2009 Annual School Report
IRRAWANG HIGH SCHOOL

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
Our school at a glance

Students

Enrolments have remained steady for the past five years with a decrease to 940 in 2009; 474 boys and 466 girls.

85.5% of students attended school on average each school day. This was slightly down on the daily attendance over the past three years.

(Details on page 3)

Staff

The school had 65.8 teaching positions allocated in 2009. This included 14 executive staff, 45.2 classroom teachers and five specialist teachers. The teaching staff was supported by 14 administrative and support staff.

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

(Details on page 4)

Significant programs and initiatives

The school ran a number of programs to give students extra educational support throughout 2009. Some of these were:-:

- Student wellbeing programs
- Academic and vocational courses
- TAFE Certificate courses as part of the HSC
- Nationally accredited VET subjects for Year 11 and 12 including work placement
- Distance Education courses
- Extensive programs to support Aboriginal students
- Scripture program for Years 7 and 8
- Youth Pathways program for students at risk
- Plan-it Youth program
- Defence Force Mentor program
- Try a Trade program
- Unilink program
- Student personalised learning plans
- Students with disabilities programs
- Peer tutoring program
- Targeted individual literacy programs.

Student achievement in 2009

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7

The performance of students in literacy is reported in six bands which indicate increasing student performance. In 2009 we had larger than state average percentages of students in bands 4, 5, 6 and 7 and less than the state average in bands 8 and 9.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9

The performance of students in numeracy is reported in six bands which indicate increasing student performance. In 2009 we had larger than state average percentages of students in bands 5, 6 and 7 and less than the state average in bands 8, 9 and 10.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9

The performance of students in literacy is reported in six bands which indicate increasing student performance. In 2009 we had larger than state average percentages of students in bands 6 and 7, and less than the state average in bands 8, 9 and 10.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9

The performance of students in numeracy is reported in six bands which indicate increasing student performance. In 2009 we had larger than state average percentages of students in bands 6 and 7, and less than the state average in bands 8, 9 and 10.

School Certificate

Our School Certificate results for 2009 were above the state average in bands 1, 2, 3 and 4 and below the state average in bands 5 and 6.

Higher School Certificate

Students achieved their best results in drama, business studies, business services, primary industries, retail services, senior science, visual arts, personal development, health and physical education. Students achieved three band 6’s and 50 band 5’s.

Messages

Principal's message

Irrawang High School is committed to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum rivalling the best that other schools can offer in specialised areas such as sport, performing arts and vocational education, whilst continuing to offer the best features of a local comprehensive high school. We have an expansive and supportive welfare program as well as offering Special Education classes. In-class tutors provide support to Aboriginal students and we have a number of programs to cater for students at risk. Transition programs operate with our partner primary schools. We offer cheerleading, drum corps, Plan it Youth and mentoring of Defence Force students. We aim to provide all students with a
balanced, general education with the opportunity to extend their education in order to prepare more thoroughly for the world of work, for higher education and for citizenship. The school aims to know and care for students as individuals, endeavouring to develop in them self respect, self confidence, a sense of their individuality and a sense of belonging. We have an experienced, motivated and caring teaching and support staff who aim to develop students’ aptitudes, abilities and interests to the maximum.

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.

Colin Elliott

P&C message
During the 2009 school year the P & C has strongly supported the school. The profit from the canteen has been passed through to the P & C and we have provided over $30 000 to the school for use in the various teaching and learning programs. This year we also gave $1000 each to the Cheerleaders and Drum Corps to assist them in their trip to Dubbo, where they performed and held clinics at a number of schools. The P & C has also helped with funds for cementing an area adjacent to the canteen, and small donations to some students to help with costs associated with representing our school in sporting and academic endeavours.

We have had members on committees for the Port Stephens Education review, and the school culture review involving staff, students and parent representatives. This allowed us to provide positive input in regards to our school and future education restructuring in our area.

