Last week we held an information session for our Junior School parents and many interesting questions were posed by our families. There was one question posed about the academic achievement of our students which I would like to talk about in my newsletter article this week.

The question was posed;

“There is somewhat of the perception going around that SAS is academically behind other schools in the area. If this is not true, is there a way to dispel this myth?”

This is not true! We have done an analysis of the schools in our area and whilst there are areas of the curriculum that require improvement, as there are for all schools, SAS is not academically behind the others. Already in the 2014 NAPLAN results we have seen very pleasing growth from Years 3 to 5 in a number of areas including Reading and Numeracy where the majority of our students in Year 5 are placed in the top two bands. (See the graph below). Over 27% of our Year 5 students for example, are placed in the top band as compared to the state average of 16.9%.

This year has seen a specific focus on the acquisition of reading skills – and the data above reflects the improvement in this area.

Further to this we have compared our 2013 results with a sample of the local schools and whilst I cannot give specifics of the other schools we compare favourably or better than the median scores of the local schools as a group.
The School has received funding from the Federal Government and we are participating in the Schools Leading Learning project for three years. We are continuing to improve through careful and meaningful learning programmes, staff professional development and monitoring and reflection of best practice. The focus for 2015 using this funding will be on Writing.

**How do we dispel the myth?**

We will continue to provide opportunities to showcase the work that our students are doing – to the parents and carers first and foremost, the community and global stage. The DVD that Mrs Carswell produced is a great advertisement for our wonderful school.

We welcome all our families to come in and discuss with either myself or the Head of School and Head of Junior School the improvements that we have seen this year.

**Lorae Sampson**

Executive Principal

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**FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL**

**“I just can’t wait for the I Love My School showcase”**

I just can’t wait for the I Love My School showcase next Friday 21st November. It will kick off at 2:30pm and finish with a concert at 4pm. This is the first of our end of year celebrations and it will be a wonderful event. It is a chance to bring together students from across K-12 and wonderful displays of their work. A great celebration.

I would strongly encourage all families to come and celebrate with us. We will have another amazing celebration on Presentation day, Thursday 11th December. Presentation day is a great day to come together and celebrate the academic achievements across the school.

Along with the academic celebrations in our Junior School Presentation we have the world renowned Christmas Nativity play as well a number of musical events. The Junior School Presentation will commence at 11am.

The Senior School presentation will commence at 7pm. We will have a range of significant awards and musical events across the course of the evening. It is also a great opportunity to celebrate the end of the school year. For Senior School students who are chosen for awards parents will receive a letter in the next fortnight outlining the rehearsal requirements.

I look forward to meeting with parents at these three wonderful events.

**Craig Mansour**

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**I love my School**

**PROJECTS:** Saturday was the inaugural I Love My School Projects, and it was great to see the school community come together to do tend to some needy gardens in the Junior School. We focused on the garden beds under the year 5/6 rooms. Thank you to all those who took part in the morning.

**SHOWCASE:** There is a real excitement about the I Love My School Showcase. A team of dedicated students and teachers have been coordinating the event which will be held on Friday the 21st November. The showcase starts at 2.30pm and will finish 5.30pm. It will be a great celebration, we encourage all parents to be there and to invite extended family to join in on the afternoon. Students from across every year group of the school will have the opportunity to showcase their musical, culinary, performing and creative arts skills.
The annual Abbotsleigh exchange is in phase two at Shoalhaven Anglican School this week. Four of our Year 8 girls spent a week in Sydney earlier this year experiencing the “big city lights” and this week it is time for a change of pace for their exchange partners in sleepy Milton. On Tuesday, Year 7 and Year 8 accompanied our exchange students on a photographic treasure hunt through the Milton CBD. Armed with a clue sheet and some very explicit instructions, the teams of students went to work to solve riddles, uncover clues, explore historic Milton and record their journey on their “point and shoot” digital cameras. Mrs Penny has been encouraging her students to explore this digital medium in visual arts in recent times, so I look forward to seeing the creative photos that come to light as a result of this activity.

FROM THE HEAD OF PASTORAL CARE

“Seeing so many members of our school and wider community coming together to celebrate was great.”

