Diary Dates

- Friday 4\textsuperscript{th} April - Last day this term
- Tuesday 22\textsuperscript{nd} April - First day back for Classroom Volunteers
- Monday 28\textsuperscript{th} April - First day back for Support a Reader and Help Our Writing Volunteers
- Friday 9\textsuperscript{th} May - Boys to Men Day
- 12\textsuperscript{th}-18\textsuperscript{th} May - National Volunteer Week

News from Milpera!

International Women's Day

This year Milpera celebrated its 22\textsuperscript{nd} International Women’s Day. The theme for the day was “Ending Poverty for Women and Children.” Adele Rice, our Past Principal spoke and reminded us that women and children are the poorest people in the world. She acknowledged all women in the school and those who have been and are associated with the school. We were reminded that boys, fathers and uncles need to support education for women, as education is the key that opens the locks to young girls. There needs to be gender equity and the same opportunities for girls and women as there are for boys and men. The students were told to believe in themselves, in their potential and to be grateful for opportunities that they get. Adele said that it is important to overcome things they feel they can’t do, but can do if they have the right support. We were told that violence against men often took place in public, whereas violence against women often took place in silence, in the home or by someone known to them. If students suffer from anxiety they should seek support so that these things don’t become a barrier to their learning. Adele highlighted that policies towards refugees are harsh and that we need kindness and compassion to support refugees, especially women at risk. Kindness and compassion go hand in hand with human rights which are essential for every society. Relationships and friendships that bear fruit change society.
Shifna Mohamed Fazahir who is now at Kedron State High School spoke about her struggles when she came to Australia from Sri Lanka. She told us how terrified and nervous she was when she arrived in Australia and spoke about her dream of becoming a doctor. She said Australia offers women freedom and that women must stand together and focus on education as it is the key to unlocking problems. She encouraged the students to master themselves and to follow their dreams.

The students were engaged by other speakers and performers. After the celebrations they took part in different activities such as Yoga, Vulcana circus, Nia dancing and fashion design.

Stanley River Camp

Room 17 and 23 went on camp this term. The students had a wonderful time canoeing, fishing and cooking. One of the highlights of the trip was seeing kangaroos. Tom Beck joined one of the classes for a night and noted how enraptured the students were by the beauty of the landscape and the chance to encounter wild kangaroos and birds and to be away from an urban environment.

Enrolments

Milpera started this year with its highest enrolments for the beginning of a school year (277 on Day 8.) At the beginning of the year over a quarter of the school’s population were students from asylum seeker backgrounds. However in week three, there was only one student within this demographic amongst all the new enrolments (in 2013 there were over 100.) This is the result of Federal Government policies. The new enrolments early in the term were made up of a mixture of refugees:- the dependants of lone female parents (women at risk), members of blended overseas/Australian families and business migrants. They have come from a wide range of countries with the biggest numbers being Somali refugees. At present we have 302 students, 57 of whom will be heading off to destination schools or to TAFE at the end of this term.

Library refurbishment and New Block

The library was closed for a few weeks so that walls could be demolished, new carpets fitted and new cabinets installed. Our much larger library space is now in use. Rooms 24, 25 and 26 are now fully operational. Mr Le now has a much bigger space in Room 25 and Room 26 is now a fully equipped kitchen.
QUT/Australian Catholic University Research partnership

Milpera is enhancing its research partnership with QUT and ACU. The intention is to establish a longitudinal research program for Milpera students to the end of their secondary education or TAFE to determine the factors in both their individual circumstances and their education that have influenced their outcomes. This will enable targeted intervention strategies to be delivered on the basis of evidence and potentially provide more leverage for the school to secure more support for students.

National Dress Day

The Student Leaders organised a beautiful assembly where everyone got to showcase their national dress and to talk about their costumes.
**Change of details**

If your physical address, e-mail or telephone number has changed, please give me the new information, so that I can update our records.

**With thanks**

Thank you for giving of your time so generously and for making a difference to our students’ lives. Your donations to the breakfast club and your gift of two bursaries at the Exit Parade demonstrate your dedication to and care for our students.