Ambarvale High School
Annual School Report

2012
Our school at a glance

Students

In February 2012 we began our year with 824 students, 556 of which were in Years 7-10, 268 in Years 11 and 12 and 73 in the Support Unit.

The number of students from language backgrounds other than English was stable at 25% of our students. However, the number of students identified as aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) grew from approximately 7% to 8% of the student population.

Staff

In 2011 our school’s teaching staff was 67.5. These teachers and executive were divided between ten major faculty areas, including our specialist Support Unit that caters for students with mild, moderate or multi categorical disabilities.

In 2012 we continued to have the expertise of a Student Support Officer (SSO) at our school. This role comes with youth work or social work qualifications and SSO’s work with our community to support students with a particular focus on the eradication of cyber-bullying.

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

Significant programs and initiatives

In 2012 Ambarvale High School strengthened and initiated a range of student based programs in line with our school priority of individualised learning for all our students. Students continued to be supported in their learning through individualised learning plans, faculties offered extension classes before and after school and staff were professionally developed on curriculum differentiation to cater for the diversity of students learning needs.

Our Welfare and Learning Support teams were amalgamated as a way of effectively managing with students learning and well-being in a targeted and holistic manner. Community links continued to be pivotal in creating networks of support for our students. The Lion’s Club has been an integral part of our student volunteering and AHS Young Leo Club has grown significantly with a number of students receiving certificates for 100 hour of community services.

The Project Friday initiative which saw Year 12 students utilise the opportunity to seek assistance and intensive support in their HSC subjects, resulted in outstanding HSC results in 2012. Student survey results indicated that Project Friday significantly increased their confidence and their management in completion of major works as well as helping them target areas which need strengthening.

Overall 2012 built on the diversification in learning which AHS is able to offer students as well as creating a school ethos of achieving one’s personal best.

Student achievement in 2012

Our National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results in Year 9 were very strong, in particular our growth in Year 9 Numeracy which was above state average, and reflects a sustained focus on engagement and achievement for students in numeracy.

Year 7 NAPLAN results are primarily used as a diagnostic tool to plan learning and growth during Stage 4.

In 2012, this was our first year without the School Certificate as a state wide bench mark of student learning. Instead, Year 10 students were working towards a Record of Student Achievement (ROSA) that is incrementally updated with state wide grades that measure current performance and students access this document when the exit secondary schooling.

We were very excited by our Higher School Certificate (HSC) results which saw a student achieve an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) of 98.6 and very strong results in Extension Mathematics, Advanced English and community and Family Studies.

Messages

Principal’s message

AHS is a dynamic comprehensive local high school with a focus on personalised learning, quality teaching and learning and student achievement; academic, cultural, sporting and leadership. We continue to enjoy strong partnerships with Appin,
Rosemeadow, St Helens Park and Woodlands Road Public Schools that serve our shared drawing communities.

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.

Ms L Barnott-Clement

Parent Workshops

In place of a traditional fundraising Parent’s and Citizens Association (P & C), AHS has a system of point of need meetings for parents and the community. These include: Ambartour, Year 7 Meet and Greet, Subject Selection Night, Year 12 Parent Teacher Night, Year 6 Information Night, Ambassadors Presentations, Sports Presentation Day, Whole School Presentation Day and Year 12 Graduation.

In addition, in 2012 parent volunteers worked in our library.

Student representative’s message

The AHS Student Representative Council (SRC) was re-established at the end of 2011 and worked hard to rebuild their role within the school during 2012. Students on the council worked with both the senior leaders and with members of the executive team to ascertain the needs of AHS students.

The SRC ran several initiatives throughout the year including: a student survey to discover the concerns of the general population, several fundraising stalls at sporting carnivals, a successful free breakfast club called ‘toasties’ and multiple big breakfast days to raise money for the community and the school. Through these initiatives, students now have access to soap dispensers in their toilet blocks, are provided with a healthy breakfast twice a week for free and will benefit from the activities the SRC can now complete with the funds from successful fundraisers. Senior members of the SRC also joined the senior leaders in a joint roll call to ensure strong communication and team work between senior members of the school.

In 2013 the SRC will continue to make contact with SRCs from neighbouring schools. This was particularly beneficial last year as it provided our students with an opportunity to discuss initiatives and seek advice on how to achieve set goals. The SRC hopes to improve conditions for our students and lift school pride through refreshing the toilet blocks and encouraging students to take more pride in the appearance of our school. The SRC will continue to provide the free breakfast to students throughout the year as it was felt this was particularly beneficial to junior students.

Mrs E Bridle

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

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Student attendance profile

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<td>87.9</td>
<td>88.5</td>
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Management of non-attendance

Background

The vast majority of students have excellent attendance.

Those few students with attendance below the required 85% are identified by an examination of attendance records and those whose absences are unjustified are rigorously followed up.

They are dealt with by the head teacher administration and the welfare team at a local level, with phone calls and letters to parents and interviews with students and parents.

Follow up by deputy principals is used as required and involves student and parent interview.

For those students whose attendance fails to improve the home school liaison officer (HSLO) is involved. Early HSLO intervention is pivotal to improving attendance as she can visit homes, interview carers, note contexts and involve other agencies. At AHS we have an especially effective HSLO and we involve her early in the process so that our intervention occurs before a problem attender becomes a school refuser.

The school supports the HSLO intervention by rigorously following up (AIPs), supporting court proceedings and cooperating at court ordered multiple agency meetings.

Findings and conclusions

Students with poor attendance are followed up very quickly by at least two staff members.

School attendance has marginally improved in most years. Year 11 attendance has declined significantly (5%) bringing the general attendance level down to slightly under the state average.

Future directions

The year 2013 sees the welfare team continuing the more direct and immediate role in improving attendance that they began in 2012. They will remain the first point of intervention as they will examine the rolls on a daily basis, visit their roll call groups and call parents as soon as a child fails to explain their absences or goes missing.

The head teacher administration and the HSLO will continue to intervene very early in the process.

Improved reports as the school moves to electronic roll marking will assist in staff targeting the students who most need support.

Retention to Year 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
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<th>2012</th>
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<tr>
<td>State</td>
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<td>61.0</td>
<td>62.7</td>
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</table>

Post-school destinations

Post destinations survey results were impressive with 49.5% successfully gaining entry to a bachelor degree of their choice. Thirty nine percent of these students gaining entry through University Admissions Centre (UAC) offer and 10.5% gaining entry to a bachelor degree studied...
at a private institution such as the Australian College of Physical Education or the Australian Catholic University; 52.5% is a huge rise from past years of 28%. Areas of study for these students include engineering, social work, medical science, health, education, digital media, health science, criminology, policing, civil engineering, arts, law, nutrition and food science, agricultural economics, fine arts, nursing, forensics and aviation. Students starting double degrees continue to rise as a result of the changing world of work and its competitive nature.

A slight decrease of students gaining entry to Technical and Further Education (TAFE) is evident perhaps as a result of pleasing university offers. Fifteen point five per cent of students will attend TAFE in 2013 in a course of their choosing. Students are starting diplomas and Certificate IV qualifications in the areas of childcare, community services welfare and mental health, photography, information technology, hairdressing and graphic design.