We are fortunate to still have representation at P & C Annual Conference and Regional meetings. This has kept us in touch with what is happening in the wider state organisation and still be a relevant part of the school community.

Sherri Luke P&C President

Student representative's message
2009 has been a successful year for the students at Irrawang High and we hope to continue this throughout 2010. Through a variety of academic, performing arts, sport and cultural activities, students have proudly represented the school. The achievements from 2009 have allowed us to set goals for 2010. For example, Chix for Change is a program that will be led by senior girls to benefit junior girls and encourage them to have respect and pride of themselves and the school. The successes of the Cheerleading and Drum Corps will be built upon in 2010 as they continually represent the school with pride. This year the Student Representative Council (SRC) has participated in many activities including fundraising, parent / teacher evenings, showcase and presentation night. They have acted as support personnel and young leaders of the school and continue to represent the student body.

Kate Kohler - School Captain

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></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student attendance profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Management of non-attendance

Student non-attendance is managed by the Head Teacher Administration who follows up with either parental written or phone contact for students who miss more than two consecutive days or have a pattern of non-attendance. In chronic cases referral is to the Home School Liaison Officer.

Retention to Year 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>SC03-HSC05</th>
<th>SC04-HSC06</th>
<th>SC05-HSC07</th>
<th>SC06-HSC08</th>
<th>SC07-HSC09</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEG</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>48.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>61.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Post-school destinations

The information below describes the destinations of year 12 students who left Irrawang High School in 2009.

There were 96 students in year 12 at the start of 2009. During the year, 12 students left the school leaving 84 who sat for the Higher School Certificate (HSC).

45% of students moved directly into employment. 36% moved onto further education which includes University, TAFE or other. 3% took up a Traineeship. The destinations for 16% of these students are unknown.

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

50% of Year 12 students undertook vocational or trade training in 2009.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification

84 Year 12 students attained HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification in 2009.

Staff information

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

Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>45.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Mild Intellectual Disabilities</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff (SASS)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>79.8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were three Indigenous staff members who made up the composition of the school workforce.

Teacher qualifications

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

<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>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Financial summary

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.
A full copy of the school's 2009 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2009

Achievements

Highlights of the year included:-

Arts

- 66 students were involved in Star Struck, (25 drum corps, 9 drama and 32 dancers). The dancers and drama students performed two items each as well as the finale. The drum corps provided preperformance and interval entertainment.

- The senior ensemble consisting of 12 dancers performed in the Hunter Schools Dance Festival. This was our twentieth year of participation. The students also auditioned for the State dance festival.

- Years 9 and 10 dance classes performed at their year assemblies as well as the annual presentation evening.

- The Drum Corps conducted a number of performances including the following:-
  - Civic Theatre
  - Nelson Bay
  - Hamilton
  - Starstruck
  - Showcase
  - Speers Point and a western Schools tour to Kandos, Wellington and Singleton High Schools

- IRRAWANG ICE participated in the NSW State Cheer and Dance Championships. They came:-
  - First in the State in Pom;
  - Second in the State in Cheerleading;
  - Third in the State for Stunting; and
  - Amy Waterhouse of Year 9 came First in the State for her Jumping Combo

- Six Drama students were selected to participate in the Regional Drama Festival.

- Visual Arts and Photographic Video and Digital Imaging classes attended Museum of Contemporary Art and Art Gallery of NSW.

- Lauren Smith, attended the NSW Public School State Music camp.

- Tyson Redman, was a member of the Hunter/Central Coast Regional Wind Ensemble and Regional Big Band.

- Year 12 student Teagan Davies had her artwork selected for exhibition at ARTEXPRESS at the Armory in 2010.

- Kia Muddle was awarded the outstanding achievement in performing and creative arts at the Nanga Mai State awards ceremony in Sydney.

- Over 350 students participated in showcase.
Showcase highlighted the immense talent, commitment and dedication of our students and teachers from Medowie, Wirreanda, Grahamstown and Irrawang Primary Schools as well as Irrawang High School. Importantly this event not only allowed our primary students and their teachers to participate in an amazing experience but gave them a unique opportunity to perform with and in the company of their colleagues from the high school. With a cast of 650 students, this is one of the most significant items on our local calendar.

