Welcome Back…

Firstly, I would like to extend a very warm welcome back to all staff, students, parents and families as we start a new school year together.

In particular I would like to welcome all our new families to Gray St and I am sure you will enjoy the friendly, supportive environment and the exciting educational opportunities the school offers.

Today we welcomed our new Preps on their first day of school at Gray St. I am pleased to report that all students settled in extremely well, which can be attributed to the Prep teachers (Cindy Dorman and Janelle Harms) and other staff and volunteers who were on hand to assist when needed. We have had a very smooth start to school and this is due to a terrific response from staff (teachers, office and support staff) who came back early to set up classes, displays and unpack for a new school year. This has ensured an efficient start for all our children – thank you all.

We welcome two new staff members to the school: Megan Garland (Music Teacher) and Bonita O’Brien (Integration Aide). We look forward to working with our new teaching staff and wish them all the best for the year.

Congratulations to Liz and Peter Hodkinson on the birth of their baby daughter Matilda born Friday 23rd January!!.

Congratulations also to the Rahman Family who received their Australian Citizenship at the Hamilton Botanical Gardens on Monday.

In this newsletter you will see a special invite to a ‘Gray St Family Picnic’ to be held on Friday 13th February in the Botanical Gardens from 5.30 to 7.00 p.m. BYO everything. There will be some fun activities for the students to be involved in. This will be a great opportunity to celebrate the start of the new school year. The students will have been working on a unit of work ‘Learning to Learn’ which focuses on setting a positive learning environment in the classroom.

On a personal note, I am really looking forward to another exciting year at Gray Street continuing to work with the school community to ensure our school provides the best learning opportunities possible for all our students. To assist me I encourage you to contact me throughout the year whether it be by calling in or by phone if you would like to discuss any issues or have suggestions to further enhance the learning environment at Gray St.

Enjoy your week ahead
Helen

2015 School Leaders

Pictured Above: School Captains - Ted Koch, Olivia Muldoon and Junior School Councillors – Lily O’Brien, President and Chella Biggin, Secretary
School Council President - School Concert Speech

As this is my fifth year as School Council President, it is only appropriate to reflect on the achievements in the last five years as a school and see a number of the plans we developed come to fruition. Our principal, staff, school council, students and entire school community have been important contributors to the journey we have taken and 2014 has provided numerous highlights that have demonstrated the benefits of following well consulted and robust plans. The implementation of our planning has continued to develop our staff, our programs, our facilities and our attitudes towards the learning opportunities for our students. I am thrilled to be able to report some of those highlights and activities to you tonight.

When my son Ted first started in 2009 our enrolments at the school were around 350 students – in fact I had to fight the education department to get him into Gray St. Today we have a more manageable 290 students with smaller class sizes however it is ever the focus to maintain our enrolments in what has been a shrinking pool of potential students. Maintaining our enrolments means we maintain our funding, teaching allocation and other entitlements. You could say that this issue is one of the most important concerns for a school council and that a lot of our efforts have been focussed on this in the last few years.

We have embarked on quite a capital works program in the last 5 years starting with the $2.5million dollar extension to the school in 2010 which was followed by a $20,000fitting out of the canteen and a $160,000 entire repaint of the internals of the school. In 2011 the school developed a master plan for the grounds and buildings to guide our improvement efforts and in 2012 we reclad and refurbished the music room, built the veggie garden terraces and planted out the boundaries. In 2013 we installed internal signage to the school and commenced detailed planning for the new playground. This year we removed and sold the old playground and installed new equipment worth nearly $140,000 and commenced the professional design and engineering work for the outdoor classroom and new basketball and netball courts. This work was complemented by a working bee to repaint the sandpits and cubby house.

In further reflection a number of other innovations have improved the school in the last five years including a refocus on literacy and numeracy across the school, introduction of the five keys to success of the “You can do it” program, new school branding including newsletter template and website, the Outside School Hours Care Program, ramping up of our orientation and transitional programs, reintroduction of the School Canteen, new school uniforms, introduction of Italian as a second language and other social opportunities such as the Science night. It has indeed been an exciting time over the last five years.