Sunday was an amazing day. Seven Shoalhaven Anglican School students met Shaneo at Meroo Head in the early hours of the morning to walk with and encourage him on his final day of the 300km Walk Against Slavery. Highlights of the day included wading across two lake entrances, having a long lunch at Burrill Pines and soaking up the sunshine as the group covered the final 15km with Shaneo. The final walk down the Princes Highway towards the crowd of people who were gathered for the coming home party was a very special experience. Seeing so many members of our school and wider community coming together to celebrate was great. It really brought home to me the power of how an idea or a vision (walking from Eden to Ulladulla), backed by a purpose (to raise funds for Destiny Rescue who rescue children from slavery) and combined with action (making the walk happen) can achieve so much. The verse of the day that popped up on my Bible App on Sunday the 9th November from Philippians 2: 3-4 says it all:

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others.

Shaneo modelled this passage on his walk and by doing so, provided the many young people whom he comes into contact with on a weekly basis at our school, with the inspiration to do the same in their own lives. To put others first.

Mr Tim Knowles
of the Murramarang National park around Bawley point. The highlights were walking with friends and family talking about God and coming home each night to my amazing family who inspired me to walk for the children who are without family. The challenges were not as expected, physically I felt great but every third day I hit a wall but once pushed through my body loved it. Blisters were manageable thanks to the many prayers of people supporting me.

Spiritually I felt most challenged as I felt burdened by the magnitude of what I was really walking for, I found myself being discouraged at different stages of the walk. God however is enough and his strength sustained me throughout my journey. A thought that kept coming to mind was ‘it is not what I am doing but what He has done’. I recited this verse to myself each day: ‘This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.’ 1 John 3:16. God’s love has paid the price through his son, I’m just following his way, this helped relieve my burden and keep my eyes on the prize. God is the real rescuer, he bought me out of slavery to sin and death when I was 14 years old and set me on his path, that was my destiny and now I walk for many to find this freedom. This campaign was always about Him.

The final day was very special as I walked from Bawley pt to Ulladulla with Tim Knowles and SAS students Caleb Dallos, Jake Adlam, Emily Cadle, Sean Coulton, Jordan Reid, Breeanna Pouicha and Darious Pouicha. Thanks so much guys, I’ll never forget that last day and the culmination of emotions felt as we finished our goal. We arrived home to a huge gathering of support out the front lawn of Ulladulla Anglican church. We have raised so far $12500 and still counting. I hope to reach $15000 before the end of term. If you still would like to give you can here: http://www.everydayhero.com.au/event/walkagainstslavery. To check out the photos: https://www.facebook.com/walkforrescue.

Thankyou everyone for your amazing support for this campaign.

Walk against Slavery journey.

It seems appropriate for me to give you a review on my adventures this year with walk against slavery campaign and of course the journey itself. My goal: $10000 for 10 days walking 300kms along the coast from Eden to Ulladulla. My conviction to achieve such a goal started in March when I heard the story of a 14 year old girl being sold for $300 to a brothel in Thailand. Anger, shock, despair hit me all at once, I knew I couldn’t walk away from that. I would pay any price for my own daughter, what about the thousands of girls forced into sexual slavery around the world? Destiny Rescue bought that girl back to freedom and a new life paying a $300 ransom. If $300 saves a life what could $10000 do? After speaking with my wife Emma and many others I set the goal. I hoped to inspire our students to sacrifice for others as well as unite our community to stand against slavery. Our school raised $2000 towards the goal. Other support came from our parents including Amber-lee McFarlane, Nathan and Kate Cash who both have children in kindergarten at SAS as well as my wife Emma and Julie Kelly. These guys poured huge amounts of energy, time and money into information events, a movie night and the incredible coming home party where I walked my final steps into Ulladulla. Amongst this Emma and her women’s bible study hosted a ladies jewellery and information event where we raised $1300. We had support of many local businesses giving money and donating items for raffles and heaps of individuals around the Shoalhaven, Australia and internationally that contributed to our target.

After all this fund-raising the walk seemed easy. The walk was incredibly beautiful passing the breathtaking coastline of the Merimbula to Bermagui region, then the long beaches and beachfront properties of Narooma to Tuross heads and finally the most stunning scenery...
Year 12 students and staff were incredibly fortunate to have a visit from Turia Pitt and her partner Michael Hoskins on Tuesday afternoon, 11th of November. Turia was named Cosmopolitan’s ‘Woman of the Year’ for 2013, short-listed for this year’s ‘Young Australian of the Year’ and the winner of the recent NSW ‘Woman of the Year’ Awards.