**Sport**

- Mr Michael O’Brien (Head Teacher Administration) was appointed for the fourth year, the NSW Combined High School Under 15’s Boys Water Polo coach. He also coached the NSW All Schools Boys Water Polo team to win the Australian championship.

- Mrs Melissa Pulsford (PE staff) was appointed for the sixth year as the CHS Girls Tennis Manager. As well, for the ninth year, she was selected as both the Boys and Girls Tennis team convenor for the Hunter Region.

- Ms Jean Duma was appointed for the second year as the Hunter region swimming team manager.

- Tori Hughes and Jack Jones both achieved age champions at the zone swimming carnival. Samantha Wood, Tori Hughes and Jack Jones competed at the regional swimming carnival.

- New athletics records were set at the school carnival by Luke Stanton in the 17+ boys shot put and Brandon Donkin in the 17+ triple jump.

- Daniel Ross was selected in the Hunter Region Australian National Football team.

- A number of students participated in the NSW Premier's Sports Challenge.

- Students who were Hunter Region CHS representatives:
  - Brittany Hepburn – softball
  - Shane Bowe, Brandon Donkin, Ty Faulkner, Danny Johnson, Mitchell Johnson, Jack Jones and Josh Parsons – athletics
  - Daniel Ross – AFL.

**Other**

- Three students received the Australian Defence Force Long Tam leadership and teamwork awards.

- Year 12 student Zoe Jones achieved second place at the Hunter Regional VET in Schools Worldskills competition and was invited to compete at the State VET in Schools Worldskills competition in the hairdressing category.

- The Plan-it Youth Programme involved 11 Year 10 students.

- The school received a ‘Certificate of Appreciation Honour Award’ from the Royal Life Saving Society Australia for the school’s support, dedication and commitment to life saving education.

- Gabrielle Pont, Danielle Jones and Natalie Nobbs competed in the Lions Youth of the Year Quest. Gabrielle made it to Round 3 and won the Public Speaking section.

- A number of year 7 students acted as mentors for a weekend leadership and development camp for students at Grahamstown Primary School.

- Over 250 students participated in the CSIRO Cool Chemistry show.

- A Careers Expo was held at Club Panthers Newcastle and an Indigenous Careers Expo was also held in Newcastle.

- Education Week Awards –
  - **Michael Groth and Jack Waight** - Excellence in Teaching,
  - **Jenny Redman** - Outstanding Contribution by a School Community Member,
  - **Faye Wheaton and Pam Mainprize** - Outstanding Contribution by a Non-Teaching Member of Staff,
  - **Danielle Jones and Gabrielle Pont** - Excellence in Student Achievement,
  - **John Sazdanoff** - School Achievement for innovative approaches in the School Vocation Education and Training Curriculum.

- Nathan Vassallo, Year 11 was awarded a Defence Technical Scholarship ($1,000.00).

- Year 10 students attended Try-a-Trade program.