Students that successfully gained an apprenticeship or traineeship increased to 6.5% with most of those students continuing their Vocational Education and Training (VET) studies from school into their apprenticeships/traineeships.

Defence force entry was unpopular as no students applied for entry in 2013.

As a result of the pleasing amount of students gaining entry to a form of tertiary education, a decrease is evident in students that are working full time (17%), part-time or casual (2.5%) and actively looking for work (6.5%). Majority of these students are planning to continue their studies by applying for mid-year entry TAFE or university in 2013.

**Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training**

In 2012 42 % of Year 12 students studied a VET or TVET course. The NSLA has greatly impacted on student’s reasons for choosing a VET subject as it is evident that students are thinking more clearly and maturely about reasons for choosing subjects with 66% of VET students choosing a subject because of the dual accreditation to help with employment when leaving school or using the Work Placements to get experience and industry contacts to leave school before 17 years of age.

The implementation of Subject Selection classes and the expanding of the Subject Selection process has led to a great decrease in students choosing a VET subject because they felt it was the only one on the line or it was more practical.

We have seen an increase to 72% of students valuing the Work Placements as experience and relevant to their future career paths and an increase is also evident in students finding employment / apprenticeships with this experience greatly improved also. Fourteen per cent of VET students gained casual or part-time employment form work placement employers.

As a result of the NSLA we have found a great decrease in students entering TAFE fulltime or leaving without employment unless over 17 year of age.

**Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification**

One hundred per cent of the 93 students attempting an HSC achieved this accreditation. Six of these students came from our Support Unit and received a Life Skills HSC.

**Staff information**

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

During 2012 a number of staff were secured for relieving positions and had the opportunity to gain experience and develop leadership skills as a result. During the year, the following executive positions had relieving personnel for a range of periods; Head Teacher Science, Head Teacher English, Head Teacher Personal Development, Health and Physical Education, Deputy Principal and Principal.

**Staff establishment**

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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<td>Principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
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<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
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<td>Teacher of Emotional Disabilities</td>
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<td>Teacher of Mild Intellectual Disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of Moderate Disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
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The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on Indigenous composition of their workforce.

During 2012 we did not have any staff located at our school that identified as indigenous, however a number of ATSI DEC staff spent time in our school working with staff, students and parents.

**Staff retention**

Our staff are very stable and we retain most teachers for many years. One Learning and Support Teacher (LaST) received a transfer to a school closer to home in term four 2012.

**Teacher qualifications**

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

Many teachers possess a range of post graduate degrees and certifications. In addition, our school commits resources to ensure staff qualifications and skills remain current through formal training. In 2012 most teaching staff received training in Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NCI) training.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
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<td>Postgraduate</td>
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**Financial summary**

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

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<th>Date of financial summary</th>
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**Income**

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<td>Canteen</td>
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**Expenditure**

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<td>Excursions</td>
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A full copy of the school’s 2012 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.
School performance 2012

Achievements

Arts
The year 2012 was an eventful year for the Creative and Performing Arts faculty. Once again our students produced works of excellent quality guided by our experienced staff.

Staffing
It was with sadness that we farewelled long serving music teacher Mr Heugh at the end of term one. Mr Heugh had been teaching at AHS since 2000 and took up a position at Corrimal High School. We would like to thank Mr Milnes for all of his hard work filling in for Mrs McAteer during her maternity leave. The students of his classes benefitted greatly from his enthusiasm and expertise.

Staffroom move
Term two saw the music staff relocate from the music staffroom in L Block to the visual arts staffroom in H Block. The former music staffroom will now be developed into a music technology lab.

Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) Ambassador
Year 11 student and 2013 school captain Cody Heathcote-Heller was successful in gaining a position as a youth ambassador with the MCA. This is a great stepping stone for Cody’s future as an artist and allows him to work with practising artists through the MCA which will have a positive influence on his HSC body of work.

Multicultural ceramic tile mural
Mrs Summerfield took on the mammoth task of coordinating a ceramic tile mural as part of an extensive multicultural project AHS is working on in collaboration with the University of Western Sydney. Staff and students from all years created a 10cm x 10cm tile reflecting their cultural heritage. The finished product will be installed on the western exterior wall of G Block.

Transition lessons Community of Schools (COS)
Each year I look forward to visiting our COS to teach transition lessons to Stage 3 students. It is a great way to meet our future students and expose them to some of the different learning experiences they will encounter in high school.

Exhibition
Once again our annual exhibition showcased the amazing talents of our amazing students. Mrs Summerfield curated the event with Year 11 student Cody Heathcote-Heller taking on the Master of Ceremonies role. A highlight this year was the inclusion of artworks produced by Mr Demertzis’ support class.
Sport

Background

AHS students continued their achievements and participation through 2012. All three carnivals ran successfully. The students that succeeded at our school carnivals were then able to represent at the Fisher Zone carnival. Here we had many students representing our school whilst displaying their skills and competing with excellent sportsmanship. We had several students who flourished at the zone carnival and were successful in gaining a position to represent the zone at the Sydney South West (SSW) carnival. We had a Year 9 student who displayed exceptional skill level and performed to a high standard at the state swimming carnival.

During the 2012 year our school participated in numerous knockout carnivals and teachers maintained and attained different sporting qualifications. This range of sports is continuing to grow as more students are joining our sporting clubs and taking part in training sessions at recess and lunch times. This is really positive and is also making our school more competitive in competitions throughout the zone. We had several students selected to represent in zone and regional sport competitions. All students should be congratulated on their efforts and participation; they displayed good teamwork skills and represented the school with pride at all times. All knock-out coaches should be commended on their efforts for both coaching the teams in their own time and the ongoing organisation that is involved. Without them this knockout sport competition would not be possible.

Every year our school participates in Fisher Zone sporting activities. This year, Year 7 and Year 8 competed in a sporting gala day which included other local high schools. Both gala days were a tremendous success in which all students that participated not only enjoyed the opportunity but were also exposed to skill development within communication, leadership and team work. Some of the sports featured within the days were netball, soccer, touch football and volleyball. Due to the great success of the day and the fun had by all next year there has been a choice to continue with the school gala days and as such also offer new and exciting sports giving our students the opportunity to grow and develop in lots of different ways.

In 2012 the Premier’s Sporting Challenge Leadership (PSCL) program enabled the school to use student and teacher knowledge, skills and interests in sport and physical activity to develop and implement programs for student interests. There are two stages of the PSCL program which involves Years 5-8 students in the ‘learning to lead’ stage and Years 8-11 in the ‘leading with action’ stage.

Findings and conclusions

At AHS we had a total of 185 students represent our school at a major carnival; this was an increase of 31 from the 2011 year. From these 54 students were successful in representing the Fisher Zone at the regional carnival; this was also an increase from 2011 and we had one student compete at the state carnival. This was an outstanding effort and all students from AHS should be commended.

There were 15 various sporting teams competing in the SSW knockout competition. Of these two teams went through and won their knockout competition. From those teams we had 11 students play as zone representatives. We had two senior students represent the region in their chosen sporting fields (hockey and gymnastics) and one junior student selected to represent in the 2013 year in cricket. This highlights our students sporting talent in a variety of different sporting teams across the zone.

