As I have started to gain a feel and understanding of the culture of Molong Central there have been several qualities of the school, staff and students that have impressed me. The beautiful surroundings with the combination of Native and European trees filled with an array of birds greet me each morning. This combined with recently updated landscaping create a peaceful and welcoming environment conducive to learning. I also have been impressed with the committed and caring staff. Teachers have knowledge of the students and demonstrate a responsibility for their learning. 

The office and support staff also plays a significant role at MCS and their professionalism and commitment to the students and teaching staff are a vital link in the education of students from K-12. 

In an attempt to familiarise myself with the student body in the High School I have wandered through the playground at recess and lunch and met many students from Year 7 to Year 12 and have been pleasantly surprised at what I have found. Students talk comfortably with each other and groups are often a mixture of year groups. Students also have communicated to me in a confident, respectful way. Their interactions with me confirm that they enjoy school and have a sense of responsibility for students in the year groups below them. 

Communication is a skill, I believe, that the students of MCS have that is an outstanding feature, and is a strength of students both in the Primary and the Secondary school. I have encouraged students to use these communication skills to assist them in the classroom. 

The Year 7 students have settled in well with teachers commenting on the way they have approached their studies and their conscientious attitude. I noticed some of the Year 7 students discussing their new experiences with Primary staff at lunch on Tuesday and they were genuinely excited at the opportunities they had experienced in their first week of High School. 

Years 7-10 were issued with their Assessment Programs last week and were guided through how to use them to their best advantage. The programs need to be referred to when determining when assessments are due, what to do if a student is sick or away on an excursion when a task is due as well as other details to support them when tasks are due. It would be a useful document for a parent to read and use as a discussion point when tasks are due. Many parents may relate to the “I don’t have any homework statement”. The programs allow a parent to see when and what assessment items are due.

The Primary and Secondary Swimming Carnivals ran smoothly last week thanks to the organisation and management of the teachers and parents. The participation at both events was exceptional as was the House support. House Captains at both the Secondary and Primary Carnivals performed their duties beautifully, encouraging participation and cheering on their house as well as organising relays. It was wonderful to see so many parents supporting their children at both events. The students and staff appreciate you being there and it is these informal occasions that provide opportunities to discuss your child’s education that I welcome.

My first Primary Assembly last week was an opportunity to celebrate student success and to acknowledge the House Captains for 2015. A feature of the assembly was the outstanding behaviour of all students but in particular the Kindergarten students who were settled and, under the guidance of their class teachers, participated with enthusiasm. 

I look forward to visiting some of the classrooms this week as the students become more aware of who I am and I start to learn some of the student’s names.

This has been challenging to me but as each day progresses I have started to put faces to names and for this reason I have encouraged the students to introduce themselves to me.

Mrs Michelle Barrett
Principal
AN ESSENTIAL QUALITY TO Instill IN CHILDREN
One common trait all successful adults have is resilience. The ability to bounce back from disappointment is something we have the opportunity to teach our children every day.

As our kids constantly remind us, life isn't always fair. Is it a parent's role to constantly try to make life fair? How do we balance the desire to shelter and protect our children with the need to teach them how to cope with life's disappointments?

The School A to Z website asked top teachers all over NSW for their tips for parents on developing resilience so children can succeed in the face of unexpected challenges. These tips include:

- Resilience doesn't come naturally to all kids - we need to specifically teach those skills.
- Always saving your child from failure doesn't give them the opportunity to learn better skills.
- To interact effectively with their peers, our kids need to develop resilience.
- Commend your child's strengths, and be positive about their abilities to improve their other skills.
- Self-esteem comes from conquering challenges, not from constant praise that everything we do is brilliant!
- Kids notice how well parents handle stress and challenges and then copy those behaviours.
- Extracurricular activities help develop social skills.
- Life isn't always fair. Teach your child how to accept that and adapt to challenging circumstances.
- Create opportunities for your child to talk about their problems - teens often open up more if you're doing some activity together.