- $720.00 was raised for the Victorian Bushfire Appeal.
- Student Representative Council members attended a Youth Forum at Port Stephens Council.
- Connor Spice, Edwin Spindler and Ryan Mulholland attended a Regional SRC Conference. Ryan Mulholland was chosen as a reserve regional member.
- Lani Johnston, Rebecca Taylor, Lisha Gahlain and Bronwyn Yarnold attended the Defence 2020 Youth Challenge held at the Maritime Museum, Darling Harbour. Bronwyn Yarnold was awarded “Most Outstanding Female Participant.”
- The school welcomed exchange students - Maggie Onofri from Rome, Philipp Wiener from Germany, Alexandre Gaschignard from France.
- Chelsea Noble, Laura O’Brien, Joshua Field and Edwin Spindler represented Irrawang High School at the Local Government Week Youth debates at the council chambers. Irrawang won this debate.
- Paul Hammond received a Distinction in the Big Science Competition. Credits were awarded to Rebecca Northam, Ryan Cox, Cassandra Scott, Lisha Gahlain and Joy Hadfield.
- 29 Year 10 students attend the Energy Australia Science and Engineering Challenge.
- Year 12 Physics and Chemistry students attended Experiment Fest at the University of Newcastle.
- Year 9 students received their laptops late term 3.
- Year 11 Legal Studies debating team were the victors in a debate organised by the Justice of the Peace against Hunter River High School.
- Year 8 students entertained residents from Raymond Terrace Gardens Nursing Home.
- Mr Michael Groth was appointed to the 2010 Industrial Technology HSC Examination Committee.
- Shane Latham received the Australian Government Career Links in the Automotive Category for the Career Links Workplace Excellence Awards.
- 18 students entered the Australian Mathematics Competition. Results were: 6 Credits, 3 Proficiencies and 9 Participations.
- Benjamin Kelly and Tahlia Mace were selected to participate in a five day NAISDA Dance Camp.

**Academic**

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

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

Yr 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)

Yr 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)

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

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

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

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7**
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7

Percentage of students in bands:
Year 7 writing

Percentage of students in bands:
Year 7 spelling

Percentage of students in bands:
Year 7 grammar and punctuation

Percentage of students in bands:
Year 7 numeracy

- Percentage in band 2009
- School average 2007 - 2009
- State average 2009
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9

Percentage of students in bands:
Year 9 numeracy

Percentage of students in bands:
School Certificate Mathematics

School Certificate

Percentage of students in performance bands:
School Certificate English-literacy

Percentage of students in performance bands:
School Certificate Science
School Certificate relative performance comparison to Year 5 (value-adding)

- Percentage of students in performance bands: Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship
- Percentage of students in performance bands: Australian History, Civics and Citizenship
- Percentage of students in performance band: Computer Skills

School Certificate: Relative growth from Year 5 (value-added)
Minimum standards

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

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

Percentage of Year 7 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 7 students achieving at and above minimum standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of Year 9 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at and above minimum standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

The Aboriginal Education Committee has been working steadily to improve learning outcomes for ATSI students attending Irrawang High School. Data was collected to identify the needs of our students which is set out below:

- The average attendance for Aboriginal students for years 7 – 12 was 2% below the school cohort.
- The average number of discipline referrals for Aboriginal students was below average compared to the rest of the school population.
Our Aboriginal students performed above the state average compared to the Indigenous population throughout the state in NAPLAN results but are below the school average in both literacy and numeracy.

95% of Aboriginal students have developed a Personal Learning Plan in negotiation with an Aboriginal support person, a carer where applicable and a member of the teaching staff.

Cultural activities organized by the school were highly rated by the students, and they have indicated they would like this to continue. In particular, boys showed an interest in learning Didgeridoo and girls expressed an interest in traditional dance.

In 2009, the number of Aboriginal students completing their HSC doubled from previous years and the number of students continuing on to year 11 has tripled.

Having examined the data collected via school surveys, NAPLAN data, retention rates, attendance, referrals and school surveys the committee’s objectives for the past year have been to:

- Provide in-class support to improve literacy and numeracy. In particular, students were tutored by senior students in numeracy during roll call whilst others received tuition in literacy by in-class tutors.
- Improve attendance rates through participation in cultural activities. During NAIDOC week Indigenous students and a friend participated in cultural workshops provided by members of the Worrimi Nation. They also participated in a cultural event at Marook “Bularwanga” which was a cultural celebration run by the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) for members and friends of the Worrimi Nation.
- Raise the profile of Aboriginal culture within the school as well as creating links within the local Aboriginal community. During NAIDOC week celebrations, students and elders from the partner primary schools participated in demonstrations within each of the Key Learning Areas (KLA’s) highlighting Indigenous perspectives.
- Consolidate retention rates through the continued implementation of Personal Learning Plans. In addition, assist students with goal setting and decision making for students in years 10 – 12 through attending the Indigenous Careers Expo and participating in an Aboriginal health day.
- Encourage senior students to access tutoring to improve HSC outcomes through the Norta Norta program.

