Dear Minchinbury Public School families

ABOUT OUR SCHOOL
As you are probably aware, the NSW government is making significant changes to our state’s education system. Education spending in NSW will be slashed by $1.7 billion. Public schools will lose $2.1 billion from their budgets. Our state system will be expected to shed 630 staff in state and regional offices over four years - as part of a total cut of 1800 from the Department of Education.

This will mean that Minchinbury PS will be affected by these changes. It is likely that, as our regions are reorganised, staff that the DEC employ to support students and schools in many ways – specialist teachers that give help in managing the special needs of students, those that assist teachers learn new ways of teaching, those that provide support in the implementation of new curriculum – will be greatly reduced. Our school and staff will be responsible for managing these things on our own or with minimal support. We have concern for the wellbeing of all our students and wish to continue providing the highest quality of education possible for all students. As yet, it is very unclear as to what support services will be available and where they will be situated.

On Sunday 18 November, there is a Community Day of Action to be held at Tumbarlone Park, Darling Harbour starting at 11.00am. If you share our concerns about the changes to education in NSW which seem to be in direct opposition to the Gonski recommendations, you might like to attend this family event to show your support.

Kindergarten Information Evening
Our Kindergarten Information Evening on Thursday 25 October was a great success. The focus groups covering topics such as the curriculum, the Best Start Initiative, student welfare and school readiness were very well received. We hope that those who attended found the new format informative and helpful.

Kindergarten Transition
The Transition to School program Minchinbury Explorers - Discovering School for our 2013 Kindergarten students continues each Thursday until 29 November. The new Kindies who have attended seem to be very settled and really enjoying their time at school. We hope they will transition to school happily next year after participating in this program.

Kindergarten 2013 Enrolments
We are continuing to take enrolments for students beginning Kindergarten next year. We currently have 67 new Kindergarten students for next year. If your child turns five before 31 July 2013, they are eligible to enrol. Please collect an enrolment package from the school office and return it completed as soon as possible. Your child’s enrolment will only be accepted if the appropriate supporting information is provided (birth certificate or passport and proof of address). Your child’s immunization history is also requested and if not supplied, your child is considered unimmunised and in the case of a disease breakout, your child will be excluded from attending school until it has passed.

Student Enrolment in 2013
Thank you to those parents that have completed their Enrolment Intentions for 2013 form and returned it to school. The information will assist us to organise classes for 2013 and make plans for other special programs. Any outstanding forms should be returned as soon as possible to the school.

Uniform Shop
The school’s uniform shop will be open every Wednesday this term to allow for parents to purchase new uniforms for next year.

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Grandparents Day
On Tuesday 6 November, our school held a fantastic Grandparents’ Day. Classrooms were visited and picnic morning teas were enjoyed. The concert was very entertaining. We certainly do have some very talented students.

StartSmart
The StartSmart program developed by the Commonwealth Bank teaches children the value of money. Research indicates that it is crucial to develop financial literacy skills from an early age. The StartSmart Primary program teaches these skills in a way that students can understand and enjoy. It was developed with a panel of leading specialists in primary education, cognitive development, instructional design and financial literacy.

Our students will be participating in these free workshops on Monday Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 12 – 15 November. You might like to ask your child what they discovered about banking this week.

Stage 2 Excursion
Stage 2 classes will visit Sydney Observatory on Thursday and Friday this week. They will be travelling to the Observatory by bus leaving at 10.00am and returning at 3.00pm.

Reading Club
Parents and students are reminded that the last day to hand in Reading Club cards for this year is Friday 16 November. Those students who have reached level 250 by that day will be considered for awards to be presented during Presentation Day.

P&C Meeting
The next P&C meeting will be held on Wednesday 21 November at 7.00pm. This meeting will include the Annual General Meeting (AGM) where office bearers for 2013 will be elected. The positions to be filled at this meeting include the President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary.

The P&C aims to:
- promote the interests of the school by bringing parents, citizens, pupils and teaching staff into close co-operation;
- assist in providing equipment required by the school;
- report to the Minister the material requirements of the school;
- assist the teaching staff in establishment of school policy and management in all facets of school activity.

Associations meet on a regular basis, at least once each school term, and carry out activities in accordance with their resolutions. It is of great benefit for each government school to have a P&C Association. This enables parents and citizens to meet together to determine the needs and aspirations of the school community. We would love to see you at our next meeting.