Coaching has become a focus at our school this year with the implementation of the new sports coaching, now sport fitness and recreation subject in Years 11 and 12. This allows students...
to refine their skills and help us to train and develop the skills of our junior students.

This year 16 indigenous students and their friends participated in a football gala day. This involved our indigenous students completing drills and skills with other local schools. It offered avenues for the highly skilled players to trial for selective teams.

Through the PSCL students in Years 8-12 organised, led and implemented a variety of sporting activities at Rosemeadow Public School (RPS) during their Primary School Sports Association (PSSA) gala day. This was a very successful program that enabled students to utilise their leadership skills, interact with primary students and promote AHS. Positive feedback was given from both students and staff about the performance of the PSCL AHS students.

Students involved in the ‘leading the action’ stage of the PSCL attended a one day workshop in term four. Thirty AHS students attended the workshops across Years 9-12. Students were engaged in a variety of sports through which development officers aimed to extend their knowledge, skills and abilities when taking on a leadership role within physical activity and sport.

In 2012 we saw the commencement of the ‘Ambarcup’. This was an initiative to meet the enthusiasm of competition between staff and students in a variety of sporting activities. The winning team (staff or student body) of the ‘Ambarcup’ was presented with a trophy at the end of the year at the sports assembly. As the seven series event began there was a request from students to compete in activities which were not traditionally regarded as sporting experiences. Therefore, this saw the introduction of a ‘history club’ re-enactment match and the ‘Singstar’ competition.

The ‘Ambarcup’ provided the opportunity for many students to engage in physical activities which they may not normally compete in and they were required to represent the student body with students whom they may have never met. As a result, the carnivals saw an increase in student participation in the senior students and when the activities were held at lunch time students participated with great enthusiasm and encouraged their fellow peers to achieve success. The SRC and leadership team of 2012 were highly involved in organising the teams for each event and this helped some students further their leadership skills.

At the conclusion of the year we held our annual school sports presentation where we recognised the effort, participation and skill of our students. Participants received trophies and certificates in recognition of their performance. This presentation assembly was well attended by parents, participants and their peers were also there to congratulate our sporting stars.

Future directions

In 2013, we aim to create more opportunities for staff and students to be coached in their chosen sporting fields. Our school sport is now set up to allow coaches of teams to develop and refine skills in preparation for sporting events. We also aim to develop students’ skills in swimming, cross country and athletics. Swimming skills have been incorporated into the sports program for all Year 7 students.

Our sports organiser has taken on the role of the zone swimming carnival coordinator. Preparation for this event has already begun and we anticipate that the event will be a success. We hope to continue to build our sport fitness and recreation classes and get them involved with our partner primary schools and junior students at AHS.

We are slowly building up a diverse range of sports into our knockout competitions and this year we have a table tennis team that is eager to get involved and compete against other schools.

We aim to continue to strengthen our ties with the community through positive participation in sport, increasing our student coaches and volunteers and recreational activities.

The PSCL in 2013 AHS has taken on the management role for our COS which includes Appin, Rosemeadow, St Helens Park, Woodland Road and Ambarvale Public Schools along with AHS. This will involve the ‘learning with action’ students passing on their acquired skills and knowledge to students involved in the ‘learning to lead’ stage. A junior PSCL sports leadership workshop will be held during term one for the ‘learning to lead’ students which will be run by AHS students at the ‘leading with action’ stage. Students across Years 5-8 will learn the basic skills of modifying games, implementing skill drills and officiating games/sports. Students within our
COS will join Years 7-8 students as participants and future leaders during the junior PSCL workshops.

Throughout 2013, students across Years 7-12 who are involved in the PSCL program will continue to support RPS during their gala days by organising and implementing the skills they learn through the running of a variety of activities. In addition they will be given the opportunity to officiate at the PSSA gala day sports. This will take place twice a term.

In term four 2013, students involved in the ‘leading with action’ program for 2014 will attend the PSCL workshops run by development officers of different sports. Year 8 students will learn about their new role within the program and students across Years 9-11 will continue to develop their skills within the sporting fields. It is aspired that Year 12 students will continue to support AHS with the skills they have acquired, and additionally implement these skills into sports within the wider community.

For 2013 we hope to see this enthusiasm for competition between staff and students to increase. Due to the competitions demand from 2012 the events to be held should continue to attract the students during carnivals. It is also predicted we continue to see the presence of the leadership team to partake in the events and further their leadership capabilities in organising the teams from the student body.

We look forward to the 2013 year and intend to continue to improve in all sporting areas. We hope to continue to be amazed by the talented students at AHS and the generosity and willingness of our student volunteers.

Other

Library

Background

The library at AHS remains an important centre of learning in the school. Despite improvements in other large indoor spaces it remains a central venue for school events. It is also a safe refuge for vulnerable students, a study area for seniors and a clinic and dispensary for children with chronic illnesses.

The library is very rarely unused. Class groups come to use its computers, interactive whiteboard and its books in a continuous stream.

It is a flexible and useful space and is the first port of call for both students and teachers who need a problem resolved.

Findings and conclusions

Students continue to visit the library in both class time with their teachers and in breaks in large numbers.

The technology sections are continuously in use.

The DVD collection continues to be built up.

The non-fiction collection enjoys moderate use.

The internet remains the information source of choice for most students and teachers.

Fiction books are increasingly popular.

Board games and puzzles have proved extremely popular, especially with boys. We have found them to be very good helping even those students on the Spectrum to improve their social skills.

Future directions

The collections will continue to be developed to maintain their relevance and popularity.

Students will be encouraged to work when using the computers in their free time, rather than playing games.

Socialisation of students will be encouraged through active use of group games.

Information skills will continue to be improved throughout the school.

Careers/School to Work (STW)

Background

Careers and STW programs at AHS are ever broadening, changing and adapting to meet the needs of each student, each cohort, the community and worldly influences. All AHS students from Years 10-12 have a career action plan and meet with the careers adviser regularly. All AHS students from Years 10-12 have a career action plan and meet with the careers adviser regularly. A wide variety of initiatives implemented in 2011 were improved and further developed in 2012, engaging with students across all year groups with a focus on those students in Years 9-12.

Careers lessons are conducted for students in Years 9, 10 and 11 with regular meeting and counselling sessions for Year 12. Embedded in the careers program is the delivery of: ‘All My Own Work’ to Year 10; School to Work Program to Years 9-12; Work Readiness Training to Years 9-12.
and 10, interview training and mock interviews for Year 10. The opportunity for block work experience for Year 10 is available for students every June with other work experience programs and opportunities available throughout the year when requested or needed. These embedded programs follow the Australian blueprint for career development. Outside of these embedded programs students are invited to attend individual careers counselling. This extra time and assistance allows the student in conjunction with the careers adviser to delve deeper into their individual short and long term goals with regard to future career pathways, tertiary education applications, and allow for the revising of students individual careers action plans resulting in a smoother transition to tertiary education and/or the workforce.

In 2011 many changes were made to counteract the challenges of the NSLA. These changes have continued to be developed for each cohort and their individual needs. Subject selection classes continued to be a success as well as additional careers classes for Year 10.

