MERRIVALE PRIMARY SCHOOL
SCHOOL COUNCIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
PRESIDENT’S REPORT

It was a busy and productive 2013 for the Merrivale Primary School Council (‘School Council’). The following serves as an overview of School Council activities over the past year.

Building and Grounds
One of School Council’s key functions is to maintain the School Grounds and Facilities.

Capital works and maintenance

In 2013 School Council devoted significant resource to planning and delivering various capital works and maintenance in the School grounds. Some $22,000 in capital works were undertaken in the School grounds over the course of the year. Examples of some of the capital works items completed during 2013 include:

- Painting and carpeting of a number of classrooms;
- Playground repairs;
- Roof repairs; and
- Construction of the Children’s Garden (see overleaf)
Children’s ‘Coastal Themed’ Garden Project

During 2013 significant resource (both in-kind hours and dollars) was devoted to progressing the School’s new ‘coastal themed’ Children’s Garden located at the front of the new hall along Landman St. The ‘hard yakka’ of creating the infrastructure (earth moving, concreting, boat and bollard installation) is now complete.

Thank you to Susan Smith for her commitment and enthusiasm towards delivering this Project. Susan and fellow School Council member John Van Someren spent a good part of their Winter school holidays shovelling dirt and mulch in wild weather! Thank you also to the many other volunteers who have generously given their time (big and small!) to make this project happen.

We can now look forward to finalising the Children’s Garden Project in 2014 with plantings and other finishing touches that will create a terrific play space for our children and significantly enhance the amenity of our School Grounds.
**School Signage Project**

In December 2013 the School Community Sign was installed in the School Grounds. Thank you to the Midfield Group who fully funded ($6,000) the costs of fabrication and installation of the signage. It is hoped the signage will raise awareness of the many activities and achievements that occur within our School and enhance communication between families, the School and the wider community – a key responsibility of School Council.

**New ‘Tribes’ Wall**

The School’s colourful new 18-metre long graffiti wall has been a big hit with students, promoting the values of the Tribes Program and dramatically enhancing an otherwise blank playground wall. Thanks to Anthea Rafferty and artist ‘Damo’ for creating the wall to give a strong visual message about “what the school is about”.

Merrivale Primary School Council – President’s Annual Report 2013, AGM (12<sup>th</sup> March 2014)
**Fundraising and Community**

Fundraising is another key function of School Council. In the absence of fundraising it is unlikely the delivery of many projects in and around the School would be possible. The major fundraiser of the School is the bi-annual Fun Fair. 2013 was a breather from the Fun Fair but created the opportunity to ‘trial’ a School Community Fun Run/Walk which was held in November 2013.

_School Community Fun Run/Walk 2013_

The School Community Fun Run/Walk was a resounding success with 180+ enthusiastic walkers and runners embarking on the 4km (walk) and 5 km (run) along our nearby Merri River Rail Trail. I am pleased to report that all entrants returned in fine fiddle (bar a couple of dad’s who appeared to ‘pull a hammy’). The Fun Run/Walk raised over $1,700 with $500 of the proceeds put towards Peter’s Project which is fundraising to build an integrated cancer care centre in Warrnambool. The remainder of the funds will be put towards a Building and Grounds Project with further details to be communicated to the School Community in 2014.

Thank you to Troy Tampion (School Council and staff member) and Bec Clark (staff member) and the many others who gave up their time to assist with the organisation of this event. The School Community Fun Run/Walk has great potential to be held on a regular basis and get even bigger. It’s a great way for our School Community to supplement fundraising activities, embrace health and wellbeing messages, and also have a School Community yak and giggle along the way!

School Council looks forward to again receiving the full support of the School community for our primary fundraiser – the 2014 Fun Fair!
Parents Club

School Council is indebted to the tireless work of Parents Club members who provide a host of in-kind services to the School – fundraising, catering for School events, organising family nights, morning teas, food share programs, and much more.

Our School is much the richer in activity, positive experiences, (and bank balance!) due to the work of the Parents Club. Please refer to the Parents Club Annual Report 2013 for further description of the wide and wonderful activities undertaken over the past 12 months.

The Parents Club is an important voice of all parents in our School and can take pride in knowing that what they achieve is directed back to our children’s education. Thank you to Parents Club President Lia Kelson and the hardworking Parents Club members for another mighty year! (and please remember to take a breather)
Strategic Planning and School Performance

An important function of School Council is to establish the broad direction and vision of the School. This is articulated through the *School Strategic Plan* which sets out the School’s vision, goals, timelines and strategies for achieving those goals.

The *School Strategic Plan* aims to reflect the community’s expectations and the Government’s priorities for early childhood development across three outcome areas:
- Student Learning
- Student Engagement and Wellbeing
- Student Pathways and Transitions

The *School Strategic Plan* was reviewed periodically through 2013.

The delivery of the *School Strategic Plan* is driven by the School’s *Annual Implementation Plan* which sets out clear goals and targets to describe how the vision connects with practice on a day-to-day basis. Over the course of the year School Council reviewed progress against the Annual Implementation Plan.