As students make their way through school life they will encounter disappointments, they will make mistakes, they will be held to account for their actions or at times lack of action.

It is how a student and at times also the parents react to these occasions that determines if the student is going to develop the all-important quality of resilience.

If you would like further information on helping your child develop resilience follow the link http://www.schoolatoz.nsw.edu.au/wellbeing/development/developing-resilience-in-your-child

STUDY CENTRE
“Hello everyone!

I am sure you are all looking forward to a successful 2015. To help you on the journey to success I have included in this newsletter "What is Study?" a guide for junior students (especially Year 7) and their parents, for when there is "no homework".

The STUDY CENTRE will be open on Wednesday and Thursday at lunchtime in A3 providing an opportunity for students to access computers and staff support for the completion of assessment tasks and coursework.

I will be contacting parents of students needing Learning and Support Plan meetings in the next few weeks.”

Sonya Mason
Learning and Support Teacher (Secondary)

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
We are continuing our push this year on improved student attendance from K-12 – all the statistics show that children whom attend school every day do much better not only at school, but beyond school as well. Think of the maths involved:-

- If absent for just 1 day per week
- This is 10 days per term.
- Or 40 days per year which equates to
- 8 weeks of the year. Nearly a full term!
- Do this from Year K-6 and 56 weeks or nearly 1.5 school years are missed.
- Do this from Year 7-10 and 32 weeks or nearly a year of school is missed.

This is schooling that can't be caught up on, each day counts.

Of course we know that sickness can prevent attendance, but can we encourage you to send a note to the school ASAP to explain the absence.

Principals are legally responsible for keeping accurate records of student attendance.

Please find attached with this Newsletter the Departmental Register Codes for absences; most importantly please note the change to the exemption for family holidays.

They will no longer be accepted as an exemption from school attendance and will be recorded as leave.

Scott Taprell,
Deputy Principal

MERIT AWARD
Tane HOETE
Home Reading Program – Club 200
While students may have already started borrowing books for home reading from their classrooms, our "Club 200" Home Reading Program officially begins next week on Monday 16th February for K-6 students. Could parents please support their child's reading practice by encouraging participation in the Club 200 during 2015.
An explanation is included on the first signature sheet called Club 25, which will be sent home on Monday - this will be most helpful to families new to our school.
Each child is encouraged to read for 5 - 10 minutes each night (new Kindergarten children may be read to by a parent or older sibling). This provides a great incentive for children to read at home on a daily basis, using books borrowed from their classroom at a suitable level of difficulty (books can be changed daily or a borrowed book may be read over a longer period of time). Older and more capable readers may choose other reading material for Club 200 Home Reading.
• Only one signature a day is recorded on the sheet.
• To receive an award at the completion of each sheet (that is 25 signatures); please return it to the Primary Office within a week of completion.
• Prompt return of each sheet means your child can gain all eight awards during the year (Club 25, 50, 75...to Club 200). This includes morning tea with the Principal to celebrate reaching Club 100 and the presentation of a book prize award (of your child's choosing) once Club 200 is reached.

Primary Swimming Carnival
Last Wednesday Primary students participated in the annual Swimming Carnival. The weather was great as was the organisation by Mrs Schaefer and Mrs Mutton to ensure the carnival was successful.
A big thankyou also to the parents for helping with the timekeeping and also the BBQ.

Our 2015 Champions are:
Junior Girls Champion - Taylah Hobbs
Junior Boys Champion - Lachlan Hobbs
11 years Girl Champion - Hannah Leisk
11 years Boy Champion - Angus Quigley
Senior Girls Champion - Molly Weekes
Senior Boys Champion - Jacob Duncan
WINNING HOUSE - Paterson

Awards
Silver: Marley Vandervelde
Gold: Grace Parry
Banner: Charlotte Twaddle
Badge: Emmison Shapland   Molli Huggett   Taylah Hobbs