**Findings and conclusions**

Implemented careers/STW events continue to be re-developed with the focus maintained to increase employer and business partnerships and their interaction with AHS students broadening students exposure to the ‘world of work’ and increasing their awareness of the many opportunities that are available. These events have proven to greatly build students confidence when discussing their aspirations and interacting with ‘employer’. Students are more able to communicate their employer skills in an interview and are more focused on their individual career action plans and what they need to do to reach their goals.

The importance of individualising students/cohorts career counselling is becoming more evident as the ‘world of work’ and the labour market is dramatically changing.

Once again the business breakfast introduced more new faces of many businesses and past work experience employers that were keen to participate in our STW events, mentor and interact with the students. Maintaining these partnerships is becoming easier and employer participation is growing. Year 10 interview day and work experience week were great successes with many students offered casual and full time positions. Speed careering was an enjoyable event and a great introduction to new career possibilities for the students. Many other events were particularly noteworthy including subject selection career classes and panel interviews, university discovery days, Macarthur careers expo, the national careers expo, apprenticeship expo, get that job day, world skills competition excursion, social etiquette training and various industry excursions.

The implementation of a new event ‘Tradies’ afternoon BBQ proved highly successful with many businesses, TAFE and Group Training Organisations (GTO) participating in the event and showcasing an interactive experience for the students.

TAFE delivered VET again proved very successful for our students with many completing their qualification. The year 2012 saw a rise in school based trainees employed with a new partnership with Reece Plumbing. Five students started a plumbing traineeship with Reece and are successfully completing all requirements. Another four students are completing a school based traineeship in retail with Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC).

**Future directions**

STW events will continue to develop and adapt for each new cohort as an individualised approach to careers counselling is extremely evident. Continuous feedback is needed from students and will provide information specific to each cohort therefore determining future events and opportunities.

Individual career action plans will continue to be developed and monitored for all students from Years 10-12. These plans give students a visual representation of their long term goals to keep them focused and engaged in their studies, but also help them set smaller steps and goals to achieve whilst completing their studies here at AHS.
**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 these 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)

and/or

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

**Reading – NAPLAN Year 7**

The percentage of students in the top three bands for Year 7 Reading have steadily increased over the last three years with 33.5% of all students achieving in the top three bands.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7

Again, strong growth in the percentage of students achieving in Bands 7, 8 and 9 was observed. Similarly there have been a steady decline in the percentage of students in the lower three bands; Bands 4, 5 and 6.

In 2012, 29.1% of students were in the top three bands compared to 16.2% in 2011.

In 2012, 70.9% of students were in Bands 4, 5 and 6, compared to 83.8% in 2011.

Reading – NAPLAN Year 9

In 2012 Year 9 reading results showed exceptional growth in Band 8 with growth from 17.2% in 2011 to 26.2% in 2012. Overall 32% of students are placed in the top three bands for reading.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9

Student growth in this area was exceptional and far exceeded average state growth. In 2011, the percentage of students in the top three bands was 20.3. In 2012, the percentage of students in the top three bands increased to 26.5.

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing (NAPLAN).

Click on the link [http://www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au) and enter the school name in the Find a school and select GO.

RoSA

The last year of the School Certificate as a state wide performance benchmark was in 2011. In 2012 we began with a new system of measuring and recording student achievement in Year 10 and beyond. The Record of Student Achievement (RoSA) is a grade based system in which student receive a grade from A to E measured against set standards of student achievement. Our staff engaged in professional learning to ensure consistency of teacher judgement when allocating grades. Grades were then submitted to the Board of Studies (BOS) and a RoSA will be generated for students as they exit formal secondary schooling, indicating Year 10 grades and Year 11 grades as appropriate.

Higher School Certificate

In the HSC we had some outstanding results from our Year 12 cohort. One student achieved an ATAR of 98.6. Another achieved the highest bands for Extension 1 and Extension 2 Mathematics.
Across a wider range of subjects including Ancient History, Community and Family Studies, English Advanced, English Standard and Society and Culture, our 2012 school performance exceeded our school average 2008-2012 and exceeded the performance of similar school groups.
Minimum Standards data

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Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

Background

In 2012 our number of Aboriginal students increased to approximately 7.5% of our school population. Aboriginal Education is an important focus area for our school staff and the programs, events and activities conducted during the year were coordinated by a dedicated group of staff across all faculty areas. Aboriginal Education is a whole school focus with a mixture of programs specifically relevant to our Aboriginal students and programs that are developed to inform and promote Aboriginal Culture and History to our whole school community.

Findings and conclusions

This year we consolidated many existing events and programs and introduced new initiatives. Our Aboriginal Education whole school team met regularly throughout the year and has expanded to include newly appointed staff. Our various activities have enhanced our relationship with the local Indigenous community and increased the number of Aboriginal community members coming into the school to support our positive programs and individual students.

The highlights of our year included:

NAIDOC WEEK – held in the first week of term three it included a Trivia competition conducted through roll call, Aboriginal Art activities in our Year 8 Visual Art classes, week long faculty focus across all years and culminated in a School Assembly and Morning Tea. The Australian National Anthem was performed in Dharawhal by students from Thomas Acres Public School and an address from Shannon Williams representing West’s Leagues Learn, Earn, Legend Program was well received by staff and students.

UWS Indigenous Student Mentoring Program – this program entered its fourth year with a committed group of Years 10 and 11 students participating in UWS workshops and meeting with university mentors twice per term at school. The year finished with an Indigenous Health event at Minto PCYC.

Individual Learning Plans were developed or revised for our Aboriginal students. Staff members met with the students to develop and
implement personalised learning goals and refer any relevant information to individual teachers.

Our relationship with UWS, TAFE and various Aboriginal employment groups has seen an increase in our senior students either remaining at school or transitioning into TAFE, apprenticeships or traineeships. An increasing number of our Aboriginal students participated in the Hands On program coordinated by SWS TAFE.

Two of our Aboriginal students continued in leadership positions on the Campbelltown Junior Aboriginal Education Consultative Group. This is an opportunity for our students and primary school students from our feeder schools to become involved in Indigenous cultural and educational events.

We also had our third successful year of Norta Norta tutoring. This is a program for our junior Indigenous students to improve their literacy and numeracy through access to a qualified tutor during school hours and for our senior students to receive tutoring after school.

Students were supported and applied for a variety of awards and scholarships. We were successful in that our students achieved Regional Aboriginal Student Achievement Awards, Kari Scholarships for Senior Study, and Future Leaders Indigenous Awards. A Year 8 student was selected and participated in a Gifted and Talented regional program.

Staff representing every curriculum area participated in after school workshops with experienced Aboriginal educators and members of the Aboriginal Education Whole School Focus Team attended a seminar at Mt Annan Botanic Gardens with teachers from other SWS schools to enable the integration of Aboriginal education strategies into AHS programs.

Future Directions

We will maintain our focus on individualised plans for our Aboriginal students and increase the awareness and participation of our students in educational, cultural and training/employment opportunities in particular our initiatives including NAIDOC Week activities and re-establishing our participation in the Hands-On program through South Western Sydney TAFE. A number of our senior students will be involved in the Aboriginal Youth Sport Leadership Program commencing in 2013.

