Dear Parents/ Carers

This Bulletin is being sent in hard copy to Year 7& 8 only as a further reminder to access it on the Website go to www.berendale.vic.edu.au and subscribe to the Bulletin.

All of our new students are settling in very well and we are getting to know them much better. We have suggested some class changes to parents because we believe that some of the students are more suited to different groups.

Community BBQ and Information Night:

I hope every family is represented at the BBQ and Information Night. This is a family event and all the family are welcome, however it is important that you respond to the note which has been sent home so that we have an idea of numbers. The BBQ is available at 5.00 pm and no food will be available after 6.30 pm when the Information Sessions will begin. All food is supplied and we have catered for a range of diets and cultures so there should be something for everyone.

School Council:

If you are interested in School Council self-nomination forms were sent home last week. If you have any queries please ring me to discuss Council responsibilities. I encourage all interested parents to nominate.

If anyone is interested, and would like an idea of what happens, our first School Council meeting is on Wednesday 20th February at 6.00pm. Visitors are welcome however they do not have voting rights.

New Bus:

Our new 8 seater bus will be picked up this week. We thank Bendigo Bank who have kindly agreed to pay the lease for five years. There is no residual so it is a great deal and the bus will be fully owned by us. The Highett Branch has been so generous to the school and I wholly recommend them to you.

School Fees:

Just a reminder that School Fees are not a voluntary payment but as in other Secondary Schools, they are fees for areas not covered by Government funding. We ask that you pay fees and will happily discuss payment options. We would also be happy to receive donations to the school which are tax deductible.

Annual General Meeting:

Please keep March 20th free for the AGM. It is a great night and a celebration of achievements at Berendale. Many of the students will be performing and /or will be featured in Sub School Presentations. A note will be sent home closer to the event

Have a great week

Paula Barnett
WELFARE MATTERS

Family Support

Currently Beyond the School Gates is offering the following Family Support Programs. ‘Making It Real’ (Resilience, enhancing strengths & active learning) is a series of 6 free workshops for parents of young people with a disability. Please visit the website www.beyondtheschoolgates.org.au for further information or to book a place. The first session is to be held at MOIRA in Hampton East this Tuesday evening so don’t delay if you are interested in participating.

The second program ‘Parent to Parent Peer Support Training’ is designed to provide parents with the skills to support other parents. Please contact Kerri Rolfe at MOIRA 8552 2222 for more information.

The Family Support Group is still working on ways to engage our fathers. If you have any suggestions please let us know.

Immunisation Reminder

Immunisation cards have been sent home to parents of our Year 7, 9 & 10 students. Could you please ensure the return of cards by this Friday 22nd February, even if your son or daughter won’t be participating in the program. The information forms part of an important data base. Once again, thank you for your co-operation.

Student Transport

A reminder that it is parents’ responsibility to notify the bus company directly when your son or daughter does not require transport at anytime. Bayside Coaches 9523 2555 or Crown Coaches 9845 1455. The daily run sheets are finalised before the buses leave the depot so the earlier the notification the better. You can always leave a message after hours quoting the student’s name, ID number, school and the particular bus run.

A reminder that all independent travellers will only need to pay $9 for their 2013 student concession card, the cost of the MYKI update is met by the department.

Joint Councils Access for all Abilities (JCAAA) Drama Program ‘Stitched Up’

There are several vacancies for the Monday afternoon drama program ‘Stitched Up’. Students travel from school by mini bus to the South Melbourne Community Centre for each session, and return to the St Kilda Town Hall for pick up between 5:45 and 6:00pm. The cost is $10 per session. Please let me know if you are interested or contact Stella direct at JCAAA 9209 6159 or email: rstella@portphillip.vic.gov.au

Speech Pathology

Our visiting speech pathologist, Carisse Matthews still has some vacancies for Term 1. If you would like to discuss your student’s participation please contact Carisse on 0439 968 785. This is a fee for service arrangement, and can be made through a Health Care Plan from your family doctor.

RDA Vacancies

We have one vacancy for ‘Riding for the Disabled’ held on alternate Fridays and commencing this week. Please let me know as soon as possible if you would like your student to participate as an application form and medical needs to be completed. There are also costs involved to cover riding fees and the compulsory insurance.

