Hello Staff, Parents, Carers and friends,

Wow! Last week of Term 1 and everyone is ready for a fortnight’s holiday!

As you are all aware, I along with Lynne Ryan, ICT consultant and Felicity Lovatt, Speech & Language Pathologist travelled to the Gold Coast to attend the biannual Spectronics conference. This 3 day event attracted 1300 delegates from all around the world – UK, Brazil, US, Hong Kong, Singapore, Dubai and from all states of Australia.

For me, my attendance at a variety of workshops which were led by world renowned practitioners confirmed that the current practices, resource tools and programs that we continue to implement in all classes at both campuses were highlighted as best practice to assist students with disabilities to become active and successful learners. The trade exhibits displayed exciting high-quality technology resources for use in classrooms and hands-on ipad workshops featured new Apps for us to investigate.

During Term 2 we intend sharing several plenary presentations by keynote speakers recorded online from the conference with staff members, which will add a new dimension to group learning and discussion of ways forward.

My Visit to the Currumbin Community Special School

I was welcomed by the Principal, Mrs Kylie Sargeant and Mr Greg Clarke, the Transition Co-ordinator who initially made contact with me about a year ago. Their special school won an education excellence award to celebrate their successful transition program for school leavers which has been evolving for 15 years. I was able to visit the senior classrooms and speak with teachers who outlined the seamless process of collaborative planning which is undertaken between work experience and service providers, parents, carers and other providers e.g. Sport and Recreation and the Polytechnic colleges.

Within the senior class complex, there were innovative options to assist students with gaining practical skills and knowledge – Stephanie Alexander garden plots, a well equipped kitchen and dining room and a hair dressing salon. Kylie, the Principal explained that the hair dressing salon was initiated by a teacher assistant who had completed a hair dressing apprenticeship previously.
This teacher assist noted the potential for students to acquire personal grooming skills in a salon setting. Hair salons in the local area donated equipment and furnishings at times when a salon was being refurbished. What an impressive enterprise!

My visit to the school has prompted a suggestion that our senior students commence networking and emailing the students at Currumbin with the thought of sharing stories and information about our schools and their local communities. The long term goal is to arrange some interschool trips to each campus.

Ted Barrance will be leaving SOSE D’port

Ted, who has been teaching at the School of Special Education NW since mid 2008 will be transferring to an AST 3 position at Penguin Primary School, commencing early July. This is a fixed term position offered until the end of 2012. Ted will be greatly missed. He has become a very influential leader and inspiring teacher over his time with us. I thank him sincerely for the positive contributions he has made to students, families, staff members and the SOSE D’port School Association.

The Teacher-in-Charge position will be advertised on Tuesday, 19th June.

Four Block Literacy

This first term of 2012 has focused on the implementation of the 4 Blocks Literacy program in all classes across both campuses which involved explicit expectations regarding written plans prepared by teachers and attendance at weekly discussion groups for teachers and support staff led by Felicity Lovatt. Alongside this planning phase has been the implementation of new technology resources to tools to assist each student’s learning.

As we collectively reflect on this implementation, we are all expressing the improvements noted in individual student’s ability to sit, listen attentively and engage in literacy tasks and to outwardly acknowledge their new skills. Thank you all for the energy and sincere commitment during this challenging phase.

I wish you all a restful holiday.

School resumes on Monday, 18th June.

Best wishes,
Grace
**SOSE Has Got Talent**

On Thursday 24th May Devonport staff and students travelled to the Burnie Campus for our annual SOSE Has Got Talent. We had an assortment of high quality performances including singing, comedy and dance.

It was fabulous to see our youngest students perform from Laurie’s Kindergarten Class. They were keen to be on stage and performed like they had done it many times before – Well Done!!

We were mesmerised by a solo performance of Justin Beiber’s Down To Earth performed by Cody Matthews.

Our audience loved to join in with many of the singing acts such as the Banksia Room’s “Old MacDonald's Farm” and the Gumtree Rooms “Alphabet Chant”.

Feet were tapping, arms were waving and many were finding it difficult to sit still in their seats when the Red Room performed their Dance Anthem dance. Zali had us all wanting to ‘shuffle’ as she rapped along with the song.

We were entertained by some performances by both the Devonport and Burnie staff.

Laughter filled the room as comedian Billy Dodds told us a few jokes.

The Green Rooms re-enactment of Wombat Stew kept us all laughing as we enjoyed not only their performance but also their wonderful costumes. The Wattle Room entertained us with Three Billy Goats Gruff with their handmade puppets. Devin’s troll made us all jump with its scary voice!

It was so exciting to see some of our literacy work turned into a performance for us all to see by the Yellow Room with their work on their names and the letters of the alphabet.

It is wonderful to see all of our students enjoying watching each of the acts. The smiles on many of the students’ faces were delightful. A big thank you to all participants – Well done.
Daimyn celebrated his 15th birthday at school and received some great presents.