Ambarvale High School
Annual School Report

2011
Our school at a glance

Students
In February 2011 we began our year with 900 students, 556 of which were in Years 7-10, 268 in Years 11 and 12 and 76 in the support unit.

The number of students from language backgrounds other than English remained stable at approximately 25% of students. Students who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) represented over 7% of the student population.

Staff
In 2011 our school had a teaching staff of 70.8. These teachers and executive were divided between ten major faculty areas, including our specialist support unit.

Specialist positions included a librarian, careers adviser, counsellor, two support teachers for learning assistance in the mainstream, a head teacher administration and a 0.5 head teacher mentor.

In 2011 we also secured a student support officer (SSO). There are 10 trial SSO positions across New South Wales (NSW) with a youth work or social work background. SSOs work with children and families to offer support and create community links. SSOs are not teaching staff.

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

Significant programs and initiatives
In 2011 Ambarvale High School (AHS) engaged in a wide range of significant programs and initiatives that are discussed in detail in the body of this document. Individualised learning plans were developed. Student leadership opportunities were strengthened and many of our whole school portfolios, including Aboriginal education and gifted and talented, were expanded and developed. Our targeted, articulated and specific focus on areas of literacy was rewarded with very strong growth in our Year 9 cohort. An SSO strengthened our welfare team and further partnerships with other community organisations were developed.

Student achievement in 2011
Our National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results in Year 9 were very strong, in particular our writing and spelling results. This is reflective of the focus on writing for the 2011 Year 9 cohort for the previous two years.

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

Our School Certificate (SC) results were also strong in a number of skill areas. Our average scores in English, Australian History, Civics and Citizenship and Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship were above those achieved in similar school groups.

We were also very proud of our Higher School Certificate (HSC) cohort who produced some very strong results, particularly in the following subjects, all of which achieved average scores above those of similar schools: English (Standard and Advanced), Industrial Technology, Mathematics, Modern History, History Extension, Senior Science and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

Messages

Principal’s message
AHS is a dynamic local high school with a focus on quality teaching and learning, and student achievement. Our school is part of our local community of schools, and we enjoy positive partnerships with Appin, Rosemeadow, St Helens Park and Woodland Road Public Schools. In 2011 we continued to work towards the individualising of the educational experience for students. A major achievement was individualised literacy and numeracy learning plans for all students in Year 8.

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 Parents and Citizens Association (P&C), AHS has a system of point of need meetings for parents and the community. These included: Ambartour, Year 7 Meet and Greet, Subject Selection Night, Year 12 Parent/Teacher Night, Whole School Parent/Teacher Night, Year 9 Laptop Distribution Night, Year 6 Information Night, National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week, Ambassadors Presentation, Sports Presentation Night, Whole School Presentation Night and Year 12 Graduation.

Student representative’s message

The AHS Student Representative Council (SRC) was re-established late in Term 4 of 2011. Students nominated themselves and went through an application process and were approved by members of the executive team. The SRC established their role and various goals through consultation with teachers and members of the executive in preparation for a productive school year in 2012.

The intention of the SRC is to work towards resolutions and practical solutions for the concerns of the general student body. The SRC will be an active presence in the school working towards enhancing student morale by addressing student concerns and seeking productive ways to troubleshoot these issues while in close consultation with members of the executive team. Members of the SRC will be the voice between the general student population and members of the executive team, ensuring student needs are addressed and met by providing students with the opportunity to express their concerns.

The SRC will work towards establishing close ties with the community, the local council and neighbouring schools with the intention of raising our student profile within the community and utilising these ties for various events.

SRC representatives have a responsibility to be leaders and model representatives of the school. It is the intention of the SRC to work with the senior leaders on initiatives such as playground activities, reward ceremonies and evenings such as Ambartour.

Members of the SRC represent their year group and the wider community of the school and will work towards the goals and concerns for the general student body.

Mrs Beth 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>506</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>429</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>433</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student attendance profile
Management of non-attendance

Background

Most of our students attend at well above the required 85% of school days.

The students with attendance below 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.

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

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 they can visit homes, interview carers, note contexts and involve other agencies. At AHS we involve the HSLO early in the process so that our most effective intervention can occur before a problem attender becomes a school refuser.

Findings and conclusions

Students with poor attendance are followed up more quickly and more rigorously than in previous years.

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 2012 will see the welfare team having a more direct and immediate role in improving attendance. They will be the first point of intervention as they will examine the rolls on a daily basis and call parents as soon as a child fails to explain their absences.

The Head Teacher Administration and the HSLO will continue to intervene very early in the process.

Improved reports from the school attendance database will assist in staff targeting the students who most need support.

Retention to Year 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SC05-HSC07</th>
<th>SC06-HSC08</th>
<th>SC07-HSC09</th>
<th>SC08-HSC10</th>
<th>SC09-HSC11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>55.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEG</td>
<td>56.6</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>55.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>64.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Post-school destinations

Year 12 post destinations survey results were impressive with 28% successfully gaining entry to the university and course of their choice. Three per cent of students gained entry to university to their second choice or to the university college. Areas of studies for these students include engineering, youth work, oral health, ancient history, forensic science, political science, modern history, computer engineering, education, digital media, health science, medical science, criminology, policing, civil engineering, arts and international studies. An increase of students starting double degrees is evident and possibly a result of the changing world of work and its competitive nature.

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

A pleasing 18% of students successfully gained entry to the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) course of their choice and are on their way to completing Diplomas and Certificate IV in the areas of animal studies, childcare, community services welfare and mental health, photography, tourism and events, enrolled nursing, hairdressing, journalism and graphic design. An increase in students applying for and gaining recognition of prior learning units of study is obvious with students that are continuing their school or vocational education and training (VET) or TAFE delivered vocational education and training (TVET) subject into tertiary study.

Students successfully gaining an apprenticeship or traineeship increased to 7.5% with most of those students continuing their VET studies from school into their apprenticeships/traineeships.

Students gaining entry into private provider courses again increased this year with 8.5% of students being accepted into colleges such as The Australian Careers Business College, Australian Business Academy, Australian College of Physical Education, Paramedics College, Open Colleges Australia and The Australian Institute of Childcare.

Defence force entry remains popular with the students of AHS with four students in the midst of the defence force recruitment process for the army infantry and apprenticeship entry.

As a result of the pleasing amount of students gaining entry to a form of tertiary education a decrease is apparent in students that are working fulltime (19%), part-time or casual (9%) and actively looking for work (7%). The majority of these students are planning to continue their studies by applying for mid-year entry TAFE or university in 2012.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification

Ninety three Year 12 students obtained a HSC in 2011. One Year 12 student obtained a Record of Achievement, with the option of completing a full HSC course of study in the future.

Six Year 12 students obtained a Life Skills HSC, delivered by our support unit.

Staff information

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

During 2011 a number of staff had the opportunity to gain valuable experience and develop the school’s leadership capacity by relieving up into a number of roles. Our Head Teachers Mathematics, Applied Technology and Industrial Arts were relieving positions due to various leave situations, and the Head Teacher Science was a shared position with a teacher relieving as head teacher two days of the week.

Our school is characterised by a large number of quality temporary teachers, employed to manage the many maternity leaves and part-time leave without pay arrangements in place to support our many young teachers who are beginning their families.
Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Emotional Disabilities</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Mild Intellectual Disabilities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on indigenous composition of their workforce.

During 2011 we did not have any indigenous staff members at our school, however a number of Indigenous Department of Education and Communities (DEC) staff spent time in our school, working with teachers and students; indigenous and non-indigenous.

