

2009 Annual School Report Heathcote High School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way



Our school at a glance

Students

Following years of steadily growing enrolments, our school population decreased from 985 in 2008 to 932 students in 2009, due to significant demographic changes within the area.

Over ninety-three per cent of students attended school on average on each school day. This daily attendance rate was significantly above both the Regional and State average.

Thirty-five per cent of last year's HSC class have gone onto further university study.

Seventy-two per cent of our 2007 year 10 cohort completed year 12 in 2009, our highest-ever percentage.

Staff

The school had 64 teaching positions allocated in 2008. This included 13 executive staff, 46 classroom teachers and five specialist teachers. The teaching staff is supported by 13 administrative and support staff.

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Significant programs and initiatives

During 2009 the school installed a fourth computer technology lab to support the teaching of digital and photographic technology and senior visual arts. Commercial cookery facilities were also upgraded in one of the food technology labs.

Other initiatives included:

- the Community of Schools in the Park (a partnership of public primary and high schools in the area)
- Installation of several digital whiteboard suites in classrooms
- Implementation of the Federal Government's *Laptops for Learning* program
- Installation of additional wireless network points to support use of laptops in the school
- Participation in the 2009 Rock Eisteddfod
- Environmental initiatives in recycling and energy-saving
- Preparations for the school's 50th Anniversary

Student achievement in 2009

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7

The 2009 literacy results show that our year 7 students performed at State average in their performance in reading, writing and language, and below State average in spelling.

NAPLAN testing occurs only one term after enrolment at high school, and their results should be viewed in this light.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7

The 2009 numeracy results show that our year 7 students performed above State average in their overall numeracy performance.

NAPLAN testing occurs only one term after enrolment at high school, and their results should be viewed in this light.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9

The 2009 literacy results show that our year 9 students performed above State average in reading, and at State average in writing, language and spelling.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9

The 2009 numeracy results show that our year 9 students performed at State average in their overall numeracy performance.

School Certificate

Our students performed at or above State average in all exams. The high degree of consistency in their results indicates their excellent progress during years 7 to 10.

Higher School Certificate

The performance of students across lower, middle and higher performing groups was encouraging. The school had a long list of high achievers with forty-two occurrences of students gaining a Band 6 (90 or more) in all courses. The results were consistent with the pattern of strong achievement by our students over several years in the HSC.

Messages

Principal's message

2009 was a good year for Heathcote High School. Some excellent School Certificate and HSC results came at the end of a year in which we strengthened our teaching and learning practices, improved our students' awareness of the environment and enhanced our school's resources, facilities and community image. This report provides a snapshot of our progress and achievements during the year.

I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous school self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school's achievements and areas for development.

Geoff Dodds (Principal)

P&C message

The P&C is a highly supportive arm of our school.

We have been instrumental in the funding of various resources and events at the school:

- whiteboards \$4578
- rock eisteddfod \$1500
- portable staging \$5030
- presentation night \$2500
- rock eisteddfod \$1500

We have also participated in the finance committee, implementation of a new uniform and formulation of the uniform policy.

The P&C meetings are held monthly with a consistently high level of intelligent discussion. The parents are given valid and comprehensive information regarding the school's progress. Healthy debate takes place on a regular basis for the benefit of all present.

We have been actively organising the 50th Anniversary Fair and have been invigorated by the generous response and wishes of support from the community.

Sue Kennedy (President)

Student representative's message

2009 was a significant year in achievement for the SRC of Heathcote High. The SRC worked together to promote community and environmental awareness within the school and to raise funds towards school projects and research and aid organisations.

Some achievements and activities organised by the SRC in 2009 include:

- Involvement in the Community of Schools on the Park (COSOPT), a community of local schools aiming to share a range of expertise, facilities and programs.
- Environmental campaigns within the school including 'Beyond Earth Hour' and a 'turn off the lights' campaign, which resulted in saving over \$800 on power.
- Successful Valentine's Day and Harmony Day fundraisers were organised by the SRC resulting in the funds to install new seating in our school and the excess money was donated to the charities 'Beyond Blue' and The Fred Hollows Foundation.

The SRC was also privileged enough to participate in a Regional SRC conference and was able to send Cassie Austen to a highly commended women's leadership conference.

We, as the SRC, would like to thank and acknowledge all the support and hard work given by many teachers, parents and students.

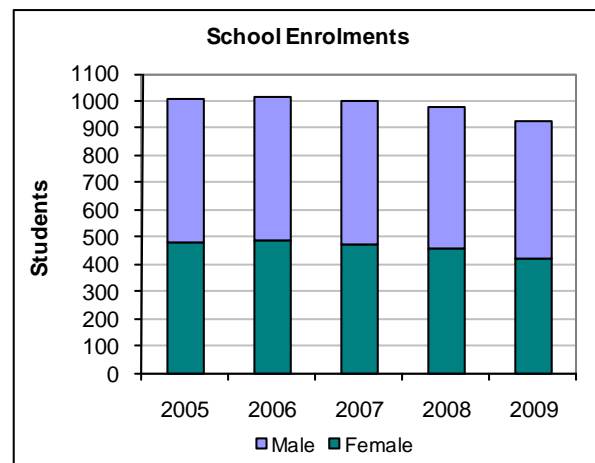
Sarah Pritt (SRC – Year 11)

School context

Student information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

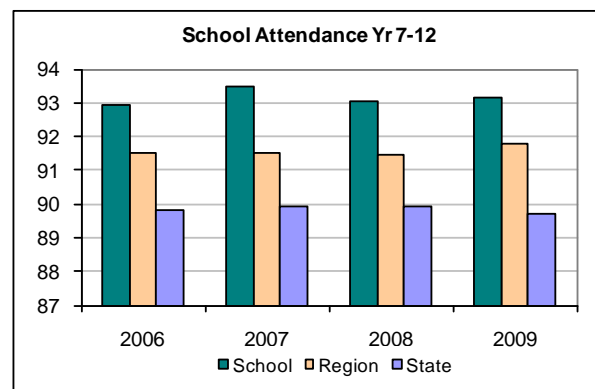
Student enrolment profile



Student enrolments rose consistently from 2002 to 2006. Due to smaller numbers in partner primary schools, the total number of students is now falling.

The vast majority of our students come from the local drawing area.

Student attendance profile



The average attendance rate of our students remains significantly above both the regional and state level, a clear endorsement of the programs in place since 2001 to improve our students' attendance.

