**World of Maths**

Students from Prep to Year 6 have spent the last two days investigating Mathematics through a range of hands on challenges.
From the Principal
After 16 years of working in schools, I have personally seen a distinct rise in claims that children are stressed, this has been more so in the last three to five years. What I personally find interesting about this, is that while there are some changes to schools, there isn’t a really significant difference from what I remember about my own schooling. I also find the research around child and adult stress fascinating.

Each day, we are all personally challenged with stressful situations, but how we personally view stress can have a significant impact upon how we cope with stress and whether stress can be a significant motivator or whether it triggers our flight responses. There is a significant body of research starting to build, showing that stress is an important part of our development, however we need to look at tuning into this stress and looking at it in a very different way. Standford University Lecturer Kelly McGonigal outlines three considerations in reshaping the way we think about stress and the importance we have as parents and educators to help children to think about stress in a positive way;

1. Caring for others builds resiliency against stress.
A study conducted by Yale University around mental health demonstrated a clear correlation between the reduction of stress and helping others throughout the day. The study showed that individual resilience to stress was proportional to how kind and supportive the individual had been towards others in that same day. Another study conducted by the University of British Colombia found that teenagers who demonstrated acts of kindness had reduced cholesterol, inflammation and better metabolic and cardiovascular health.

We used this idea on parade today to further conversations from our classes around our school rule I am Respectful. We know that the more we speak nicely and use a calm positive voice, the better we feel within ourselves and the more often others reciprocate.

2. Purpose in life reduces stress
Research has found that while people who have a strong sense of purpose in their life, often have more stress and worry as there is often a greater commitment to things they value, however this isn’t a bad thing. This level of stress is a motivator for success and a driving force for achieving significant outcomes, resulting in a reduction in overall life stress. Helping students understand what they value and building positive self-image goes a long way to reducing personal stress. Helping children to answer four simple questions can be a strong way to build self-affirmation;
- What quality or strength do you value in yourself? (not what adults value).
- What activity, role or relationship brings you joy or satisfaction?
- What mission, purpose or community do you serve? Thinking beyond themselves is a difficult but powerful way to build purpose and sense of belonging.
- Why are these important to you?

3. A focus on stress can help students grow
Studies by the University of Southern California and Hope College show that stress is one of the most significant contributors to positive life change. Even situations that as parents we want to protect children from (harm, risky behaviours or exposure to confrontations with others), there is correlation to significant positive learning and greater resiliency as an adult. What is important though is that children and even adults have the opportunity to discuss and share their learning through conversation and stories.

The difficulty in all of this is changing our personal mindsets about stress, but once we do this, stress becomes a tool for learning rather than something that impacts upon us. I encourage parents to talk to their children about the challenges that encounter each day and focus on what they have learnt from this experience.

Parents may be interested in reading further about personal mindsets and self-affirmation. Two sources that parents may be interested in can be found at;

The Pscyhology of Change: Self Affirmation and Social Psychology Intervention

Articles on Growth Mindset
http://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/tag/growth-mindset/

Dental Van
The Queensland Health Dental Van has arrived today. Our students who have returned their permission forms will start visiting for check-ups from next week.

AFL Gala Day
Our school has a strong history of performing well at District and Regional AFL Events. This year our competitions with kick off with the Annual Gala Day for boys on the 16 March and girls on the 27 April. Our school team, the Bush Turkeys has a fierce reputation of being a tough team to beat, but also fair and great sports. Over the next few weeks our students in Year 5 and Year 6 will have the chance to
try out for our teams during lunch breaks. Good luck to all of our students.

Behaviour Celebration Day
Our Behaviour Celebration Days are an important part of our School Wide Positive Behaviour Support Program. At the end of each term we hold a different event as a reward from the Principal for those students who continuously demonstrate our school expectations. These events are normally nil or minimal cost to students. As a school we recognise that children are not perfect and we take this into consideration when providing invitations. Students who demonstrate major behaviours or ongoing minor behaviours will be provided a curriculum work program during the time of this event. These students will join back with all other class programs after the activities.

Academic Triathlon
We are seeking expressions of interest from our Year 4 to Year 6 students to represent our school at our first round of the Academic Triathlon. This round will be a Mathematics Challenge held at Agnes Water State School on the last day for Term 1, Thursday 24 March. We will be joined by Miriam Vale P-10 School for the first time. The event will be held in our school hall from 10:30am to approximately 12:00pm. Parents are welcome to join us and if possible help on the day.

