Some of you may have read an article in the Herald–Sun over the weekend which highlights the concern many people have of children’s lack of swimming ability. Recent research indicates that less than half of the state’s students are able to swim 50m by the time they have reached year 6. In the research which included surveys completed by teachers, it was estimated that 9% of year 6 students could not swim at all and that “36% of children lacked the knowledge to avoid getting into dangerous situations around water”.

Whilst there have been many comments and pushes for swimming programs to be compulsory in schools, there has been no funding provided for this, so whilst it remains a “user pays” program there can never be compulsion. The survey found that some schools are axing swimming programs completely due to costs and what is considered to be an overcrowded curriculum where programs such as swimming compete for time with other programs in schools.

As you would be aware, Seaford Primary offers two swimming programs- our intensive swimming program for children in year Prep to 4 and our Nippers Program in years 5 and 6, and we have always been impressed by the high participation rates of our students. The response so far this year for our Nippers Program commencing on the 26th of February, however, has not at this point been high, and it may have something to do with cuts to parent payments and EMA which has been a source of funding that many of our families would use to assist with their child’s participation.

The Nippers Program is a fantastic program conducted in small groups of students in open water at Seaford Beach, with each group being supervised by a trained and highly skilled instructor from Life Saving Victoria. The program runs for 12 hours, (three consecutive days each of four hours duration) at a cost of $72.

The fact that your child lives close to the beach and would, no doubt, use the beach as a recreational facility, increases the need for your child to have the skills, not only to enjoy the beach, but to be safe in and around it.

I can’t urge you strongly enough to ensure that your child participates in this program. As always, if your child’s non-participation is due to financial difficulties at this time, please speak to me so that a payment plan can be established so that your child can participate and develop these essential skills. I would also encourage you to speak with your child about joining Nippers at the Seaford Life Saving Club. Further information can be found at www.seafordlsc.com.au

Please find attached to this newsletter all the details of next Tuesday's Whole School Welcome Back Picnic and Activities Evening. We look forward to all of our families attending this event and enjoying being part of our school community.
On Wednesday of next week we will be holding our Meet and Greet evening where you have the opportunity to have a chat to your child's teacher. Please remember that this is not so much of a parent/teacher interview where teachers would be reporting to you on your child's progress- it is too early in the year to be doing that. It is an opportunity for the teacher to outline the year’s program, discuss how you can be a partner and supporter in the education program and also gives you the opportunity to tell your child’s teacher a little bit about your child. For students in years 3 – 6, it is an expectation that they will attend and participate in the discussion as well.

You should all have received the interview request time sheet and a time will be allocated to you based on your request. Interviews will commence from the afternoon session with non-classroom teaching staff providing supervision for your child until the end of the school day. Please remember that you will be allocated a ten minutes time slot and it is important that we keep to this schedule as close as possible to avoid long wait times for other parents. If the ten minutes is insufficient, your child’s teacher will be more than happy to make another time on another day to continue the discussion.

I trust that you will find this to be a valuable time.

Regards

Michael
COMMUNITY NEWS
Displayed on the Noticeboard in the front foyer of the Office.
• The Performance Factory. Drama classes at the Sea-
  ford Hall
• Miss Karla’s School of Ballet
• Adult dance classes—St Chads church hall Chelsea
• Big Ben’s Boxing—Youth boxing classes ages 8—14
• Stingrays Hockey Club—Free Hockey Clinic Thurs-
  day 14th 21st and 28th February 6p.m.-7pm.
• Children Performing Company of Australia
• margosPT—personal training
• Rowellyn Park nab AFL Auskick 2013
• Seaford Junior Football Club registration day  Sunday
  17th February 9.00a.m. to midday.
• Expressive Art Program for Children of Divorced/
  Separated parents.

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE CAN YOU HELP US??

First a BIG welcome to all the new parents for 2013 - whether you're a parent of a Prep or an older child. There are lots of ways to get involved at Seaford Primary School and we encourage you to take advantage of these because your children will benefit so much from seeing you here. They love to point you out to their friends, saying, “That’s MY Mum!” or “See that man there? He’s MY Dad!” Even if you work and have very little time to spare, just supporting our fundraising activities helps.

Speaking of fundraising….. for those parents with some spare time, might we interest you in becoming a part of our Fundraising Committee? We meet approximately once a month (at a time that suits the members best; be it just after 9am in the staffroom or 7pm at Seaford RSL) to organise and discuss fundraising activities.

It's very easy to get locked into the same old “tried-and-true” ideas, some of which we couldn't change (like our Kids Carnival - because the children would be devastated!) but you might have a fabulous idea that you saw used at a friend's school that might be just the ticket for us here!

Please consider joining the Fundraising Committee (or if you’re already a member, make sure your mobile and email are up-to-date so we can contact you about meetings and such). The more people we have (mums AND dads) the more ideas we have to draw from, the better our chances of raising funds and the more our children will benefit. You also get to meet new parents, form new friendships and become more familiar with your child's school – all of which benefits your child too.

If you're interested, please leave your name and contact number at the office with Erica, because we're due to have a meeting very soon.

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

A reminder that anyone with a current pension or health care card is eligible to apply for EMA. These applications have to be in by 28/02/2013. Parents who were eligible last year do have to re-apply this year. Please see the School Office for forms and information.
Legends Theme Song

We are the 5/6 Legends, we know how to play the game.
Side by side we stick together to uphold the Legends name.
Hear the school kids shouting, as all school kids do.
Oh the Naplan tests are cakewalk for the Seaford Primary School!!!!!
(Can you guess the tune?)
Laptops and iPads

The notebook computers and iPads have arrived. The children from prep to year six are very excited and look forward to using them in all aspects of the curriculum. So far the senior grades have developed protocols for the appropriate use of these fantastic tools which will be used to support learning. By Jazzy and Mikayla 5/6L
Welcome Back Family Picnic 2013

Tuesday Feb 19th 2013 5-7pm on school oval-

- bring your own picnic dinner/take away/ or use the school’s BBQ to cook, rugs, chairs etc.
- Face Painting
- Novelty Races
- Vortex Challenge
- Fitness Circuit
- Sports Equipment available for your use.
- Prep 1st Day photos and Welcome Certificates presented at 6.30
- Every Child receives free icy pole and drink

Please note this is an alcohol free event in a non smoking environment