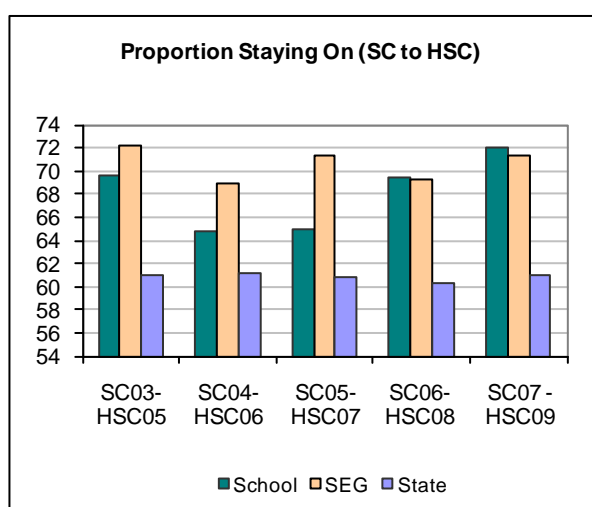
Notwithstanding the overall pattern of good attendance, the school will more closely monitor the attendance patterns of students in the middle years to ensure that absenteeism does not rise in the future.

Management of non-attendance

The school has in place a very robust attendance management system, including:

- Efficient roll-marking procedures to allow us to follow up more effectively on absent students.
- An SMS messaging system to alert parents promptly of their child's absence from school.
- Close monitoring of student attendance patterns by welfare staff.
- Closer regulation and follow up of late arrivals.
- A recognition scheme for good attendance.
- Close liaison with district support staff.

Retention to Year 12



The retention rate has improved over the last four years and is now at a historic high. The major reason for this would appear to be related to a changing student and community perception regarding the importance of the HSC as a work-related credential.

Historically students exiting Heathcote High during years 10, 11 and 12 have been very successful in finding employment and apprenticeships, should they not be undertaking tertiary studies.

Post-school destinations

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

In 2009 thirty-eight year 12 students undertook vocational or trade training as part of their HSC studies. This was 27% of the year 12 cohort.

The post-school destinations for this cohort are university (35%), full or part-time employment (13%), TAFE (24%), apprenticeship or traineeship (14%) and other – private college, looking for employment, gap year, etc (14%). These figures demonstrate the continuing success that Heathcote students have in transitioning into work and tertiary education.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification

Of the students completing their HSC course at Heathcote High in 2009 100% attained the HSC qualification.

Staff information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

The quality of the educational opportunities available at Heathcote High is due in the main to the skills, experience and commitment of our teaching staff and the dedicated support provided by our administrative staff. Our students benefited greatly from their efforts in 2009. The breakdown of the teaching staff for 2009 was:

Staff establishment

Position	No.
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	2
Head Teachers	10
Classroom Teachers	46.1
Teacher of Physical Disabilities	1
Support Teacher Learning Assistance	0.7
Teacher Librarian	1
Counsellor	1.2
Careers Adviser	1
Total	64

There is one Indigenous member currently on the staff.

Teacher qualifications

All teachers meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools. They regularly participate in professional learning activities to update their skills.

Qualifications	% of staff
Degree or Diploma	85% of staff
Postgraduate	15% of staff



Financial summary

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

Date of financial summary:	30/11/2009
Income	\$
Balance brought forward	428 750.46
Global funds	439 474.57
Tied funds	243 489.42
School & community sources	527 308.27
Interest	17 565.86
Trust receipts	80 405.80
Canteen	0.00
Total income	1 736 994.38
Expenditure	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	177 657.92
Excursions	81 013.43
Extracurricular dissections	284 335.23
Library	16 080.47
Training & development	2 089.83
Tied funds	234 089.69
Casual relief teachers	96 996.91
Administration & office	167 745.78
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	78 187.09
Maintenance	50 163.18
Trust accounts	69 044.51
Capital programs	55 730.98
Total expenditure	1 313 135.02
Balance carried forward	423 859.36



It should be noted that the balance brought forward and the balance carried forward each year contain a large percentage of committed funds. Any funds not accounted for are added to the funds paid to the school at the beginning of the school year to be put towards committed programs for that year.

The school's budget is overseen by the school's finance committee, which decides on the spending priorities for the year. Most of the income is expended on teaching and learning programs.

The school community would like to express its sincere thanks to parents who support their children by paying the scheduled school and subject contributions.

A full copy of the school's 2009 financial statement is published in *Bottlebrush*, the school's monthly newsletter. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2009

Achievements

Arts

The school encourages excellence in its broad creative and performing arts programs, where talented students are encouraged to exhibit and perform within and beyond the school.

Highlights include:

- Jessica Hannan won 1st prize of \$1000 in the Wenkart Foundation Australian Song competition for her song, 'It's Not Fair' about the Victorian bushfires. Jessica also competed in the Mc Donald's Performing Arts Challenge, achieving a highly commended in the Under-18 song writing competition with her composition, 'Only Human'.
- Members of the school band and vocal group performed with the Community of Schools on the Park at the COSOTP official launch.
- David Kalatzis and Alexandra Rosewall compared the COSOTP launch held at Engadine West Public School.
- Year 11 and 12 music students attended workshops at the Australian Institute of Music with Shenae Rowley, Sheridan Tampion and Casey Teuma giving vocal performances.
- Over 80 students competed in the 2009 Rock Eisteddfod winning an award for performance skill.



Rock Eisteddfod

- Kevin Bragg and Amy Underwood competed in the Sydney Morning Herald Public Speaking competition with Amy selected to compete in the finals.
- The Year 10 debating team comprising Kevin Bragg, Arielle McDonald, Zac Naoum and Sarah Pritt defeated Inaburra and Caringbah Selective High Schools to be runners-up in the Sutherland Shire Debating Competition.
- Arielle McDonald was a finalist in the Legacy Public Speaking Competition.
- Rebecca Monohan, Katelyn Phillips and Tara Wells received scholarships worth over \$400 to the Whitehouse School of Design five day course in fashion design.
- The annual Talent Night and Art Exhibition showcased the diverse talents of our performers and artists to the school community.
- The HSC Expo night included performances of Year 12 Music and Drama students and displays of projects and portfolios for Industrial Technology (Wood and Multimedia), Visual Arts and Society and Culture.
- The Textiles 'Designers on Parade' night showcased the HSC major works and design portfolios of our Year 12 Textiles and Design students, Year 7 and 8 technology classes and Year 9 and 10 textiles students. Year 11 and 12 Hospitality students catered for the night. As a result of this event, Year 11 and 12 students were asked to model their catwalk fashions at the Camellia Gardens in support of breast cancer research and the palliative care unit in Calvary Hospital.



