Dear Parents / Guardians

I trust you are all as excited as we are with the progress of our new sporting area. I just walked down there today to take a picture and am amazed with the transformation from the ‘Hillsmeade Lake’ to this green, even surfaced area for our children to play. We are now only days away from removing the fences.

Monday this week, as teachers participated in our second VCOP professional learning day, we were privileged to have 14 volunteers from the new Casey Central Coles in our school grounds. With the new store opening on the 17th March, this Coles community program offered our school an opportunity to participate in a working bee to tidy up an area of our grounds. Chloe’s Garden had a makeover with the tables re-stained, old plants removed and new plants put in. As so many volunteers were here, they also repainted our yellow poles and other areas around the school. Areas were cleaned and tidied as well. Although no publicity was requested from us, I sincerely thank Coles for putting the community into Hillsmeade PS and supporting us with our efforts to make our school a great learning environment for our children. Please see page 3 for some photos.

WORKING BEE – To continue the excellent progress on maintaining our grounds, we are having a 2hour working bee on Sunday 20th March 9am-11am. The more volunteers we have on this day, the more we can achieve! Please consider coming along. Expertise required: planting, mulching, painting and shovelling dirt.

Every Face has a Place... If you have walked through our corridors this year, you will have noticed this beautiful artwork created by Sue Causon, one of our parents. Working with a few of our senior children, Sue designed and painted our multi-cultural tree representing our school’s families. Please come in and have a look. It is simply FANTASTIC! I’d like to thank Sue for her creativity and commitment for doing this for our community.

Preps do not come to school on Wednesdays until March 2nd, except for their interview times. If parents are unsure of their times please contact your child’s teacher.
Look what’s going on at Hillsmeade

Hillsmeade Fundraising Committee
Think Big, Dream Big

We are selling zooper doopers at lunchtime on Tuesdays for $1 each. We have reusable wet-suit holders to stop little hands getting cold for $1.50 with a zooper dooper. Both are available from the HFC room from 1.40pm.

Kids please remember to put your wrappers in the rubbish bin.

Events for Term 1.
Raffle tickets out: Wednesday 9th March (1 book per family).
Free dress day & bring an item for Easter raffle Friday 11th March.
Raffle tickets due back no later than: Wednesday 23rd March.

AGM is being held on Tuesday 23rd February from 9.30am
In the fundraising “rainbow” room. At this meeting all positions will be voted on for 2016. All welcome.

VCOP & The Big Write

During our curriculum day the teachers at Hillsmeade continued their profession learning about VCOP & The Big Write. Your child may come home and tell you that they are using VCOP in their writing at school...but what is it?

Four areas of writing have been recognised as areas of importance for a child’s writing to develop. These are identified as Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation, or VCOP.

V = Vocabulary (the words they use in their writing)
We call them WOW words! For example: instead of using the word ‘nice’, we could use other more interesting words such as ‘beautiful, stunning, fantastic’ etc.

C = Connectives (we call them joining words)
These are words we use to make our sentences longer. For example: ‘and, because, but, so, when, then’. The words come in the middle of sentences, e.g.

‘When I stared out of the window I felt angry because I saw my bike was broken.’

O = Openers (we use these words to open or begin our sentences)
For example: ‘I, My, When, First, Suddenly’ There are many more openers. We encourage the children to use a different opener to start each sentence in their writing.

P = Punctuation (the marks we use to help our writing make sense!)
The students begin to use full stops, capital letters, exclamation marks and question marks, commas, ellipsis etc.

We are very pleased with the development in student’s writing since the introduction of VCOP across the school. I hope this has given you a snippet of information about the program and I encourage you to talk to your children about it..... maybe they might even teach you how to play Sensei Says!

Andrea Garwood
Classroom & specialist teacher.
Thank you to the Coles volunteers for helping paint & plant around our school ready for our oval opening for twilight sports.

Official Opening of the Oval

Twilight Sports 24th of February 4.6pm

Visiting AFL player Fraser Gehrig
15 Different sports activities
5 Major prizes to be won

Canteen open selling drinks & snacks
Free sausage on the day
**School council election process timetable 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>DATE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notice of election and call for nominations</td>
<td>Wednesday 10th February</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closing date for nominations</td>
<td>Monday 22nd February</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date by which the list of candidates and nominators will be posted</td>
<td>Wednesday 24th February</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date by which ballot papers will be prepared and distributed</td>
<td>On or before Monday, 29th February</td>
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<tr>
<td>Close of ballot</td>
<td>Tuesday 8th March</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vote count</td>
<td>Wednesday 9th March</td>
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<tr>
<td>Declaration of ballot</td>
<td>Wednesday 9th March (in HPS Link)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special council meeting to coopt Community members (the principal will preside)</td>
<td>Monday 21st March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First council meeting to elect office bearers (the principal will preside)</td>
<td>Monday 21st March</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Breakfast Club for 2016**

Every Tuesday between 8.15am to 8.40am at the courtyard outside the library.

For those who are new to the school, there is no cost for Breakfast Club.

**EXCURSION DUE DATE:**
- Body investigators grade 3 due 24th Feb
- Hands on science grade 4 due 10th March

**NOTICES SENT HOME:**
- Twilight Sports

**MUSIC LESSONS**

Private lessons are now available for keyboard/vocal/drum and guitar. Please see the office or Mrs Scott for an enrolment form.

**CSEF**

“The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) is provided by the Victorian Government to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school trips, camps and sporting activities. Eligible students will receive $125 per annum which will be paid directly to the school.

Eligibility will be subject to the parent’s Centrelink Health Care Card being valid on the first day of term one or two. A copy of the concession card is required with each application. Parents are encouraged to lodge the application form by 29 February 2016, so that payment can be made from March. Contact the school office to obtain a CSEF application form or download from www.education.vic.gov.au/csef.

**Hillsmeade Heroes**


**HILLSMEADE VISION STATEMENT**

Hillsmeade Primary School is a warm, friendly and diverse learning community where students have opportunities to learn in a manner that is personalised and caters for their interests, needs and strengths. We strive to prepare our students and families for a life of continual learning and we pride ourselves on our unique learning environments. We aim for Hillsmeade students to investigate, communicate and become lifelong learners with curious minds and a bright future.