Multicultural education
Multicultural perspectives are integrated into programs in various Key Learning Areas. Particular emphasis on multiculturalism has been evident in the languages and human society and its environment syllabuses and these provided the most obvious avenues for implementing these perspectives. The presence of exchange students in the school has assisted this development.

Respect and responsibility
Respect and responsibility are foundations upon which students and staff at Irrawang High School work on a daily basis. This has meant in part a call for a greater focus on values education. Values are taught in classrooms in all subjects. Students learn care, co-operation, democracy, excellence, fairness, integrity, participation, respect and responsibility on how they operate within this range of our school context. Respect and responsibility are important values at Irrawang High School.

Other programs
Student Welfare
- Brainstorm Productions presented ‘Verbal Combat’ to students in Year 7 and 8 to educate about various forms of bullying and harassment.
- Roadwhyz seminar (young driver awareness program) presented to students in Year 11 and 12 to promote smart and healthy choices.
- “Pirate Quest” presented to Year 9 students about discovery and awareness of local agencies and their purposes in the community.
- “Jump Start” (Peer Support training) provided to Year 9 students to mentor small groups of Year 6 into 7 transition students.
- Student Achiever of the week - recognising the outstanding achievement of individual students in all faculties.
- Job Coaching provided extra support for students with disabilities in workplace learning programs.
- SAFE program involved the whole school dealing with bullying and harassment.
- Seasons for Growth program designed to assist young people to cope with changes that occur in their lives.
- Integration funding provided to students with disabilities or disorders to assist them with integration into mainstream education.
- Indigenous students visited Awabakal to seek advice about health and well being focusing
on oral, dietary and sexual health of Indigenous students at Irrawang High School.

- **Val Your Voice** involved youth workers from Raymond Terrace discussing relevant issues related to young people in our community and Irrawang High School. They produced a mural based on Irrawang High School's motto “Integrity”.
- A representative from the Smith Family and volunteers worked with students in Years 10 and 11 applying for Department of Housing Scholarships.

### Careers

- 100 hour Board of Studies Work Education course provided for all students in Years 9 and 10. This course assisted students to make informed designs about their future.
- All students in Year 10 had Work Experience in a one week block.
- Indigenous students in Years 9, 10, 11, and 12 attended the Indigenous Careers Expo.
- Students in Year 12 attended Newcastle Careers Expo.
- Interested students in Years 10, 11, and 12 attended TAFE Open Day.
- Interested students in Year 12 attended University of Newcastle Open Day.
- “Plan Your Career” was held at Raymond Terrace Bowling Club for interested students in Years 10, 11 and 12.
- Work Cover “Greencard” course offered to interested students in Years 10, 11 and 12.
- Interested students in Years 9, 10, 11 and 12 attended Defence Force recruiting seminar.
- University Road show presentation from UNE (Armidale) CSU (Bathurst) and SCU (Lismore) presented to interested Year 12 students.

### Progress on 2009 targets

#### Target area 1. Improve outcomes for Aboriginal students.

Our achievements include:

- Expanded participation in work experience programs.
- Increased the number of students accessing Kupundi activities.
- Increased the number of students accessing tutoring services to improve their literacy and numeracy outcomes.

#### Target area 2. Improve student retention rates

Our achievements include:

- Identified students at risk of non completion of schooling.
- Continued to develop welfare strategies across our partner primary schools to promote engagement and retention.
- Improved student engagement through effective teaching and learning.

### Target area 3. Increased student attendance

Our achievements include:

- Improved data collection and analysis of quantitative information.
- Reduction in partial truancy.
- Improved involvement of parents and community in strategies to improve attendance.

