Here are two financial supports for parents that you may be eligible for:-

1. Introduction of Schoolkids Bonus

**MAIN POINTS:**

- The Schoolkids Bonus is being introduced by the Australian Government from 2013.
- The Education Tax Refund (ETR) will be replaced by the Schoolkids Bonus, which provides a guaranteed upfront payment to support eligible families with the costs of their children’s education. To be eligible for the Schoolkids bonus, parents must be eligible for the Family Tax Benefit Part A.
- Each year, eligible families will receive: $410 for each child in primary school, $820 for each child in secondary school.
- Parents will no longer be required to keep records of purchases in the twice a year payment, made before the start of Term 1 and Term 3.

**CRITICAL DATE:**
The changes will take effect from 1 January, 2013.

**ACTION REQUIRED:**

**CONTACT/ENQUIRIES:**

**TWO CHANGES TO EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE FOR 2013**

1. The EMA provides financial assistance to families on a low income to help with the cost of essential educational items such as textbooks, stationery and uniforms. 
   EMA is a means-tested payment—parents must hold a Centrelink/Veterans Affairs concession card to be eligible.
2. The EMA is being restructured to increase the focus on direct support to parents.

**The changes to the EMA starting in 2013 include:**

*The School Start Bonus will be discontinued.
*EMA payments to parents increase:
*$200.00 for parents of eligible Prep students.
*$150.00 for parents of all other eligible primary school students.
*School-based EMA payments will be discontinued.
*Changes to the EMA will be effective from the start of the 2013 school year.

The EMA is paid in two instalments annually (70% in March and 30% in August).
The existing payment options for the EMA payment to parents will not change. Parents will still have the choice on the EMA application form whether to have their EMA paid directly into their bank account or paid by cheque. The existing EMA processing arrangements will continue in 2013. 
EMA application forms will be available from the school office.