

Dear Parents

It's a somewhat disjointed period after having a separate Easter Break for the first time since 1980. We have nine more school days then another week's vacation. Those nine days will be quite busy as we have several big activities occurring to finish Term One of 2008. Tomorrow is our third 'Walking Wheeling Wednesday' and we'll have another next week. Last week's was once again well patronised by our students with around 70% actively travelling. That's not quite as high as Week One but it is still impressive. Don't forget that tomorrow is Wednesday and we want to see another big turn out. The table for all classes is below. I must apologise for my mistake last week in saying Prep B was our champion class. Actually 7B won as 88% of them walked, rode or car pooled. I'll blame it on my failing eyesight that I misread the figures. Prep B was actually second with a very good 85% participation rate. I hope both classes keep up their fine form into the future and spur on our others.

Class	Participants	Percentage
Prep A	11 out of 18	61.1
Prep B	11 out of 19	57.9
Yr 1	15 out of 21	71.4
1~2	13 out of 24	54.2
Yr 2	24 out of 30	80.0
3A	16 out of 24	66.7
3B	19 out of 25	76.0
Yr 4	19 out of 27	70.4
4~5	19 out of 23	82.6
Yr 5	17 out of 23	73.9
5~6	15 out of 24	62.5
Yr 6	20 out of 31	64.5
7A	19 out of 23	82.6
7B	19 out of 26	73.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>237 out of 338</b>	<b>70.1</b>

Another very important date is April 1, Tuesday next week. That day is set aside for our Term 1 Parent – Teacher interviews. From 3pm through to 7pm all classes, except Year 1, will be having interviews. By now you should have received a form to book a time and I encourage every parent to try to attend. Communication is one of our biggest difficulties and it is often the cause of parental complaints. Seeing your child's teacher face to face is a very effective way to ensure that both parties are fully informed of student progress, class work and broader school issues. Teachers will discuss any pertinent items and provide each parent with a short written summary of their child's first term work. Can I suggest that to get the best out of the time available, parents have a short list of questions, problems or concerns that they need teachers to address. Mr Swales and I will also be available should parents wish to discuss anything with us.

Next Thursday, April 3 is our School Disco. It will have an international flavour with dances and food from other countries. Please wear something that represents another country. Prizes for the best costume Junior, Middle and Senior School. More info later this week.

This year we have made a huge break from tradition in holding the night at the Taigum Salvation Army Church. Of course it's a venue with which we are quite familiar because of our Carols Night and we are keen to try it as a venue for other activities. Peter and his team have very kindly made it available to us so we are taking the opportunity. Our DJ once again, will be the wonderful Mr Key who helps us every time we have a function requiring music. When I told him we'll be at the church, his response was 'great acoustics' – a good omen I'm sure. Our intention is to start at 5:30pm for dinner and then having the actual disco from 6:30 through to 8pm so it's not too late a night for our students. Mrs Tompkins will be sending a food order form home this week which will have more details of the activity. Our discos are usually very successful and I can see no reason why this won't be the same. Keep your eyes peeled for the order form.

As I reported last week, the path around the parent car park is now operational. It was heavily used by our students who seemed to find it very simple and convenient. I know that many parents were happy that the driveways were free of pedestrian traffic, especially in the afternoon rush. From now on, we should not see any students walking or riding anywhere along our Handford Road frontage except those crossing at the lights on Liberty Drive. To my way of thinking, the school area is now very much safer. My only lasting concern is pedestrian traffic through the staff car park. Unfortunately, many of the students doing this are accompanied by their parents. I really need to highlight the danger of a serious accident occurring if this continues. Unlike the parent car park, all staff have to reverse out of parking spots in the staff carpark and thus visibility is very much compromised. We also have many parents still parking in this area, causing extra congestion and worsening the safety risks. I have no qualms with mums and dads using this carpark in the middle of the day to drop off or pick up, go to interviews or act as volunteers, but at the peak times of 8:15 – 9:15 am and 2:30 – 3:30 pm, it would be wise to use our newly surfaced (and much larger) parent carpark.

You may be aware that we are one of the first schools to have benefited from the computers for teachers (C4T) initiative of Education Queensland with all our teaching staff given Lenovo laptops and backpacks. I am happy that every day I see most of our staff with their machines on their backs as they come into

school. Apparently they have picked up the nickname 'Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles'. The laptops are proving to be a great hit and a valuable teaching resource. Last week, we improved their value by adding a digital camera to each classroom teacher's backpack. Shortly we will be providing microphones to the packs as well. That will give teachers a fully portable multimedia package to use in many creative ways in their rooms. Tomorrow, our staffroom will be provided with a wireless access point which will allow the laptops to access internet and email in the area. More access points will be installed in many other places throughout the school as the year progresses. The ICT agenda at Taigum State School is proceeding at a pace.

My final comment is to thank parents for their huge turn out for our Easter Bonnet Parade. I think all up there were nearly 200 in attendance. It was an amazing showing and our Parade ground was struggling to cater for the crowds. I also wish to thank all those who helped make a bonnet or a hat or some sort. They all looked great and didn't our little ones enjoy showing them off!

Marl Fisher  
Principal

## **Turn off your lights and help save the Planet**

Parents across Queensland are being asked to join their children in supporting this year's World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Earth Hour on Saturday 29 March 2008. People across the globe will be united in turning off their lights and any non-essential electrical appliances in their homes and offices between 8pm and 9pm.

The hour-long campaign to reduce greenhouse gas emissions shows how each one of us, by making small changes, can create big changes for our planet. Schools across Queensland are already celebrating Earth Hour on the Friday 28 March.

Students and staff will be switching off lights, fans and air-conditioners during breaks and at the end of the day, as well as turning off equipment such as computers, printers, scanners and hot water urns when not in use.

On Saturday 29 March, it's the turn of Queensland parents to do the same at home and help combat the alarming problem of global warming. If all Australian households turned off unused lights and appliances on standby at the power point, Australia's emissions would be reduced by at least 5

million tonnes per annum. That's the equivalent of taking 1.5 million cars off the road for a year. Remember – be involved but do not turn off lights that affect safety or essential electrical appliances such as refrigerators. The Minister for Education, Training and the Arts, Rod Welford, recently announced a statement on sustainability for all Queensland schools which will serve as a guide for schools to meet their environmental obligations. If you would like to know more the Statement on Sustainability for All Queensland Schools visit: [www.education.qld.gov.au/publication/producton/reports/](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/publication/producton/reports/)

For more information on Earth Hour, go to: [www.earthhour.org](http://www.earthhour.org)

## **My Favourite Teacher**

It is once again time to celebrate the hard work of Queensland teachers with My Favourite Teacher. This year it's coming back with a twist as students recognise teachers who have inspired them to get more active in the Year of Physical Activity.

All state schools students are encouraged to nominate their favourite teacher via the website - <http://education.qld.gov.au/community/events/e-dweek/favteacher/>

Students can vote by clicking on their local papers masthead and nominating their teacher in 25 words or less. Of course parents of smaller children are allowed to give them a hand so no teacher misses out on being recognised for the important role they play in everyone's life.

Nominations close on Friday 2 May 2008. Winning teachers will receive certificates, a Stefan gift pack valued at more than \$100 and a Year of Physical Activity pack.

Favourite teachers will be announced during State Education Week which commences on Monday 26 May 2008.

## **Confirmation and First Communion**

St Flannan's Catholic Parish, Zillmere invite parents of children eligible for Confirmation and First Communion to attend an information night to collect enrolment forms on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> April 08 at 7 p.m. in the parish hall. All enquires call Kate McLean on 3265 1320.