Hello!

I hope that you all had a wonderful Christmas and New Year! Welcome back to the 2015 school year! We are already off to a great start and I’m sure this will continue. In light of some issues that arose at the end of last year I want to reiterate that my door is always open. I would greatly appreciate that if you have any concerns about any school matters, you speak with me directly. If I am unaware of issues and concerns it makes it difficult for me to make a change. In 2015 let’s work together to make Ravenswood State School a positive learning environment.

We will be holding a parent information session Friday Feb 6th at 3:00pm. This is a chance for you to have a look at our new programs, view upcoming assessments and ask any questions you may have.

From the Principal
Our Purpose: Ravenswood State School exists to provide learning to all stakeholders. We provide a learning environment which supports students in their achievement, facilitated by skilled, professional and compassionate staff.

Our Curriculum

English

P-2
Exploring emotion in picture books
In this unit students listen to, read, view and interpret written picture books, including stories from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. They identify emotive content and justify their interpretations of the stories.

Assessment
Prep- Students select a favourite story and create a short spoken response to elements of the story.
Year 1- Students will complete a spoken presentation to the class. Their presentation will be about a character and his or her emotions. They will also need to make a connection between the story and a personal experience.
Year 2- Students will complete a spoken presentation to the class. They will discuss the characters and settings of different texts. They will share their opinions of stories with the class.

3-4
Investigating author’s language in a familiar narrative
In this unit, students listen to, view and read simple chapter books to explore the use of descriptive language in the construction of character. They also examine and analyse the language features and techniques used by the author. Through a written response or creation of a new chapter, trick or plan, students develop alternative behaviours and actions for a character.

Assessment
Written Response- Creating an event to add to the novel 'The Twits'

Reading Comprehension-Explains how language features, images and vocabulary are used to engage the interest of audiences.

5-6
Short stories
In this unit students listen to and read a range of short stories by different authors. They investigate and compare similarities and differences in the ways authors use text structure, language features and strategies to create humorous effects. Students complete a comprehension task about a particular short story and other short stories they have read.

Assessment

Reading Comprehension- To construct meaning from how text structures and language features work together, and analyse and evaluate similarities and differences in short stories.

Math

P-2
Weeks 1-4- Number and Algebra
Establish understanding of the language and processes of counting by naming numbers in sequences, initially to and from 20, moving from any starting point. Connect number names, numerals and quantities, including zero, initially up to 10 and then beyond. Subitise small collections of objects. Compare, order and make correspondences between collections, initially to 20, and explain reasoning.

Develop confidence with number sequences to and from 100 by ones from any starting point. Skip count by twos, fives and tens starting from zero. Recognise, model, read, write and order numbers to at least 100. Locate these numbers on a number line. Count collections to 100 by partitioning numbers using place value.

Investigate number sequences, initially those increasing and decreasing by twos, threes, fives and ten from any starting point, then moving to other sequences. Recognise, model, represent and order numbers to at least 1000.

Group, partition and rearrange collections up to 1000 in hundreds, tens and ones to facilitate more efficient counting.

Weeks 5-7- Measurement and Geometry
Sort, describe and name familiar two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects in the environment.

Recognise and classify familiar two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects using obvious features.

Describe and draw two-dimensional shapes, with and without digital technologies. Describe the features of three-dimensional objects.

Weeks 9-10- Statistics and Probability
Answer yes/no questions to collect information.

Choose simple questions and gather responses.

Represent data with objects and drawings where one object or drawing represents one data value. Describe the displays.

Identify a question of interest based on one categorical variable. Gather data relevant to the question. Collect, check and classify data. Create displays of data using lists, table and picture graphs and interpret them.
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3-4

Week 1-4 - Number & Algebra
Investigate the conditions required for a number to be odd or even and identify odd and even numbers. Recognise, model, represent and order numbers to at least 10 000. Apply place value to partition, rearrange and regroup numbers to at least 10 000 to assist calculations and solve problems. Recognise and explain the connection between addition and subtraction.
Investigate and use the properties of odd and even numbers. Recognise, represent and order numbers to at least tens of thousands. Apply place value to partition, rearrange and regroup numbers to at least tens of thousands to assist calculations and solve problems.

Week 5-7 - Measurement & Geometry
Make models of three-dimensional objects and describe key features. Identify angles as measures of turn and compare angle sizes in everyday situations. Identify symmetry in the environment.
Compare the areas of regular and irregular shapes by informal means. Compare and describe two dimensional shapes that result from combining and splitting common shapes, with and without the use of digital technologies. Create symmetrical patterns, pictures and shapes with and without digital technologies. Compare angles and classify them as equal to, greater than or less than a right angle.

Week 8-10 - Statistics and Probability
Identify questions or issues for categorical variables. Identify data sources and plan methods of data collection and recording. Collect data, organise into categories and create displays using lists, tables, picture graphs and simple column graphs, with and without the use of digital technologies. Interpret and compare data displays.
Select and trial methods for data collection, including survey questions and recording sheets. Construct suitable data displays, with and without the use of digital technologies, from given or collected data. Include tables, column graphs and picture graphs where one picture can represent many data values. Evaluate the effectiveness of different displays in illustrating data features including variability.

5-6

Week 1-4 Number & Algebra
Identify and describe factors and multiples of whole numbers and use them to solve problems. Use estimation and rounding to check the reasonableness of answers to calculations.
Identify and describe properties of prime, composite, square and triangular numbers.

Week 5-7 - Measurement & Geometry
Connect three-dimensional objects with their nets and other two-dimensional representations. Describe translations, reflections and rotations of two-dimensional shapes. Identify line and rotational symmetries. Apply the enlargement transformation to familiar two dimensional shapes and explore the properties of the resulting image compared with the original.
Construct simple prisms and pyramids.

Week 8-10 - Statistics and Probability
Pose questions and collect categorical or numerical data by observation or survey Construct displays, including column graphs, dot plots and tables, appropriate for data type, with and without the use of digital technologies. Describe and interpret different data sets in context.
Interpret and compare a range of data displays, including side-by-side column graphs for two categorical variables. Interpret secondary data presented in digital media and elsewhere.

History

P-2
Remembering the past
The key inquiry questions guiding this unit are:
For Prep:
• What stories do other people tell about the past?
• How can stories of the past be told and shared?
For Year 1:
• How do we describe the sequence of time?
For Year 2:
• What aspects of the past can you see today? What do they tell us?
• What remains of the past are important to the local community? Why?
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3-4
Celebrating and commemorating our history
The key inquiry questions guiding this unit are:
For Year 3:
• How and why do people choose to remember significant events of the past?
• What is the nature of the contribution made by different groups and individuals in the community?
For Year 4:
• Why did the great journeys of exploration occur?
• Why did the Europeans settle in Australia?

5-6
Exploring change and continuity in Australia
The key inquiry questions guiding this unit are:
For Year 5:
• What do we know about the lives of people in Australia’s colonial past and how do we know?
• How did an Australian colony develop over time and why?
• How did colonial settlement change the environment?
For Year 6:
• Why and how did Australia become a nation?
• How did Australian society change throughout the twentieth century?

Geography

P-2
Exploring features of places
In this unit, students will investigate the inquiry question/s identified from the Australian Curriculum: Geography:
• What are places like?
• What are the different features of places?
• How can we care for places?
• How can spaces within a place be rearranged to suit different purposes?
• What is a place?

3-4
Exploring similarities and differences in environments and places
In this unit, students will draw on studies at the local scale, including representations of Australia and the location of Australia’s neighbouring countries, understand the different climate types and their influence on the characteristics of places and review unit inquiry questions. Further to this, students will identify the natural and human characteristics of places in Australia and Australia’s neighbouring countries using sources such as photographs maps and the internet; interpret representations of places, for example, through a globe, wall or atlas map, or digital application; and recognise their purpose. Students will identify and compare the characteristics of places, including the types of natural vegetation and native animals. Students will interpret geographical information and data to identify different views on how the environments should be protected, and form conclusions.

5-6
Exploring people and places in a diverse world
In this unit, students extend their mental map of the world, with a focus on Europe, North America and Asia. Students learn to identify and describe the relative location of places at a national scale and to complete maps using cartographic conventions. Students also learn about the location of major countries in Asia, particularly the sub-regions of northeast Asia and southeast Asia, the differences in economic, demographic and social characteristics between countries in these sub-regions, and global trends. The concept of place is further developed by exploring the human and environmental factors that influence the characteristics of places. The interconnections between people and environments are examined through climate and landforms. Students learn how climate and landforms influence the human characteristics of places, and how human actions influence the environmental characteristics of places. They will represent and interpret data to identify simple patterns, trends and spatial distribution, infer relationships, and draw conclusions. Students learn about the world’s cultural diversity, including that of its indigenous peoples, and reflect on the cultural differences and similarities, and the meaning and significance of intercultural understanding.

Science

P-2– Watch it Grow
Students will explore the growth of living things and explore the processes of growth and change, reproduction and death that apply to all animals. They will look at a variety of life cycles and compare growth of living things under different conditions.
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3–6– Desert Survivors
This unit provides an opportunity for students to explore some of the structural features and adaptations of desert plants and animals, and to compare them with plants and animals that live in other environments. They pose questions and develop evidence-based claims supported by their reasoning. Through hands-on activities, students investigate how the structural features of desert plants and animals help them to survive in their own natural environment.

Health
Students will be investigating bullying. They will plan an activity day to share with the school.

HPE
Swimming
Cross Country

Art
Textures Tell Stories
Students will work through a series of activities where they are asked to develop an understanding for using texture and shape in the creation of an art work that is suitable for telling a story. The finished work must incorporate some textures would be sufficient for a visually impaired person to interpret meaning from their art work.

Civics and Citizenship
3–4
Participating in my community
Key questions:
• How are decisions made democratically?
• Why do we make rules?
• How can I participate in my community?
In this unit, students develop civic knowledge and understanding, and apply citizenship skills to explore democracy in the context of the familiar and personal. They explore democracy through learning about decision making within communities. They also consider the purpose of creating rules for groups and how individuals participate in their community. Through the study of Civics and Citizenship, students can develop skills of inquiry, values and dispositions that enable them to be active and informed citizens.

5–6
Participating in Australia’s democracy
Key questions:
• What is democracy in Australia and why is voting in a democracy important?
• How do laws affect the lives of citizens?
• How and why do people participate in groups to achieve shared goals?
In this unit, students develop civic knowledge and understanding, and apply citizenship skills as they are introduced to the key values of Australia’s liberal democratic system of government, such as freedom, equality, fairness and justice. Students learn about representative democracy and voting processes in Australia. Students expand on their knowledge of the law by studying how laws impact on the lives of citizens. Students also investigate the role of groups in our community. They develop skills of inquiry and values and dispositions that enable them to be active and informed citizens.
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Our New Programs in 2015

In 2015 we will continue to focus on Literacy and Numeracy. We have implemented a variety of new programs within our classroom to help us reach our targets in both areas.

Spelling

Although we saw some success in students spelling results last year we noticed that the students weren’t applying their spelling strategies in their every day writing. We have decided this year to go with a new spelling program called Spelling Mastery. Spelling mastery teaches students dependable spelling skills by blending phonemic, whole-word, and morphemic approaches. The program interweaves these three approaches according to students’ skill development and provide straightforward lessons to help efficiently and effectively teach the spelling skill students need to become proficient writers.

Students were assessed to determine at which level they will enter the program. The lessons will be delivered in 30min blocks four times a week. Spelling Mastery uses specific strategies that encourage students to think their way through spelling rather than memorize weekly spelling lists. Your child’s word list will be send home in their homework books. In this program students are assessed at the end of a five week block. Students are given a list of study words but are not tested on every single word. Their words are selected at random to avoid the students spelling correctly simply from memorization.

Reading Groups

This year we will be running reading groups in 30 min blocks four days a week. The P-2’s will use the Flying Start to Literacy program and the 3-6’s will use the Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) program.

Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI)

The Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention System (LLI) is a small-group, supplementary literacy intervention designed to help teachers provide powerful, daily, small-group instruction for the lowest achieving students at their grade level. Through systematically designed lessons and original, engaging leveled books, LLI supports learning in both reading and writing, helps students expand their knowledge of language and words and how they work. The goal of LLI is to bring students to grade level achievement in reading.

Flying Start to Literacy

Flying Start to Literacy supports the systematic development of reading strategies and skills in young students. It focuses on the key interrelated elements of beginning reading texts which scaffold early literacy success: key content vocabulary, high-frequency words, text complexity, phonics, fluency and comprehension, the links between reading and writing, and assessment for instruction.

Writing

We will also be implementing a new writing program.

High-Performance Writing is a comprehensive resource designed to teach students how to improve their writing standards, incorporating a strong focus on the key traits of effective writing. The program uses a three-step instructional model based on current research that supports the belief that all children can become writers. In the first step students will hear or read exemplary pieces of writing in the genre they are studying. In the second step they will work together to plan and draft a collaborative piece of writing. They will work through the writing cycle together. The third step of the model engages the students in planning, drafting, editing, proofreading and publishing an individual piece of writing.

Homework

Homework is a bridge that joins schools and parents. From the school’s perspective there is the opportunity to monitor students’ independent progress. For parents there is the potential to gain a greater appreciation of education and to express positive attitudes towards their children’s achievement.

This year our homework will consist of sightwords, sound activities, maths activities and students are still required to read every night. Homework will be sent home on Monday and will be returned on Tuesday.

Prep’s will only be required to practice their sight words and their daily reading. In saying this it is still recommend that you continue to work on sound letter recognition, handwriting and basic counting skills.