Designers on Parade

Sport

We have had outstanding success in a range of sports in 2009. Individual students and teams have been entered in competitions at all levels.

Our three annual school carnivals: swimming, athletics and cross country were strongly attended and the recent return to the house system continues to be a success with excellent student participation.

The introduction of the teacher versus student sporting challenges has been most successful, fostering healthy competition and staff/student camaraderie.

Some team and individual performance highlights include:

- The school's mountain bike team won the Jet Black NSW Interschool Mountain Bike Cross Country Championships and came first in the national titles at Thredbo for the second consecutive year.
- The Open Rugby League Team made the final eight in the state in the University Shield Competition.
- The Boys Softball team made the final eight in the state.
- The Under-13 and Under-15 Rugby League teams were the Sutherland Shire winners of the Adam Dykes and Mitch Healey Shields.
- The Senior Girls Rugby League Team won the Sydney East Rugby League Girls' Sevens Competition.
- In the Oztog Shire Challenge Heathcote High teams won two competitions and were finalists in five.
- Heathcote High School achieved second place in the very strong Sutherland zone athletics carnival.
- Mitchell Codner was selected in the Under-19 National Cross Country Mountain Biking Team to compete in Germany and Belgium.
- Timothy McMillan achieved one gold, one silver and two bronze medals in the state cycling titles. Tim was subsequently selected in the Australian Cycling Team.
- Shaun Wilson was crowned the Australian Junior Men's K1 kayaking champion in sprint and classic. He came fourth in the Whitewater World Cup held in Tasmania. He was also selected for the Olympic Hopefuls Team for K1 sprint kayaking.
- Rachel Cook won gold in the 11-16 years women's trio division at the Australian Acrobatics Gymnastics Championships.
- Rebecca Gilmore was selected to represent Australia in gymnastics.
- Samantha Hammond was selected in the Under-16 Australian touch team.
- Lachlan Hay, David Parkes and Chris Reznicek-Bradley were members of the

Sydney East softball team which won the state titles. Lachlan and Chris were selected in the NSW representative side.

- Ella Nelson won the Under-15 100m and 200m and Jake Hammond won the 18+ 100m and 200m at the NSW Combined High Schools Athletics Championships.
- Liam Rapley was second in the Combined High Schools Triathlon. Liam was selected to represent Australia at the world titles.



Liam Rapley in action

- Cameron Baillie, Tim McMillan and Liam Rapley came 14th out of 124 teams at the All Schools Triathlon Championships.
- Maddison Ball competed in the NSWCHS Girls Lawn Bowls Championships, making the state quarter finals in the pairs.
- Jake Hammond (athletics) and Chris Reznicek-Bradley (softball) received NSW Blues.
- Jake Hammond won a Pierre de Coubertin Award for his exemplary participation in a range of sporting activities.
- Scott Allen was selected for the NSW Institute of Sport talented athlete program in Rugby League.
- Jim Clarke and Ben McKinnon received a silver medal in the six hour Lake Macquarie Rogaine.

Other

- Ms Lorraine Smith received a Sydney Region award for outstanding service by a teacher.
- The school received a Sydney Region award for outstanding achievement in student leadership and mentoring strategies.
- Mr Craig Mear had his historical paper on the effects of smallpox on the indigenous population of Sydney published and was interviewed by ABC Radio National.
- Rachel King and Zachary Stunnell attended the University of Sydney's Science Gifted and Talented Discovery Program with 78 other gifted and talented students from across NSW, ACT and Queensland. Rachel scored the highest mark in the Sydney University Gifted and Talented Science Program Qualifying exam, receiving a scholarship to participate.
- Cassandra Austen was selected in the UBS Investment Banking Young Women's Leadership Program at the University of Sydney. Cassandra was also one of six regional finalists in the ZONTA International Young Women in Public Affairs Award.
- Sarah Pritt and Zoe McCarthy were selected for the University of Wollongong's Women in Engineering Program.
- Kaila Bowden and Liesl Brockmann received Walter Mollenhauer Year 12 student scholarships worth \$500 each.
- Three students received regional Vocational Education and Training Excellence Awards for outstanding commitment to vocational studies – Ricky Dodson in Metal and Engineering, and Alannah Scott and Daniel Walsh for excellence in Hospitality.
- Daniel Walsh was one of ten finalists for the prestigious High Flyers Program at the Radisson Hotel.
- Jade Mieszkuc was the proud recipient of Sydney Region's inaugural 2009 Deadly Kids Doing Well Award.
- Nikki Henson progressed to the state level for the Premier's Anzac Memorial scholarship.
- Michael Tuovinen received a High Distinction (top 1% in the state) for the Australian Science Competition and 14 students awarded distinctions.
- Ten students gained a distinction (top 15% of the state) in the NSW Geography Junior Competition and seven students received distinctions in the Australian Mathematics Competition.
- Twelve students received high distinctions and ten students were awarded distinctions in the National Geographic Channel Australian Geography Competition.
- Year 10 Science students competed for the first time in the Illawarra and South East

Region Science and Engineering Challenge at Wollongong University, achieving second place.

- Year 9 students participated for the first time in the state wide Aurecon Bridge Building Competition at the Art Gallery of NSW.
- Director-General of Education and Training, Mr Michael Coutts-Trotter visited our school to observe students from Year 7 and 8, who are completing the Premier's Reading Challenge, reading and doing craft activities with students from Heathcote Public School. This is an example of further strengthening our links with our partner primary schools.



Sydney Region awards evening



One of our winning mountain bikers in action

Academic

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10.

The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in the assessments.

Year 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for year 7)

Year 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for year 9)

In the School Certificate the performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from Performance Band 1 (lowest) to Performance Band 6 (highest).

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7

The 2009 NAPLAN results show that students entering Heathcote High were at the State average in their overall literacy performance. Our students performed more strongly in reading, writing and language tasks than in spelling tasks.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7

The 2009 NAPLAN results show that students entering Heathcote High were above State average in their overall numeracy performance. Our students performed equally strongly in all components of the test – space and geometry, measurement and data and number, patterns & algebra.