The *Annual Report to the School Community* summarises what our school is doing and how it is performing (including comparisons of performance with other Victorian Government Schools).

If not done so already, I would encourage all members of the School Community to familiarise themselves with these important documents which contain clear statements of key improvement strategies and actions to further enhance the educational outcomes of our School.

In particular, our School has made great progress towards strengthening the use of data for managing School performance. Thank you to our School Principal Susan Farrell and staff involved for your time and effort in collating, analysing and presenting clear and meaningful educational data to School Council and the wider community. Our children are the beneficiaries of sound evidenced based data to identify learning needs, resourcing and curriculum delivery.
School Council sub-committees

School Council recognizes that many members of our School Community would love to participate in some way but we also appreciate that you cannot or may not want to commit to the role of being a School Council member. Sub-committees are the perfect way to contribute your ideas without the commitment of being a Council member.

During 2013 School Council reorganised its sub-committee structure including the creation of two new sub-committees in the area of Health & Wellbeing; and Education & Policy. There are now six areas of interest where our School Community can directly contribute to our School:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Committee</th>
<th>Convenor</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Linda Mooseek</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents Club</td>
<td>Lia Kelson (President)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sustainable Schools (Buildings/Grounds)</td>
<td>Susan Smith</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health and Wellbeing</td>
<td>Lidia Allen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education and Policy</td>
<td>Will King (vacant 2014)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Relations</td>
<td>Andrew Paton (interim)</td>
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A School Council member is responsible (Convenor) for each sub-committee. Thank you to all individuals who participated in our sub-committees over 2013 and in particular, the aforementioned Convenors who regularly reported progress of their respective sub-committees to School Council. School Community input is vital to the functioning of these sub-committees.

It is hoped that as the new sub-committee structure builds momentum it will trigger increasing levels of parent and community participation at the School. School Council sub-committees are open to anyone in our School Community. They are a great way for you to contribute (big or small) towards the future direction of our School. Sub-committees meet throughout the year. Meetings are informal and there is flexibility in when and how they are held. You would join a sub-committee that most interests you and would discuss matters within that area. You can give as little or as much time as you can allow – any input you can offer is valued.

School Council members responsible for each sub-committee would be delighted to hear from you during 2014.
Finance

School Council is responsible for approving the annual budget and monitoring expenditure. The Finance sub-committee held eleven meetings through 2013 to oversee the School’s financial performance. Thank you to Finance Sub-Committee Convenor, Linda Moosmek, and other members of the Finance sub-committee for your diligence in discharging School Council’s financial responsibilities in this area.

Over the first quarter 2013 an independent audit was undertaken of the School Council accounts for the year ended 31 December 2012. Thank you to the Principal Ms Susan Farrell and the School’s Business Manager for assisting with the independent audit, the culmination of which was a clean bill of financial health in the way financial statements (and the information they contain) were prepared.

Policy development

Over the course of the year Council developed, reviewed and updated various School policies. A particular thank you to members of the Health and Wellbeing sub-committee (Convened by Lidia Allen) who, in partnership with Mandy Jones (School Staff), reviewed and updated a high number of Health and Wellbeing policies that have subsequently been ratified by School Council.

School Council

There were eleven meetings of the whole School Council in 2013. All School Council governance requirements in relation to statutory, legal, finance and audit, and education were completed. It is imperative that decisions made by School Council are properly understood and well recorded. Thank you again to School Council Secretary Julie Scoble for efficiently delivering the important (and time-consuming!) task of true and accurate minutes of all School Council business undertaken through the year.
Should you be curious, School Council meetings are open for anyone to attend (excluding any items of a confidential nature). It is my hope that interest in the wide range of School Council activities will continue to grow and most importantly, every member of the School Community, should they wish to do so, have the opportunity to have a say.

I would like to acknowledge those members of Council whose terms have now concluded and will not be re-nominating at this point in time. A sincere thank you is extended to outgoing Council members Troy Tampion (8 years) and Will King (2 years) for service provided to School Council.

The aforementioned achievements in this report did not just occur but were undertaken by a dedicated and enthusiastic group of parents, staff and school supporters, who in their own right have a family, work life and commitments over and above this school. I would like to acknowledge all members of the 2013 School Council for their contributions over the year.

School Council recommends that parents take the time to consider the 2013 Annual Report to the School Community that is available for all families at the office. Our Principal, staff, School Council, and our School Community set high expectations. It is one of the benefits of being on School Council to see ‘first hand’ the excellent work undertaken to improve how our children learn. It is also enlightening to gauge an appreciation of the many challenges and layers of complexities that our School, and the broader Education System, deals with on a day to day basis that must be overcome to progress educational outcomes (eg. whether it be limited budgets, compliance with Departmental regulations, or tough decisions on competing priorities).

Finally, thank you to our Principal Susan Farrell, and the committed and talented staff of Merrivale Primary School for the amazing work you do with our children in guiding them through these most formative years.

We can reflect on 2013 as a busy and productive year.

Andrew Paton
School Council President (2013)
Merrivale Primary School
12th March 2014