She is a burns survivor, motivational speaker, engineer and published author. She worked as a model before landing her dream job with Rio Tinto at their prestigious Argyle Diamond Mine and moving to Kununurra with her partner Michael. Their lives were turned upside down when she was trapped by a grassfire in a 100-kilometre ultra-marathon in September 2011, and suffered burns to over 65 percent of her body.

Her recovery so far can be described as gureling and phenomenal, but Turia is a force of nature, and her talk was truly inspirational. As well as working as a motivational speaker, Turia is an ambassador for Interplast (an organisation that provides free reconstructive surgery to people in developing countries) and will be leading a trip in June to raise funds for this important cause. Let’s get behind Turia and support Interplast. Donations can be made at http://turiasincatrailchallenge.gofundraise.com.au/page/TuriaPitt

On behalf of the Year 12 students and staff who attended, thank you Turia!

Risk Taking

Students now-a-days are more and more exposed to societal demands, through the introduction and implementation of social media and the Internet as a whole. So, with this in mind, why is it so important for our students to take risks with their learning, when at the same time we are trying to prevent them from risky cyber behaviour that occurs as their device usage in class increases? Well, it’s simple! As a parent, I wish for my child (and the students that I teach) to try everything, to take those risks that we as non-device children took. You know the ones - the tree climbing, jumping off things you weren’t meant to, exploring places that you were told not...those risks.

And then there are the learning risks. I would like for the students at SAS to see the value in attempting the unknown, to give it a go, to try and try again, and to never give up. This is what the Inquiry Process/Project Based Learning (open ended, driving questions) is allowing the students in the Junior School – the chance to explore, inquire, seek, try, fail, try again, succeed. This is a vital element to life-long learning and one that I feel is imperative to a child’s academic (and complete) development.

The nurturing and supportive environment at SAS JS is the perfect place for students to take risks and I saw this in true form when I had the privilege of visiting the Stage 2 Camp this week. I accompanied a vibrant group of Year 4 students to go Jetty Jumping. The tide was high, the current reasonable and the water warm (well, warmer than the outside temperature). Most of the students were straight into the water after the safety talk, but there were a couple of students who hung back and observed before jumping. There was one student who stayed out of the water. They wanted to go in, this much was obvious, but they were scared to take the risk. Over and over the other students tried convincing this student to jump in with them. Again and again they refused, until finally, with 5 minutes to go, this student took the leap. The comment when they came out of the water, smile plastered on their face, “I don’t know what I was so worried about.”

If only this is the same with classroom learning? Well, it can be and should. Encourage your children to take those learning risks, encourage them to seek wisdom and develop as people that are open-minded, resilient and independent thinkers. It is the best way to be!

Anna Carswell
Head of Junior School

“No one will ever become knowledgeable in anything, unless they try out for themselves what they read about.”

Encourage your children to take those learning risks, encourage them to seek wisdom and develop as people that are open-minded, resilient and independent thinkers.”
I LOVE MY SCHOOL

I Love My School Showcase:
Friday 21st November, 2.30pm-5.00pm (Approx)
All parents and the extended family are invited to join in on the fun, as our students celebrate all their wonderful creative achievements throughout 2014. With Food demonstrations and tastings, loads of group and individual performances, video presentations and the SAS art and photographic Gallery

GUMNUT PRE SCHOOL

Using natural resources including bark and leaves the children in the Whale Group created some magnificent trees.

"My tree has lots of leaves. One of the leaves blew off because the wind rustled it. The bark is on the tree and it makes it really thick." (Matilda)

"I have made my tree for my sister. The leaves sway in the wind and make my house cold. The bark comes off the tree and my sister puts it back on again." (Skye)

"My tree has bark and it has leaves. The leaf fell off the branch right down to the ground." (Jesinta)

"The leaves are going to blow off the tree when it's autumn. This is a magic tree because when you press a leaf the tree will do anything you want...even turn a bath on for you. The bark is for blowing off in autumn." (Ava)

Girls and Youth League Football Trials

Southern Branch Football Club is holding trials for girls and boys for its 2015 competition teams.

Girls U13 - U17 Trials have already taken place.

Boys Sunday 16 November U12s at 9am & U13s at 10.30am; Tuesday 18 November U12s & U13s at 6pm; and Sunday 23 November U12s & U13s 2pm.

All trials are being held at South Nowra Football Fields. To register complete the online forms at www.southernswfootball.com.au. Further details can be obtained from Matthew Shepherd, Southern Branch Manager on 0419925906.