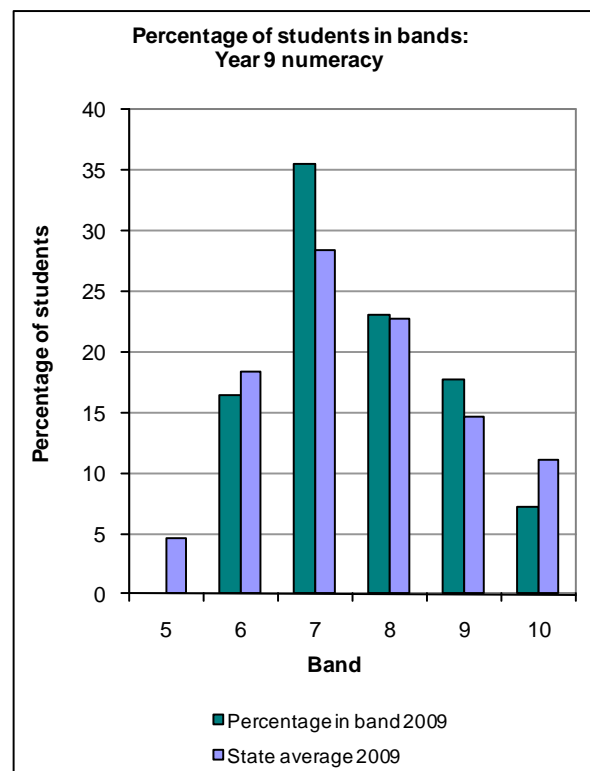
Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9

The results show that our students improved in their overall literacy performance, with the strongest progress being made in reading. Student results in writing tasks highlight the need for a greater focus on language expression, construction and spelling.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9

The results show that our students improved strongly in their overall numeracy performance, with the strongest areas of growth being in measurement, data, space and geometry.

Progress in numeracy



School Certificate

In 2009 our year 10 students sat for the School Certificate (SC) external examinations in English-literacy, mathematics, science, Australian history, civics and citizenship, and Australian geography, civics and citizenship.

In English-literacy:

- three students achieved a band 6
- 44% of our students achieved a band 5 or 6, three per cent below the state average
- our school mean (average student's result) was at the state mean

In mathematics:

- seven students achieved a band 6
- 33% of our students achieved a band 5 or 6, nine per cent above the state average
- our school mean (average student's result) was 2.8 above the state mean

In science:

- twelve students achieved a band 6
- 47% of our students achieved a band 5 or 6, eleven per cent above the state average
- our school mean (average student's result) was 2.4 above the state mean

In Australian history, civics and citizenship:

- four students achieved a band 6
- 23% of our students achieved a band 5 or 6, right on the state average
- our school mean (average student's result) was at the state mean

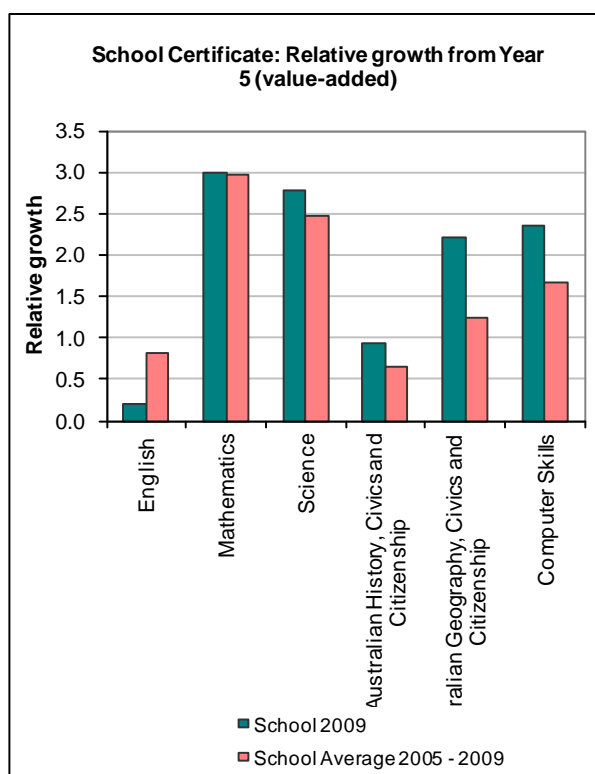
In Australian geography, civics and citizenship:

- three students achieved a band 6
- 32% of our students achieved a band 5 or 6, four percent above the state average
- our school mean (average student's result) was 1.4 above the state mean

In computing skills:

- 70% of our students were in the highly competent band, eight percent above the state average
- our school mean (average student's result) was 2.1 above the state mean

School Certificate relative performance comparison to Year 5 (value-adding)



Higher School Certificate

In all, 142 Heathcote High students completed the HSC across 30 traditional and two vocational subjects. The breadth of our senior curriculum continues to be a great strength of our school.

The performance of our 2009 HSC class was strong, with eight students scoring an ATAR above 90.00. 27 students made the Board of Studies' distinguished achievers' list (scoring 90 or more in a course or equivalent). These students achieved a band 6 on 42 occasions. This level of excellence was consistent with the pattern achieved by our students in recent years.

In English, we offered all courses. Some of our best results were in the more demanding English extension courses. In the extension 2 course one of our students gained a top band result, while in

the extension 1 course five students were placed in the top band (more than 40% of our candidates). In English advanced three of our students scored 90 or above. These were exceptional results.

In mathematics, excellent results were gained in the general mathematics course with six students gaining a band 6 result. In the more demanding mathematics course three students achieved a band 6, while in mathematics extension 1 course two students scored a top band result.

In the science KLA, our students performed more strongly in biology and chemistry than in physics. In biology more than one third of the students gained a band 5 or 6, well above state average.

In human society and its environment (HSIE), we offered ancient and modern history, history extension, economics, business studies, legal studies and society and culture. Our students achieved best in ancient history (four band 6 results) and economics (one band 6 result). In the very challenging history extension course two students gained a top band result.