Finally as part of the Equity Transition Funding a teacher will be employed one day per week to coordinate and expand the engagement and opportunities for our Aboriginal students and facilitate greater community involvement in the school.

Multicultural education

Background

Ambarvale High School has a rich diversity of cultures that closely reflects the current dynamics of the Campbelltown local government area. We have a broad array of backgrounds represented making up approximately 25% of the school population. The largest cultures represented are Arabic, Eastern European, Hindi and South Pacific Islander. The school has a well-developed culture of tolerance and respect for those who come from different backgrounds and takes pride in being able to celebrate the richness that other cultures have to share.

Our school continues to utilise an ESL staff member one day per week in addition to having the Multicultural Education team that is overseen by a member of the school executive. The multicultural team actively promotes inclusivity for staff and students in all programs regardless of background.
Findings and Conclusions

In 2011 we were successful in gaining a grant of $10,000 to participate in a 2012 Multicultural Action Research Project conducted by the University of Western Sydney (UWS). In 2012 we saw the implementation of a whole school multicultural project designed to embrace and teach about the different cultures individuals come from with the intention of students gaining a broader understanding and tolerance of their world and the cultures within.

Our UWS Action Research Project Plan was delivered through our school values system (TRREC) allowing all students access to specific multicultural activities. As part of a whole school approach, we attempted to address issues related to perceived limited understandings by students about the cultural diversity of the broader Australian community including the experiences of refugees.

The school’s action research project sought to answer the question: *How does the explicit teaching of the unit of work enhance students’ understanding, empathy and respect for cultural diversity, in particular, the plight of refugees coming to live in Australia?*

Through teaching a cross stage unit of work focused on social justice and incorporating authentic stories from students of refugee backgrounds, students explored issues of social justice and responsible citizenship. As a result of the project, students indicated that they were now more aware of the difference between illegal immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers. They were able to demonstrate critical thinking skills to become more discerning viewers when presented with often biased media reports. As a positive spin off, staff who delivered the unit of work reported that their own knowledge about the refugee question had increased.

This year we trained a new Anti-racism Contact Officer (ARCO) who was diligent throughout the year to ensure students addressed one another in a respectful manner. There were two registered incidents of racism that were investigated and resolved successfully.

Future Directions

The Multicultural Portfolio will continue to embrace a wide range of initiatives and events. We will continue to build upon our experiences from 2012 and display further growth through the collection and analysis of data from our involvement in the UWS Action Research Project.

Respect and responsibility

Positive Behaviour and Intervention Supports (PBIS)

Background

Over the past three years, the Trust, Respect, Responsibility, Excellence and Cooperation (TRREC) team at AHS has evaluated the school’s implementation of TRREC lessons, behaviour monitoring cards, the merit system and signage around the school.

The year 2012 saw the relaunch of PBIS-TRREC at the beginning of term four. Students were involved in a range of activities alternative to their normal school day, focused on our values of trust, respect, responsibility, excellence and cooperation including:

- Study skills – excellence
- Initiative and team games – cooperation and trust
- Guest speakers and video lessons – responsibility and excellence
- Anti-bullying program executed by Year 10 students – respect
- Step ahead activities – responsibility
Findings and conclusions

Behaviour monitoring cards

Staff members continue to be happy with the TRREC behaviour cards as they reflect our school rules and values. The colours of orange, red and green indicate the level of monitoring for each child on a behaviour card.

Merit system

Through the development and implementation of our merit system, TRREC is continuing to make an impact in the classroom. This is evident by the number of students receiving higher levels of sapphire and ruby awards throughout the year.

Signage

The TRREC team continues to liaise with staff and executive in developing and displaying signage around the school based on our behaviour matrix. Signs representing a matrix of appropriate behaviours depending on the area of the school (classroom, playground, office, canteen, etc) went up around the school in our TRREC footprint colours and are visible for all students in the appropriate areas.

Many staff purchased shirts with our school TRREC logo and values to assist in the implementation and embedment in our school community.

Future directions

TRREC is an ongoing program which continues to grow on a yearly basis at Ambarvale High School. TRREC will continue in 2013 to:

- Improve data collection from our Report Individual Student Contact (RISC) system to identify problem areas.
- Continue to embed TRREC in lesson planning and execution.
- Identify focus areas each fortnight to identify and recognise students who are demonstrating this value at school and in the community.
- Organise and lead a refocus day that specifically targets the five core values, with the intention of maintaining the profile of TRREC within the school.

Other programs

Gifted and Talented Education (GAT)

Background

The year 2012 saw a continuation and strengthening of AHS gifted and talented initiatives and projects.

A number of extra-curricular activities and extension programs have been added to cater for the diverse needs and interests of our GAT students. These include science club, tree shepherds club, engineering solar challenge, mind marathon, Leo Club, university vacation programs and extension classes in maths, English and history.

Term two staff development day provided 50 staff members with training on curriculum differentiation, including concept mapping and models of gifted education. The workshop was delivered by regional quality teaching consultants.

Findings and conclusions

GAT students are able to access a wide range of opportunities ranging from extension classes, leadership opportunities to high interest clubs. Students have been attending the University of Wollongong learning labs, a program which runs in the July school holidays. The solar car challenge team competed in Melbourne and won the award for the ‘best first entry’. GAT students in Year 7 attended the mind marathon held at East Hills Boys High School.

Social justice and community volunteering is an integral part of the school ethos and to date we have had eight students obtaining their 100 hour certificates accredited by the Campbelltown Lions Club. Students have been able to use this accreditation to gain early entry to university and obtain scholarships.

Future directions

The key component of AHS – School Plan 2012-2015 is ‘teacher quality’ with this priority in mind, and the need to cater for students diverse learning needs, staff will be provided with a professional development program delivered by Gifted Education Research, Resource and Information Centre (GERRIC) consultants. The aim being to consolidate knowledge around GAT and
to have staff accredited with the GERRIC mini certificate of gifted education.

**Student welfare**

**Background**

Welfare initiatives and programs at AHS are vast and always developing to meet the needs of our students and community.

Throughout 2012, we targeted students for specific and individualised programs such as Stewart House, Links to Learning, Links to Learning – Early Leavers, Youth Connection – MTC, Stay Connected – Burnside to name a few. We also ran many programs for the whole school and for specific cohorts; Brainstorm live performances, large screen shows such as Motivational Media, Love Bites Program, boys and girls groups and a Year 7 transition camp.

Our Ambarvale Ambassador program continued to be a huge success, with numbers close to 200; we are rewarding our consistently excellent and well behaved students. The year 2012 saw the ambassadors attend Teen Ranch, IMAX theatre, Taronga Zoo and a camp to the Collaroy Centre at Collaroy Beach. Each semester sees a new intake of keen and excellent students.

Community awareness programs and speakers presented to students on a range of emerging and current issues; Camp Quality – The Teenage Alchemist, New South Wales (NSW) Rugby League – Fit and Healthy – Backyard League, Heart Foundation – Jump Rope for Heart and our Police School Liaison Officer on crime prevention to name a few.

