SWPBS Purpose Statement:

Toowoomba West Special School is committed to promoting a safe, respectful and responsible school community that enables our students to reach their full potential.

URGENT: If you are a parent or carer who has been collecting prizes / donations for Megan Apalais for the Race Day multi-draw raffle, please bring those prizes / donations in to school as soon as possible.

In this issue:

- Urgent ..........................................................
- Sports Day ...................................................
- Focus on Curriculum ..................................
- P&C Race Day .............................................
- Drop Off Areas Undergo Transformation ............
- Do you have a Companion Card? ......................
- QSchools App ...........................................
- School Wide Positive Behaviour Support Update ...
- Talk Like a Pirate Day ....................................
- Coming Events ...........................................
- Access to Justice of the Peace ........................
- Visits to Paediatricians or Other Specialists ...........

SPORTS DAY

Our annual sports day was held on 14 October. The morning session involved students and staff progressing around a circuit of events which were, naturally, fully accessible to all. After morning tea there were short and longer course races for all students, as well as races dedicated to family members and our buddies from Toowoomba Grammar School.

Thanks go to Mr Glenn for planning such a fun-filled day, and to Miss Yvonne and Miss Eliza who helped with setting up of activities early that morning. Special mention goes to senior Blair Taylor who was a wonderful role model for students as he assisted and supported younger children with their races, as well as volunteering to help the Grammar boys after the event with the packing away of all of the equipment.

Above: Yes, he may have a broken foot but that did not stop this young man from walking his race! Below: It was great to see so many family members there to support their children. It means so much to them!
Below: Miss Eliza runs with and encourages her Preppies! Whoo!

The Toowoomba Grammar students, all from year 11, were of tremendous assistance on the day and we thank them very much. (More Sports Day photos at the end of the newsletter.)

**FOCUS ON CURRICULUM**

In earlier newsletters you may have read about the federal government funding which has come to Queensland and has been distributed to schools by our state government. Education Queensland is asking all of its state schools to use these funds to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students. These funds, now known as the Great Results Guarantee (GRG), will continue in all schools in 2015 as well. This year we attracted just over $30,000 (as it is on a per capita basis). We have been using these funds to train key teachers in a Maths program, YuMi Deadly Maths. Next week four teachers are going to QUT for three days with teams from 12 special schools around the state for their second training session for the year.

We have just purchased a range of resources which we will be implementing in 2015 such as Reading Our Way, a reading program developed and licensed by Down Syndrome Association Queensland which is achieving great results in many schools throughout Australia.
It is a visual / sight word approach which not only benefits children with intellectual disability but those who have ASD. We will still be using our Letterland program in conjunction with this. We are also purchasing the Brigance screening kit which identifies developmental needs in language, motor, self-help, social-emotional and cognitive skills. Our GRG funds have also been used to release key staff to support teachers with a range of literacy and communication pedagogy, including PECS and Intensive Interaction.

Staff investigate the ‘how’ around the teaching of maths – YuMi Deadly Maths pedagogy around teaching part and whole during the Pupil Free Day on 20 October. Larissa Vale, our Curriculum Coordinator, planned activities to support teacher’s understanding.

Over the last school holidays major works were completed at the front of our main drop off areas. At last we have a one way, drive through drop off area (instead of a turnaround circle). This is relieving congestion and the narrowing of the street in front of the school at peak times, and is streamlining the vehicle drop offs inside the school and minimising queues.

Parents and carers are advised to access the new driveway entry by driving south along Gladstone Street, therefore turning LEFT into the driveway. This will ensure that there is no traffic congestion caused by cars turning right into the driveway and potentially holding up traffic behind them. Your co-operation with this is greatly appreciated.

There will be a live band – “Special Guest” providing entertainment and the genre is good old ‘pub rock’, perfect for kicking up your heels on the dance floor after a lovely meal. There are great prizes up for grab in a raffle plus ‘cent auction style’ prizes. Parents and Carers, we would love to see you and your extended family and friends there. This is our major fundraiser for the year and it will be a ton of fun!

One of the fortunate things about getting together at our parent support meetings is that you get to hear about and share ideas which might benefit others. At one of our meetings two of our parents were telling others about the Companion Card. Information from the website follows.