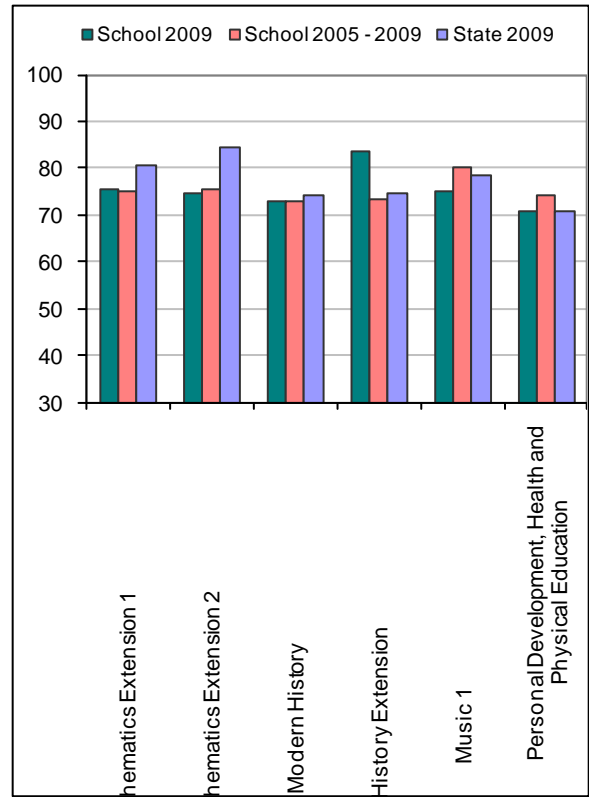
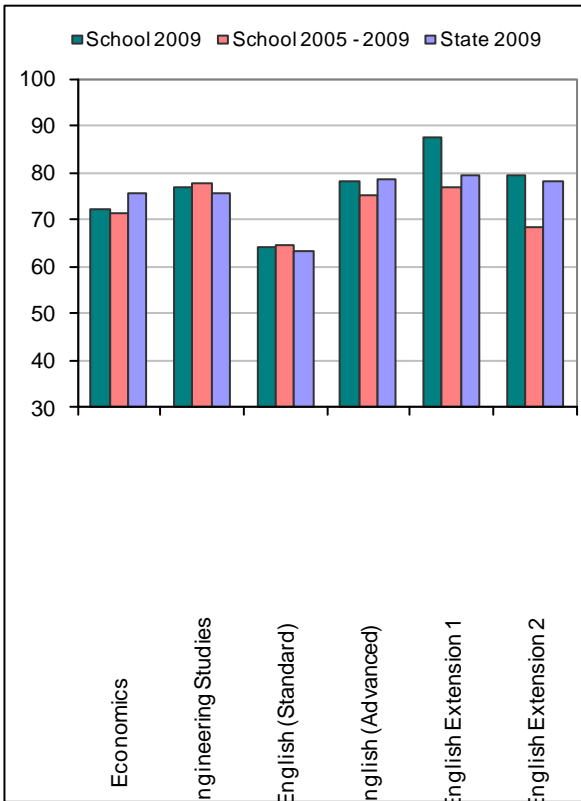
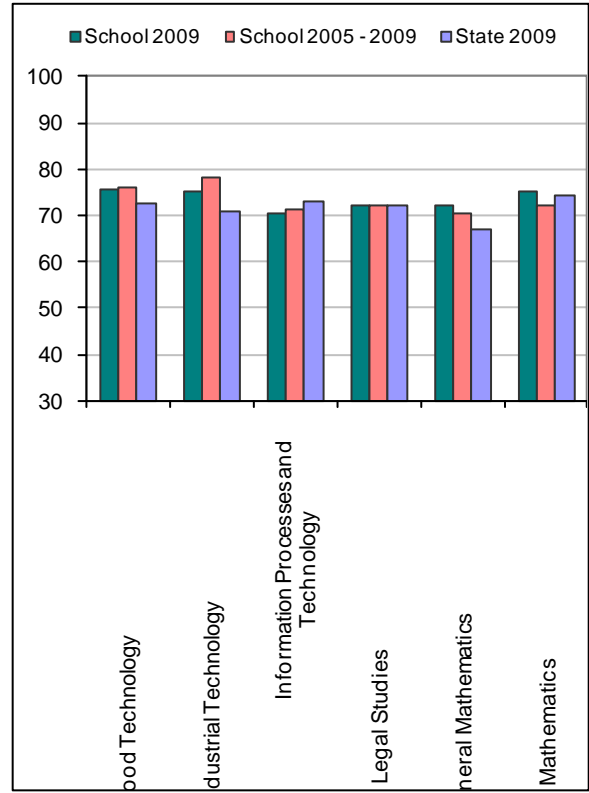
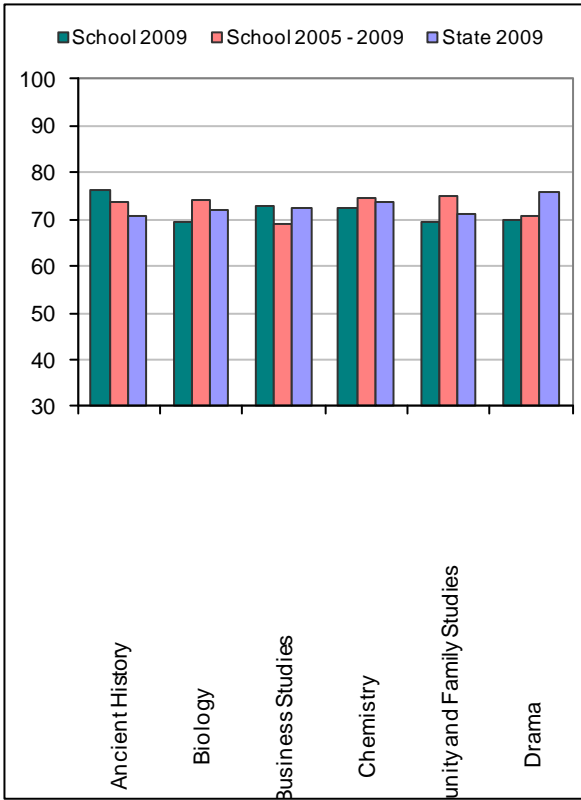
In technological and applied studies (TAS) we offered engineering studies, food technology, industrial technology, information processes & technology, software design and development, textiles & design, VET hospitality and VET metals & engineering. The results were well above state average in all of these courses, with the exception of information processes & technology and VET hospitality (just below). This is continuing evidence of the school's strength in courses with a strong practical component. In industrial technology five students achieved a band 6 and in textiles & design three students achieved a band 6. Students also achieved band 6 results in engineering studies, food technology and information processes & technology.

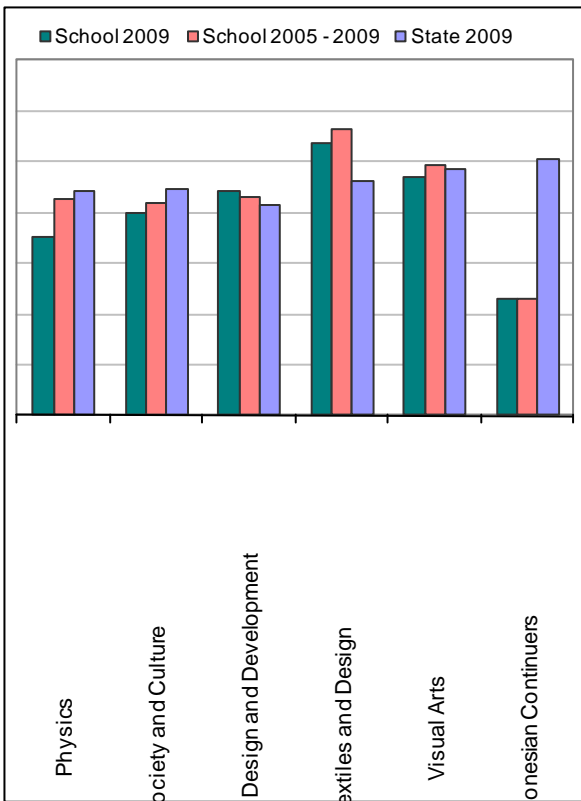
In the languages KLA we offered Indonesian continuers. Our four students achieved below state average in this demanding course.