### Target area 4. Effective use of technology in teaching and learning

Our achievements include:

- Increased number of staff exhibiting confidence and expertise in the integration of technology in the classroom.
- Upgrade of cabling switches and wireless network.

### Key evaluations

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2009 our school carried out evaluations of a review of practices and procedures in relation to our anti-bullying plan and school culture.

### Educational and management practice

#### Background

In response to expressions of student and staff needs and in accordance with Department of Education and Training (DET) requirements the current school Anti-bullying Policy and Procedures were reviewed. As part of that review the school sought the opinions of parents, students and staff about the knowledge, understanding and effectiveness of the current school Anti-bullying procedures i.e. the S.A.F.E program (Safe and Friendly Environment).

In December 2009, 115 year 7, 121 year 9 and 38 year 11 students were surveyed during roll call. A random selection of parents were mailed surveys of which 5 were returned and 93 staff were invited to respond online through Sharepoint. 24 staff responded. The survey asked the respondents to rate the school as ‘never’, ‘sometimes’, ‘often’, ‘always’.
and ‘always’, ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’ in questions regarding feeling safe at school, in the community; the incidence of truancy directly related to bullying; student choice and reaction to bullying, school response to reports of bullying and where and when bullying occurs in and around the school.

Findings and conclusions
• The most common places identified by students, staff and parents for bullying to occur are in the classrooms and the playground with the safest areas being the library and computer rooms. The most common times are in class and during breaks (recess/lunch)
• Students in all years report seeing bullying happening; girls are more likely to tell an adult at school or at home and boys are more likely to help the person being bullied during or after the event.
• A significant percentage of students 37% year 7, 46% year 9, 44% year 11 responded in the ‘sometimes’ category when asked if school staff try to stop bullying; 40% year 7, 48% year 9, 37% year 11 responded ‘sometimes’ when asked how consistently rules regarding conduct and behaviour are enforced and 34% year 7, 54% year 9, 47% year 11 responded ‘sometimes’ when asked how fairly rules regarding conduct and behaviour are enforced.
• Year 7 is more likely to report bullying than years 9 and 11. Boys are less likely to report bullying than girls.
• In response to questions about the current Anti-bullying procedures and practice 100% of staff disagreed that the school is generally more positive and peaceful, 50% disagree school personnel are using effective strategies to stop bullying, 60% disagree that there is greater understanding among parents and community members about the nature of bullying.
• 78% of staff responded ‘yes’ to needing help to implement the bullying prevention program in the classroom.
• The 5 parent surveys indicated that while they acknowledge bullying occurs it was not a significant issue for their children while enrolled at the school.

Future directions
• The Welfare team will develop a revised Anti-bullying Plan based on the data published and in line with the school ‘Raise Responsibility System’.
• Professional development of the welfare team will occur through available programs and for teaching and support staff through Learning Support Team meetings and staff and faculty meetings.
• All students will participate in Raise Responsibility Anti-bullying workshops during drop everything and read (DEAR) Term 2 2010.
• The Police School Liaison Officer, motivational theatre groups and specific speakers will be invited to address staff, students and parents regarding the legal and social implications of bullying – including cyberbullying.
• Parents will be informed via newsletters of the school Anti-bullying Plan and DET and other approved websites and resources dealing with bullying.
• Student leaders will attend a camp in July to train as mediators and mentors.
• Student leaders will visit local primary schools as part of Transition and promote the Anti-bullying Plan.

Curriculum
A review was conducted to determine whether the existing culture at Irrawang High School reflects its motto and is founded upon the assumptions, beliefs, values and habits/norms that shape the way the school community thinks acts and feels.

RATIONALE FOR THE REVIEW
The school believes that a healthy and sound culture correlates with increased student achievement and motivation and with staff productivity and satisfaction.

