Hello Staff, Parents, Carers and friends,
Over this fortnight, I’ve been busy attending several important meetings – these have included the NW Principal’s Forum and the Special School Principal’s meeting which was held at the Devonport campus on Monday, 7th May. Both meetings provided an update on Federal government initiatives and I’d like to share some new information with you.

The release of the Gonski Review into Funding for Schooling earlier this year represented the first step in the Australian Government’s plan to introduce a new funding system for all Australian schools as from 2014.

The review provides only a theoretical framework for a new funding model and the government is setting up a consultation phase, including analysis and testing of the proposed model. One initiative will be the collection of nationally consistent data on students with disabilities. The collection of nationally consistent data will be based on the Disability Standards for Education 2005 requirements for schools to eliminate possible discrimination in education against students with disability. A quality assurance process and support is expected to be developed to assist schools to work through the model to ensure that judgments that are made are sound.

As many parents, carers and other members of the school community are aware, inequities in funding levels of teacher assistant support for students enrolled in Special Schools compared with students in regular schools remains an unresolved issue. This new funding model to be developed, will apply across all educational settings and contexts including special schools. As more information is released, I will share it in future newsletters.
More good news

- 20 iPADS will be released shortly to the School of Special Education NW. They will be supplied with a range of apps that can be used for a 6 week period to trial with students re suitability. Our Speech & Language Pathologist, Felicity Lovatt has assisted to develop an assessment profile and student assessment will commence in Term 2. At the end of 6 weeks, the iPADS will be personalized for individual students who will be using it with specific apps. The iPADS will come with covers. A distribution of approximately 50 more iPADS will be allocated on the basis of need rather than pro rata numbers across the Southern, Northern and North West Special Schools once students have been assessed re suitability.

- A visit to Warringa in Victoria will be made available with each special school invited to send one representative to work with Apple re basic introduction of using iPADS with students with disabilities. Flight costs will be covered.

- 4 Smart Boards will be purchased via Federal MSSD funding and shared between the Devonport and Burnie campuses. The likely date for installation is Term 2.

Many thanks for the following donations

The Devonport Campus staff and students wishes to thank The Mad Hatter’s Fundraising Group and the Sassafras CWA for a donation of $350 towards the playground rejuvenation fund. This donation was initiated by Mrs Audrey Campbell who is a community member of the School Association. Audrey can be described as a ‘mover and shaker’ who is an enthusiastic supporter of our school.

Reminder

If your child is going to be away from school for ANY reason you must phone both Phoenix Coaches (64249112) and the school (64245554) to let us know.

I will be away from Monday, 21st May until Friday, 26th May visiting the Currumbin Community Special School and attending the Spectronics Conference on the Gold Coast, QLD.

Best wishes,

Grace
Woolworths Earn & Learn

The 2012 program has now started. Send along your stickers and we will get the kids stick them on the cards for you.

As an added bonus, this year we have a collection box at our local Devonport Woolworths store. You can drop your stickers in the box as soon as you collect them.

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