November 2014

Dear Parents,

Re: 2015 School Account (Student Education Contributions)

The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 provides for the provision of free instruction in the standard curriculum program, and empowers School Councils to charge for goods and services used in the course of instruction and to raise funds.

Each year our School Council is responsible for the preparation of a budget to provide resources for educational programs, administration, facilities maintenance, and student/classroom resources. The development of this budget is aligned with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) policy, ‘Parent Payments in Victorian Government Schools’.

The DEECD provides funding to schools through the School Resource Package (SRP) which is supplemented through locally raised monies via fundraising, the hire of facilities and family contributions.

The SRP includes funding for staffing, the standard curriculum program, equipment and operational costs such as utilities, maintenance, ICT costs and resources. Approximately 90% of the SRP funding is required to cover the cost of the employment of staff, leaving the remainder to meet all other operational costs.

As such, the maintenance of our facilities, curriculum opportunities and the means by which they are presented rely on additional contributions from parents.

In 2014, locally raised funds (Parent Payments) contributed towards the following:

- Curriculum materials in all learning areas
- The refurbishment of the student bathrooms
- The refurbishment of classrooms, the corridor and office spaces in Block B
- Building a new classroom and storage space in the Early Learning Centre
- Purchasing additional interactive whiteboards
- Continued upgrading of the computer technology and network capabilities throughout the school - additional notebook computers, iPads, servers, switches and peripheral equipment. This has significantly enhanced each child’s access to up-to-date technology
- Purchasing of a number of Literacy, Numeracy, Multi-media, Science resources, library books and sport equipment
- Purchasing of additional reading material for our school’s new Reading Program
- The implementation of the Digital Excellence (Computer skills) program
- Maintenance of schools grounds such as mowing of the oval and general gardening
- New Classroom furniture and
- Landscaping throughout the school
School Council, the staff and Mr Catalano (our Principal) are extremely grateful to all of our school families who have paid their school fees which has made an enormous difference to our school as indicated above.

In 2015 we require your support again as we have some major plans to continually improve our school and also make a significant difference to the education provision offered. Next year we plan to utilise school fees towards the following additional programs and projects:

- Continue to increase the number of iPads and computers in the school
- Increase the Science resources across the school as we continue to move to a curriculum which has a greater focus on Science
- Increase the variety and number of reading material to support our school’s Reading program
- Redevelop the school’s sick bay and Out of Hours School Care building
- Continue to develop the school’s external facilities such as additional play areas and landscaping

**Parent Payments**

In accordance with DEECD policy, School Councils can request payments from parents for student materials and services charges, and for voluntary financial contributions. These payments fall into three categories:

1. **Essential education items** which parents and guardians are required to pay the school to provide for their child (e.g. stationery, text books and associated learning materials)

2. **Optional extras** which are offered on a user-pays basis and which parents and guardians may choose whether their child accesses or participates in (e.g. Extra-curricular programs or activities such as instrumental music, swimming, camps etc)

3. **Voluntary financial contributions** which parents and guardians may be invited to donate to the school (e.g. grounds beautification, library or building maintenance fund).

4. **Levy for specific projects** which parents are requested to pay in order for the project to commence and be completed earlier (e.g. the redevelopment of the student bathrooms)

**The 2015 School Fees:**

As decided at the September 2013 School Council meeting, school fees for 2015 will remain as the same price as this year (2014). Which are $250 per child plus an additional $20 for the Digital Excellence (whole school computer) program. Therefore School Council has determined that the parent payments required for ‘essential education items’ in 2015 will be **$270 per student**.

We have outlined what the essential education items are below, and this year’s arrangements for payment are on the attached form.

**Essential Educational Items**

The essential education items charge goes towards the cost of stationery and books for each student, including pens, pencils, rulers, erasers, glue etc, photocopying costs, class sets of texts for Literacy activities, classroom paper and other requisites, supplies for specialist classes in Art, Physical Education, Mandarin and Music, library books and other curriculum material as well as ICT (computer) consumables. **Bulk buying reduces costs compared to what parents would have to pay individually for such items.** The cost of stationery items is tax deductible if your family is eligible for the Family Tax Benefit Part A and for the 2015 school year is set at $70. Incidentally eligible families can also claim uniform and computer costs as well.