TERMS OF REFERENCE
To review, report on and make recommendations about:
✓ The aspects of the school’s culture which are positive and should be reinforced
✓ The aspects of the school culture which need improving or should be changed

METHODOLOGY
The review used a methodology that required the school to select random samples of students, parents and community members for interview. Staff members were interviewed. Students were interviewed in small groups and parents were interviewed in pairs, individually or by phone.
During the four days of the review:

- 25 staff were interviewed
- 12 parents were interviewed
- 38 students, in groups, were interviewed

SOME FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- Staff generally felt that the senior executive have a positive influence in the school and are very well organised. They promote a positive climate through:
  - communication strategies and new ideas
  - in the way they speak and manage students
  - taking extra time to talk to parents
  - caring about staff welfare
- The school would like parents to have a more prominent role in the school.
- Student leaders have a positive influence in a number of extra-curricular activities.
- The school needs to investigate strategies to assist students to feel happier at school.
- The school should continue to recognise the positive achievements of both staff and students.
- All faculties need to encourage student achievement through parent contact.
- The school needs to encourage a greater sense of school pride and/or belonging.
- Parents spoke positively about the support and direction given by the school leadership.
- Parents believed that many senior students are positive role models for younger students.
- There needs to be a celebration of achievement at all levels by staff and students in academic, extra-curricular and sporting endeavours.
- To improve the rapport between students and teachers in the classroom the following were suggested:
  - That learning should be interesting and fun
  - Students need to experience the learning and not just sit passively and listen
  - There is a need for a greater interaction and conversation between teachers and students to ensure more effective learning
  - Students do not like copying from the blackboard or textbook.

- Students wanted the opportunity to be able to choose how they learn best
- Students wanted more feedback on their progress and areas where they needed to improve
- Senior students were more positive in their comments about encouragement and feedback they received from their teachers.
- Parents believe that staff generally do a great job and care about the students.
- Most teachers encourage students to do their best. However there is a need for something more than commendations which seem to have lost their effect and students are embarrassed by public recognition. There does not seem to be a significant reward system for the middle range students or those who always do their best. Newsletters and assemblies are an attempt to encourage excellence but the message needs to be clearer and directed at the student level.
- Staff believe parents want their children to do well. However the main contact with parents for teachers is parent teacher afternoons. Most of the communication from the executive to parents tends to deal with student misbehaviour.
- Parents believe that in general the community supports the school and what it is doing. They stated that the school’s reputation has improved over time however, they agreed that the school needs to have a greater presence in the community.
- There needs to be a consistent approach in implementing school policies and procedures to ensure that the school works as a unified team.
- Teachers need to be provided with greater opportunities to develop with their colleagues quality teaching and learning programs and incorporating elements from the quality teaching framework so that they would be able to effectively meet the needs of their students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- That the leaders of the school exercise their responsibility and accountability for student learning outcomes by ensuring that the quality systems in the school support
classrooms and faculties, and are communicated to the school community.

- That the executive develop effective structures at all levels to facilitate open communication and dissemination of information so that effective decision making processes are established and an ‘ownership’ of the school as an integral part of its community is developed.

- That the school ensure that teaching programs are designed to respond to student's interests, needs and abilities within a well resourced teaching environment so that explicit, relevant teaching of active learners occurs across the school and students are engaged in the learning process.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction
In 2009 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school via a culture survey. Their responses are presented on page 17.

Professional learning
All members of staff, including ancillary, participated in professional learning activities throughout the year.

These activities included:
- vocational education training;
- leadership programs;
- induction programs for beginning and new teachers to the school;
- technology training;
- teaching and learning programs;
- student behaviour management programs;
- year 10 portfolios;
- syllabus implementation;
- career development and welfare and equity programs.

School development 2009 – 2011

Targets for 2010

Target 1

For NAPLAN 2010 overall literacy levels for year 9 -13% students in bands 9 & 10, 54% students in bands 7and 8

For NAPLAN 2010 overall numeracy for year - 9 19% students in bands 9 & 10, 55% students in bands 7and 8

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

Establish a professional learning team led by current Deputy Principal to:-
✓ evaluate existing school practices,
✓ evaluate smart data to build the capacity of staff to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes.

