



PARENT BULLETIN

8th February 2013

COMING EVENTS

Monday, 11 th February.....	School Council Nominations open
Wednesday, 13 th February.....	Morwell Campus Photo Day
Monday, 18 th February.....	School Council Nominations close
Friday, 22 nd February.....	Year 7 Team Building
Wednesday, 27 th February.....	Year 10 Team Building

SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS:	8.00 am – 4.00 pm
SCHOOL HOURS:	8.25 am – 2.50 pm students are supervised between 8.10 am and 3.00 pm

CAMPUS PRINCIPAL'S NEWS



Welcome back!

Hello everyone, welcome to the Kurnai College Morwell Campus Learning Community for 2013, and a special welcome to all those parents and carers who are new to our College!

I hope everyone has been able to have a break over Christmas and New Year, and are now ready to get back to the serious business of learning.

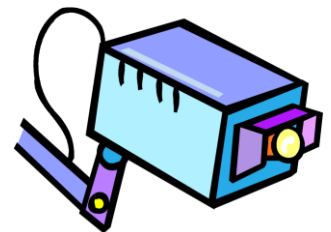
We have a very busy year ahead, and teachers have been planning exciting curriculum that is relevant to students as well as being at the students' current level of ability, so that they are able to learn effectively.

We have been pleased with the start students have made – they are very positive, and I have observed students in class and on task when I have visited classrooms. The yard is also looking good, with students taking responsibility for keeping their designated areas clean and tidy.

Holiday Refurbishment and Maintenance

During the holidays, we have had some maintenance work done to improve the look of our campus, including carpeting and painting in our new Year 9 Learning Centre, and a wall has been removed between two classrooms to create a new Year 7 Learning Centre.

All of our security cameras have been cleaned, refocused and in some cases, realigned so that we have a good view of all areas of our grounds both inside and outside the courtyard. We are also in the process of having three extra cameras installed around the gym.



These cameras not only improve the feeling of safety around the campus but have already, on numerous occasions, helped us to track down people from outside our community who come on the grounds out of hours and vandalise. This reduces the number of vandalism incidents, which saves the school a lot of money and inconvenience.

Textbooks

Parents who have not yet collected text books from Morwell Newsagency are reminded that after today, books will be returned to stock, however will still be available for a short time. Please take the time to collect texts as soon as possible so your child can fully participate in his or her learning.

Free Breakfast

This term, a free hot breakfast is available at the Morwell Neighbourhood House (48-50 Beattie Crescent) from 7:00am. Volunteers run this program each Monday (except public holidays) during the term and it is open to all ages. For more details, call the House on 5134 5488.

Quote of the Fortnight

If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up someplace else. **Yogi Berra**

KURNAI COLLEGE –SCHOOL UNIFORM

As Kurnai College values its identity, student dress standards should promote a positive image of the school within the community. Wearing the school uniform expresses a sense of belonging for students and is a valuable factor in achieving good tone around the campus.

Select items from those pictured below:



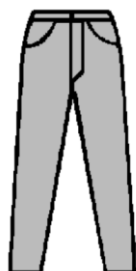
College Summer Dress



College Kilt-style Skirt



Black covered-in shoes



Navy Pants
(NOT tracksuit)



Plain white T-shirt only to be worn under uniform shirt



Maroon College polo shirt



Woven navy shorts



Woven long or short-sleeved shirt with College logo on pocket



Maroon knitted woollen jumper



Long-sleeved or sleeveless polar fleece jacket

A blazer and school tie are also available.

For PE only:



College sport polo shirt (mainly blue)



Navy shorts



Clean mostly white runners

UPCOMING EXCURSIONS/CAMPS

To ensure the smooth organisation and running of camps and excursions we request that permission forms and payments be returned to the school by the due date on the permission form. This enables the purchase of train tickets, food and venue tickets, etc, in a timely manner.

Year 7 Team Building	22 nd February	\$12.00	Payment & form due 19/02/13
Year 10 Team Building	27 th February	\$10.00	Payment & form due 22/02/13

“IT’S NOT OKAY TO BE AWAY”

Morwell Campus Absence Hotline: 5165 0602

If your child is going to be absent for the day or a number of days please contact the Absence Hotline and leave details. This service has been set up for the convenience of both families and the College with voicemail access 24 hours a day 7 days a week. The voicemail is checked several times a day. Thank you to the many parents already utilising this system.

Please leave a recorded message stating -

- Your name.
- The student’s name.
- Year level or home group.
- The reason for the absence and the duration if known.



There is a growing number of students who are constantly late to school.

Home group commences at 8.30 am. It is important that students attend as valuable information is passed on to the students regarding school activities and daily school news. If the student misses home group they commence the day without the knowledge they need to set them up for the day on a positive note.

- If your child is late, they **must** bring a signed and dated note.
- Being **late or sleeping in** are **not** acceptable reasons.
- We also require a signed and dated note for students to leave the College early.

SCHOOL COUNCIL 2013 ELECTIONS

School Council Notice of Election and Call for Nominations will begin on Monday 11th February. 3 parent member positions (2 years) and 2 DEECD employee member positions (2 years) will be vacant. Nomination forms can be obtained from the office of each campus and must be lodged back at the school by 4:00 pm on Monday 18th February. If the number of nominations is less than the number of vacancies, a notice to that effect and calling for further nominations will be posted in a prominent position at the school. Further reading and timeline dates are available within this newsletter.

Information for Parents

What is a school council and what does it do?

All government schools in Victoria have a school council. They are legally constituted bodies that are given powers to set the key directions of a school within state-wide guidelines. In doing this, a school council is able to directly influence the quality of education that the school provides for its students.

Who is on the school council?

For most school councils, there are three possible categories of membership:

- A mandated elected Parent category – more than one third of the total members must be from this category. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) employees can be Parent members at their child’s school as long as they are not engaged in work at the school.
- A mandated elected DEECD employee category – members of this category may make up no more than one-third of the total membership of school council. The principal of the school is automatically one of these members.
- An optional Community member category – members are coopted by a decision of the council because of their special skills, interests or experiences. DEECD employees are not eligible to be Community members.

Generally, the term of office for all members is 2 years. The term of office of half the members expires each year, creating vacancies for the annual school council elections.

Why is Parent membership so important?

Parents on school councils provide important viewpoints and have valuable skills that can help shape the direction of the school. Those parents who become active on a school council find their involvement satisfying in itself and may also find that their children feel a greater sense of belonging.

How can you become involved?

The most obvious way is to vote in the elections which are held in Term 1 each year. However, ballots are only held if more people nominate as candidates than there are positions vacant.

In view of this, you might seriously consider -

- standing for election as a member of the school council.
- encouraging another person to stand for election.

Do I need special experience to be on school council?

No. What you do need is an interest in your child's school and the desire to work in partnership with others to help shape the school's future.

What do you need to do to stand for election?

The principal will issue a Notice of Election and Call for Nominations following the commencement of Term 1 each year. All school council elections must be completed by the end of March unless the usual time line has been varied by the Minister.

If you decide to stand for election, you can arrange for someone to nominate you as a candidate or you can nominate yourself in the Parent category.

DEECD employees whose child is enrolled in a school in which they are not engaged in work are eligible to nominate for parent membership of the school council at that school.

Once the nomination form is completed, return it to the principal within the time stated on the Notice of Election. You will receive a Nomination Form Receipt in the mail following the receipt of your completed nomination.

Generally, if there are more nominations received than there are vacancies on council, a ballot will be conducted during the two weeks after the call for nominations has closed.

Remember

- Ask at the school for help if you would like to stand for election and are not sure what to do.
- Consider standing for election to council this year.
- Be sure to vote in the elections.

Contact the principal for further information

NOTES FROM THE NURSE – WENDY RUDELL

Welcome back to all students for the 2013 year – especially Year 7's. The information below is a reminder of some of the extended supports offered at Kurnai.



What the Secondary School Nurse does

The secondary school nurse works as a member of the student welfare team to improve the health and wellbeing of students. The role involves facilitating health promotion and health education activities within the school.

The nurse can also help individual students with information, guidance and support about a range of issues that may include:

- Relationships
- Loss and grief
- Adolescent health concerns
- Coping with illness
- Safe sex
- Smoking, alcohol and drug use
- Managing stress and anxiety
- Healthy weight

As well as providing students with information and support, the school nurse can also help them find and get in touch with other health services that might include:

- Local doctors
- Medical specialists
- Community Health Centres
- Alcohol and drug counsellors
- Psychologist or Youth counsellors
- Student Support Service Officers
- Culturally specific services
- Problems at home
- Culture or racism issues

Who has access to the School Nurse & Does it cost?

This School Nursing Program is a free confidential service available to the Kurnai College staff, students and community and is funded by the Victorian Government.

When is the School Nurse at Kurnai?

The secondary school nurse at your school is: **Wendy Ruddell**. Days at Kurnai; *Mondays, Tuesdays (Wednesdays by appointment)*. The school nurse can be contacted at the college on **5165 0600** or alternatively students can drop in to **B5** student services office on those days.

EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE –

Changes to the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) for 2013:

The EMA continues to help families on lower incomes with financial assistance to cover the cost of educational expenses including **textbooks, stationery, uniforms** and **excursions** for their child up until the age of 16.

From 2013, the Victorian Government is restructuring the EMA to better target financial support to families on lower incomes. Payments made direct to parents will be increased for eligible recipients at all year levels up to age 16, with an additional increase for parents with students in Years Prep and 7 in recognition of the additional costs at these transition points.

In 2013 the annual EMA payment for families with children in primary school (years 1-6) will receive a payment of \$150. Families with children in secondary school (Year 8 up until the age of 16) will receive an annual payment of \$250.

The School Start Bonus which was previously received by EMA families has been discontinued as a separate payment from 2013. However, additional funding has been incorporated into the EMA meaning that parents of children in Prep and Year 7 will receive boosted EMA payments of \$200 and \$300 respectively in those years.

From 2013, the EMA will no longer be paid 50/50 between the parent and the school. The 50% school portion of the EMA will no longer be paid to schools on behalf of parents. However, \$62 million over four years will be redirected to the State's most needy schools to assist families on lower incomes. These funds will form part of the school Student Resource Packages to be allocated at the local level.

New EMA payment option

From 2013, on the EMA application form you can choose to have your EMA payment;

- Paid by direct deposit (Electronic Funds Transfer) into your nominated bank account **or**
- Paid by cheque which will be posted to the school for collection **or**
- **Paid to the school to be held as credit which you can use towards education expenses**

The introduction of the new payment option to have the EMA payment directed to the school provides parents with extra flexibility to assist with budgeting towards education expenses.

Eligibility:

To be eligible for the EMA in 2013, you must:

- be either a parent or guardian of a primary or secondary school student up to the age of sixteen; **and**
- be an eligible beneficiary of a Centrelink pension, allowance or benefit within the meaning of the *State Concessions Act 2004** **or** be a Veterans Affairs (TPI) pensioner **or** be a temporary foster parent.

* i.e – the parent/guardian must be the holder of a valid Health Care Card or valid Pension Card.

The eligibility criteria must be met as at **29 January 2013** (Instalment One) and **15 July 2013** (Instalment Two).

Payment Amounts - 2013:

	Prep	Years 1 - 6	Year 7	Year 8 – Age 16
Instalment One	\$140	\$105	\$210	\$175
Instalment Two	\$60	\$45	\$90	\$75
Annual Total	\$200	\$150	\$300	\$250

*Student year level (or age for ungraded and special school students) will determine the amount payable. Parents of students turning 16 years in 2013 are paid on a pro rata basis.

Contact: School Office for an EMA application form and to lodge your application. **The closing date for EMA application forms to be submitted to the school is 28 February 2013.**

COMMUNITY EVENTS

MORWELL NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE FREE HOT BREAKFAST

New this term (Term 1, 2013) is the FREE HOT BREKKIE morning commencing Monday 4th February between 7:00 am – 9:00 am. Come along for a yummy brekkie to start your week. Cooked by our dedicated team of volunteers this program will run every Monday during school term (except public holidays). Address is **Morwell Neighbourhood House**, 48-50 Beattie Crescent, Morwell. Open to all ages. For more details or a copy of our program call the House on 5134 5488 or see Kiyomi. □

JUNIOR NETBALL REGISTRATION DAY

Cougars Junior Indoor Netball Registration day for 2013 season will be held on Tuesday 19th February 2013 between 4:00 and 5:00 pm at Churchill Netball/Football Club netball courts.

Any enquiries please contact Donna Turpin on 0408 221 012 or 5122 1011.

MORWELL EAST FOOTBALL/NETBALL CLUB

U16 & U18 footballers wanted. Training will be held Mondays and Wednesdays between 5:00 pm and 6:00 pm at Ronald Reserve, Vary Street, Morwell.

BBQ following training on Monday 11th February. Round 1 – 6th April.

Contact Wayne Arnold (U16 & U18) 0400 902 577 or Gavin Blair (President) 0408 142 095.

All past and new players welcome.

SAVER PLUS

Would \$500 assist you with education costs?

You could receive up to **\$500** to help pay for educational costs including:

- school uniforms
- text books
- excursions
- laptops
- sports equipment, uniforms and lessons
- music tuition and instrument hire
- TAFE, traineeship and apprenticeship costs!

Berry Street delivers Saver Plus in your local area and is looking for new participants.

You may be eligible if you or your partner:

- have a Centrelink Health Care or Pensioner Concession Card
- are at least 18 years old
- have some regular income from work
- have a child at school, or attend accredited vocational training yourself.

**To find out more contact Meryl Watson, Saver Plus Worker at Berry Street
5120 2506 / 0478 398 695 or mwatson@berrystreet.org.au**

Saver Plus is a matched savings and financial education program, developed by Brotherhood of St Laurence and ANZ and 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.