Maree McCutcheon
WHEN PAYING SCHOOL FEES
When depositing school fees in to the school’s bank account it is very important to add in the student’s name so it can be easily identified.

IMPORTANT DATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 20th February 2013</td>
<td>6.00 pm</td>
<td>School Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 26th February 2013</td>
<td>5.00 pm</td>
<td>Welcome BBQ / Information night</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 11th March 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>Public Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 20th March</td>
<td></td>
<td>AGM / Student Performance Night</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday 28th March 2013</td>
<td>2.00 p.m. Finish</td>
<td>End of Term 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 15th April 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>Start of Term 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday 25th April 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>Public Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 13th May 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>Student free day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 10th June 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>Public Holiday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 28th June 2013</td>
<td>2.00 pm Finish</td>
<td>End of Term 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 15th July 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>Start of Term 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 29th August 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>Student free day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 20th September 2013</td>
<td>2.00 pm Finish</td>
<td>End of Term 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 7th October 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>Start of Term 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 5th November 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>Public Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 19th November 2013</td>
<td>6.00 pm</td>
<td>Performance and Awards Night</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 20th December 2013</td>
<td>12.00 pm Finish</td>
<td>End of Term 4</td>
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Education Maintenance Allowance - information for parents currently receiving EMA

Changes to the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) for 2013:
The EMA continues to help families on lower incomes with financial assistance to cover the cost of educational expenses including textbooks, stationery, uniforms and excursions for their child up until the age of 16.

From 2013, the Victorian Government is restructuring the EMA to better target financial support to families on lower incomes. Payments made direct to parents will be increased for eligible recipients at all year levels up to age 16, with an additional increase for parents with students in Years Prep and 7 in recognition of the additional costs at these transition points.

In 2013 the annual EMA payment for families with children in primary school (years 1-6) will receive a payment of $150. Families with children in secondary school (Year 8 up until the age of 16) will receive an annual payment of $250.

The School Start Bonus which was previously received by EMA families has been discontinued as a separate payment from 2013. However, additional funding has been incorporated into the EMA meaning that parents of children in Prep and Year 7 will receive boosted EMA payments of $200 and $300 respectively in those years.

From 2013, the EMA will no longer be paid 50/50 between the parent and the school. The 50% school portion of the EMA will no longer be paid to schools on behalf of parents. However, $62 million over four years will be redirected to the State’s most needy schools to assist families on lower incomes. These funds will form part of the school Student Resource Packages to be allocated at the local level.

New EMA payment option

From 2013, on the EMA application form you can choose to have your EMA payment;

♦ Paid by direct deposit (Electronic Funds Transfer) into your nominated bank account or
♦ Paid by cheque which will be posted to the school for collection or

Paid to the school to be held as credit which you can use towards education expenses

The introduction of the new payment option to have the EMA payment directed to the school provides parents with extra flexibility to assist with budgeting towards education expenses.
**Eligibility:**
To be eligible for the EMA in 2013, you must:

be either a parent or guardian of a primary or secondary school student up to the age of sixteen; and

be an eligible beneficiary of a Centrelink pension, allowance or benefit within the meaning of the *State Concessions Act 2004* or be a Veterans Affairs (TPI) pensioner or be a temporary foster parent.

* i.e – the parent/guardian must be the holder of a valid Health Care Card or valid Pension Card.

The eligibility criteria must be met as at **29 January 2013** (Installment One) and **15 July 2013** (Installment Two).

**Payment Amounts - 2013:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Prep</th>
<th>Years 1 - 6</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 8 – Age 16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instalment One</strong></td>
<td>$140</td>
<td>$105</td>
<td>$210</td>
<td>$175</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Instalment Two</strong></td>
<td>$60</td>
<td>$45</td>
<td>$90</td>
<td>$75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annual Total</strong></td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>$250</td>
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*Student year level (or age for ungraded and special school students) will determine the amount payable. Parents of students turning 16 years in 2013 are paid on a pro rata basis.

**Contact:** School Office for an EMA application form and to lodge your application. The closing date for EMA application forms to be submitted to the school is **28 February 2013**.