- Provide professional learning for all staff to participate in Smart workshops in order to inform teaching and learning programs.
- Build the capacity of teachers to explicitly teach literacy and numeracy strategies using the Quality Teaching Framework.
- Identify and provide targeted individual intervention for those students not meeting minimum standards and/or in top two bands.
- Train staff in use of Newman’s analysis for the design of teaching and learning practices and/or assessment tasks for students in years 7 – 10.
- Train staff in use and implementation of the accelerated literacy program.
- Conduct exchange visits with partner primary schools to develop knowledge and understanding of stage 3 and 4 syllabus outcomes and literacy/numeracy teaching and learning strategies used in primary/high school.

Our success will be measured by:

- Improved NAPLAN results in literacy and numeracy for all students in year 9.
- Literacy periods operating successfully with all staff up skilled on specific literacy and numeracy strategies to improve student outcomes.
- Teachers from all KLAs to have visited partner primary schools to engage in discussion with Stage 4 teachers.
Target 2
Improve the average attendance rates of all students by 2% in 2010.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

Our success will be measured by:
• implementing a quality monitoring and follow up attendance program
• training staff in utilising the attendance management software
• celebrating and rewarding attendance above 95%
• improve staff responsibilities through the introduction of roll call tutor groups

Target 3
Improve attendance, retention and engagement of Aboriginal students.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
• Appoint an Aboriginal Education Worker (AEW).
• Improve the implementation of personal learning plans through teacher mentor regular meetings with students and parents to meet personal goals set.
• Increase cultural awareness amongst staff to improve classroom offerings for Aboriginal students.

Our success will be measured by:
• The successful varied roles carried out by the AEW.
• Number of personal learning plans used by teachers.
• Number of staff who have an increased cultural awareness of Aboriginal students and their classroom offering for these students.

Target 4
Improve School Certificate and Higher School Certificate results in terms of raw and value added terms.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
• Deputy Principal National Partnerships to focus on leading professional learning for staff on teaching and learning in the middle years to improve students’ literacy, numeracy achievement, engagement and retention.
• Provide professional learning and mentor support for teachers in the development of Information Communication Technology (ICT) strategies to support student learning and to develop communication networks.
• Deputy Principal National Partnerships & Head Teachers regularly monitor the progress and performance of teachers to encourage continual evaluation and revision of their classroom practice.
• Provide professional development that builds the capacity of teachers to continuously evaluate and revise their classroom practices to improve student outcomes.
• Provide more opportunities for teachers to observe each other and evaluate one another’s instruction to raise the overall quality of teaching.
• Recognise outstanding teachers and teaching practice within the school and build the capacity of teachers to implement an approach to teaching and classroom management that supports an engaging and productive learning environment through the introduction of an effective mentoring program.
• Assist with payment of student entry fees into state wide competitions in English, Mathematics, Science, Human Society and its Environment.
• Purchase whole school student achievement data management system.
• Invite students to attend regional Gifted and Talented Students camp.

Our success will be measured by:
• The number of staff exhibiting confidence and expertise in the integration of technology in the classroom.
• The increased students’ level of intellectual engagement with their learning programs evident in improvements in value adding in School Certificate and Higher School Certificate results.
• Demonstrated evidence of Quality Teaching Framework elements embedded in teaching and learning programs, practices, registrations and assessments.
• Surveys and observations indicate increased teacher understanding of the Quality Teaching Framework and increased student engagement in their learning.
About this report

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

Colin Elliott: Principal
Chris Mc Cord: Deputy Principal
Sonia Todd: SASS Staff and Parent Representative
Kate Kohler: Student Representative
Sherri Luke: Parent Representative

School contact information

Irrawang High School
Mt. Hall Rd.
Raymond Terrace
NSW; 2324
Ph: 02 49874687
Fax: 02 49831027
Email: irrawang-h.schools@det.nsw.edu.au
Web: www.irrawang-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
School Code: 8562

Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at: