Mr Mark Ireland
Principal

From the Principal’s Desk...

The term comes to an end next Friday, 10th April and we will dismiss at 2.00 pm. This is one hour earlier than our normal dismissal time. Please make arrangements for the early dismissal on the day. It has been a busy term as we have worked hard to set up the routines and conditions for learning for the rest of the year. It has been a reasonably mild summer but we are looking forward to cooler weather for the next couple of terms.

External Review.

In the first month of next term the school will undergo an external review and the review will identify areas that we need to work on over the coming years. This is quite a timely thing as it will give us some objective views around what we do well and what we need to work on. We can then set our longer term strategic plans around what has been identified and work towards addressing them.

Naplan.

Our students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 will sit the NAPLAN testing in Week 3 next term. The NAPLAN testing is done in a way that we as a school do not use very much at all as part of our teaching. We have been undertaking some practice testing as we get to know the format of the test so that students feel comfortable with the style and presentation of the testing. The testing regime runs across 3 days and takes in 5 aspects of literacy and numeracy. Some students get very nervous and wound up over the testing period as they feel that there are massive expectations on them to perform. If you feel that your child will suffer undue pressure from the testing then please discuss it with your child’s teacher. It is possible to withdraw your child from the testing if you feel that nothing will be gained from their participation in the test or that it will have a negative effect on them.

Farewell and thanks.

We say farewell to Ms Megan Winen this week. Megan has had to leave and return to Adelaide and so we say farewell and thank her for her work here at Coober Pedy over a number of years. She has done a terrific job with her classes and made a strong contribution to the school over her time here. We are working with DECD to have a replacement for her class to start next term.

Security fencing contract.

We are expecting the security fencing contract to go to tender shortly and there is likely to be an ‘on site’ meeting of contractors in the first week of next term. By the time the tender has been released and contractors have responded, it is not likely to see any work until the next school holidays. We are looking forward to having the fence as we have a number of projects planned to make the school look more attractive once we can protect work over night and over weekends.

Upcoming Dates to Remember...

Easter long weekend—Friday 3rd to Monday 6th April.

Last day of school 2pm dismissal Friday 10th April.
Parent teacher interviews.

A big thank you to parents who were able to get to the parent teacher interviews over the last few weeks. They are a great way to share information about your child/ren and to plan together so that we can address any issues or concerns around your child’s progress. Please remember that we can set up a meeting or interview at any time during the year if you have concerns or issues that you want to raise or just check on progress. It is best to set up an interview time rather than just try and catch teachers, as they are often busy in the mornings and have a duty of care to all students once the school day has begun so teacher may not be able to give you the time you need to have a complete conversation.

Attendance update.

Just a reminder about the importance of your child being at school and arriving on time to start the day. Our attendance rate so far this term has been 75%. This means that a number of students are missing school regularly and this has a massive impact on their learning and their confidence here at school. It is hard to catch up once you start to fall behind the others in the class. When you don’t know or understand what is going on, it is really hard to feel comfortable at school and so the number of absences starts to increase. The RSAS team are available and out in the community to assist if there are concerns or issues around school attendance.

Absenteism is a nasty cycle that is very hard to break. The best solution is to not let it happen to start with. Let’s see if we can increase the attendance rate right across the board here at Coober Pedy next term.

Have a safe and happy Easter and take care on the roads if you are travelling.

Mark Ireland

REMOTE SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE TEAM

The attendance team is made up of Linley Belford Manager/Mentor, Julia Chamberlain, Richard Narrier and Gary Crombie who are School Attendance Supervisors, and Cheryl Brown, Nikki Gardiner, Samantha Hayes, Francine Hoani, Kris Davies, Alinta Wonga and David Gilbey who are the School Attendance Officers.

We feel that we are highly visible to the school community and the general community by our signature black and orange tops. We can be contacted via the Complete Personnel office 8672 5590 or direct on mobile: 0428966637.

We are working with the School, families and students to assist in improving attendance rates. There are many and different reasons for students to be absent from school and our team can help support families. The Team work to increase school attendance through a variety of measures, including walking or driving children to school, helping with breakfast and can assist with some school lunches and organizing uniforms through the School.

There is a Red Cross Breakfast Club that runs from 7:00am until 8:45am each school weekday and all students are welcome to come along and have breakfast and then can participate in indoor or outdoor activities before the School Bell! Our team assist with the running of the Club and the activities.
UTHSAC organised an Apology Day on March 13th and students from the DEADLY Centre and Ms Winen’s class attended. Students learnt about the significance of Apology Day and participated in the activities organised. The highlight of the day was when a group of boys were painted up in ochre and learnt the emu dance.

Our new SSO Wendy Wilson, brought in her pet snake to show the DEADLY Centre students. The students learnt about how to look after the snake and were able to handle it. Students then wrote a procedural text on how to feed a snake.

A parent group meeting will be held in the Aboriginal Education room on Wednesday week 2, term 2 at 12.30pm. All parents are welcome to attend the meeting and voice any ideas or concerns in regards to Aboriginal Education.

Sarah Turner—DEADLY Centre Teacher.
The SWAT (Students Working Actively Together) Teams have been working hard this term. The recycling team have been collecting the bottles and cans each week from classes. The toilet team have almost completed repairs to the student toilets including new locks, mirrors, toilet seats and painting the doors. The Events and Fundraising team prepared food for a fundraising stall during Harmony Day and have planned a fun fundraising event for each term this year. We look forward to starting the Unity Through Diversity mural and mosaic project next term.

Mini Blues
This term we have had many exciting reward lessons for Mini Blues including excursions to the town playground, movies, jewellery making and craft, and games. This week will be the last reward lesson for the term and we will be having an Easter hunt around the school.