Drama, music and visual arts were offered in creative arts, with our students performing below state average in each course. The best results were in visual arts where nine students achieved a band 5.

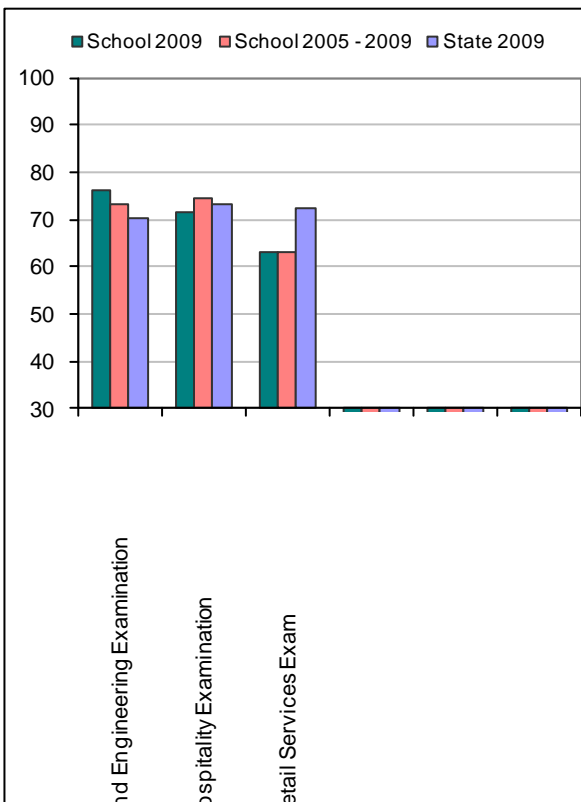
In PDHPE, we offered community & family studies and personal development, health & physical education with the students close to state average in both. In PDHPE two students achieved a band 6 result.

Student results in the different HSC courses can be seen on the next page.





Some of our 2009 HSC High Achievers



Major HSC Artwork by Jade Offord

Minimum standards

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards for reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy for years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

The performance of the students in our school in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy is compared to these minimum standards. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these standards are reported below.

Percentage of Year 7 students achieving at and above minimum standard	
Reading	94.6
Writing	93.9
Spelling	94.7
Punctuation and grammar	93.1
Numeracy	98.4

Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at and above minimum standard	
Reading	96.1
Writing	96.2
Spelling	93.0
Punctuation and grammar	91.7
Numeracy	100.0

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

The school has a supportive learning environment for all students, including Aboriginal students.

Curriculum, teaching and assessment programs are culturally appropriate. Professional learning of staff in the new Aboriginal Education Policy was undertaken and the school focuses on integrating aboriginal perspectives into all key learning areas.

Some examples of the approach taken include:

- Year 7 site study to Curracurrang which focused on Aboriginal history of the area and indigenous food.
- Year 7 technology classes developed a DVD based on an Aboriginal theme and gained an understanding of the cultures and traditions of the traditional landowners in the local area, the Gweagal clan of the Dharawal nation.
- Years 9 and 10 Multimedia students produced a video on the year 7 Curracurrang excursion, highlighting our indigenous links and close connection with the Royal National Park.
- Studies of Aboriginal communities are incorporated in the Social Sciences.
- Dreamtime stories, poetry, short stories by Aboriginal authors are studied in English.

- Aboriginal art and music are studied in the Creative Arts and Aboriginal art is displayed in the school's administration building.
- Traditional culture, impact of contact and dispossession, aboriginal rights and freedoms are studied in History.
- The 'Acknowledgement of Country' is a feature of all major school assemblies.

Multicultural education

In recognising the predominant Anglo-Australian school population, with less than 5% of students from a background other than English, the school, under the Quality Teaching Framework, ensures that our teaching and learning programs are culturally inclusive and address issues such as racism and discrimination.

In addition to the implementation of multicultural perspectives in the curriculum, the school participated in extracurricular activities designed to develop an understanding of and respect for cultural difference. These included:

- Year 7 and year 10 Human Movement students participated in our Values Gala Day with Granville South High School as part of the *Shire 4 Values* project which focuses on the values of respect, care and compassion. This event gives our students the opportunity to mix with students from a school with a diverse, multicultural student population.
- The St George Regional Museum travelling 'Path of the Dragon' display presented the history of Chinese migration to students and to parents during our open night.
- The school participated in cultural exchange programs, hosting students from Blayney and Oita School in Japan and travelling to France.
- A range of student-led activities were organised for Harmony Day and students entered the Harmony Day poster competition.

Respect and responsibility

The school's restorative practices framework, which underpins our welfare and discipline system, emphasises the three Rs – respect, responsibility and relationships. Staff and student leaders promote these values both within and outside the classroom and at school assemblies and community events.

The annual Anzac Day ceremony is a significant part of the school's calendar and emphasises the values of respect and responsibility. The ceremony is led by students.

Values education is at the heart of the school's operation. It can be seen in the following:

- The Student Representative Council (SRC) organised a number of blood donations by our senior students.

- Year 10 Textiles students made tea and hand towels to raise funds for the John Franklin Christmas lunch.
- Year 10 students were trained in Peer Mediation to enable them to mediate minor disputes and conflicts between our junior students and also act as Peer Leaders, mentoring our year 7 students.
- Year 8 students were buddies for year 4 students from our partner primary schools in the 'High School Student for a Day' primary linkages initiative.
- Students also led and mentored partner primary school students in three 'Primary Maths Challenge' days.
- The English faculty added a linkages program with Heathcote Primary School where students made picture books for kindergarten and Year 2 students.
- The school hosted the Student Leadership in Primary Schools (SLIPS) Program for fifty aspiring leaders from partner primary schools. Students focused on extending their team building and leadership skills with the responsible help of our Student Representative Council (SRC) leaders.