We have a very strong transition program in place to ease the transformation into high school including transition days at school and a strong peer support program where our selected and trained Year 10 students run sessions around values on a weekly basis.

Student leadership has continued to grow within the school and we aim to give students opportunities to excel and display leadership potential. We held a values forum with our senior leaders, a range of ambassadors, and leaders from our feeder primary schools. The day focused on school values, community issues and anti-bullying. The second half of 2012 also saw the redevelopment of our student leadership team through the leadership committee. Our leadership team, consisting of prefects, vice-captains and captains were active in positive peer relationships through leadership activities, actively involved in Thursday and Friday lunchtime activities, running assemblies (both whole school and year meetings) and attending events that represent the school.

**Findings and conclusions**

Many of our programs are embedded into our school calendar. This makes them easier to organise as they are accepted as a part of the school program by the community.

We continue to offer programs that are targeted and effective by grouping all programs delivered by agencies under the umbrella of welfare has allowed the school to track individual and cohort intervention.

**Future directions**

New activities for 2013 will include the development of a Peer Mediation Program, student mentoring and a pastoral care system in roll call, where students will continue with the same roll call teacher (where possible) throughout their time at AHS. This will allow another point of contact for students and parents to keep communication lines open between home and school.

A continued focus will be on student leadership where students have opportunities to be involved in leadership skill development, public speaking and communication.

The Ambarvale Ambassador program will continue to play an increasingly important role as it lifts its profile within the school. This will include a review process for current ambassadors, as well as continuing the semester application process.
Progress on 2012 targets

Please note, progress on our School Plan 2012-2014 is also addressed in our key evaluations section of this document.

Priority 1 Literacy and Numeracy

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- Implementation of literacy and numeracy strategies across all KLSs as evidenced in curriculum programs via the Executive Assessment and Review Schedule (EARS) process.
  
  Our achievements include:
  
  - All teaching programs containing explicit literacy and numeracy strategies.
  - One hundred per cent of staff to be trained in recognised literacy and numeracy programs for alignment and consistency of teaching practice.
  
  Our achievements include:
  
  - One hundred per cent of staff have received Prioritising Grammar training in 2012.
  - Develop and utilise individual NAPLAN learning plans for 100% of students in Year 8 that identify Year 7 achievements and planned Year 9 goals.
  
  Our achievements include:
  
  - These plans are in place for this cohort of students.
  - Expected growth in Year 9 reading at or above 55%.
  
  Our achievements include:
  
  - Students whose results were equal to or greater than expected growth in reading was 51.5%.
  - Expected growth in Year 9 spelling at or above 50%.
  
  Our achievements include:
  
  - Students whose results were equal to or greater than expected growth in spelling was 59.4%.
  
  - Expected growth in Year 9 grammar and punctuation at or above 50% (this requires an improvement of 6.2%).
  
  Our achievements include:
  
  - Students whose results were equal to or greater than expected growth was 52.1%.

Priority 2 Leadership and Management

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- Strong management systems to ensure core business is teaching and learning.
  
  Our achievements include:
  
  - ‘Project Friday’ as a successful initiative to increase learning time for Year 12 students.
  - One hundred per cent of staff has engaged in reflective classroom observations with supervisor to enhance teaching practice and performance.
  
  Our achievements include:
  
  - Head Teacher Mentor and faculty Head Teachers have embedded classroom observation into regular practice for all staff.
  - One hundred per cent of staff to have a professional learning plan implemented that informs professional dialogue with supervisor with a minimum of one documented meeting per term.
  
  Our achievements include:
  
  - All teaching staff have a professional learning plan collaboratively with their Head Teacher.
  - A minimum of six actively participating in NSW Institute of Teachers Professional Accomplishment/Leadership.
  
  Our achievements include:
  
  - Currently three staff are preparing to submit their Highly Accomplished Accreditation application.
  - Increasing the numbers of students engaged in leadership initiatives by 15%.
  
  Our achievements include:
  
  - There is currently no accurate data to measure increases in leadership initiatives numerically. Qualitatively, the enormous
growth of the Young Leos has substantially increased student leadership engagement.

**Priority 3 Engagement and Attainment**

**2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:**

- A 10% increase in parent and community opportunities to participate in initiatives to increase their engagement with their child’s learning, evidenced by a whole school data base of involvement.

  Our achievements include:

  - This target has not been achieved.
  - A 10% increase in student opportunities to participate in cross and extra-curricular initiatives to personalise learning, evidenced by a whole school data base of involvement.

  Our achievements include:

  - A data base has been developed but an increase has not been tracked.
  - One hundred per cent of years 8 and 9 students have an individualised literacy and numeracy plan, and 100% of Year 10 students have a personalised subject selection/learning plan.

  Our achievements include:

  - This target has been met and is in place.

**Priority 4 Curriculum and Assessment**

**2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:**

- Targeted curriculum pathways and individualised programs of study for students.

  Our achievements include:

  - This has continued as a school focus and is implemented in various formats across the school.
  - Strategic placement and development of learning support personnel.

  Our achievements include:

  - Our 2.3 Learning and Support Teachers have re-configured their working strategies to encompass the increased range of their role and to contact a greater number of students each week.

  - Quality Teaching Framework Programs and Teaching.

  Our achievements include:

  - All teaching programs have explicit links to Quality Teaching Framework.
  - A deep understanding of assessment and feedback for all teaching staff.

  Our achievements include:

  - Our Executive Conference and term four School Development Days were focused on feedback and formative assessment.

**Priority 5 Aboriginal Education**

**2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:**

- An individualised approach to learning outcomes for Aboriginal students.

  Our achievements include:

  - Decrease gap between ATSI and non-ATSI students in NAPLAN and HSC.
  - Maintain above state average ATSI growth in NAPLAN in all areas.
  - Increased staff commitment to, and capacity for Aboriginal Education.

  Our achievements in the area of Aboriginal Education are strong. For a detailed review of achievements, please refer to the Aboriginal Education report within this document. In addition, greater than or equal to expected growth for ATSI Year 9 students in the area of numeracy was 75%. A very powerful result. For spelling, it was 66%.

**School evaluation**

NSW public schools conduct evaluation to support the effective implementation of the school plan. In 2012 our school carried out evaluation of the TAS faculty and on overall evaluation of our progress thus far in the 2013-2014 School Plan.

**TAS Evaluation**

**Background**

The AHS Technological and Applied Studies (TAS) faculty was formed in 2011 through the combination of the Industrial Arts, Applied Technology and Computer Studies Faculties with
the new Head Teacher TAS being appointed in term four 2011. The faculty prides itself on the continuation of its reputation for achieving excellence, the TAS faculty consists of one head teacher, seven full time, one temporary and two part time classroom teachers, and one kitchen assistant. The faculty teaching staff consists of a mix of experienced and beginning teacher complimented by some teachers bringing a wealth of industry experience prior to becoming teachers.

The faculty delivers a range of subjects to students in Years 9 to 12 consisting of Industrial Technology (Timber, Metal and Multimedia), Design and Technology, Food Technology, Child Studies, Community and Family Studies, Information and Software Technology, Information Processes and Technology, VET Hospitality, VET Construction, VET Information Technology. In addition the faculty also delivers the Technology Mandatory course to all Year 7 and 8 students. In 2012, the faculty implemented the addition of web page design, jewellery, metal, leather, and graphics CAD to better cater for changing interests of students. The faculty also delivers the Life Skills programs to students with mild and moderate intellectual disabilities.

The faculty is still geographically split due to the location of subject specific delivery rooms across three blocks. The facilities are well maintained and resources kept up to industry standards through annual audits and industry links. In 2013 a full commercial kitchen is being updated to industry standards under the Regional Trade Training Centre initiative.

Data identifies a growth in student achievement with four Band 6 and five Band 5 being awarded to students in TAS in 2011. This achievement must also be credited to the professional and highly experienced staff teaching those students.

During 2012, the TAS faculty undertook a self-evaluation process. The evaluation team consisted of the Principal, two Deputy Principals, Head Teacher HSIE, Head Teacher TAS, and two classroom teachers. The aim of the evaluation was to explore the strengths of the TAS faculty as well as areas of further development. The evaluations sought the opinions and perspectives of students, parents and staff.

Findings and conclusions

Students

A student forum was used as an evaluation tool. Twenty students were randomly selected from Years 7 – 11 providing a wide range of subject experience. Interestingly, even though the selection was random, there was a high representation from our G and T stream.

During the forum the students were asked a series of questions about student assessment, student engagement, the TAS classroom environment, classroom equipment and resourcing. The results indicated that students enjoyed the practical aspects of the subject in that they could view a ‘finished product’, worked to deadlines and could self-regulate through the use of project based activity. Students also commented on the range of choices available within TAS subjects. In the forum, 55% of the students believed that TAS subjects were useful in their ‘everyday’ life. However, 85% of students said they were interested and enjoyed TAS classes because of the practical experience. Students who indicated a lesser level of satisfaction stated that this was due to the selected subject not being their ‘first choice elective’ or the subject was not ‘what they thought it would be’.

Senior students recognised the commitment of the TAS teaching staff and celebrated their willingness to support student achievement. This was noted by the students who were completing HSC subjects as they were given additional support by TAS teachers over a considerable period of time, both inside and outside school hours.

Parents

Parent’s perceptions were gathered via a parent survey. Fifty parents were selected at random to complete the survey, and 74% surveys were returned. The survey canvassed parent opinion on a range of topics including: resourcing, access to computers, curriculum, engagement, classroom management, teacher expectations and faculty performance. Parent responses were overwhelmingly positive with many voicing their satisfaction with, and confidence in, the TAS faculty organisation and performance. Specifically, 83% of parents surveyed valued TAS as an important curriculum area and 78%
reported that their child enjoyed the TAS subjects and were engaged in their learning. 66% were satisfied with the faculty’s performance.

Similarities were noted between the student forum feedback and the parent survey responses in that both commented on the need to update equipment and resources.

**Staff**

A two tier approach was adopted to evaluate teaching and learning programs and practices. This included lesson observations and document/data analysis. Lesson observations were conducted by the Principal, the two Deputies, HT HSIE and teachers from the TAS faculty. It was noted that teacher knowledge of pedagogy was strong and that quality teaching implemented across all lessons. Teachers were observed using a combination of direct instruction and modelling, with lessons that were well-paced which utilised a variety of activities. Safety was a key priority in practical lessons and students were familiar with and followed safety regulations. Lessons showed some differentiation to cater for the range of students’ learning needs. This was obvious when teachers delivered to students with intellectual disabilities. Teachers displayed a good rapport with students and were able to keep students on task using cues and positive feedback. Teachers experience was displayed through their professional knowledge and their classroom management.

Staff interviews focussed on leadership, organisation, resourcing and communication. Staff comments revealed a confidence in leadership based on good communication practices. They acknowledged a renewed sense of collegiality and common purpose. There was recognition of the value of whole school initiatives like ‘Project Friday’ which supported the completion of major works within the TAS HSC subjects. Areas for strengthening focussed on the need for more teacher professional development in order to support the implementation of the National Curriculum. There was also an acknowledgement of the need to update equipment.

**Future directions**

As a result of the review it is noted that:

Less experienced teachers need to observe lessons conducted by more experienced teachers to develop their skills.

- Written material needs to be condensed for students with less ability.
- Technology needs to be widely implemented for student engagement and research.
- A systematic approach needs to be formulated in relation students not bringing their equipment and proper shoes.

Teachers need to adopt a more consistent adherence to school expectations for student behaviour and classroom protocols.

It was evident that students were more motivated in practical lessons and were highly engaged, whereas in theory lessons they became disinterested in the teachers, who were not using a range of teaching strategies. Teachers need to utilise smart data to assist with programming and lesson delivery.

Students identified several areas that needed strengthening. These included updating and maintaining equipment and an increased expenditure on resources. They also highlighted a need for increased differentiation. Behavioural issues were raised as a concern as they negatively impacted on the TAS learning environment.

- A stronger focus on constructive feedback within student assessment
- Increased productivity would come from improved behaviour management in some classes.

**Evaluation of 2012-2014 School Plan**

**Background Information**

In 2011 the members of the school Executive Team, and other Teaching staff who identified an interest, participated in the Team Leadership for School Improvement Professional Learning Program. As a result participants developed greater leadership capacity for guiding and
managing results-focused whole school improvement. A sub-group of this team then
developed the School Plan for 2012-2014. They
aligned the schools strategic priority areas to the
Regional Plan which included; Literacy and Numeracy, Leadership and Management,
Curriculum and Assessment, Engagement and Attainment and Aboriginal Education. The team
developed the Priority Areas and Targets using
the structured framework of the Team
Leadership for School Improvement Program.
Outcomes and Strategies were subsequently
developed through consultation with relevant
stakeholders. Individual faculties and Whole
School Portfolios then developed their own
Management Plans for 2012 based on the School
Plan.

Findings and Conclusions
An extensive evaluation of the School Plan for
2012 was undertaken and revised for 2013. It was
found that a number of strategies were
completed and demonstrated identified
indicators of success. Of note were the strategies
linked with Aboriginal Education and Leadership
and Management. This included a number of
School based Policy updates and a staff-wide
focus on professional learning and Professional
Learning Plans. Many strategies were begun, but
not completed and will be strengthened in 2013. This
included lessons observations by staff to
allow for critical reflection of literacy and
numeracy strategies and refinement of annual
TARS (Teacher Assessment and Review) processes to align with National Teaching
Standards. Many strategies were not started and
this will also be a focus for 2013. Some of these
strategies included; liaising with other schools
who have achieved success in NAPLAN, running
Enrichment Days for Literacy and Numeracy and
running an Indigenous Careers Day.