**About companion card**

If you have a disability and a lifelong need for ‘attendant care support’ in order to participate in community activities and attend venues, the Companion Card can help you with the costs of getting out and about with the support of a companion. Companion Card holders receive a second ‘companion’ ticket at no charge at participating venues and on public transport. The ‘companion’ ticket is also exempt from booking fees. The Companion Card is issued in the name of the person who has a disability, and is valid for 5 years. A companion is any person who accompanies a cardholder and provides attendant care support. The cardholder’s chosen companion may be a
paid or unpaid assistant or carer, family member, friend or partner.

**Attendant care support**

Attendant care support means significant assistance with mobility, communication, self-care or learning, where the use of aids, equipment or alternative strategies does not enable a person to carry out these tasks independently. Attendant care support does not include the companion providing only social company, reassurance or encouragement.

**Eligibility**

The Companion Card is not income or asset tested.

To be eligible for the card, you must:

- be a lawful Australian resident, living in Queensland
- have a disability
- because of the impact of the disability, be unable to participate at most community venues or activities without attendant care support
- need, or be likely to need, lifelong attendant care support.


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**QSCHOOLS APP ALLOWS YOU TO ACCESS SCHOOL WEBSITE INFORMATION EASILY!**

This is a reminder to parents and carers about an app developed by Education Queensland that allows parents/carers to access information about their child’s school. The QSchools app allows you to access all information on a school’s website. When any new items are uploaded to the website, parents/carers could receive an alert to let them know about it. Fantastic! It’s **free** from the App Store (for apple products) or Google Play Store (for androids).

Also, if you have not visited our website recently, then do have a look when you get the chance: [https://toowwestspecs.eq.edu.au/](https://toowwestspecs.eq.edu.au/) or just Google us! Every EQ school website has a translator at the bottom of the site page. Each website can be translated into a range of common languages. For all of you Star Wars fans out there, I have just discovered that it will translate into Klingon!

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**SCHOOL WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT**

As a way of encouraging and supporting staff to implement positive behaviour support, we have an **“SWPBS Staff Member of the Week”**. Staff can nominate each other as recipients and each week a worthy recipient is selected who is highlighted on the staff noticeboard for that week. We have adopted the term ‘awesome’ from the Lego Movie where “everything is awesome!” As I write this, Megan Thompson happens to be our SWPBS Staff Member of the Week:

“for being **AWESOME** in the way that she continually **self-reflects** around the behaviour management strategies that she uses with her students. (Could I or we be doing things differently to promote positive behaviours?)

Most recently, she has consulted, initiated and co-opted others in her team to develop and implement new strategies around a student which are achieving positive results! Megan, you set an **AWESOME** example for us all!”

And what is the coveted weekly prize for winning this award? You get to park your car at a special designated car park close to C Block (instead of parking up near the child care centre)!

**Lea on behalf of the TWSS SWPBS Team**

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**‘TALK LIKE A PIRATE’ DAY**

‘International Talk like a Pirate Day’ was held on the last day of Term 3 to raise money and awareness for Childhood Cancer Support. It is one of the best days for **FUN** on the school calendar as our students and staff dressed up and talked like pirates – and what better way to let off steam at the end of a long term. Thanks to those families who kindly donated to this worthy cause.
Till next time

Lea

★★★★★★ Coming Events ★★★★★★

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sat 15 November</td>
<td>P&amp;C Race Day, Toowoomba Turf Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 8 December</td>
<td>Graduation Night 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 9 December</td>
<td>Graduation Night 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs 11 December</td>
<td>End of Year Concert</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 12 December</td>
<td>Last day of the school year</td>
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On Wednesdays Gail Saw, our Uniform Co-ordinator, comes in to collect and place orders for uniforms.

ACCESS TO JP

Mr. Glenn, our Deputy Principal, is a registered Justice of the Peace (Qual.). Should you need the services of a JP (Qual.) please enquire at the office to make a time to meet with him.

Visits to Paediatricians or other specialists:
If your child has a paediatric, neurologist or other specialist visit coming up, please let your child’s teacher know. This will enable us to provide an update about your child’s progress at school. Paediatricians and other specialists tell us that they find information from school to be extremely valuable e.g. in relation to a child’s behaviour, ability to concentrate, cognitive and physical skills, energy levels etc. while at school. It would be desirable to have at least one week’s notice for a report.