One of our students reading to a kindergarten student at Heathcote PS

Other programs

Outdoor Education Programs

The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme has been operating very successfully in the school for over twenty years under the expert guidance of a number of staff members, led by Mr Greg Moon. Feedback from students and parents is overwhelmingly positive and the ongoing relationships established between students and staff, contributes greatly to the friendly, accepting nature of the school.

This year approximately ninety students from Years 8-10 participated in two bronze, two silver and one gold walk, most of three days' duration.

Teachers have also contributed to the Year 6 Enrichment Program (a Community of Schools on the Park initiative) by incorporating abseiling outdoor activities into this challenging gifted and talented program.

This year we further strengthened our outdoor education programs with the establishment of an outdoor education partnership with TAFE NSW Sutherland College Loftus Campus. Over eighty students from Years 8 and 9 participated in overnight bushwalks supervised by Heathcote High School staff and Loftus TAFE students completing their final assessments in Bushwalk Guiding. Loftus TAFE have also offered its services for future canoeing and abseiling sessions with our students.



Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme student

Progress on 2009 targets

Target 1: student engagement and retention

Our achievements include:

- Staff training on how best to engage students including workshops with Michael Mc Queen, an expert on Generation Y.
- Closer tracking of student performance and engagement in years 10 and 11 including processes to provide early indicators of students at risk and early parental contact.
- Enhanced support for 'at risk' students with TAFE Taster courses in building and construction trades, hairdressing, beauty and hospitality and work experience undertaken.
- Introduction of Vocational Education Training (VET) Construction and Childhood Studies courses for senior students.
- Introduction of teacher mentors and expansion of the Triple M Program for 'at risk' boys and introduction of the Girls' Talk Program for 'at risk' girls.
- More integrated careers and transition strategy including the introduction of academic advisers to guide year 10 students in subject selection for year 11, a careers program 'The Real Game' for all Year 10 students and a careers day including representatives from TAFE, University, defence forces and private providers.
- All faculties reviewed their Stage 5 programs to identify workplace competencies and how they are preparing students for the world of work.
- Reduction in suspension rates of 30% for long suspensions. The average length of short suspensions fell by 9.7% and long suspensions fell by 32%.

Target 2: literacy

Our achievements include:

- Training of staff in the analysis of NAPLAN data and sharing of findings within faculties.
- Staring of year 7 NAPLAN data with partner primary schools.
- Support has been targeted at specific students based on NAPLAN data analysis.
- Whole school teaching approach to literacy with literacy requirements embedded in all faculty programs including consistency of text type and scaffolding instruction, metalanguage and pre-testing.

Target 3: connected classroom

Our achievements include:

- Increased access to technology facilities throughout the school including wireless

connectivity, additional computers and installation of Clickview.

- Increased teacher access to high quality training in new digital technologies including use of the interactive whiteboard, video conferencing, Web 2.0 technologies and software management programs such as Moodle and One Note.
- Smooth introduction of the Federal Government's *Laptops for Learning* program with year 9 students.

Target 4: environmental programs

Our achievements include:

- The environment team's profile in the school was significantly enhanced with the Year 10 Environment Team of Amber Davis, Caitlin Irvine, David Kalatzis, Alex Parker, Matt Radandt and Jessica Sagggers who attended the Observatory Hill Environmental Centre for the WaterTight water conservation initiative with Engadine Primary School.
- Awareness in the school community of the impact of its environmental footprint with our participation in the Beyond Earth Hour Challenge, utilising the school's video conferencing facilities to connect with and share ideas with other schools. Over the four week challenge students and staff reduced energy consumption by 21.2% and reduced the school's carbon footprint by 5049.5kg of CO₂.
- Installation of energy saving measures across the school, including electrical switchboard upgrade, and granting of \$50,000 through the National Solar Schools Program for solar panels for the school's heating needs, more efficient and cost effective hot water systems and timers on lights and electrical appliances.

Target 5: building a stronger school image in the community

Our achievements include:

- Extension of linkages programs with partner primary schools including participation in the new 'Community of Schools on the Park' (COSOTP) and expanding our 'Year 4 student for a Day' and our 'Primary Schools Maths Challenge' programs to include two extra primary schools and establishing literacy links with one of our partner primary schools.
- A coordinated approach preparing for the school's 50th Anniversary celebrations in 2010, working with staff, students, P&C and ex-students and staff to plan and coordinate school open day, fete and dinner.
- Extension of community links including hosting the Rotary Club of Engadine and the primary school's student leadership program.

Key evaluations

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2009 our school carried out evaluations of technology implementation, the Girls' Talk program and the Gold card Reward System.

Educational and management practice

Technology Implementation

Background

Given the amount of funding being directed to schools by the Federal Government's Digital Education Revolution, it is vital that the school determines our technology needs and monitors closely the use of technology across all Key Learning Areas (KLAs). This is an exciting time in technology and education and the school must ensure the best use of the extra resources for the benefit of all our students.

Findings and conclusions

In close consultation with staff, including the school's Technology Coordinator and Technical Support Officer, an audit was done of the school's technology usage and future hardware and software needs. Staff were surveyed to ascertain their levels of expertise and how they were using technology in their teaching and learning.

It was determined that three new interactive whiteboards were required, a new terminal server was installed, a new computer lab costing \$40000 was commissioned, wireless connectivity throughout the school was increased, a Clickview server was installed to enable teachers to access the video and DVD library from anywhere in the school, twenty new computers were installed in our existing labs and the administration computers were upgraded.

Staff required quality training in new digital technologies. Teachers were therefore trained in the use of laptops, interactive whiteboards, Web2.0 technologies and resources and the use of Moodle and OneNote software and file management systems.

Students in years 7 to 10 were educated in technology etiquette. State Minister, Paul McLeay and the Police School Liaison Officer spoke to students about cyber crime, cyber stalking and predatory behaviour.

There was a parent and student information session about the new school laptops.

Feedback from staff and students indicated that year 9 students in particular are much more

engaged in their learning since the commissioning of their laptops.

Future directions

Ensuring best practice teaching and learning in the use of technology requires ongoing commitment from the school. To this end, in 2010 professional learning funding will target further teacher training in the use of computer technologies. Two of our computer labs will be upgraded, wireless connectivity throughout the school will be commissioned, online bookings will minimise paper usage and an improved school website will be developed.

Curriculum

Girls' Talk Program

Background

One of the Student Welfare Committee's goals of 2009 was to address the needs of our 'at risk' female students. In keeping with the Boys' and Girls' Education Strategy (2008), our current Triple M program for 'at risk' boys therefore required a female equivalent in some form. The Girls' Talk initiative in 2009 differed from Triple M as it involved two whole day sessions as opposed to weekly lessons on the timetable in sport time.

Following research and consultation across the school community, the Student Welfare Committee decided to employ the services of Enlighten Education – a recent small business awards winner. Their one-day "Butterfly Effect" intensive program involved five sessions working with forty students. Girls in years 8 and 9 were targeted.

Findings and conclusions

Twenty two year 8 and eighteen year 9 students took part in the Butterfly Effect program in 2009. Workshops included 'Stop I don't like it', 'Style file', 'Forever friends', 'Chill out' and 'Love the skin you're in'.

Evaluations of the intensive day program and follow up sessions, revealed the girls' appreciation and excitement about this new and engaging experience. Between 85% and 95% of students thought the workshops were either very good or excellent.

The data provided by the staff at Enlighten Education did reflect positively on their workshops. Considering the nature and circumstances of our target group, however, the one-day workshop and follow up sessions were expensive and did not provide regular or ongoing support. Given this, the Student Welfare Committee feels a different approach is needed

and is instead looking towards developing and implementing a parallel female-oriented Triple M program to begin in Semester 2 in 2010.

Future directions

This new program aims to identify and target a small group of 'at-risk' female students in years 9 and 10. A Heathcote High school coordinator will work closely with Engadine District Youth Service (EDYS) to provide ongoing support for these students. These sessions will operate on a Tuesday afternoon. The program will hold weekly workshops that address the specific needs of these students, including anger management, healthy lifestyle, positive communication, self-concept, and post-school opportunities.

Other evaluations

Gold Card Reward System

Background

The Gold Card is a rewards initiative and is in place to promote the excellent effort and conduct that so many of our students demonstrate every day. The Gold Card system has been in place in the school for three years and a review was timely.

Findings and conclusions

Existing gold card holders and their parents were surveyed about their ideas surrounding the card which is part of the levels system at Heathcote High School.

Feedback from these surveys clearly demonstrated parent and student appreciation of another proactive rewards system and the many benefits of being a gold card holder. They did, however, offer suggestions to improve the system and the Student Welfare Committee decided on the following changes:

- Additional at school privileges including the middle lane of the canteen to accommodate gold card holders
- A new more durable plastic card with colour photo identification
- Weekly special discounts and offers at the school canteen
- New local businesses offering discounts
- Existing businesses to update their offers
- A two year life span on the card requiring holders to reapply after 24 months
- A gold card movie excursion to Miranda with a dedicated cinema and discounted price.

Future directions

In 2010 there will be only one nomination intake and induction assembly per year in Term 3 and the end of year picnic days for all junior year groups will be reintroduced.

Ongoing reviews of all our school's rewards systems will be undertaken.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2009 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school through surveys, meetings and informal contact. School community members expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the school – its procedures and policies and the progress it is making.

Parent involvement in special events and activities was pleasing with very high attendance at our year 12 parent information evening, year 7 selective class night, subject selection evenings and information sessions, in particular.

Students seeking representation on the SRC, applying for the Leadership Passport and Gold Card and volunteering for the primary school linkages programs, indicated the high numbers who value these leadership and mentoring roles.

The school staff identified the best aspects of the leadership in the school and the teaching and learning focus. They identified the school's communication channels as working effectively, the high quality programs in all curriculum areas and the core business of improving student outcomes as the school's priority. They also felt that they have access to an appropriate range of professional learning opportunities to support their role. Teacher satisfaction is evidenced by the very low transfer rate.

Professional learning

The school spent \$40,739 on teacher professional development in 2009.

The areas of highest spending were:

- Quality teaching (\$18,416)
- Syllabus implementation (\$10,327)
- Welfare and equity (\$5,748)

Teachers have greatly benefited from the opportunity to have time and resources to strengthen their teaching and welfare strategies, and have reported that better learning outcomes have resulted for the students.

School development 2009 – 2011

The school priority areas for 2009 – 2011 are:

- School engagement and retention
- Literacy
- Connected classrooms
- Environmental programs to improve ecological sustainability
- Building a stronger school image within the community

Targets for 2010

- Student engagement and retention – 10% decrease in suspension rates through improved student progress monitoring and proactive intervention strategies to tackle student disengagement.
- Literacy – improvement of student literacy performance from below state average in year 7 (2008) to at state average in year 9 (2010).
- Connected classrooms – enhanced technology facilities and increased staff usage of technology within learning programs.
- Environmental programs – implementation of a strategy to decrease the school's environmental footprint.
- Building a stronger school community – participation in Community of Schools on the Park, design of new promotional package and completed preparations for 50th Anniversary celebrations.

Target 1: student engagement and retention

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Closer tracking of student engagement and performance in years 10 and 11
- A more integrated careers and transition strategy
- Enhanced support for 'at risk' students

Our success will be measured by:

- Level of decline in discipline incidents and suspensions

Target 2: literacy

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Stronger English faculty focus on narrative writing in lead-up to NAPLAN 2010
- Faculties to incorporate explicit literacy criteria into Stage 4 assessment tasks
- The implementation of a school-wide literacy initiative focussing on the 'glossary of key words'

Our success will be measured by:

- Improved student literacy achievement in year 9 NAPLAN
- Stronger school emphasis on writing and expression in classroom and assessment activities

Target 3: connected classroom

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Increased access to technology facilities throughout the school
- Increased teacher access to high quality training in new digital technologies

Our success will be measured by:

- Level of usage of digital technology facilities

Target 4: environmental programs

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Installation of energy-saving measures across the school
- Environment committee to plan a range of environmentally sustainable school practices
- Stronger role for SRC in promoting ecologically sustainable practices across the school

Our success will be measured by:

- Extent to which school practices reflect emphasis on ecological sustainability
- Awareness in school community of the impact of its environmental footprint

Target 5: building a stronger school image in the community

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- The extension of linkages programs with partner primary schools including participation in the new 'Community of Schools'
- A coordinated approach preparing for the school's 50th Anniversary celebrations in 2010
- The implementation of a coordinated and well-designed promotional strategy

Our success will be measured by:

- Success of the Community of Schools on the Park in representing the achievements of the partner schools
- Success of anniversary celebrations in 2010
- Design and publication of a new school promotional package

About this report

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school's practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school's future development.

G. Dodds	Principal
S. Kennedy	P&C President
G. Primmer	Deputy Principal
D. Beeten	Deputy Principal
R. Dickson	Administrative Manager
S. Garrick	School Captain
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Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at:

<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/asr>



Duke of Edinburgh Award student celebrating a good catch