Staff retention

Our staff remains very stable and we retain the vast majority of teachers for many years. In 2011, two teachers accepted transfers to schools closer to home and one teacher relinquished their position to engage in full-time parenting. One teacher was nominated for transfer from the Creative and Performing Arts due to a reduction in curriculum requirements.

Teacher qualifications

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

In addition, many teachers possess a range of post graduate qualifications including Diplomas and Masters Degrees.

In 2011 a dedicated team of teachers continued the process of applying for Professional Accomplishment Accreditation with the New South Wales (NSW) Institute of Teaching.

Qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School and administrative support staff (SASS)

Members of the AHS SASS team continued in their roles as members of various professional learning committees delivering workshops and conferences to SASS across the South Western Sydney (SWS) Region. One member of the AHS SASS team retained their position on the Regional SASS Reference Group (RSRG) which steers professional learning for non-teaching staff across the region. During the year SASS continued to build and develop skills learnt in previous years.

Future directions

Throughout 2012 SASS will be encouraged to continue to enhance their skills by attending professional learning opportunities in their particular area of expertise as well as other areas they may be interested in that will challenge their knowledge and abilities relevant to the ever evolving roles that SASS undertake in the workplace.

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: 30/11/2011

Income

Balance brought forward 681826.43
Global funds 521003.64
Tied funds 223925.75
School & community sources 179147.12
Interest 32361.36
Trust receipts 179117.41
Canteen 186386.60
Total income 2003768.31

Expenditure

Teaching & learning
Key learning areas 125752.10
Excursions 54234.31
Extracurricular dissections 111290.11
Library 12527.02
Training & development 3755.82
Tied funds 216860.36
Casual relief teachers 151382.14
Administration & office 156069.46
School-operated canteen 164365.28
Utilities 99735.15
Maintenance 41392.84
Trust accounts 365717.24
Capital programs 5800.00
Total expenditure 1508881.83

Balance carried forward 494886.48

A full copy of the school’s 2011 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 2011

Achievements

Arts

The year 2011 was another busy year for the Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) faculty. Students from all years engaged in a range of challenging and rewarding activities producing original and inspired work.

Faculty Evaluation

The CAPA faculty undertook an extensive evaluation in 2011. Staff, students and parents were surveyed to gain opinions relating to course content, teaching and learning styles and satisfaction. We have all found this to be a rewarding experience and look forward to implementing improvements identified in the process.

CAPA Exhibition

Our annual exhibition provides students with the opportunity to display their artistic and musical skills for the community. A feature of this year’s exhibition was the display of work from Rosemeadow, Appin, Woodland Road, St Helens Park and Thomas Acres Public Schools. This is the third year we have invited our community of schools to participate in our exhibition.

Choir

Ms Sutton and Mr Heugh collaborated to form a student choir. Vocalists from our elective music classes have been rehearsing weekly to develop a repertoire of songs. This is the first serious choir for many of the students and they are finding the experience very rewarding. Big thanks go to Ms Barnott-Clement for her support in the purchase of a uniform.

Housing NSW Performance

Ms Sutton and members of the Year 11 music class performed at the opening of the Community Centre which is part of the new Public Housing development on Copperfield Drive. The performance was part of our Education Week celebrations and was well received by all those in attendance.

Work Experience at Art Gallery of NSW

Year 10 visual art student Cody Heathcote-Heller completed work experience at the Art Gallery of NSW. Cody was extremely fortunate to be accepted by the gallery and gained a lot from the program including hands-on curating experience and industry contacts.

Third Place in ‘Design an Ad’ Competition

Year 8 student Monique Athanasopoulos was awarded third place in a ‘Design an Ad’ competition run by the Fairfax Media. Monique designed an excellent poster for the local
Workout World business and was competing against students from throughout the Sydney metropolitan area. Monique and her family were invited to an afternoon tea to receive the award.

**Sport**

**Background**

AHS students continued their achievements and participation through 2011. We held three successful carnivals; swimming unfortunately was competitors only due to the unavailability of the local pool. This however did not deter the efforts of our students. Students succeeding at our school carnivals went through to the Fisher zone carnival where they represented the school once again with excellent sportsmanship. A number of our students also made it through to the Sydney South West (SSW) carnival across all disciplines, as well as the state carnival in swimming.

Our school also participates in a number of SSW knockout competitions. Students should be congratulated on their efforts and participation while the coaches deserve a big thank you as well for taking the time to coach the knockout teams.

At the zone level, Year 8 competed in a gala day that included the other local high schools. The gala day was a success and allowed students to interact with students from other schools while developing communication and teamwork skills. Unfortunately the Year 7 gala day was cancelled due to poor weather.

Once again, AHS was involved in the Premiers Sporting Challenge. This gave our students an opportunity to undergo leadership training around physical activity. This was a great initiative as it taught our students the importance of physical activity and gave them the opportunity to conduct coaching sessions in the local primary schools. This enhances our students’ leadership skills as well as strengthening ties with our local community.

**Findings and conclusions**

At AHS a total of 154 students represented our school in the three major carnivals. Of them 48 were successful in representing our zone at the regional carnivals. Three of those students went on to represent our region at the state carnivals; a tremendous effort from our talented Ambarvale athletes.

At AHS we had 16 various sporting teams compete in the SSW knockout competitions. From those teams, nine students played as zone representatives. This highlights our students’ sporting talent in a variety of different team sports across the zone.

Our school organised and hosted a very successful Fisher zone annual sport presentation that recognised the talents from students across the zone and included special guests that inspired our students.

This was followed by our annual school sports presentation where we recognised the effort, participation and skill of our students. This was a well-attended event with parents and the remainder of the school on hand to congratulate our sporting stars.

**Future directions**

In 2012, we aim to create coaching programs to develop the skills of our students across knockout sports as well as athletics, cross country and swimming.

We are focusing on developing the leadership skills of our senior students through the organisation, implementation and coaching of our junior students.

We aim to strengthen ties with the community through positive participation in sport and recreational activities outside of the school environment.

We look forward to 2012 as we are further amazed by the talents and sportsmanship of AHS students.
Other
Library
Background
The library at AHS continues to be a centre of learning, a venue for school events, a haven for vulnerable students, a study for seniors and a clinic and dispensary for children with chronic illnesses.

It is continuously booked throughout the year for class groups to use its computers, interactive whiteboard (IWB) and its books.

It is a flexible and useful space that is at the heart of the school.

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, both the IWB and the computer bank.

The DVD collection is improving.

The non-fiction collection has been culled and is somewhat better used – although computers remain the information source of choice for most students and teachers.

Fiction books are very popular.

Board games and puzzles have been introduced.

The entrance to the library has been redecorated to improve the appeal to passers-by.

Future directions
Information skills and study skills will be more comprehensively taught to all students.

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 rather than solitary computer games.

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Environment
Background
The primary purpose of this portfolio is to broaden and deepen student understanding of their local environment and to offer interested individuals the opportunity to become involved in finding local solutions to local problems, while at the same time developing an appreciation of global challenges that affect all of us.

Findings and conclusions
The profile of the Environmental Whole School Portfolio continued to increase around the school during 2011, following on from The Year of Sustainability in 2010. Student involvement increased and an active ‘environment group’ of students is now established at AHS. Student activity in 2011 focused on recycling paper and developing systems within the school for collecting and composting vegetable waste. These efforts are ongoing.

AHS was involved in the regional ‘Greening of Western Sydney’ program which involved planting numerous shrubs and trees in a section of ‘paddock’ in the agriculture plot, with the eventual aim of creating a native bushland garden, featuring a selection of native flowering plants, shrubs and trees as well as some ‘bush tucker’ species such as Lilli Pilli.

The regeneration of a portion of the endangered Cumberland Plain Woodland ecosystem has continued, though setbacks were encountered during 2011. These included the difficulties associated with establishing ground cover species in areas dominated by pasture, as well as the total failure to establish Black Wattle seedlings via a mass planting of seeds in an area of pasture. These setbacks have in no way altered the eventual goal of establishing a genuine sample of an endangered local ecosystem.

Future directions
Increasing student involvement in local environmental issues remains a key focus of future plans. Developing a strong cadre of motivated student leaders would be of great benefit to the school, to the local community and to the students themselves. Bush regeneration, particularly regeneration of Cumberland Plain Woodland will remain an ongoing focus that requires significant time and energy.
There is a great potential for seeking local knowledge, expertise and assistance from groups and organisations where initial contact has been made, such as the Mount Annan Botanic Gardens and the Macarthur Centre for Sustainability. It is expected that much closer contact with these groups will be developed in 2012.

**Careers/school to work (STW)**

**Background**

Careers and STW programs at AHS are broad, ever changing and developing to meet the needs of each student, each cohort, the community and worldly influences. There were a wide variety of initiatives implemented in 2011, engaging with students across all year groups with a focus on those students in Years 9 to 12.

Careers lessons were 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, STW program to Years 9 to 11, work readiness training to Years 9 and 10, interview training and mock interviews for Year 10 and the opportunity for block work experience for Year 10. 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 individual careers action plans to be put in place resulting in a smoother transition to tertiary education and/or the workforce.

The year 2011 brought many changes not only resulting from student careers surveys but also to meet the challenges of the new school leaving age (NSLA). To help counteract these challenges earlier extended careers classes were implemented as well as subject selection classes ensuring that every student from Years 10 to 12 had an individual careers action plan.

**Findings and conclusions**

Newly implemented careers/STW events were successful and aimed to increase employer and business partnerships and their interaction with AHS students broadening their exposure to the ‘world of work’ and increasing their awareness of the many opportunities that are available. These events are embedded into the 2012 careers and STW programs.

The business breakfast introduced the faces of many businesses and past work experience employers that were keen to participate in our STW events, mentor and interact with the students. Year 10 interview day and work experience week were a great success 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, ‘get that job’ day, social etiquette training and various industry excursions.

New implemented events included a business breakfast, speed careering, boys and girls business mentoring and social etiquette training.

The introduction of a senior transition adviser (Mr Paul Herrmann) has increased students’ face to face careers counselling for ‘at risk’ students that are a direct result of the NSLA. Our transition adviser works closely with the welfare team in targeting students that would like to leave school but are under the age of 17 years. Students are offered a varied study pattern and participate in the ‘Broaden Your World Program’ by Open Families Australia.

In 2011, 38 mainstream students participated in TAFE delivered VET. TVET has delivered successful results for most students who participated at the Campbelltown, Macquarie Fields, Wetherill Park, Liverpool and Miller campuses. Eight students participated in a school based apprenticeship/traineeship in the areas of retail, real estate and business services, construction, hairdressing and aged care.

Surveys of Years 10 to 12 including the exit surveys show students are increasingly more confident and focused on their career paths and are choosing subjects to reflect this. Exit surveys have proven that students’ successful transitioning into careers or tertiary educations of their choice are increasing also.
Future directions

As a result of student surveys and employer feedback the new STW events of 2012 have now been embedded into the STW program and plan. Continuous feedback is needed and will provide information specific to each cohort therefore determining future events and opportunities. One such event will be a new ‘tradies’ afternoon BBQ brought on by the need of the current students in Years 10 to 12 that wish to gain an apprenticeship to leave school or after completing the HSC.

Individual career action plans will continue to be developed and monitored for all students from Years 10 to 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 School Certificate the performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from Performance Band 1 (lowest) to Performance Band 6 (highest).

Progress in Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7

Year 7 NAPLAN results are a measure of student achievement in May of that year and hence are largely a reflection of learning during Years 5 and 6. Results in 2011 indicate a need to close the gap between school and state, and school and similar school groups.
Progress in Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7

The 2011 Year 7 cohort did not perform strongly in numeracy, with only 16.2% of students represented in the top three bands. This is below the school average, similar school groups and state. A focus on numeracy skill development for this cohort is essential to ensure individual student and cohort growth that we anticipate will be reflected in the 2013 Year 9 NAPLAN.

Progress in Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9

Year 9 NAPLAN results in 2011 are very encouraging. As a school we focused in literacy on writing and spelling. This is clearly reflected in our results, with the school average score in writing exceeding that of similar school groups by 23 points. Thirty one per cent of students achieved in the top three bands, compared to similar schools 22.7% of students. In spelling, we again exceeded the performance of similar groups, achieving an average score that was 19.4 points higher, and only 5.9 points below state average.
Progress in Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9

Progress in numeracy for Year 9 students was not as strong as the achievement in literacy. It was encouraging to see only a 4.5 point difference in the percentage of students in the top four bands between the school (51.9% students) and similar school groups (56.4%). Nonetheless, numeracy will continue to be a key focus in teaching and learning to strengthen student results.

School Certificate

The year 2011 will be the last year schools report on SC data. The external state-wide examination process that has provided this data has been removed by the Board of Studies. Instead, Year 10 students will be measured by a range of internal assessment tools, moderated by course performance descriptors and reported in a Record of School Achievement (ROSA).

SC results in English were strong, with 74.6% of students achieving in the top three bands. The average score for the school exceeded that of similar school groups.

Australian History, Civics and Citizenship and Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship also performed extremely well with both subjects exceeding the average results of the similar school group.
School Certificate relative performance comparison to Year 5 (value-adding)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>School 2011</th>
<th>School Average 2007-2011</th>
<th>SSG Average 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>-1.8</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>-1.6</td>
<td>-2.0</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian History, Civics and Citizenship</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Skills</td>
<td>-2.4</td>
<td>-2.0</td>
<td>-1.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: By definition, the State average relative performance is zero

Higher School Certificate

In the HSC we had some outstanding results. Not all results are recorded here in graph form. Subjects with a small candidature do not appear on the graph. Some specific results include History Extension with an average mark of 92, compared to the state average of 76. Modern History students in 2011 at AHS scored on average 77, compared to the state’s 73.1. English Standard results, with a school average mark for 2011 of 63.6, was stronger than the state average mark of 62.8. Students in Industrial Technology also performed very well with an average mark in 2011 of 74.8, compared to the state’s 69.3.
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.

Minimum Standards data

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<th>Percentage of Year 7 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)</th>
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<th>Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)</th>
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Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

Background

In 2011 our number of Aboriginal students increased to approximately 6.5% 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 last week of Term 2 included a trivia competition conducted through roll call, Aboriginal art activities in our Year 8 visual art classes, a week long faculty focus across all years and culminated in a school assembly and morning tea with indigenous dances performed by students from our community of schools [Rosemeadow Public School (RPS) and Thomas Acres Public School (TAPS)] and an address from our University of Western Sydney (UWS) guest speaker, Ms Maree Graham.
UWS Indigenous Student Mentoring Program – this program entered its third year with a committed group of Year 10 students participating in UWS workshops and meeting their individual university mentors twice per term at school. This program also assisted our Year 12 Aboriginal students to gain tertiary entry to UWS in 2012. The year finished with an indigenous cultural morning for indigenous and non-indigenous students from RPS and TAPS.

Individual learning plans were developed or revisited 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. This included the completion of school based traineeships as part of the HSC.

Three of our junior Aboriginal students continued in leadership positions on the Campbelltown Junior Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG). 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.

Many of our students participated in the Koori Flow Program coordinated by Campbelltown City Council. This involved Aboriginal community members meeting with our students to enhance their personal understanding of Aboriginal culture.

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 7 student was selected and participated in a gifted and talented regional program.

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 initiative of an indigenous careers day as part of our NAIDOC Week activities and re-establishing our participation in the hands-on program through SWS TAFE.

Our focus on community involvement will continue to expand with the inclusion of opportunities from local indigenous elders who have expressed interest in participating in ongoing educational programs at the school.

Gifted and talented education (GAT)

Background
In 2011 the focus was on consolidating the school gifted and talented committee ensuring a cross-faculty representation. Faculties continued to implement strategies to engage gifted and talented students through extension classes, acceleration and enrichment activities.

A register of identified GAT students was created and placed on the school intranet to allow for information to be disseminated and updated.

Term 2 Staff Development Day had workshops on differentiating the curriculum for GAT students. Teachers were shown how to use the Quality Teaching Framework, Bloom’s Taxonomy and Multiple Intelligences to create a ‘thinking classroom’.

AHS staff also hosted and presented at the Regional GAT Video Conference, inservicing staff in the region on characteristics of GAT students and identification tools.

Findings and conclusions
GAT education initiatives are firmly placed on the school agenda being a focus of faculty management plans, school portfolios and the School Management Plan under student engagement and attainment.

Future directions
The year 2012 will focus on providing students with greater opportunities to showcase their talents through the establishment of student leadership opportunities such as Social Justice

Faculties will continue to develop individualised education plans for students. The science faculty will continue with their enrichment days with partner primary schools. The maths faculty has widened its acceleration programs with students from Year 7 through to Year 11. The English faculty will commence a junior extension class which will be held after school, similar to the junior extension history and geography classes which are held before school.

AHS will continue to deliver individualised learning experiences for all students.

Multicultural education

Background
AHS has a rich diversity of cultures amongst the students and this continues to expand especially with students from non-English speaking backgrounds and recent arrivals to Australia. English as a second language student numbers across the school remain constant at approximately 25%.

Our overall school goal is to provide extensive support to ensure all students realise their full potential. The learning needs of students from non-English speaking backgrounds are met through expert English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers and resources and support learning strategies.

We continue to have a whole school multicultural portfolio team managed by a member of the school executive.

The educational intention for this multicultural team is to foster an active, articulate and rounded thinking capacity around multiculturalism. Students participate in a full range of activities including guest speakers, workshops, food stalls from around the world, refugee tent and performances.

We continue to have an Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO) who continues to investigate and resolve reported issues of racial discrimination and conflict within the school.

Findings and conclusions
Through 2011, the multicultural team was very active within the school; they co-ordinated a multicultural day with a range of activities and events. Students are advised of these activities through Daily Notices, Ambargram and assembly announcements. These activities assist in promoting multiculturalism education which is necessary in preparing students for a harmonious, multicultural society in which diversity is regarded as a strength. Our school is participating in a Multicultural Education Action Research Project in 2011-2013. All teachers were invited to complete an online survey on their understanding and experiences of multiculturalism and multicultural education. Over 80% of the staff responded to this survey. A focus group of teachers, parents and students was held to discuss multiculturalism and awareness of multicultural education. This allows an accurate profile of the school to be developed and provide the school with valuable information for future planning.

Future directions
- Multicultural education will continue as an executive managed whole school portfolio.
- Participating in the University of Western Sydney (UWS) led Multiculturalism Research Project.
- We anticipate a continued ESL staffing allocation of 0.2 and we will continue to train and support our ARCO in 2012.

Respect and responsibility

Positive behaviour and intervention supports (PBIS)

Background
PBIS has been embedded in our school plan and has been a priority in teaching and learning across our whole school portfolios since its implementation four years ago. Following on from our re-launch in 2010 TRREC has been a priority focus in association with pastoral care activities and all key learning areas (KLA).

TRREC is embedded in all whole school activities and functions. Most school documents and communications contain the TRREC message (our values: trust, respect, responsibility, excellence and cooperation). Behaviour management systems and reward systems directly reflect the values and student behaviour is modelled and practised throughout these systems. Visually TRREC is evident across the school with
substantial signage in both outdoor places and inside learning spaces. TRREC values are explicitly taught to all year groups through unified language by staff and specific KLA enrichment lessons.

Findings and conclusions

Behaviour monitoring cards
Monitoring cards which are used to target our 15% students (PBIS behaviour pyramid) are successful and widely used by executive members. Minor alterations have been made to assist staff in adequate reporting of behaviours.

Behaviour management plans
Students from each year group were targeted as those ‘at risk’ of disrupting and negatively affecting the learning of themselves and others. Through whole school collaboration of experienced and expert teachers behaviours and triggers were identified and management techniques and strategies were proposed to help staff manage these individuals. These documents were created using a common template and have been disseminated to all staff to help assist in creating a quality learning environment for all students and consistency across all KLAs.

Fortnightly focus
Each fortnight the whole school focuses on one of our five core values. Signage has been erected around the school to remind staff and students of the fortnightly focus. Year group noticeboards and classrooms are equipped with smaller signage and posters to use as a teaching tool. Every roll call and pastoral care group participate in age appropriate learning activities designed to reflect the fortnightly focus. These activities are delivered on a bi-weekly basis to all year groups. Key messages revolving around the fortnightly focus are composed in daily notices and spoken of at all year group meetings and whole school assemblies.

TRREC enriched curriculum lessons
Lessons are being delivered within elected KLAs which make strong links to the syllabus and TRREC values. These lessons are being reviewed and refreshed. Each term a different year group will complete these lesson activities with different KLAs.

Data collection and evaluation
TRREC surveys have been collected and collated to give an understanding to student knowledge of our values and outline areas of improvement. It has indicated that our junior school is proficient with TRREC knowledge however middle school and senior school require a refocus.

Future directions
TRREC is continually evolving with an ever-changing team and small focus activities. Our overall goal of a unified language and approach to student behaviour management is continuing to improve and develop. The TRREC team will continue to:

- Improve data collection from our Report Individual Student Contact (RISC) to identify problem behaviours, areas and settings.
- Continue to embed TRREC in lesson planning and execution.
- Make strong links with our community of schools to educate transition students of our TRREC values.
- Run focus activity days specific to a value and a year group or targeted students.
- Utilise other whole school areas to improve the understanding of TRREC values, multicultural and respect.
- Improve all AHS documentation so all proforma and documents contain the TRREC logo and messages.

Other programs
Student welfare

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

Throughout 2011, 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, Camp Quality performance – The Teenage Alchemist,
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 2011 saw the ambassadors attend IMAX Theatre, Taronga Zoo, a Digi Ed Claymation workshop and a camp to Perisher for three exciting and fun-filled days of skiing and snowboarding. Each semester sees a new intake of keen and excellent students and a review of our current ambassadors.

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.

The year 2011 also saw the introduction of a Student Support Officer (SSO), allocated to our school on a full-time basis. The SSO works with the school welfare team to promote student wellbeing through connections with parents, the community and particularly outside agencies to assist our students.

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. The second half of 2011 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

Activities for 2012 will include the continuation of the development of programs with our SSO to continue to provide a safe and supportive place for students.

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 2011 targets

Target 1

Thirty one per cent of the Year 9 cohort to achieve in the top three bands of NAPLAN in reading

Our achievements include:

- A result in the top three bands for NAPLAN reading that was slightly below our target of 31% with an achievement of 24.3%. However our overall focus on literacy saw outstanding results in the other three domains, meeting or exceeding the 31% in the top three bands target. In writing we saw 31.2% in the top three bands, in grammar and punctuation, 30.1% and 46.6% in the top three bands for spelling.

Target 2

Thirty per cent of the Year 9 cohort to achieve in the top three bands of NAPLAN in numeracy

Our achievements include:

- A result that does not meet this aspirational target. Twenty point three per cent of students achieved in the top three bands. However it is encouraging to note that the
percentage of students achieving in Band 7 (the fourth top band) was 31.6%. This exceeded the percentage in this band at a similar school level and against our four year school average.

Target 3

Individual student learning plans are in place and utilised to enhance teaching and learning for a range of students 7-12

Our achievements include:

- Individual student learning plans are in place for a number of cohorts across our school. All Year 8 students were actively engaged in the design of their own literacy and numeracy learning plans to identify areas that require strengthening and to differentiate learning opportunities to meet specific literacy and numeracy needs.
- All Aboriginal students have a personalised learning plan in place that is used to target specific educational opportunities towards individual goals and aspirations.
- All Year 10 students received an individualised transition plan to support their learning at Stage 6 and beyond.
- All students in our support unit have an individual learning plan to structure and develop learning opportunities that best meet their individual needs.

Target 4

Head teacher development is a sustained and repeatable program that is embedded and is resulting in increased whole school leadership skills

Our achievements include:

- Each head teacher has an individual professional learning plan to inform and direct their learning, with a focus on leadership, pedagogy and management. In addition, each head teacher meets for an hour each fortnight with the principal for one-on-one professional support and development using a coaching/mentor model.
- This overall model has now been adopted by head teachers in their support and supervision of teaching staff.
- As a school we are hence seeing increased levels of specificity in terms of professional support and accountability.

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 2011 our school carried out evaluations of the support unit and CAPA.

Educational and management practice

Planning

Background

To enhance whole school planning, AHS in 2011 implemented the DEC PL and planning resource; Team Leadership for School Improvement. This is a program of professional readings and activities designed to engage a school team in current research and methodologies to ensure school improvement. A team of eighteen teachers were involved over a period of two terms; including the Principal, the Deputy Principal, ten head teachers and five classroom teachers.

Findings and conclusions

Staff reported a high level of satisfaction with the program with particular attention to the professional readings and the opportunity to think and converse deeply with others about our students, our staff and our school.

Classroom teachers reported satisfaction at the opportunity to be part of a team that was setting directions and targets.

Staff also reported satisfaction that their knowledge, opinions and experiences were being sought as valuable data to inform decision making.

The program culminated in the creation of the 2012-2014 School Plan. There was a measurable increase in the collegial input into this document, although ‘fine tuning’ was largely left to a small sub-set of the original team.

Future directions

A similar process will be developed each year to inform annual planning. This will include:

- whole staff access to the planning team
• current, relevant professional reading built into the planning process
• formal systems to gather teacher opinion and knowledge about our school
• structured analysis of a range of data (internal and external) to inform decision making
• a set of planned activities to structure and monitor team progress

Curriculum

Support unit

Background

AHS has a support unit, catering for up to 74 students with a range of mild and moderate intellectual disabilities, and up to seven multi-categorical students. These students are organised into six classes; three mild intellectual disability classes (IM), two moderate disability classes (IO) and one multi-categorical class.

The unit has six substantive teaching positions including one head teacher. Two staff have post graduate qualifications in special education. Staff also have tertiary qualifications in a myriad of curriculum areas including science, history, music and visual arts. Two staff have more than 20 years each of teaching experience in special education, with the remaining staff having between six and ten years.

Each support class is enhanced by the additional resource of a school learning support officer (SLSO). The SLSOs role is to assist the teacher and students with teaching and learning activities. In addition a school administrative officer is allocated to the support unit three days a week to support with the administrative tasks associated with coordinating the faculty.

The support unit is characterised by a range of quality teaching and learning programs with an emphasis on life skills, work readiness and transition. Successful and popular programs include the shopping program, Inspire Café, fitness and dance program and work experience.

A significant event each year is the support unit camp which provides students with the unique opportunity for the development of independent living and socialising skills. Students are away from home working as a cohesive team across a range of activities for three days and two nights.

Whilst at camp students are actively engaged in and enjoy a number of activities that involve team building, self-esteem initiatives and physically challenging ‘adventures’.

During 2011 the support unit undertook a self-evaluation process. The evaluation team consisted of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Head Teacher Science, Head Teacher Support, two classroom teachers and two SLSOs. The aim of the evaluation was to explore the strengths of the support unit, as well as areas for further development. The evaluations sought the opinions and perspectives of students, parents and staff – both from the support unit and the mainstream section of the school. Evaluation tools included a range of surveys, classroom observations, students’ forums, focus groups, and document and data analysis.

Findings and conclusions

Students

Students were surveyed on a range of topics to seek their opinions and feedback, including their happiness and safety levels at school, their overall sense of wellbeing, and the relevance of their learning experiences. Students also participated in a student forum to provide rich information to enhance survey results. The forum asked questions such as; “tell us about what happens in your classroom?” and “what type of learning do you enjoy best?”

Results indicated that students had a strong sense of connection to their learning environment and the support unit specifically. Students recognised that staff overwhelmingly treated them in a fair and yet firm manner, with a powerful commitment to student learning. Students indicated that they ‘had a voice’ within the unit and that their opinions were valued. Seventy three per cent felt they were treated fairly in class and 76% were proud of themselves and their achievements. Sixty eight per cent stated that teachers listened to what they say.

One finding from the student forum was that students did not enjoy integration during roll call or sport. Integration in elective subjects was valued, largely due to the more structured environment and specific skill development.

An area that indicated a capacity to be strengthened was student perceptions of their own wellbeing with some students reporting they
felt depressed, restless, lonely, upset or worried. It was, however, difficult to ascertain whether these results were about school specifically or their self-perception in general. Nonetheless, there is clearly the capacity to increase social and emotional awareness and coping strategies in these areas.

**Parents**

Parent perceptions were gathered via a parent survey. Responses were returned from less than 50% of parents. The survey canvassed parent opinion about a range of topics; including teaching and learning, facilities and resources, the learning environment for their child, the school’s welfare system, transition and work readiness.

Parent responses were overwhelmingly positive, with many voicing their satisfaction with, and confidence in, the support unit staff and programs.

Areas in which some reservations were communicated were the equity of the welfare system and the level of information provided to parents. Because this information was gathered via a survey, it is difficult to gauge the context or reasons for these responses. Staff analysis suggests that parents possibly believe the whole school welfare system is not understood or fully utilised by support unit students to the same extent as other students. This is evidenced by other school data including records of behaviours and consequences which demonstrate a disproportionate representation of support students involved in welfare and discipline incidents.

Parent concerns regarding effective communication can be addressed in a number of ways and this is covered in future directions below.

**Staff**

Four evaluation tools were employed to harness staff feedback and perceptions; two surveys, lesson observations, interviews and document/data analysis.

Teaching and learning programs and practices were measured using lesson observations and document/data analysis. Significant findings included teaching practices that included explicit, planned teaching activities with a high interest level were very successful in engaging students. Further, when lessons effectively employed technology and were characterised by many small practical and varied tasks, students remained focused and on-task with clear indicators that they were enjoying their learning. Observations also indicated that some teaching staff would benefit from further training to ensure their lessons met these criteria in a more consistent fashion.

Also observed was an excellent rapport between teaching/SLSO staff and students, indicative of warm and supportive relationships. The physical learning environment was welcoming and colourful, with behaviour expectations and student work prominently displayed.

Protocols to manage students moving between classes during class time need to be developed and implemented.

All staff were able to produce evidence of teaching programs, lesson plans, registration, roll books and individual plans (educational, behaviour) for students, however some were faculty based and others were created by individual teachers. A developing strength is the increasing uniformity and consistency of formats planned to ensure equity and quality of learning experiences for all students.

Through surveying support unit staff, results indicated that student learning was the core business and that classes were happy and classrooms portrayed a positive learning environment. Some staff indicated a lack of confidence in responding to students in areas of mental health and wellbeing. Forty per cent of staff felt that the support unit did not always set suitably high standards of achievement for students and 47% of staff were not always satisfied with the unit’s performance overall. An area for strengthening is faculty organisation, as the survey identified that 67% of staff felt that the allocation of money and resources was not used effectively, 53% of staff felt the support unit was not well organised and 94% of staff felt that the school plan was not always monitored and used collaboratively to develop an annual faculty plan. This survey was completed by all staff stakeholders, including SLSOs and identifies that there may be some areas to strengthen in regards to communicating clear faculty plans and procedures and in the allocation of funds and
resources. A greater focus on student achievement through utilising the school’s TRREC merit system, continuation of support unit assemblies and an increase in the nominations of support unit students as Student of the Month, SRC representatives and Ambarvale Ambassadors would assist in developing a culture of high expectation within the faculty.

Through surveying mainstream teachers of support students [CAPA, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE), and Technological and Applied Studies (TAS)] it was identified that staff felt confident in writing, planning, assessing and reporting on a life skills program and outcomes. However, it was identified that 50% did not feel that support was provided to assist in making adjustments/differentiating teaching and learning activities for students with a disability. Seventy five per cent of mainstream teachers felt that they were not always aware of the individual needs of students in their class.

Mainstream teachers’ understanding of the individual needs of students and student individual education plans can be addressed through greater access to student profiles in digital form on our school’s database. It is also recommended that a culture of teacher observation be developed to encourage both mainstream and support teachers to provide feedback in order to develop all teachers’ skills in differentiating the curriculum.

Future directions
As a result of the review, it is recommended that:

- strategies are developed to increase parent and student understanding of the whole school student welfare system including the awards system, the Ambassador Program, SRC and other opportunities
- a program of teacher professional learning be implemented to increase staff skills in behaviour management
- a review of behaviour management systems within the support unit be undertaken to fully explore proactive measures to positively manage student behaviour and to develop appropriate strategies to respond to negative behaviours within the unit
- a weekly support unit newsletter be developed to increase communication with parents
- a support unit staff workshop be developed and implemented to address high standards of student learning achievement to ensure appropriate and consistent standards are known and addressed
- an internal review of support unit organisational systems take place
- the Faculty Management Plan be developed collegially and in line with the School Management Plan and be referred to regularly at faculty meetings
- that support unit students’ specific needs and associated plans be more effectively shared with mainstream staff via a range of distribution and communication systems

Other evaluations
CAPA
Background
The CAPA faculty was formed in 2007 by combining the music and visual arts faculties. In 2011 the faculty had five classroom teachers and one head teacher delivering a wide variety of classes including visual arts, music, visual design and photography. In addition to teaching elective classes from Years 9 to 12 the staff also delivered mandatory music and visual arts to Years 7 and 8 and our support unit students from Years 7 to 12. The faculty resources include visual arts workshops, a photographic dark room, pottery kilns, computer lab, performance spaces and practice rooms. The faculty also has orchestral wind instruments and a growing number of electronic instruments including electric guitars, digital pianos, and digital drum kits.

In 2011 staff collaborated to complete an extensive review of teaching programs and a highlight of the year was the CAPA exhibition held in December 2011. This exhibition featured work from every visual arts student from Years 7 to 12 and performances from elective music students from Years 9 to 12. The exhibition was well attended by members of the school and local community. Also in 2011 a school choir was formed and the first performance of the group was at the annual CAPA exhibition in December.
Findings and conclusions

The self-evaluation team consisted of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Head Teacher Mathematics, Head Teacher CAPA, and two classroom teachers. The evaluation aimed to identify both the strengths and areas for improvement across the faculty by using a variety of evaluation tools including teacher lesson observations, student, staff and parent surveys, student forums and data analysis of SC and HSC results.

Staff

A variety of lessons were observed by members of the evaluation team as part of the data gathering process. During each lesson teachers demonstrated excellent understanding of subject knowledge and teaching styles. A range of ICT was included in each lesson including PowerPoint presentations, interactive whiteboard and music technology. Specific art and music literacy and numeracy content was evident in each lesson including some cross curriculum links. Students were focused in all lessons and participated in meaningful class discussion. Suggestions for improvement were minor including more cross curricular links and refinements to uses of ICT.

The staff survey results demonstrate that the CAPA staff use engagement as part of the quality teaching framework. The results show we are using practical based activities to help promote student engagement. Survey results also indicated that CAPA staff use rewards and recognition to reinforce school values as part of the TRREC program. As a result of these strategies the great majority of our students are fully engaged.

The survey has concluded that the faculty has adequate learning facilities. Although the visual arts to experience minor rooming issues associated with their four specialised art workshops. The organisation of Stage 4 classes by semester plays a role in this timetabling situation but after lengthy discussions the faculty has agreed that semester based organisation of classes is the best option for the delivery of the Stage 4 curriculum.

The survey indicated that CAPA staff contributed equally to create resources, programs and assessment tasks. The annual CAPA exhibition is a prime example of the effective collaboration to provide an opportunity for staff and students alike to celebrate their skills and talents. Communication between the head teacher and visual art teachers has sometimes been an issue as the faculty is spread across two separate areas of the school. An increased presence in the art block over the past two years has seen an improvement in this area.

Individual staff members were also interviewed and given the opportunity to discuss student engagement and achievement, faculty organisation, professional learning (PL) and suggested areas for improvement. The staff commented very favourably on student motivation and commitment. Particularly those students that devoted many hours to the development of their major work in Year 12 visual arts and their music performance in HSC music. Although it was also apparent that staff are constantly encouraging students to participate fully in the theory component of the various courses, particularly in the senior school, as this is an area for improvement. Another area of common agreement was the positive impact of student laptops on teaching and learning. It then followed that the staff were accessing and will continue to access PL to maintain and enhance the use of technology in the classroom. The staff also commented on their sense of staff cooperation and team work and the positive tone particularly in the art block. The issue of communication between staff was seen as an area for improvement as the faculty is spread across the school in two separate locations. Organisation and administration within the faculty was considered an area of recent improvement with continued effort required. The staff believed that many of these issues will be addressed when the faculty joins together in the one staffroom in 2012 and the visual art and music teachers are able to communicate constantly throughout the day.

Students

Students from Years 7 to 10 were surveyed on a range of points including interest in subjects, difficulty of work, teacher expectations and learning through practical tasks. Ninety two per cent of students surveyed agreed that visual arts and music were interesting and enjoyable subjects to study. Two thirds of students felt that CAPA teachers set high expectations and utilise different strategies to improve skills. Eighty three
per cent of visual arts students expressed confidence in their teacher’s knowledge and ability whilst 90% of elective music students feel they learn more during practical lessons. Sixty eight per cent of music students agreed that tasks were achievable with a similar number of visual arts students found their work to be challenging.

The results of the 2011 HSC for music 1 and visual arts demonstrate the students’ ability for practical tasks. In the music 1 course which is studied by our students the options are performance, composition and musicology with the majority of the music 1 students selecting performance for their HSC exam. The completion of a composition option is an area that will be explored with future years following the encouraging results in this option in 2011. The 2011 HSC visual arts students completed artworks for their major work from a range of expressive forms including painting, drawing, sculpture and photography. The results indicated strengths in practical tasks and the need for the development of essay writing skills to enhance their outcomes in the art theory component of the HSC examination.

Parents

Parents of students in Years 7 to 10 were asked to complete a survey on their perceptions of the CAPA faculty based on personal knowledge and feedback from their children. Ninety three per cent of parents surveyed were very satisfied with the CAPA faculty’s overall performance. The same number of parents indicated that they discuss their children’s progress in CAPA subjects with them. Eighty seven per cent of parents believe the CAPA faculty has competent teachers who set high standards of achievement for all students. Approximately two thirds of surveyed parents attend the annual CAPA exhibition and 87% of parents agree that course fees are reasonable. Importantly the only other response was ‘not sure’ and no parent indicated fees were too high.

An area requiring improvement in the future is 66% of parents agreeing they receive relevant feedback. This figure is a good indicator of an area requiring strengthening when compared to the higher levels of agreement exhibited in the other areas. It is acknowledged that the parents that did return the survey were generally those with children who are talented and engaged in the creative and performing subjects.

Future directions

The year 2012 will see a number of significant changes to the CAPA faculty. A change in curriculum choices will require a change in staffing. A permanent visual arts teacher has been selected through the merit selection process and consequently one of our music teachers will be transferring to another school. As a result of this the remaining music teacher and head teacher will relocate from the music staffroom to the visual arts block. This will see a higher presence of the head teacher in the art block and improved communication with the visual arts teachers.

A music technology lab will be set up in the vacant music staffroom improving the delivery of ICT in music. All teachers have expressed a desire for more teacher PL to further develop an understanding of Moodle, Adobe Photoshop as well as continued inservicing to maximise staff input to electronic reporting and assessment. VET will be sought for one or both of the music teachers to allow the school to offer the Entertainment Industry course. This is in response to new school leaving age requiring students who may not seek a traditional HSC staying at school until the age of seventeen. The continued promotion of the faculties extra curricula activities to encourage students outside of elective classes to join the choir and the formation of junior instrumental ensembles including a guitar ensemble will be a priority in 2012.

A higher level of parent contact will be put into practice. A greater effort will be made during Congratulations Week to contact parents of students who are working well. The continued use of the parent contact register will continue to track communication with our students’ families.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2011 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Many strategies are embedded into our known work practices to measure school community opinion and satisfaction in an ongoing, reflective and evaluative manner. This included formal evaluations of events and activities and regular bullying surveys to ascertain levels of occurrence
and concern and to monitor recorded levels of perceived bullying.

In 2011, Years 7 to 11 were surveyed regarding bullying and results were very similar to previous years. Bullying peaks in Year 8, but levels are still very low with less than 4% of students reporting that they were bullied in a sustained way and that it was either hard to stop or didn’t stop.

Reports of bullying in the senior years were almost non-existent, with one student indicating that they had been bullied in the past 12 months and that the incident was ‘mild’.

When boys are bullied it is more likely to be physical (52% of bullying involved: push, hit, barge). When girls are bullied they largely report strategies of social exclusion (63% of bullying involved: left out, name calling, jokes about them, hurtful comments).

Data collected from student responses is used to inform programs and initiatives to equip students with the attitudes and skills to resist and deflect the impact of bullying by building resilience, and to ensure student social skill development does not endorse or include bullying strategies.

**Professional learning**

In 2011 PL 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.

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

In 2011 there was a particular emphasis on staff completing PL courses after school hours specifically in Autism Spectrum Disorder and non-violent crisis intervention. An initiative in 2011 was to conduct our PL as a combined group of teachers from both AHS and RPS. We also shared the location of the training with staff spending approximately half the time at each school site and it was a great opportunity to meet professionally with our community of schools teachers and also to visit their school. Also using a combination of online learning and after school practical sessions fifteen teachers and three SASS members completed their St Johns Senior First Aid course.

PL is an integral part of the development of our new scheme teachers (NST). Approximately 40% of our current teaching staff are NST including 21 staff that are early career teachers in their first three years of teaching. NST are required by the NSW Institute of Teachers to complete 100 hours of PL every five years. The types of PL activities include lesson observation of colleagues, development of best practice in regard to teaching strategies, classroom management techniques, understanding of DEC policies and procedures and curriculum based activities as well as training in DEC mandatory training requirements. This includes such courses as emergency care, anaphylaxis and child protection. AHS is fortunate to have a head teacher mentor who works with these teachers to allocate funds and develop appropriate activities to meet their PL requirements.

Another important area of PL 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 2011 regional ICT consultants conducted training of ten teachers across all KLA’s who in turn trained members of their own faculties in web 2.0 tools, EDMODO and other ICT programs. All staff now apply for PL events online and in many cases complete PL online. In 2011 all teaching staff completed e-emergency training and child protection PL online.

**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.
School priority 1 – Literacy and numeracy

Outcome for 2012–2014

• An individualised approach to teacher and student learning in the areas of literacy and numeracy.

• Across curricula teaching programs clearly embedded with literacy and numeracy strategies.

• Increased staff awareness of students’ NAPLAN results and agreed growth plan.

• Consistent whole school professional learning in externally sourced literacy and numeracy programs.

• Increased involvement in, and awareness of literacy and numeracy achievements and goals.

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

• Improved outcomes through intense identification and support for students falling below national benchmark in literacy and numeracy.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

• Implementation of literacy and numeracy strategies across all KLAs as evidenced in curriculum programs via the Executive Assessment and Review Schedule (EARS) process.

• 100% of staff to be trained in recognised literacy and numeracy programs for alignment and consistency of teaching practice.

• Develop and utilise individual NAPLAN learning plans for 100% of students in Year 8 that identify Year 7 achievements and planned Year 9 goals.

• Expected growth in Year 9 reading at or above 55%.

• Expected growth in Year 9 spelling at or above 50%.

• Expected growth in Year 9 grammar and punctuation at or above 50% (this requires an improvement of 6.2%).

• Expected growth in Year 9 data, measure, space and geometry at or above 50% (improvement of 7%).

• Expected growth in Year 9 numeracy, pattern and algebra at or above 50% (improvement of 7%).

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

• Faculties to create and annually review and update curriculum programs that include effective and specific literacy and numeracy strategies, including whole school preparation for NAPLAN, specifically spelling.

• Teacher Assessment and Review Schedule (TARS) lesson observation to include effective delivery of literacy and/or numeracy outcomes to facilitate opportunities for critical reflection and feedback on teaching practice with supervisors.

• Liaise with other schools that have achieved success in NAPLAN growth to share experiences and provide strategies to increase student outcomes.

• Stage 4 (Year 7) cross-curricula project in Term 1 specific focus on whole school literacy and numeracy strategies.

• Support Teacher Learning Assistance (STLA) time structured as small group workshops for identified students in year cohorts, with students working on specific areas of need.

• Literacy and numeracy enrichment days/activities organised by literacy and numeracy teams throughout the year, with a focus on Year 8.

• Implementation of a community of schools numeracy program with a focus on developing and extending teacher capacity and capable students utilising technology.

• Teacher professional learning time to analyse and interpret NAPLAN data and develop specific teaching and learning strategies to be implemented and incorporated into curriculum programs to improve areas in literacy and numeracy.

• Co-ordinating and reviewing whole school professional teaching and learning time to deliver Prioritising Grammar and Newman’s Error Analysis and incorporating these
strategies in teaching and learning programs in Term 1, 2012.

**School priority 2 – Leadership and management**

**Outcome for 2012–2014**

- Reviewed and strengthened management systems.
- An individualised coaching approach to executive professional learning to build capacity and density.
- Strengthened leadership and management capacity of school staff to drive school improvement.
- TARS/EARS processes strengthened to include a more varied range of assessment tools including lesson observation.
- TARS/EARS processes closely aligned to School Priorities and Plan, Quality Teaching Framework and NSW Institute of Teachers Teaching Standards.

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

- Strong management systems to ensure core business is teaching and learning.
- One hundred per cent of staff has engaged in reflective classroom observations with supervisor to enhance teaching practice and performance.
- One hundred per cent of staff to have a professional learning plan that informs professional dialogue with supervisor with a minimum of one documented meeting per term.
- A minimum of six staff actively participating in NSW Institute of Teachers Professional Accomplishment/Leadership.
- Increasing the number of students engaged in leadership initiatives by 15%.

**Strategies to achieve these targets include:**

- Teacher professional learning in the Quality Teaching Model, focussing on feedback and success criteria aligned to Quality Teaching Framework and National Curriculum Standards Framework.
- Executive and senior executive meet regularly with principal to develop their own professional learning plan, improve teaching practice and support staff through achieving higher levels of accreditation.
- Principal gaining Professional Coaching Accreditation.
- Identify and develop quality, innovative and strategic leaders at all levels to support career development and succession planning through involvement in Principals Preparation Program, Executive Leadership Development and Aspiring Head Teacher TPL and the provision of professional learning opportunities.
- Developing TARS/EARS process to reflect NSW/Australian Professional Teaching Standards and incorporate practical processes to facilitate opportunities for critical reflection and feedback on teaching practice with supervisors.
- Continue to implement mandatory induction program for newly appointed teachers and early career teachers.
- Utilise Head Teacher Mentor to support NST and early career teachers in acquiring and maintaining professional competence.
- Head Teacher Mentor to develop structures with curriculum head teachers and skills with expert teachers to provide sustainable support to NST and early career teachers in acquiring and maintaining professional competence and to support expert teachers to implement Classroom Teacher Program – DEC modules.
- Recognise staff through certification for involvement in whole school and personal training and development through MyPL@Edu.
- All staff to develop a professional learning plan in consultation with their supervisor and review these plans every term.
• Student leadership developed through identification of students with leadership potential and provision of support to enhance leadership skills and opportunities, including school to work ambassadors.
• SRC is reviewed and restored with a clear purpose and direction and role statements are developed for student leaders in consultation with all members of the school community.
• Interagency student leadership programs/opportunities developed.

School priority 3 – Engagement and attainment

Outcome for 2012–2014

• An individualised approach to parent engagement with the school and their child’s learning.
• Re-establish an active Parents and Citizens Association (P&C).
• Establish new and enhance current links with outside agencies to provide activities in areas of student wellbeing and leadership.
• Students experience challenging, flexible, personalised and safe learning environments that recognise achievement.
• Increased student/parent awareness of career pathways.
• Increased and individualised transition support for students.
• Maintain links with Year 12 students in their subsequent year of completing HSC.

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.
• 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.
• 100% of Years 8 and 9 students to have an individualised literacy and numeracy plan, and 100% of Year 10 students to have a personalised subject selection/learning plan.
• Enhanced well-being of students evidenced by student well-being survey data over three years.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

• Utilise a range of public relations techniques to attract and retain members of the P&C.
• Student recognition of achievement through assemblies, merit system, Ambassador program, academic and sport assemblies, Student of the Month, NSW Premiers Volunteering.
• Develop individualised learning programs to engage and enhance students through acceleration and extension classes, sport opportunities, gala days, and extra-curricular activities.
• Identify gifted and talented students through Gifted and Talented Register and encourage students to undertake extension courses and participate in extra-curricular activities and external tests and competitions.
• Allocation of a transition adviser to support at risk students in Years 11 and 12 transition into career pathways (employment and/or further education).
• Involvement in the UWS ‘Fast Forward’ program, providing an interagency relationship that provides longitudinal support for students in Years 9 to 12 with the intention of increasing tertiary engagement.
• Events and programs developed and implemented to provide student exposure to different career pathways, involving increased community and employer engagement in school to work activities.
• Continued implementation of school to work classes for students in Stage 5 with targeted students undertaking extensive work placements and experience who will be given the option to commence Stage 5 TVET early.
• Effective use of Years 6 into 7 transition program to support students through orientation day, mini-Olympics, primary and
high school visits and through student adviser liaising with Stage 3 co-ordinators to ensure correct placement of students in Year 7.

- Implementation of ‘The Anchor – Supporting Kids through Separation’ with targeted students as identified through the welfare team.

- Effective use of outside agencies, service providers and school based support structures to provide additional support to students, including anti-bullying programs, focus groups (boys and girls), motivational media, school committees and clubs (Social Justice, Ambassadors, multicultural groups, Multicultural Day, student leaders, sports roll call).

- Effective use of data to guide the implementation of student support strategies review existing programs that includes student exit data, VET exit survey, school to work online survey, post destinations survey.

School priority 4 – Curriculum and assessment

Outcome for 2012–2014

- An individualised approach to developing, implementing and linking quality programming, assessment and feedback that is embedded in teaching and learning programs.

- Students and teachers are using ICT creatively across the curriculum to enhance learning.

- New national curriculum delivered in a timely manner through innovative, inclusive and relevant programs underpinned by quality teaching.

- A focus on the development of teacher capacity to provide consistent and high quality feedback to enhance learning.

- Clear alignment between the implementation of curriculum, professional learning and student learning needs.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

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

- Strategic placement and development of learning support personnel.

- Quality Teaching Framework programs and teaching.

- A deep understanding of assessment and feedback for all teaching staff.

- Continue links with the community including partner primary schools/community of schools.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Continue to develop individualised programs of study for all Stage 6 students through data analysis, students and parent/carer interviews.

- Modification and adjustment in mixed ability classes including effective use of STLAs to support teaching and learning.

- Teacher Professional Learning in the Quality Teaching Model, with a focus on feedback and success criteria aligned to Quality Teaching Framework and National Curriculum Standards Framework.

- Implementation of SENTRAL as a reporting tool to be used by staff to monitor student progress and prepare reports.

- Training of a member of SASS to be proficient in Board of Studies documentation and data entry.

- Continue to develop and utilise school evaluation tools to inform best practice and decision making.

- Teacher professional learning time committed to training in feedback.

- Assessment to reflect best practice and support student learning with a focus on developing and providing opportunities for quality feedback in the classroom.

- Establishing and maintaining clubs to cater for students that are gifted and talented or have a specific interest (e.g. Science Club, Ancient History, etc.).

- Increase staff capacity to utilise educational technology programs to enhance learning.
School priority 5 – Aboriginal Education

Outcome for 2012–2014

- Maintain personalised learning plans for all ATSI students.
- Effective knowledge and implementation of the Aboriginal Education and Training Policy and the Aboriginal and Training Strategy.
- Interagency and DEC Aboriginal Education opportunities are harnessed to further individualise the educational experience and engage students.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- An individualised approach to learning outcomes for Aboriginal students.
- 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.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Provide support to staff to develop and maintain quality personalised learning plans for all Aboriginal students.
- Provide specific TPL focused on cultural education, including best practice teaching methods.
- Identify Aboriginal students requiring additional support in literacy and numeracy through the use of data and provide appropriate support strategies, such as ‘Norta Norta’.
- Provision of leadership programs to build leadership capacity of Aboriginal students with assistance of Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) (junior) and regional leadership awards, KARI scholarships.
- Implementation of an Indigenous Careers Day in NAIDOC Week.
- Utilise teacher professional learning time to increase staff understanding of policies and strategies to enhance teaching capacity in Aboriginal Education.

- Promote and support enhanced cooperation with AECG.
- Facilitate inclusive school environments that encourage and build productive family and community partnerships. Increased through programs with outside agencies include UWS mentoring, Campbelltown Council, AHS community of schools, Aboriginal Employment Strategy and Regional Leadership Awards, Koori Flow, native gardens, NAIDOC Week, welfare team, Welcome to Country.

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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