From the Relieving Principal’s Desk

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

We are quickly at the halfway point of the term. Teachers are working hard at finalising assessment data and writing quality reports that outline what your child can do and what they find challenging in all six key learning areas.

Claire Smith

It is with great sadness that I announce that Ms Claire Smith will be retiring at the end of the term. Ms Smith has given 38 years of service to the public education system and we are extremely grateful for the care, compassion and support she has provided many students over the years. She will be greatly missed by the Casula community. We will be having a farewell assembly for Ms Smith towards the end of the term. We wish Ms Smith all the best in her retirement!

Reading data

Twice a term teachers collate reading data for each student in their class. This data is then used to see the percentage of students working above, at or below grade expectations. Sometimes teachers will contact you to ensure that home reading is being completed consistently. Reading aloud to someone and then asking questions about what has been read all help in supporting reading fluency and comprehension.

Last week I attended the Kindergarten Book Prize assembly. I presented a book award to a student from each Kindergarten class who regularly completes home reading. Well done to the winners!
Homework
As you are all aware we have been trialling a new approach to homework this year. The changes include home reading completed each night, “Maths Online” work and practising spelling words. Assignments are also completed regularly. It is not mandatory for students to complete homework but we believe that reading aloud, reviewing the Maths concepts that were taught in the classroom, and regularly reviewing spelling words all helps towards improving student outcomes. The assignments so far, have had a large return rate and teachers are impressed with the quality of work. Again, I encourage you if you have any concerns or questions about homework please see your child’s teacher.

OC Application Forms
Online applications for OC placement have now closed. The Year 4 teachers sent home a note last week about students attending early morning study sessions from 8am each Tuesday. Please return the notes to the office ASAP.

NAPLAN
Last week I was extremely proud of our Year 3 and Year 5 students who sat the NAPLAN tests for writing, language conventions, reading and numeracy. All students tried their very best and that is all we ask. Students are graded in bands. The results for the tests will be delivered late September.

Award System for 2015
Last week Ms Goulder and Mrs Sutarov presented a session to parents about our new award system. The response from the parents that attended was very positive and most parents felt they understood the system much better by the end of the session. A reminder from all teachers is to try and keep all awards in a safe place to enable the trade for the award of excellence to happen much more smoothly. I am enjoying attending weekly assemblies to hand out the Principal's Award to deserving children in each class across the school.

Absences
Ms Goulder and grade supervisors are following up students who are not attending school on a regular basis or not providing notes explaining why their child was absent from school. The statement below is directly quoted from the DEC Attendance Policy;

Parents of children from Kindergarten to Year 12 have a responsibility to make sure their children attend school every day. On occasion, your child may need to be absent from school. Justified reasons for student absences may include:

- Being sick, or having an infectious disease
- Having an unavoidable medical appointment
- Being required to attend a recognised religious holiday
- Exceptional or urgent family circumstances e.g. attending a funeral

Parents are required to provide an explanation for absences to the school within 7 days from the first day of any period of absence. Parents can contact the school by telephone, written note, text message or email. Where an explanation has not been received within the 7 day timeframe, the school will record the absence as unjustified on your child’s record.

Walk Safely to School day
Last week we acknowledged “Walk Safely to School Day”. There are some very important ideas that you need to understand regarding your child walking to school.

- All parents and carers are encouraged to walk with their child to school.
• Children up to the age of 10 should hold an adult’s hand when crossing roads.
• Walking reduces the level of air pollution created by motor vehicles.
• Children MUST be taught vital road-crossing skills to develop into mature pedestrians.

Zone Cross Country
I would like to wish all 50 students attending the Zone Cross Country tomorrow, the very best of luck! Run Hard!

Stage 3 students really enjoyed their excursion to Mt Annan Botanic Gardens last week. Thank you to Miss Wenham for her excellent organisation.

Congratulations to Nathan Jennings and Jacob Christie who represented Casula Public School at Zone softball. We are very proud of you!