We also ask parents to make a voluntary financial contribution towards our Building Fund (Tax Deductable for all families) and also a Grounds and Maintenance Levy.

**Building Fund**

The Department of Education & Early Childhood Development grants are insufficient to keep our buildings in their best condition. As a voluntary contribution to your child’s education, School Council provides a tax deductible opportunity to enable you to help improve the school facilities. The Glen Waverley Primary School Building Fund is used solely for the upgrade and maintenance of our school buildings. Contributions over $2 are fully tax deductible and School Council is requesting a minimum of $30 per family. In 2014 these funds were used to refurbish classrooms.
Grounds and Maintenance Levy
We are most fortunate to have an excellent outdoor environment for our students and staff at Glen Waverley Primary School. Once again, School Council is requesting a minimum of $20 per family.

Air Conditioning and Sick Bay Refurbishment Levy
In 2012, School Council introduced a levy to assist in the redevelopment of the car park, in 2013 for our wonderful new school library and 2014 to refurbish the student bathrooms. Although they have all been quite extensive projects, the end products are something we should all be very proud of, and would not have been possible without family contributions.

Another pressing need in our school is to install some new and replace ageing air conditioning units in our classrooms and to also refurbish the sick bay. School Council has set the level at $20 for the first child and $10 for each subsequent child (2015 only). We sincerely hope that all families can see the benefit of this levy.

Changes to the Education Maintenance Allowance
Parents will not be able to apply for the Education Maintenance Allowance in 2015. From 1 January 2015, the government will provide extra financial support directly to Victoria’s neediest schools instead of providing the Education Maintenance Allowance directly to parents. The money will be allocated to eligible schools through schools’ core operational funding mechanism, with the neediest schools receiving the most funding. Glen Waverley Primary School will not be receiving any additional funding. This change to how the money is distributed was required by the funding agreement with the Commonwealth government to make sure Victorian schools receive increased funding that will benefit all students and, in particular, those from schools with concentrated disadvantage. The end of the EMA direct payments to parents will not affect any other payment you may be receiving such as the Schoolkids Bonus, which is provided directly to eligible parents to assist with education costs.

In Summary
Essential Education Items - Curriculum Levy - $270 per student which consists of:
- Student Class Materials and Supplies $250 (Including School Communication Diary and Student Requisites - Book Bags)
- Digital Excellence (Computers skills) program $20

Air Conditioning and Sick Bay Redevelopment Levy - $20 for the first child and $10 for each subsequent child (2015 only)

Voluntary Financial Contributions (per family)
- Grounds and Maintenance Levy – School Council is requesting a minimum of $20 per family
- Building fund (tax deductible donation)- School Council is requesting a minimum of $30 per family

Total for voluntary family contribution requested a minimum of $50 per family.

Please note:
The student class materials and supplies levy is tax deductable – for families receiving the Family Tax Benefit Part A. The Essential Education Items does not include the Flutophone (Years Foundation to 2) and Recorder (Years 3 to 6) as most children should have these from previous years however eligible families can still claim this along with uniform and any other item for educational purposes. The cost of the Flutophones and Recorders are $10 – payable and collected from the office.

School Council understands that some families may have difficulty in meeting these contributions, Mr Catalano is available to discuss your own circumstances with you in a totally confidential manner and a payment plan will be created. These discussions are not known by School Council and remain between yourself and Mr Catalano.
As a means of further assisting families, those who pay their 2015 School Account prior to the end of the 2014 school year will receive a $10 discount on their essential items. Payment made in 2015 will not be eligible to receive the discount.

We are accepting payment for the 2015 School Accounts from Monday 3rd November.

If you elect to pay your 2015 School Account next year, we would appreciate receiving these contributions on or before **Friday, 6th February 2015**.

Once families have paid their account they will be issued with a bag containing the requisites (exercise books etc) for their child(ren). These will be available for collection from **Monday 1st December**. Families who would prefer to collect their “book bags” in 2015 may do so from **Monday 26th January**.

The School Council, Staff and Mr Catalano would like to thank you for your contribution during the 2014 school year and we look forward to your continued support in 2015 and beyond.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Paul Van Den Bergen  
School Council President  

Mrs Nive D’Souza  
School Council Treasurer  

Mr Frank Catalano  
Principal