It is slightly disturbing to be able to state that we are now half way through Term 1. This means that the year appears to be moving so quickly. It has been a pleasure to speak with so many parents in the past 5 weeks and gain the feedback on the new school structure. All comments to this point have been very positive. There still needs to be some minor changes but these will happen with as little disturbance as possible.

**Homework**

A common comment that is asked of me as Principal is about homework. It needs to be stated that there is homework every night; your child needs to review over the five periods which they completed that day. This could involve simply reading over their notes from a lesson or completing an exercise or task that reinforces the concept that was being taught. By reading over work and familiarising with the work, the self-confidence for the next lesson is increased. This also allows your child to question work that was not fully understood, either of yourself or hopefully of the teacher in the next lesson. Apart from this I fully encourage and support all students to be reading material that interests them,
whether that is a novel, magazine, fiction or non-fiction. The school library has many and varied resources that I can all but guarantee will meet one of your child’s interests.

**Thank you to Technical Support Teachers and Staff**

I would like to thank our technical support teachers and staff, led by Mr Geoff Timms. This team has now fully reimaged and made available an additional 120 laptop computers to students and staff in the school. These laptops are able to access the school’s Wi-Fi system and can be an active part within teaching and learning within the classroom. Students have access to these laptops in different faculty areas, but they can also be borrowed through the school’s library.

**Primary Industry Area**

The time has now finally come for the newly remodelled and rebuilt Primary Industry area to be signed over to the school for usage. Meetings this week with representatives from Public Works, the contractors (Greg Clarke Building) and the school will allow this outstanding resource to be handed over for the start of next week (7th March). The time spent on the construction and completion of the build and its surroundings will be worth the wait and time delays. An official opening of the buildings will occur early in Term 2. With the handing over of this resource the car park at the northern end of the school will also be returned back to the school.

**Parent Portal in Sentral**

It is pleasing to observe the usage of the parent portal of the Sentral software used by the school. The bookings made by parents for the parent/teacher interviews for Tuesday 15th March demonstrates how quickly parents have taken up this opportunity. The parent portal allows each parent access to their child’s timetable, latest report, attendance record and school calendar. A copy of the school’s newsletter can also be read from this portal as well as daily notices. Feedback on this site and its improvement is always appreciated.

**School Students Representing our School**

School representation of students across the whole school remains very high. Students are representing in public speaking, debating, community involvement and of course in all sporting areas. I thank all parents for their support in encouraging their child to participate and enjoy the involvement. To see a smile on a student’s face after they have performed and been congratulated reinforces the efforts put in by all.

**John Douglas**

**Principal**
Northern Rivers Zone Swimming Championships
On Friday 26th February a team of 30 very keen and competitive swimmers travelled to the Lismore Memorial pool for the Northern Rivers Zone Carnival. This team was very successful, finishing first in the overall point score after narrowly beating Maclean High School. We also had four age champions: 14yrs girls Chiara Wenban Year 8, 15yrs girls Alyssa Iles Year 10, 16yrs girls Sarah Bransgrove Year 10 and 16yrs boys James Leslie Year 10.

Alstonville High Schools Mixed 12-19 600mtr Freestyle Relay made up of our 6 fastest girls and 6 fastest boys, set a new zone record of 6:15.21. Alstonville High School also had 10 Relay Teams qualify for the North Coast Regional Swimming Carnival to be held at the McElhone Swimming Complex at Kempsey on Tuesday 8th March. Thanks to all the parents who transported and supported their children on the day. Good luck to all the students that will compete at The North Coast Swimming Championships. Congratulations to the following students who competed at the Zone Carnival held in Lismore for their outstanding success and excellent behaviour.

Girls:

1. Bransgrove, Sarah yr10  
2. Bransgrove, Emma yr8  
3. Cusack, Jade yr12  
4. Duroux, Taneisha yr7  
5. Gilmour, Tess yr8  
6. Iles, Alyssa yr10  
7. Jones, Eva yr7  
8. Jones, Scarlett yr9  
9. Lopes, Evie yr9  
10. Peiti, Giaan yr9  
11. Rawson, Mae yr7  
12. Rawson, Sarah yr7  
13. Stanek, Gabrielle yr11  
14. Thomson, Alahna yr7  
15. Ware, Aolani yr8  
16. Wenban, Chiara yr8  
17. Wenban, Domenica yr10

Boys:

1. Fleming, James yr9  
2. Halpin, Owen yr8  
3. Hewetson, Jackson yr7  
4. Leslie, Aaron yr7  
5. Leslie, James yr10  
6. Leslie, Nathan yr8  
7. Maron, Oscar yr7  
8. Meury, Max yr10  
9. Mukherjee, Auric yr7  
10. Mulcahy, Max yr8  
11. Seymour, Edan yr7  
12. Stevenson, Lleyton yr10  
13. Vidler, Gabe yr10

Basketball
On Friday 19th February, Alstonville High School student Zoe Hurley yr11 competed at the Northern Rivers Zone Open Girls Basketball Gala Day and Trials held in Lismore. As a result of her fine performances at these trials, Zoe was selected into the Northern Rivers Zone Open Girls Basketball team. Zoe will now contest the North Coast Open Girls Basketball Championship to be held at Port Macquarie on Thursday 17th March.

Football
Congratulations to our students that were selected into the Northern Rivers Zone Football (Soccer) team. The Girls Football Trials were held at Kadina High School on Thursday 25th February with Brittany Webster yr11, Sarah McKie yr11, Caitlyn Walker yr12 and Ruby Riordan yr10 selected into the team. The Boys Football Trials were held at Southern Cross University’s synthetic field on Thursday 25th February with James Leslie yr10 selected into the team. All five students will now travel to Junction Hill Road at Grafton for the North Coast Regional Football Trials to be held on Friday 18th March.