Have a great fortnight,

Mrs Diamond

YEARS 3-6 ATHLETICS CARNIVAL REMINDER

Payment for the carnival finishes on Wednesday 27th May. Please ensure that you have paid for your child to attend!

The cost is $12.50. If you require assistance please contact the school office for a form to help with this payment.

Mr David King
Carnival Organiser

CASULA HIGH SCHOOL UPDATE

This week at Casula High:

• Our Year 12 SLR students are enjoying currently coaching the younger students, including our special education students in a range of sports.
• Year 8 social science students are developing their origami skills by creating swans and frogs.
• 60 of our year 8 students participated in planting 200 plants in co-operation with Greening Australia. Well done!
• Casula High School has been invited to provide the musical entertainment for the “World’s Biggest Morning Tea” fundraiser to be held at the Casula Community Centre.
• Our Special Education students have begun their Claymation projects.
• Our Year 7 students are currently producing iMovies in their transitions lessons.
• Year 8 geography students are constructing their own globes for use in their classes.
• The Year 7 maths classes are building 3D shapes and drawing them in different perspectives.
• For more updates on our exciting achievements why not like us on Facebook? Find us at www.facebook.com/casulahighschool

If you have any queries please contact the school on 9602-4270, Emily Signorini, Transition Co-ordinator
KD and Mrs Denner

After many years on Stage 3, it was time for a change and moving to Kindergarten-Land has been awesome. Kindergarten is a year of growing socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually and as a teacher, I love going on a daily adventure with the students in KD.

As you enter through our classroom door you will meet many vibrant, fun loving, energetic children.

We are lucky in KD to have many parents who help with our learning.

We love celebrating coming to school. Taking time out to read for enjoyment. Using technology.

KD have an open classroom to any one who would like to visit, read a story or join in a game.
2M1 waterlilies artwork inspired by Claude Monet
### PSSA RESULTS

#### Term 2 – Round 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>BOYS SOCCER</strong></th>
<th><strong>FINAL SCORE</strong></th>
<th><strong>PLAYER OF THE MATCH</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JUNIOR A GAME 1</td>
<td>Vs Liverpool West</td>
<td>Win 6-1</td>
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<tr>
<td>JUNIOR B GAME 2</td>
<td>Vs Liverpool West</td>
<td>Win 5-1</td>
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<tr>
<td>JUNIOR A GAME 1</td>
<td>Vs Liverpool West</td>
<td>Win 9-0</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>GIRLS SOCCER</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JUNIOR A GAME 1</td>
<td>Vs Nuwarra</td>
<td>Win 7-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUNIOR B GAME 2</td>
<td>Vs Nuwarra</td>
<td>Win 1-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENIOR GAME 1</td>
<td>Vs Nuwarra</td>
<td>Draw 1-1</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>NETBALL</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JUNIOR GAME 1</td>
<td>Vs Nuwarra 2</td>
<td>Loss 7-1</td>
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<tr>
<td>GAME 2</td>
<td>Vs Dalmeny 2</td>
<td>Draw 1-1</td>
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<tr>
<td>SENIOR GAME 1</td>
<td>Vs Nuwarra 2</td>
<td>Win 14-3</td>
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<tr>
<td>GAME 2</td>
<td>Vs Dalmeny 2</td>
<td>Loss 5-2</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>RUGBY LEAGUE</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JUNIOR GAME</td>
<td>Vs Wattle Grove</td>
<td>Loss 20-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENIOR GAME</td>
<td>Vs Wattle Grove</td>
<td>Win 24-0</td>
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#### Round 2

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<tr>
<td>JUNIOR A GAME 1</td>
<td>Vs Marsden Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>JUNIOR B GAME 2</td>
<td>Vs Marsden Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>SENIOR GAME 1</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JUNIOR A GAME 1</td>
<td>Bye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUNIOR B GAME 2</td>
<td>Bye</td>
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<td>SENIOR GAME 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>JUNIOR GAME 1</td>
<td>Vs Holsworthy 2</td>
<td>Win – Forfeit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAME 2</td>
<td>Vs Liverpool West 1</td>
<td>Loss 10-0</td>
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<tr>
<td>SENIOR GAME 1</td>
<td>Vs Holsworthy 2</td>
<td>Loss 6-2</td>
</tr>
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<td>Vs Liverpool West 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>SENIOR GAME</td>
<td>Vs Holsworthy</td>
<td>Win 38-24</td>
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Why saying “I'm not good at maths” is just not good enough! by satiarc2014

How many times have you heard people say "I'm not good at maths"? Perhaps you've said it yourself. Often people make the statement with pride, almost implying it's 'cool' to be bad at maths. Imagine if the same number of people claimed "I'm not good at reading". I don't think it would be deemed socially acceptable - in fact, most people would be embarrassed to make that claim. So why is it okay to be openly negative about mathematics? Why do so many in the media openly claim to dislike mathematics, and why is mathematics seen as a domain only accessible to an elite group of 'smart' people? Research has proven humans are born numerate, so what happens in those few years when children are in school to make them hate maths?

Firstly, we need to look at what happens in the home. Parents need to think carefully about how they talk to their children about mathematics. Regardless of how they experienced school mathematics and how they perceive mathematics, claims like "I was never good at maths when I was at school" are not helpful. Children notice. Molly, a Year 6 participant in my PhD study, made this comment when asked about what her family think about mathematics: "My mum doesn't really like asking her because she thinks she doesn't have a maths brain. She thinks that she's got more of an English brain than anything else." Not surprisingly, Molly was not the only child who made that kind of comment.

Parents' negative attitudes or beliefs do have the potential to negatively influence children, particularly when not having a 'maths brain' can be used as an excuse for opting out of mathematics in the senior years of schooling. Evidence of this influence on children's thinking can be seen in this quote, where Christie, another participant, was describing her friends' attitudes towards mathematics: "Maybe some just don't enjoy it the way I do, they just think maybe it's not their subject. They might enjoy English."

So what can parents do to promote positive attitudes towards mathematics? Above all, they should never make negative comments about the subject. If you are a parent and you are having difficulty with helping your child, seek help in the primary years, many schools are happy to provide parent workshops to help parents understand new teaching methods. Workshops could also be held to help parents 'brush up' on their own mathematics skills. If your child is in secondary school and the mathematics they are learning requires more than a quick revision, don't panic. It's okay to say "I don't know" or "I don't remember how to do that" - try and find a way to assist your child in finding an explanation, whether it is by seeking help online, encouraging them to seek help from their teacher, or, if required, finding an appropriate tutor who may be able to provide some remediation. It's better to seek help early.

One of the challenges with mathematics is that the concepts are hierarchical. That is, if children don't develop a deep understanding of foundational topics such as place value, gaps in learning begin to occur. When mathematics becomes more complex, children who struggle with the foundations of mathematics cannot keep up with their peers and fall behind, often leading to negative attitudes, poor self-efficacy, and disengagement.

And now we turn to the classroom. What can teachers do to stop the "I'm not good at maths" comments from perpetuating a fear of mathematics? Firstly, talking to parents about this issue needs to be a priority. Next, think about how you can promote positive attitudes - I've written much about engagement and mathematics and there are lots of great teaching and learning ideas on this website and elsewhere. Another comment that we often hear is "when am I ever going to use this?" It's a fact that there is mathematics that some of us will never use once we leave school. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't learn it - if we don't we may be minimising future opportunities. Professor Edward Frenkel (one of my mathematical heroes) claims that school mathematics is often not presented in a way that highlights the connections to our daily lives (check out his video on YouTube). We don't always have to understand the complex mathematics that lies beneath Facebook, online shopping, traffic systems, etc., but we do need to be aware that mathematics plays a critical role in many aspects of our daily lives, regardless of what we do or where we are from.

Finally, I strongly believe we need to stop allowing those around us, in our lives and in the media, to make such negative statements about mathematics - if we don't take a stand things will never change, and it's definitely time for a positive change. Start your school week with this statement: "I love maths!" Feels good, doesn't it?
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