These capital works, educational improvement and other development programs have culminated in some outstanding results for the school. Each year the department of education conducts a Parent Opinion Survey that gauges our parent responses to different aspects of the schools climate, student behaviours and student engagement. This report is valued by school council as a means of gauging how our parents feel the school is performing. This year's results truly reflect the direction in which we wish to take the school. A 90% response rate showed we are engaging well with parents but it was the benchmark against other primary school in the state that showed some very impressive results with 12 out of the 19 response areas demonstrating results in the third quartile or better. The areas of stimulated learning, approachability, extra curricular and learning focus were considered by parents to be the strongest areas of the school. This has been an excellent improvement over the last three years and reflects strongly on the positive environment created by our staff that builds positive attitudes in our students. This data will be one of the inputs that will help frame our next 4 year strategic plan due for completion early in first term.

We celebrated another Country Fair in October as our premier fund raising activity for the year. New features included the Great Victorian Jam and Chutney Challenge, Billy Cart Competitions, Sideshow alley and the class art auction. In 2014 we invited business support for the Fair in which nearly $10,000 was received in sponsorship and a total of $25,000 raised - a tremendous effort. Although fund raising was the ultimate goal of the event I was personally pleased to see our whole school community come together as one and the way we were able to use the event to showcase the very best that Gray St has to offer. With more than 3000 people attending on the day, this event has become one of our best marketing tools for the future in which we can encourage enrolments, sponsorship and community engagement of the school. Although this event took a total school effort I need to single out the enormous effort of the Fair Committee who drove its success. They gave up hours and hours of their time to guide the fair to the success it was. Thank you and again please accept the whole school’s gratitude for your efforts.

Our total fund raising and other contributions over the last two years have seen us amass nearly $85,000 towards the construction of our new outdoor classroom and basketball/netball courts. This month we were pleasantly surprised to receive a bequest from the estate of Mrs Rachel Dempster. Mrs Dempster’s husband Ted was a former Mayor of Hamilton in the 1990’s and she spent many years employed as a secondary teacher at Hamilton High School. Her bequest of approx. $45,000 brings our total fund raising efforts to $130,000. Our target to commence our project is $350,000. Tonight I would like to make a special announcement regarding the project. Mr Geoff Handbury AO and his late wife Helen have been strong supporters of education and Hamilton for many years. In making a presentation to Mr Handbury last week he was delighted to donate $100,000 towards our project. This now takes our fundraising efforts to within $120,000 of our target and with a big effort next year we are on track for an early 2016 start. A Hamilton Gray St Primary School Building Fund is about to be established that will provide tax deductibility to any future donations. We would of course welcome any further support from the school community if they felt they were in a position to contribute and again please let me thank all those that have contributed in any way to our fund raising efforts so far.

Our most physical visible achievement this year was of course the replacement of the new playground equipment. There were several parents and staff that gave up their Saturday mornings in September to remove the old equipment and prepare the site for installation. This project was led by Leigh Whyte with great support from his wife Vicki, who is now working full time with the contractors Omitech. Special mention to Dean Dark for the large amount of time given with his bob cat to clear the site. A $140,000 project like this doesn’t occur without huge effort, good planning and great vision – to all involved, my sincerest thanks.

Gray St is a busy place and those that have not been associated with a school environment for many years are often surprised at how much is packed into a school year. We have had swimming carnivals, school sports day, musical performances, chess, tournament of the minds, gardening, buddies, Gray Street’s got talent, school camps, hoop time, bike ed, swimming lessons, information sessions,
The running of a school is never easy and it is with enormous thanks I would like to acknowledge our Principal Helen Freeman for her outstanding efforts in leading and guiding our school. She has this year been appointed for another five year term and after all the achievements I have noted previously we are delighted to have her continued to provide a great passion, incredible work ethic and clear vision for the school. On behalf of school council can I publicly express my appreciation for your dedication, insight, incredible hard work and leadership in assisting council to realise Gray St’s true potential. Helen – thank you.

Helen is ably assisted in the office by Maree and Leesa who have again absorbed the rigours of school administration through 2014. Thank you to you both.

As parents and as a school council we rely on the classrooms to be an active and nurturing environment. I would like to acknowledge all staff who as leaders of the school are each responsible for taking on different lead functions throughout the year. It is always achieved with good humour and exemplary organisational skills. You help create an environment that provides an excellent learning experience for our children and the school community. We have built a great team of staff at Gray St, well done this year and please accept our sincerest thanks for all your efforts.

Our Out of School Hours Care and Vacation Programs continue to add an excellent service to the broader community particularly in assisting parents to fulfill their work obligations. Rosemary Anderson and her team have continued to grow the demand for the Out of school hours care program so much so that it is now a substantial contributor to our fund raising activities and occupies an important role in the Greater Hamilton community. Thank you Rosemary and team and well done.

I chair such a terrific cross-section of the school community in your school council. The council has worked very hard this year and steered the school through the numerous issues and projects that are both planned and unplanned. I would like to acknowledge my fellow councilors, Deputy Chair Briget Kelly, Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair, Jason Muldoon, Facilities Committee Chair, Leigh Whyte, Education Sub Committee Chair, Bonita O’Brien and other parent councillors Peta Alexander and David Hintum. Council would not be complete without excellent input from our staff councilors in Kerrie McFadden, Damien Hayes and Adam Taylor. Simon McKinley after many years of service to council retired early in the year. Sadly we say goodbye this year to Leigh Whyte who has been on school council for more than 6 years and most of that time as Facilities Chair. His passionate input and experienced commentary around the council table and unsung efforts in all aspects of school life will leave an enormous gap in our school.

In recognising the importance that volunteer efforts such Leigh’s play at Gray Street, School Council established the annual Bob and Lesley Moroney School Volunteers Award which is displayed prominently in the school reception area. This award recognises the substantial contribution of a parent volunteer or community volunteer over an extended period of years or through a single significant initiative that has had a positive impact on students. Sandra Jacobson was our inaugural recipient in 2013 and in considering recipients for this year’s award it became obvious that there are several members of the school community that have embodied the very essence of what the award is about and that it only fitting that their contribution be recognised this year.

Before I announce this year’s winners, would you please welcome Bob and Lesley Moroney to the stage to help me present the award for 2014. Ladies and Gentleman tonight’s award is presented to two individuals who have provided an enormous voluntary contribution to Gray St. Our first recipient has consistently turned her creative talents to all aspects of school life.

Her style and flair has been instrumental in helping to lead and establish the Country Fair. She has a can do attitude that has assisted the school raise substantial funds over the last 7 years. She has embodied the very essence of being a supportive parent at Gray St with many volunteer hours dedicated to reading in the classroom, canteen duty, Meals on Wheels, selling raffle tickets, wrapping for mother’s day and father’s day stalls and the Easter raffles decorating and styling for school events and assisting at school concerts. Her parent involvement with the school ends with her daughter Madi’s graduation this week and I’m sure husband Ronnie and her business Regent Florist will be very pleased to have her back! Would you please put your hands together for our first recipient of the Bob and Lesley Moroney School Volunteer Award in Louise McLennan.

Our second recipient tonight has been contributing to the school community for nearly 14 years of which he has served 6 years on school council. His efforts in assisting to develop the master plan for the school and then implement it will provide lasting benefits for years to come. Co-ordinating the recladding of the music room, boundary plantings, numerous working bees, installing of goals posts, garden terraces, clearing of fallen branches and having the right tool for the right job is but some of his achievements. He is always just a phone call away if ever the school needed something done at short notice. This year his efforts were instrumental in coordinating the removal and sale of the old playground and preparing for the installation of the new equipment. This was a powerful effort done with great humour and tremendous personal satisfaction. His time given to everything from welding metal scarecrows to making demonstration billy carts will be well missed as he also finishes his official parent involvement at the school with his son Jackson’s graduation this week. He with the support of his wife Vicki, has been very a tireless and unselfish contributor to our school and tonight we also honour Leigh Whyte with the Bob and Lesley Moroney School Volunteer Award for 2014.

At the end of every year we sadly say goodbye to another lot of families at Gray St. To those families that will be leaving us at the conclusion of term, thank you for allowing Gray St to be a part of your lives and allowing us to contribute to the development and education of your child. You are now all part of Gray St’s rich 162 year heritage and you are always welcome to return at any time.

Prudent financial management, the implementation of our strategic planning efforts combined with strong engagement of our school community continues to place the school in the best possible position for the future. As I have outlined, it will be another big year at Gray St in 2015. I personally look forward to having all our children at Gray St next year as Jemima joins Ted and Adelaide. Please have a restful and safe Christmas and we look forward to seeing you back next year.
2015 Staffing & Grades

Principal: Mrs Helen Freeman

Class Teachers:
- Grade Prep A: Miss Cindy Dorman
- Grade Prep B: Mrs. Janeille Harms
- Grade 1 A: Mr Damian Hayes
- Grade 1 B: Mrs Lisa Beaton & Mrs Danah Clark
- Grade 2 A: Mrs Sylvia Murray
- Grade 2 B: Mrs Kerrie McFadden
- Grade 3/4 A: Miss Natalie Quinn
- Grade 3/4 B: Mr Kyle Hosking
- Grade 3/4 C: Miss Raquel Potter
- Grade 5 A: Miss Callaway
- Grade 5 B: Miss Melissa Hermans
- Grade 6 A: Mr Anthony Hill
- Grade 6 B: Ms Lisa Ferrier

Specialist Teachers:
- Mrs Sheree McGinley (PE)
- Mrs Carolynn Murray (PE)
- Mrs Megan Garland (Music)
- Ms Emma Brown (Art)

Classroom Integration Aides:
- Mrs Vicki Allen
- Mrs. Wendy Goodman
- Mr Graham Devereux
- Mr Ash Nice
- Mrs Claire Hilsdon
- Ms Jenny Poyton
- Mrs Bonita O’Brien

Office Staff:
- Business Manager – Ms Maree Falkenberg
- Office Manager - Mrs. Leesa Dorman

Canteen Staff
- Canteen Supervisor – Mrs Lyn Battista

OSHC
- OSCH Supervisor – Ms Rosemary Anderson

School Times – 2015

8.35 a.m. Students start to arrive at school (teachers on Duty)
8.50 a.m. Bell for students to enter rooms and prepare for the day’s activities
9.00 a.m. Classes/Friday Assembly
11.00 a.m. Morning Recess Eating
11.10 a.m. Morning Recess Play
11.30 a.m. Classes
1.00 p.m. Lunch Eating
1.10 p.m. Lunch Play
1.35 p.m. Lunch Halfway Bell
1.58 p.m. Music Plays – Line Up Time
2.00 p.m. Classes
3.25 p.m. Bus Bell
3.30 p.m. Dismissal of Classes
3.45 p.m. Teachers finish duty

Term Dates For 2015

Term 1: 28th January (students start) to 27th March

Term 2*: 13th April to 26th June

Term 3: 13th July to 18th September

Term 4: 5th October to 18th December
Prep Days Off

Prep students do not attend school on the following days in February:

Wednesday 4th February 2015
Wednesday 11th February 2015
Wednesday 18th February 2015
Wednesday 25th February 2015

Sunsmart

Hats must be worn every day during Term 1. Don’t forget to bring them to school.

New Uniform

The Uniform Shop will be open Tuesdays from 8.30 to 4.00p.m.

Book Boxes

If you are yet to collect your book box, please contact Leesa in the office tomorrow. Thank you

Canteen

The first day of Canteen for 2015 will be – MONDAY 2nd FEBRUARY. A 2015 Canteen Price List was handed out today with the newsletter. Please note sausage rolls are not available for the first week.

Requests from the Artroom and the Library

Just a reminder that all students will need to wear an art smock during art. Many of the activities are messy and clothes need to be protected. Could you please send a named art smock along to school for your child’s weekly art lesson. I am also asking for any old wool for artwork.