Rugby League
Three of our students will represent North Rivers Zone Rugby League teams at the Northern North Coast Trials. The Northern North Coast Trials involve the Northern Rivers Zone team competing against Far North Coast Zone team in the 15 years and Open age groups. Congratulations to Jordan Coughran yr10 and Lachlan Wade yr9 who were selected into the 15 Years team and Josh Patston yr12 selected into the Open Boys team. The Trials for all 3 boys will be held at Kadina High School on Friday 18th March. Good luck!

Paul Francis / Sports Organiser

Raising Resilient Teenagers: A Free Online Program for Parents
FREE online parenting program empowering parents to make sense of adolescence and parent their teenager with confidence.

As children become teenagers, it can be hard for parents to know the best way to stay connected with their child. Parents can play an important role in increasing resilience in their teenagers and protecting their mental health.

Researchers from Monash University and the University of Melbourne have recently developed a new online parenting program that offers practical strategies parents can use to manage the challenges of adolescence and stay connected with their teenager.

If you are a parent or guardian of a child aged 12 to 15, you may be eligible to participate in a free trial of the program.
Participation will take a few hours of yours and your child’s time, over 3 months. Both you and your child will be reimbursed for your time.

Find out more or register at: http://www.parentingstrategies.net/depression.brief.intervention/ Or contact the researchers at med-parentingstrategies@monash.edu or on (03) 9905 1250

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**Year 12 Fundraiser - Huge Easter Raffle**

Tickets are now on sale. $2 per ticket or 3 for $5.

This will be drawn lunchtime 22nd March.

Hampers and many Easter egg prizes! There is also a guessing competition. For $1 guess how many Easter eggs are in the jar to win it. Buy your tickets now at lunch or recess.

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**From Mr Trirro: Head Teacher English**

Dear Parents/Guardians

It has been a pleasure to take up the role of Head Teacher English at Alstonville High School. I am eagerly returning to Public Education after 10 years working in the Catholic system as a Head teacher at a highly successful College in the region. I am indeed proud to be a member of the Alstonville High School community and look forward to supporting your child’s enjoyment, development and achievement in English.

Alstonville High School has an outstanding tradition of academic excellence, innovation and quality teaching. My faculty and I are committed to enhancing opportunities for your child and sincerely thank you for investing your trust in our capacity to achieve results with integrity and through commitment and focus.

It was great to meet so many parents of prospective students last week at the Year 5 & 6 into 7 evening and particularly pleasing to receive many compliments about the enthusiasm and creativity of Faculty staff. We are indeed fortunate to have such a committed and professional team at Alstonville High School.

Speaking of which, Mrs Kelly Twyford has kindly offered to lead a Year 12 Creative Writing workshop on Saturday, 12th of March from 9.30 to 12.30 at the school. Year 12 students are strongly encouraged to attend as this is an outstanding opportunity to hone their creative writing skills; a mandatory component of the HSC course. A reminder that Writers’ Group meets at lunch in L3 every three weeks. See Mrs Twyford for information.

In addition, an excursion has been organised for Year 9 students on Friday the 8th of April to see Bell Shakespeare perform ‘Such Sweet Sorrow’ at the Murwillumbah Civic Centre. I would urge parents and students to return their permission notes and money to the office for this event as places are strictly limited.

Currently, Faculty staff are organising a range of English related activities for your child including writing competitions, debating opportunities and a range of interactive workshops. Valuable events such as these can only operate with the support of the school community.

Indeed, I encourage you to become actively involved in your child’s English education at Alstonville. As a mandatory subject, all students are expected to attain their personal best, becoming creative and confident critical thinkers.

All the very best for the 2016 academic year. We look forward to an extraordinary, positive and empowering year ahead in English education at Alstonville High School.

If you have any queries regarding English programs at Alstonville, please don’t hesitate to contact me at the school.

Mr Vincent Trirro
**Head Teacher English**
MOBILE MUSTER – Supporting the Jane Goodall Foundation and chimpanzees’

The Student Environment group are running a MOBILE MUSTER this semester.

So please help us by sending in with your child all your old unused mobile phones, batteries, chargers and accessories. This is a great way to clean out the drawer as well feel like you are giving back to the community. 90% of the materials in these are recovered and reused.

Students can drop these items into the box located in the front office.

Ask all your friends and family members to support you in this Muster.

*** DID YOU KNOW*** Recycling 50,000 handsets can replace the need to mine 110 tonnes of gold ore, 123 tonnes of silver bearing or 11 tonnes of copper sulphide ore.

Many thanks

‘HAWCS’ – Helping All With Cleaner Schools

Keryn Akers / Environment Group
Scouting is for Girls and Boys aged 6 to 26.

The different age groups meet on different nights.

Joeys 6 to 8yrs, Cubs 8 to 11 yrs, Scouts 11 to 15yrs, Venturers 15 to 18 yrs and Rovers 18 to 26yrs.

Alstonville Scout group is a small enthusiastic group looking to expand and offer amazing scouting experiences to local youth. Other Scout groups exist in Ballina, Byron Bay, Lismore, Bangalow, Casino and Kyogle, Brunswick Heads, Grafton and Coffs Harbour. For more information google your local scout group, or for Alstonville Scouts Contact Ian Judd: alstonvillescouts@gmail.com