★ STUDENT OF THE WEEK ★

Class    Student
K Hope    Olivia Hobbs - For being a quiet and sensible hard worker.
K/1 Blue Cow    Juliette Whyburn - For fantastic effort with recount writing
1 Barrington    Sam Milne - For working hard in all areas.
1/2 Snowy    Sam Ball - Trying his best in everything.
2 Tomah    Jamaine Trapman - For a fantastic start to Year 2.
3 Bimberi    Jerome McKellar - For a great effort with his writing
3/4 Canobolas    Noah Lake - For presenting neat work and trying hard at everything.
4/5 Zeil    Delta Rodwell - For a wonderful start to the year.
5/6 Gibraltar    Emma Adams - For an enthusiastic approach to her work.
5/6 Kosciuszko    Ella Kirby - For a fantastic start to Year 5.
Library    Cody Brown - For excellent participation in Library.

Uniform Award – Tuesday
Week 2 Term 1
Stage 1 - Priscilla Power
Stage 2 - Lacey Brown
Stage 3 - Alex Davis

There will be assembly this Thursday
No class item, 2.20pm start

Have a wonderful week!!
Jane Backhouse
Deputy Principal - Primary
Hi everyone,

After discussions with Mrs Barrett and Mrs Backhouse it has been decided that it would be great to support the following competition and see if we can win the $10,000 grant. I will send a note home soon to determine how many families wish to take part.

Apologies for the Scholastic catalogue not arriving home last week but it will be distributed later this week. Enjoy a week of reading and learning!

Mrs Hall

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**HELP MOLONG CENTRAL SCHOOL KICKSTART 2015 WITH A $10,000 GRANT PLUS GREAT REWARDS FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!**

The Primary School Challenge is open to students in NSW, VIC, QLD, SA and WA in Years 4-7 or aged 9-13 years. Students are asked to watch Australia: The Story of Us on Sunday nights on Channel 7 or its affiliates, starting this Sunday 6th February, then answer the week’s corresponding quiz questions on the following website: Yahoo7.com.au/StoryOfUs-Quiz

There will be 10 student questions each week, either multiple choice or true/false, plus a bonus question for parents. Repeats of the program are available on the website, so it is easy to still participate even if you miss a week.

**How our school can participate:**

- Students will register their school to start the quiz. A parent/guardian must register and consent at the same time.
- The more students from the eligible grades who participate, the more chance the school has of qualifying for the $10,000 grant.
- Schools will accumulate points based on student engagement as well as correct answers. This will be further detailed in the terms and conditions at the commencement of The Primary School Challenge.
- Finalist schools will be contacted by mid April 2015 and the Principal or an elected school representative will be asked to submit a short response outlining how the school would use the $10,000 grant.

*The Primary School Challenge starts 8th February*

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**CANTENE 13/2/2015 – 20/2/15**

**HELP IS DESPERATELY NEEDED ON THIS ROSTER.** Please give one morning per month to the Canteen—that is all it takes. Ring the Canteen on 6366 9009 from 8.30am-1.45pm. If you can’t work on your day just call me. Thank you, Tina McGovern, Canteen Manager.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>16/2/15</th>
<th>17/2/15</th>
<th>18/2/15</th>
<th>19/2/15</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>Monday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
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13/2/15  2nd FRIDAY

HELP NEEDED
MOLONG CENTRAL SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

It is a legal requirement and a major responsibility of parents and carers that children attend school every day that it is open for instruction.

Parents should NOT keep a child away from school for the following reasons, as they are NOT considered acceptable: birthdays, shopping, minding other children, routine check-ups or care such as haircuts, minor family events, regular appointments (ie. private swimming or music lessons) which require students to leave school early.

Whilst we acknowledge that not all specialist medical and dental appointments can be made after school, we request that where possible, every attempt is made to arrange these visits after school hours, or during school holidays.

After each absence a note needs to be sent to the school within two days to explain the absence. Information on the note must clearly state the reason for the absence, giving an indication of the type of illness or justifiable reason for absence which prevented the student from being at school, or alternatively parents may like to make a telephone call to the school and explain the reason for the child’s absence.

