FROM OUR PRINCIPAL

Term 4 of a school year is the term of reflections and celebrations. Teachers and students engage in activities that make them think about the progress that has been made and the accomplishments within the year and these are cause for celebrations, not to mention leading up to end of year holidays and the Christmas season. Some students are achieving at the expected year level and even above this, whilst others may be greatly challenged to demonstrate their knowledge and skill at the standard for his/ her year of schooling. For some students the gains he/ she have made may be small in comparison to others who have shown great improvements within a learning area. These are the two sides of the conversation when we provide feedback to students and families; achievement and growth.

Students should be aware of their achievements. This is what they know and can do. The next steps in their learning needs to be clear and this is the place of feedback. Effective feedback is what closes the gap between where you are at and where you need to be. An example- Your goal is to read more fluently. At the moment you can read (decode) the words at this level. You need to group the words into phrases and use the punctuation marks; commas and full stops to pause. What is a phrase? That’s the next learning step!

As you are aware teachers are writing reports yet this is NOT the end of the learning and teaching at school. The grades in the reports show where a child is against end of year level standards- covering broad concepts and skills, the individual goals students have in reading, writing or maths are more fine grain and are a specific skill or set of information (a mastery of a concept or set etc). Classroom teachers are still designing and creating learning experiences to help students achieve their learning goals. Please ask your child’s teacher how you might be able to help at home.

Language and Culture
Community: a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common. Our school community comprises of so many different students from families of diverse cultural backgrounds, language backgrounds, social and religious beliefs with the commonness being attendance at our school and living in the local area.

Last Friday we held a smoking ceremony, a traditional Arrernte ritual, in honour of Miss Smith’s passing. Miss Smith was an Arrernte Language and Culture teacher in Alice Springs for over two decades. The passion for her language was evident in her classes as she enthusiastically taught students from the first years of schooling through to Year 12. The teachers, staff, students and parents were presented with the significance of the ceremony and the beliefs of the Arrernte people regarding the spirit of the person who had passed by Ms Teresa Alice. After the assembly we all walked through the smoke thinking of those who had recently passed away and remembering happy moments with them or wishing their spirit peace. This is another an example of how the Ross Park community authentically engaged in a cultural learning experience.

Parent Engagement

Teachers are keen to have parents and families engage with their programs and regularly invite parents to contribute to or even enhance topics of learning by sharing personal experiences or skills with the students. Ms Richter-Cross, a relief teacher who regularly works at our school, is currently working with 3 France to make special table decorations for the Alice Springs Senior Citizens end of year dinner. Preschool students are working with local Aboriginal artists and Ms Crea to produce original artworks. Year 5/6 classes have been learning from Ms Swift how to use felt to create art pieces for the end of year art exhibition. If you have a particular talent or skill that you would like to share with your child/ children’s classes please contact the classroom teacher and explore the possibilities.

Food Drive Donations
Thanks to all those who have already made contributions to the Christmas Food Drive this year. The Department of Education, Alice Springs Region, invited schools to participate in this initiative to help make the holiday season a little better for those in our community who are experiencing financial, social or emotional hardship. All donations will be given to a local charity.

Great conversations are being had in classrooms and in the playground sparked by our participation in this enterprise about Christmas traditions, the meaning of generosity and charity and societal issues. In the playground on Tuesday I overheard a conversation between a couple of Year 3/4 students, “What do you think about Christmas things?”

“Yeah, like eating candy canes and putting up Christmas trees. It’s only November”.

“Christmas things should be done in December at least! I think it loses its special-ness if we do it too long”.

“The shops have had Christmas decorations for sale for ages already. I think it’s too much!”

That’s why I love my job: children keep surprising us!

SUZI BURGESS, Principal
LEAVING?
Thank you to those families who have let us know their children will not be attending our school next year. Planning for 2019 is underway, so accurate student numbers are very important.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY
Our Regional Manager has approved a professional development day for all staff on Tuesday 29th January 2019. NO STUDENTS ATTEND SCHOOL ON THIS DAY—students begin on Wednesday 30th January.

2018 ROSS PARK CHRISTMAS APPEAL FOOD DRIVE
Please donate non-perishable food items—you can drop them off at the school office by 7th December. We are trying to collect food for people in our community who aren’t able to afford food at this time of year. Thank you!

Student Representative Council

SWIMMING CARNIVAL
27 Ross Park students participated in the Interschool Swimming Carnival on Friday 9th November at the Alice Springs Aquatic Centre. This was following on from our inaugural school swimming carnival the week before. There were 7 different schools competing and Ross Park won the primary schools shield! Brothers Harrison (5/6C) and Anthony (3M) and Savannah (4S) were the age champions for their divisions. We were lucky to have many students win ribbons in different events and also win two different relay events. Well done, swimmers! (Mattie 5/6C lost his Fitbit at the Carnival—anyone seen it?)

IGNITE!
Last week, many of our students displayed their musical talents in a town-wide concert at Araluen, called ‘Ignite!’ Mrs Nicole Quesnel, co-ordinator of the evening, said, “On behalf of the NTMS Team, I’d like to thank you for your hard work and dedication in preparing for this year’s show. Ross Park students participated in many NTMS ensemble groups including the BEAT Choir, the House Band, Massed Band and String Theory. Your school should be very proud of its contribution to this event.” Well done students and leader/teacher Jess Letts!

SUSTAINABILITY
“This week we want you to consider what kind of gifts you could give to others that will help them in being more sustainable. We think that eco-friendly items, such as bees wax wraps or a re-useable drink cup or water bottle make excellent gifts and will help others to be more sustainable in their everyday lives.” Lily and Lily 5/6M

SO CUTE!
Year 5/6 Barnes and Gilbert were lucky to have some very special visitors during this week. Chris ‘Brolga’ Barns from the Alice Springs Kangaroo Sanctuary came to the classroom with two joeys who were just 4 months old. The class is currently reading Brolga’s autobiography, ‘Kangaroo Dundee’. They prepared interview questions and learned how to care for Joeys. The class donated some pillowcases to the Kangaroo Sanctuary and Flora wrote and illustrated her very own children’s picture book and gifted this to Brolga. The students will be sharing Brolga’s message during assembly next week.

ROSCO'S Canteen will be CLOSED for Week 9 of this term—10-13th December.

Special next week:
Ham & Cheese OR BBQ Meatlovers Pizza
Only $3 per slice!

Two pieces of old play equipment have now been removed from our junior playground and the large play equipment has been painted, thanks to the efforts last weekend of our Maintenance Officer Michael Smith, parents Ric Duncum, Kura Waugh, Cherry Chavez-Hopwood and Steve Yates and staff members Alastair Sheriff, Teresa O’Connell, Suzi Burgess and Suzi Smith. The working bee was an initiative of your School Council and over $1000 in was saved in contracting costs!

STOP PRESS: Book Club catalogues have been distributed today and orders MUST be submitted by Wednesday 21st November, to receive the books before Christmas!