Students will need to bring a Library bag to take Library books home in.

Many thanks, Emma Brown.

Newsletter Information

The newsletter is handed out every Thursday to the eldest child at School. You can also find the newsletter on the school website. The newsletter can also be emailed to you directly. Please complete the form at the end of the newsletter if you would like this option.

If you would like to be included on the 2015 email list, please complete the form below, thank you.

DITCH THE PAPER!!!

Help us slash our photocopy costs and help the environment!
Sign up to have your NEWSLETTERS AND OTHER INFORMATION emailed to you.

Please print details

Cut this out and return to the office

Student Name/s and grade/s: ________________________________
Parent Name/s: __________________________________________
Email Address: __________________________________________
URGENT – FINAL REQUEST
Hamilton Junior Netball 2015

We are seeking names of children in grades 3 to 6 in 2015 who wish to play netball for Gray Street. Gray Street usually enters teams in U10’s and U12’s. The following information has been provided by the Hamilton Junior Netball Association:

**Term 1 Season:** Saturday 7th February – Saturday 28th March
No game on Saturday 7th March (Labour Day weekend)
No finals for this season

**Term 4 Season:** Saturday 10th October – Saturday 5th December
Finals: 28th November and 5th December

**Age Groups:** Under 10    Under 12    Under 14    OPEN

**Cost: Juniors:** born between 01/01/1998 and 31/12/2007 (8 – 17 years old)
VNA: $47  + HNA: $10 (TERM 1 SEASON ONLY)  + GAME FEES: $35 (TERM 1 SEASON ONLY )
TOTAL: $92 (TERM 1 SEASON)

Please fill out the form below providing your child’s details and this will enable us to put your child in a Gray Street team. Please note fees are not required at this stage and all fees must be paid to the Junior Netball Association on the first Saturday of netball in February 2105. Term 4 fees will be charged at the beginning of Season 2 in October. VNA is payable only once per year but HNA and Game Fees will be payable for the second season.

Please return this note to the Gray Street front office by Monday 2nd February 2015.

Carolynn Murray & Sheree McGinley
Netball 2015

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**Hamiton Junior Netball 2105 Term 1 Season**

NAME: .................................................. YEAR LEVEL 2015......................... DOB:..............................................
PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME:........................................... MOBILE PHONE:............................................................
EMAIL ADDRESS:.................................................................................................................................
AM ABLE TO  COACH  UMPIRE  ASSIST (please circle)
# 2015 SPORTS & ART DAYS

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Sports Days</th>
<th>Art Day</th>
<th>Library Day</th>
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<tr>
<td>Prep A – Miss Dorman</td>
<td>Tuesday, Wednesday &amp; Friday</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prep B – Mrs Harms</td>
<td>Tuesday, Wednesday &amp; Friday</td>
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<td>1A – Mr Hayes</td>
<td>Tuesday &amp; Friday</td>
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<td>1B – Mrs Beaton &amp; Mrs Clark</td>
<td>Tuesday &amp; Friday</td>
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<td>2A – Mrs Murray</td>
<td>Tuesday &amp; Friday</td>
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<td>2B – Mrs McFadden</td>
<td>Tuesday &amp; Friday</td>
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<td>3/4A – Miss Quinn</td>
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<td>3/4B – Mr Hosking</td>
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<td>3/4C – Miss Potter</td>
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<td>5A – Miss Callaway</td>
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<td>5B – Miss Hermans</td>
<td>Monday &amp; Thursday</td>
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<td>6A – Mr Hill</td>
<td>Monday &amp; Thursday</td>
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<td>6B – Ms Ferrier</td>
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**SPORTS DAYS** - please ensure your child is wearing appropriate clothes for sport:

- Short/Long sleeve pale blue polo - shirt with school logo
- Navy blue poly-cotton sports shorts
- Navy blue track suit pants – straight leg
- White or black runners

**ART DAYS** - please ensure your child has an appropriate well named art smock

**LIBRARY DAYS** - please ensure your child has an appropriate well named library bag