School Canteen
Our canteen is looking for volunteers to help with serving and preparing lunches. If you can spare an hour or so on any day through the week, please contact Marina French. We would also like you to consider your availability to help in the canteen in 2013. You might like to book in now a regular day for next year.

STUDENT WELFARE NEWS
Positive Behaviour for Learning
This week's target behaviour relates to the expectation of students to act sensibly. The target is for students to 'choose sensible games'. We encourage students to choose games and activities that are safe or played safely at school. Students are able to bring balls and small inexpensive toys from home with which to play at break times.

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such as skipping ropes, tennis balls, elastic, jacks, matchbox cars, colouring books and the like are all items that can be easily brought to school.

In bringing things to play with, we also encourage students to share and take turns as well as decide on the rules for playing a game before starting to play. This can help avoid arguments. Parents might like to discuss how their child can play with the things they bring to school so that they know what is expected. Teachers teach a number of games to students that they can play and which don’t need equipment eg Red Light, Letters, May I, Fly.

Injuries to students
From time to time, students receive injuries both at home and at school. Sometimes students will break a bone or need stitches to cuts. If your child has been injured and is returning to school with the injury, you need to make an appointment with Mrs Baker or Mrs Berwick as a part of the risk assessment needed before your child returns to school. The risk assessment that you complete with us helps us know of any restrictions placed on your child by their doctor while recovering, eg plaster, sling, crutches. We need to make changes to your child’s usual routine to ensure their safety while continuing to recover from their injuries.

INTERESTING INFORMATION

Family Astronomy Night – Neighbouring Galaxies
The University of Western Sydney Penrith Observatory will be running a Family Astronomy Night on Saturday, 17 November from 8pm. The evening will include a presentation, a 3D astronomy movie and stargazing through the University’s computerised telescopes (weather permitting).

Cost: $15 adult, $10 child, $40 family.
To book: Register on line at www.uws.edu.au/observatory or email r.mccourt@uws.edu.au
Enquiries: Phone (02) 4736 0135 (Mon, Wed or Thurs)

Useful Educational Apps – Spelling Games Lite HD – Reading Eggs Spelling
Publisher Blake eLearning
Review date 21 August 2012

Reading Eggs Spelling is a FREE app that teaches children the fundamental skills of spelling whilst staying motivated and having fun. Based on the key teaching principle that the most effective learning takes place whilst having fun, Reading Eggs Spelling transports your child to a fascinating new setting with each game – captivating their attention with a vibrant, interactive sensory environment to keep them motivated and engaged whilst learning.

Key Features:
• Suitable for ages 6 - 12.
• Contains 10 games, samples from all of the 6 paid versions of the Reading Eggs Spelling app – Grades 1 to 6.
• Fully interactive games keep your child engaged by arranging words through ‘touch and drag’ motions, typing in missing letters, and receiving voice feedback with correct pronunciation of words and sentences.
• Each game transports your child to a vibrant new setting, including a pirate ship, the carnival, and even to outer space – providing the sensory environment necessary to keep them motivated and engaged whilst learning.
• Develops key literacy skills including encoding, proofreading, compound words, word endings and plurals, homophones (homonyms), meanings, syllables, phonics, vocabulary, speed and some spelling rules.

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### DIARY DATES

| TERM 4 Week 6 | Monday 12 November | StartSmart Financial Literacy Workshops  
| | | School Self-Evaluation Meeting 3.15pm |
| | 13 | StartSmart Financial Literacy Workshops |
| | 14 | StartSmart Financial Literacy Workshops |
| Thursday 15 November | StartSmart Financial Literacy Workshops  
| | | Kindergarten 2013 Transition Program  
| | | Sydney Observatory Excursion - S2R, S2B, S2K |
| | 16 | Sydney Observatory Excursion - S2/3U, S2L, S2J  
| | | Early Stage 1 & Stage 2 Honour Assemblies |

| TERM 4 Week 7 | Monday 19 November | School Self-Evaluation Meeting 3.15pm |
| | 20 | P&C AGM 7.00pm |
| | 21 | |
| | 22 | Kindergarten 2013 Transition Program |
| | 23 | Stage 1 & Stage 3 Honour Assemblies |

### NOTES HOME THIS WEEK

| Stage 3 | Make-Up Opportunity |

Food for Thought

"Ask me three priorities for Government, and I tell you: education, education and education".  
Tony Blair

Have a great week!

Signed: Pauline Baker  
Principal  
8.11.12