Head of Curriculum News
Understanding Your Child’s Task Sheet
As we have outlined many times, at Agnes Water State School we teach the Australian Curriculum through the context of our lovely town and community. The concepts and topics we choose are relevant to current issues – such as banning plastic bags and so on. At this stage of the term you will start to see various task sheets coming home for the assessment your child has been working on. The basic format for the task sheets are the same across the whole school so that a common language can be used for everyone. All that is required of you, as parents, is to read through the task, sign it and return it to your child’s teacher. Many of the tasks will only need to be completed at school, however it will be really beneficial to discuss the work with your child. Ask them to explain it to you, see if they have much of their own background knowledge about the topic. These conversations that you have will really help. At the bottom of the task sheet are the elements from the Australian Curriculum that are being assessed in the task. In the lead up to the students doing the assessment teachers will give them many different opportunities to learn and practice. If you have any questions about how to read the Task Sheet or how to help, please do not hesitate to ask.

Ideas for Writing
One of the big items for improvement in our school this year is student writing. Our whole school is concentrating on the way we implement our school writing program so that students develop good writing and editing habits. Our school uses the Seven Steps to Writing Success program. One of the key points is that before we begin putting pen to paper we must think and brainstorm. By practicing as much as we can we can generate ideas and creativity. A great activity the grade 5/6 class did this week was using a strategy called ‘Show, don’t tell’. They were each given a simple sentence and had to write what their sentence was about without using any of the words in the original sentence. The look of disbelief on their faces when I told them what they had to do was priceless. But once they overcame the initial discomfort of this challenge they were on fire. The “I can’t do it” or “it’s too hard for me” soon changed once they found the fun in what they were doing. One example that stood out was by Axl Bennett. His card said, “The horses were lost.” The sentence he wrote was “The big, colourful herd of Appaloosas were running through the forest not knowing where they were going.” You can see the marvellous difference between the two sentences – by expanding their vocabulary and providing lots of interesting topics they rise to the occasion. At home you can help improve your child’s writing by using everyday opportunities to write. I am a big fan of weaving literacy into family life – rather than just an add-on in a busy household. Help them pick someone in their life who helps them (or sent them birthday money!) and sit down to write a thank you letter with them. Keep a family gratitude journal (an old exercise book and a pencil is all you need) – get them into the habit of writing down something each week that they are grateful for – and get everyone in the family to put something in it as they can. It’s a beautiful way to keep memories for the future as well. Challenge them to use better words than “It was good.” Good is too easy to overuse – what about magnificent or wonderful or tremendous? Have a game of charades using simple sentences and watch their imagination fly!
“Celebrate what you want to see more of.” Tom Peters

This week I am celebrating the hard work and dedication of Mr Gourlay. I have had the privilege of working with him in his 5/6 classroom each week this term supporting the students in their writing. The focus in this room is always about learning and excelling. Mr Gourlay maintains high expectations for every student and he uses every opportunity to motivate and inspire his class. His kind nature and passion for AFL means these lucky students are receiving a very well rounded education! Thanks Mr Gourlay!

Please share what you see...email me at ltank1@eq.edu.au so we can all benefit from the dedication of our educators.

Yours in Learning,

Mrs Leigh Tankey

The year 2/3 class wiring about their treasured memories.

The writing board in Mrs Window’s classroom.

2016 LITTLE ATHLETICS SEASON

SIGN ON DAY

Date: Saturday 5th March 2016
Time: 9am – 11am
Venue: Discovery Coast Sport & Rec Centre
Age Groups: Tiny Tots, Under 6’s to Under 16’s
Cost: Tiny Tots $40 & U6’s – U16’s $80

CASH OR CHEQUE ONLY

Proof of Age for the Registering Athlete is required
Enquiries: Call Melanie Cooper
0408 808 179 for more information.

Little Athletics..... Where everyone is a STAR

SCHOOL BANKING
Don’t forget school banking is every Tuesday.

Dollammites
Apply now to be a 2016 Census Area Supervisor!
The Australia Bureau of Statistics is seeking motivated and community minded project managers to work on the 2016 Census and make a difference in your community.

Area Supervisors are:
• Non-office based positions requiring travel
• Casual temporary positions, with flexible working hours.

As an Area Supervisor, you will:
• Recruit, manage and train a small team of temporary Census field staff
• Implement and manage the Census delivery and collection processes and procedures
• Undertake a range of administrative tasks, including the receipt, handling and storage of a range of Census materials
• Earn $34.76 per hour (inclusive of 25% loading).

As an Area Supervisor, you must:
• Know your local community
• Hold a current driver’s licence
• Be comfortable using computer, tablet and mobile devices
• Comply with ABS work health and safety policies
• Hold Australian Citizenship or have the legal right to work in Australia.

Job seekers from diverse backgrounds, including non-English speaking backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, are encouraged to apply.

More information is available from the ABS website. Apply online at abs.gov.au/careers