Future Directions
The Evaluation of the plan for 2012 highlighted a
number of key areas where success was achieved
and identified areas that need to be
strengthened. As a result, a number of key
revisions were made to identify the areas of focus
for 2013. Many successful initiatives will continue
and others have been modified to include the
programs that have been committed to through
Transitional Equity Funding. These new initiatives
include the employment of; a Stage 4 and Stage 5
Learning Adviser, a Support Unit Learning Adviser, a Speech Therapist, a Social Worker and
an Indigenous Learning Adviser. Other programs
include; a wilderness program for disengaged
youth, the building of a cross-KLA outdoor
classroom and a range of initiatives to support
targeted students who are transitioning from
school with the new leaving age. The plan will
again be reviewed at the end of 2013 and
updated with a focus for 2014.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction
In 2012 the school sought the opinions of
parents, students and teachers about the school.
Their responses are presented below.
The opinions and satisfaction levels of parents,
students and teachers are sought frequently
throughout the school year via evaluations,
surveys, and other opportunities to share
thoughts and offer feedback.
In 2012 we introduced a new way of structuring
the senior timetable that allowed for one day per
fortnight to be free of timetabled classes and
available for sustained blocks of study. These
blocks of times were utilised by students and
staff to work on major projects, bodies of work
and complex learning tasks that benefitted from
blocks of time larger than the standard one hour
timetabled period.
We surveyed students, staff and parents to
gather feedback regarding the success or
otherwise of this initiative. Student feedback was
overwhelmingly positive with all students
believing the initiative had been successful and
that they had benefitted from the new structure
– 25% of students believed there were times
when they had to choose between subject
activities when they would have preferred not to
have to do so. Twelve per cent of students
suggested we make it a weekly occurrence.
Parent responses were limited, but those that did
respond reported high levels of satisfaction with
the program. Staff, also were overwhelmingly
positive, with a range of suggestions to improve
the Project Friday Program.
Professional learning

In 2012 professional learning involved all staff both teaching and SASS in a variety of initiatives from in-school events to regional projects. These activities were diverse and designed to reflect the priorities of the School Management Plan and the mandatory training associated with duty of care obligations.

Professional Learning (PL) is conducted at school using the expertise of existing teaching staff and off site using DEC staff specifically employed to facilitate teacher professional learning. Staff also engaged in PL at a variety of external locations with participation in workshops, conferences and meetings that were regularly held after school and on weekends.

An important area of PL continued to be student welfare initiatives. The school has a very strong and enthusiastic welfare team who meet regularly before school and participate in external PL. Members of the welfare team facilitate and lead in-school opportunities for the whole staff. In 2012 some of the activities our staff completed include, Autism workshops, Anti-Bullying programs, Mental Health and Wellbeing seminars, and approximately 15 staff completed the Rock and Water program.

PL is an integral part of the development of our new scheme teachers. Approximately 35% of our current teaching staff are new scheme teachers including 18 staff that are early career teachers in their first three years of teaching. The Head Teacher Mentor works extensively with these teachers as they are required by the NSW Institute of Teachers to complete 100 hours of professional learning every five years. The types of professional learning activities available to staff include lesson observation of colleagues, development of best practice in regard to teaching strategies, classroom management techniques, understanding of DET policies and procedures and curriculum based activities as well as training in DEC mandatory training requirements.

Also in 2012 our staff attended a variety of curriculum-based conferences and workshops outside of school hours coordinated by KLA specific professional learning associations. In addition a team approach was used to develop an Executive Conference, delivered outside of school hours with workshops presented by DEC staff and members of the executive in their area of expertise. Leadership development is also a key aspect of PL with a number of staff participating in events to enhance their leadership skills.

Another important area of professional learning is digital education. An essential part of the Digital Education Revolution (DER) is the training of staff in Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills to enhance the use of emerging technologies in the classroom and associated administrative responsibilities. In 2012 staff participated in regional programs and projects and engaged in workshops at school coordinated by regional consultants and AHS staff with expertise in ICT programs including Smart Notebook, Adobe Connect, Moodle, and One Note. All Staff now apply for professional learning events online and in many cases complete professional learning online. In 2012 all teaching staff completed e-emergency and anaphylaxis training.

In 2012 there was a particular emphasis on all staff completing a 15 hour Prioritising Grammar course which was conducted during staff meetings (both in and out of school hours) and on Staff Development Days. This course required independent implementation and feedback around the strategies outlined during the course.

Preparation for the implementation of the National Curriculum in 2014 involved our staff members participating in PL and taking a lead role in the development of curriculum across the region.

School planning 2012—2014

The school planning policy provides direction for the preparation and implementation of school plans including the identification of priority areas, intended outcomes and targets that are consistent with the NSW State Plan and the Department’s planning documents.

Our Ambarvale High School Plan 2012-2014 remains essentially the same document in 2013 in terms of direction and intent as the one that steered our practice during 2012.

As part of our whole school evaluation process we have reviewed progress thus far, in addition to adapting and adjusting the document to reflect new opportunities and/or funding in 2013. Our successful inclusion into the Transitional Equity
Funding 2013, in particular, required adjustment to our 2013 interpretation of our School Plan. Hence our priority areas remain stable. Targets and strategies listed reflect, primarily, adjustments for the 2013 school year.

School priority 1 - Literacy and Numeracy

Outcome for 2012–2014

- Increased levels of literacy and numeracy achievement for every student.

2013 Target to achieve this outcome include:

- Individualised learning plans and conferences that track and monitor student literacy and numeracy achievement.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Stage 4 Student Learning Adviser sought and implemented.
- Data driven targeted student learning identified for LaST support.

School priority 2 – Leadership and Management

Outcome for 2012–2014

- Strengthened leadership and management capacity of school staff to drive school improvement.

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- All staff are familiar with and conversant about the national standards.
- TPL Mondays to provide time and environment for workplace based reflection, self-evaluations and planned teacher learning.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Substantial teacher professional learning time for teachers to address National Standards and map their own practices and areas for learning against the standards.

School priority 3 – Engagement and Attainment

Outcome for 2012–2014

Students experience challenging, flexible, personalised and safe learning environments that recognise achievements.

2013 Target to achieve this outcome include:

- Gifted and Talented Student Register responsive to student need.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Student Learning Adviser roles in place.
- Gifted and Talented opportunities outside the school are actively sought.
- Continued involvement in the University of Western Sydney ‘Fast Forward Program’.
- Critical mass of staff to receive post graduate certification in Gifted and Talented Education.

School priority 4 – Curriculum and Assessment

Outcome for 2012–2014

New National Curriculum delivered in a timely manner through innovative, inclusive and relevant programs underpinned by Quality Teaching.

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- Staff to engage in professional learning opportunities to prepare and plan for the National Curriculum.
- Staff to work with other colleagues across schools to ensure breadth of National Curriculum understanding.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Informed and planned allocation of National Curriculum Professional learning funds that reflects teacher need and curriculum complexity.
- Use of the two School Development Days in term two 2013 to focus on the National Curriculum and related teacher learning; the first day as a Community of Schools and other local High Schools and the second day as a school specific focus.
School priority 5 – Aboriginal Education

Outcome for 2012–2014
To maintain and strengthen Personalised Learning Plans for all ATSI students.

2013 Target to achieve this outcome include:
Maintain above state average growth for all ATSI students in Year 9 NAPLAN.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
- Use of Transitional Equity Funding to employ additional teaching personnel to work with ATSI students.
- Continued professional learning for staff to strengthen literacy and numeracy teaching strategies.
- Teacher learning in the Aboriginal and ways of learning.

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.

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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: