidered with MSHS on the bottom of the left leg. These shorts are available from Caters Mensland, Colour Studio and Memories in Mareeba.

It was after extensive consultation with students, parents, administration and staff that there was seen a need to introduce a uniform pair of shorts to be worn by all students. Previously there were many different styles and colours of maroon shorts available and all varied in length.

The new style of shorts was introduced to improve the overall standard of our uniform and to instil in our students a sense of pride that they belong to Mareeba State High School.

Mareeba State High School Parents and Citizens Association

P & C Reminders

General Meeting – 13th March 5.30pm
Working Bee – 18th March