If parents do not send in a justified explanatory note following the child’s absence, this absence will show up as A (unjustified leave) on their school attendance record.

Student exemptions (M) can be sought if parents are aware of an event which may cause a period of absence, such as: hospital based treatment, family bereavement or infectious illness.

These exemptions need to be applied for in advance or as soon as possible into/after the series of absences. This can be put into place with a phone call to the school, or by picking up an exemption form from the Main Office or Primary Office.

If a child’s absence was a sensitive issue or for personal reasons and you do not wish to discuss the absences with our Office Staff, you may ask to speak to either myself or the Deputy Principal, or you may post your absence letter to the school and mark it “Confidential” and for the “Attention of The Principal”.

We continue to seek the cooperation of parents in caring for the educational needs of MCS students, and this includes regular attendance at school.

Yours Sincerely,
Mrs Michelle Barrett,
Principal

May I please ask that you take time to read over the page and below, so that you are fully aware of the type of absences that will be justified by the NSW Department of Education and the correct wording for acceptable absence notes.

EXAMPLES OF ABSENCE NOTES:

CORRECT
Dear Mrs. Barrett,
My son, John Smith was away on 13/10/2015, as he had a family bereavement.
Parent/Guardian Signature: ………………………
Parent/Guardian Name: Mrs. J Smith
Date: 14/10/2015

CORRECT
Dear Mrs. Barrett,
My son, John Smith was away on 13/10/2015, as he was very sick with tonsillitis.
Parent/Guardian Signature: ………………………
Parent/Guardian Name: Mrs. J Smith
Date: 14/10/2015

CORRECT
Dear Mrs. Barrett,
Please allow my son, John Smith to leave school at 2.30pm on 13/10/2015, as he has an orthodontic appointment in Orange.
We were unable to do this after school hours.
Parent/Guardian Signature: ………………………
Parent/Guardian Name: Mrs. J Smith
Date: 14/10/2015

INCORRECT
Dear Mrs. Barrett,
My son, John Smith was away last Thursday, as he had family commitments.
Parent/Guardian Signature: ………………………

INCORRECT
Dear Mrs. Barrett,
John was away last Thursday, as he needs a leave pass.
Parent/Guardian Signature: ………………………

INCORRECT
Dear Mrs. Barrett,
John needs a leave pass for Thursday, as he has an appointment in Orange.
Parent/Guardian Signature: ………………………
# ATTENDANCE REGISTER CODES

Government and non-Government schools use a set of common codes to record the attendance of students. The Minister for Education has approved the following changes to the use of the Attendance Register Codes for 2015.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Change in definition and description for 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>The student’s absence is unexplained or unjustified.</td>
<td>The revised description reinforces that it is at the Principals discretion to accept or not accept the explanation provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>The student’s absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical or paramedical appointment.</td>
<td>Clarifies that the principal may request a medical certificate in addition to explanations if the explanation is doubted, or the student has a history of unsatisfactory attendance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>An explanation of the absence is provided which has been accepted by the Principal.</td>
<td>Now includes travel in Australia and overseas. The 15 day limit on the use of this code for an individual student in a year has been removed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>The student was exempted from attending school and a Certificate of Exemption has been issued by a delegated officer.</td>
<td>Family holidays are no longer an accepted category for exemption from school attendance. This is now recorded as leave using symbol “L”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>The student is participating in a flexible timetable and not present because they are not required to be at school.</td>
<td>Now includes Kindergarten students participating in Best Start assessment and senior students in exam periods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>The student is enrolled in a school and is required or approved to be attending an alternative educational setting on a sessional or full time basis.</td>
<td>Applies to students who are enrolled in a school but are required or approved to be attending an alternative educational setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>The student is absent from school on official school business Eg: school organised sporting events &amp; excursions.</td>
<td>The inclusion of student participation in international student exchange.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>