Irrawang High School
Annual School Report
2014

NSW GOVERNMENT
Education & Communities

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2014
School context statement

Irrawang High School, situated in the lower-Hunter region in Raymond Terrace, is a comprehensive, co-educational school of around seven hundred and fifty students. We are the second high school in the town, and draw our students mainly from Irrawang Public and Grahamstown Public in Raymond Terrace, and both Medowie Public and Wirreanda Public in Medowie. A significant proportion (just over 10%) of our students is from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) background, and a few students have Asian, New Zealand or Pacific Island backgrounds.

Our students are drawn from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, a small majority being considered disadvantaged. The school was included in the Federal Government’s National Partnership (Low Socio-Economic Status-SES) Program from 2010 to 2013. The major employment centres near Raymond Terrace are the RAAF Base Williamtown and Tomago Aluminium. The unemployment level in the area is higher than the national average. Many parents and caregivers travel to Newcastle city and the lower Hunter coalfields and vineyards for work.

The school has an array of programs to assist and support students and families, and is well known for its welfare and support offerings. We also cater strongly for creative and performing arts (CAPA) students, with a varied and successful range of activities and programs for these students. The school runs special gifted and talented students’ (GATS) classes and activities, and offers several vocational and training courses in its senior curriculum. We have specialist language and agriculture facilities.

Principal’s message

Irrawang High School was established as a NSW government comprehensive high school in 1983. The school caters for a wide range of interests and abilities as well as having a commitment to serve both its students and the wider community. Students are provided with a breadth of educational opportunity in a strongly supported environment that values challenging students to achieve their personal best. Many students have excelled academically, in sport, in music, performing and creative arts, and leadership as well as in a range of cultural and social activities.

I acknowledge the achievements of staff (both teaching and support), students and parents in meeting the challenges of the 21st century and always managing to improve the learning opportunities for all students.

Students are empowered to achieve self-reliance and to become confident, responsible and successful young people. There is a strong focus on quality teaching and learning in a safe environment. Achievement, commitment and improvement are rewarded.

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.

Col Elliott; Principal

Parents and Citizens (P&C) Report

The Irrawang High School P&C Association meet on the 4th Monday of each month at 6.30 pm in the Mica Room, Irrawang High School. These meetings provide an opportunity for parents and guardians to become members and take an active role in the school and to keep up-to-date with school issues.

The IHS P&C Association runs the school canteen. 2014 marked the end of an era for the canteen as Helen Jones, our Canteen Supervisor, and volunteers Chris Voigt, Maryanne Braeckmans, Melissa Eveleigh, Kerry Parker, Marina Schmahl and Marilyn Taylor all retired. We welcome Mrs Alison Ryner who will be the Canteen Supervisor from January 2015. We are very fortunate to have a profitable canteen as the profits from this are forwarded to the school. All the students at Irrawang High benefit from this.

Over the past year, IHS P&C Association has contributed $30,000.00 to the school to support teaching and learning programmes. New tops worth $1393.25 were donated to the Dance Group. Two students received assistance to help with costs associated with their sporting achievements.

On behalf of the Irrawang High P&C I extend an open invitation to parents, guardians or community members to attend a meeting and observe or participate. If you are unable to attend
but wish to have an issue discussed or you have some suggestions, complaints or feedback, we now have an email account. Please feel free to contact us on irrawanghighschool@pandcaffiliate.org.au

To the people generously giving their time to the P&C committee and sub-committees, thank you for your valuable time and support.

Cassandra Collins
P&C President Irrawang High School

Student Representative Council (SRC)

In 2014 the SRC once again co-ordinated the school’s ANZAC commemoration ceremony. The senior co-ordinator (Jemima Lye) played a key role in organising the students and the order of proceedings. We would like to thank the executive, teachers and students who were present on this occasion and participated in the ceremony. In addition we would like to take this opportunity to once again thank the RAAF, Legacy and the RSL for their valuable contribution to the ceremony and their continued support over many years which includes their donations of books and resources on the theme of ANZAC. The donations are part of an expanding library of written and visual sources available for Stage 5 students about the key contributions made by Diggers on behalf of all Australians.

Representatives of all SRC year groups were involved in the ANZAC Day ceremony held in Raymond Terrace on April 25. An SRC student from Year 12, Matilda Phillips, delivered a speech on the ANZAC theme. We would like to thank the Defence Transition Mentor, Glenda De Wit, for making arrangements to supply the wreaths laid by SRC representatives on behalf of our school at both of these ceremonies.

Our other community involvement has had two main focus areas:

1. Fund raising activities. Once again SRC students from a variety of years have been involved in these fundraising activities, collecting donations and selling badges for Legacy and Red Shield in the Raymond Terrace CBD. Over the three days of fundraising we have raised a total of over $1400 for each of these organisations. For the first time, senior SRC representatives and their co-ordinator were invited to an awareness raising event on behalf of the White Ribbon program. It was very informative and included testimonies from victims of domestic violence as well as guest speakers from the organisation. S.R.C. students then discussed these issues with the other students in the S.R.C on their return.

2. Participation in the Port Stephens Youth Advisory Panel

School Captain Alannah Newell (Year 12), Jemima Lye, Our Senior SRC Co-Ordinator( also from Year 12) and Jazmine Hughes (Year 11) are the school representatives for Irrawang High on the Port Stephens Council Youth Advisory Panel. Part of their role is to gather ideas from students to put forward to the panel and facilitate school engagement with the Port Stephens Council. All three students are members of the school’s S.R.C.

World events such as the Malaysian Airlines Tragedy have led to the involvement of the S.R.C as student leaders in an assembly which remembered the loss of lives including those of Australians in this event. In doing so they were responding to the requests of other students to mark this sad occasion by explaining the key facts and leading the one minute’s silence to acknowledge the lives of all victims regardless of nationality.

Mr and Mrs Owen Holbert, ex staff members, came to one of our regular assemblies to explain how they were part of an initiative to raise funds for a humanitarian project in Cambodia. This involved building schools, and providing uniforms for school students. It also focused on providing solar panels for the villagers living in these communities. Students at our school responded very favourably to this initiative and our senior students assisted Ms. Grushka in co-ordinating the fundraising for it. SRC members from each year also collected gold coin donations from the students on a regular basis. Over $2400 was raised for this initiative.

At formal Year Assemblies representatives from each year in the SRC contributed to the smooth running of their formal assemblies which celebrate student achievement. Students assisted parents and other members of the public and acted as chairpersons for these assemblies.
During informal Year Assemblies held every fortnight, all SRC representatives raise concerns and listen to student issues and report back to the SRC where ideas are introduced, debated and researched before reporting back to their year group.

The S.R.C. is responsible for flag duty at Irrawang High. The Commonwealth, state and the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander flags are raised and lowered each day according to the established protocols set out by the Department of Education and Communities (DEC). The school flag located at the front of the school is also raised or lowered according to this protocol.

Meetings with Principal: Each week the principal met with the senior SRC Representatives every Monday to discuss student issues and perspectives. During Term 4, Relieving Principal Mr. Chris McCord also attended the SRC roll call every second Thursday to discuss with all members the issue that have arisen and to brainstorm ideas.

Extra-Curricular School Activities: Students from the SRC assisted in the smooth running of our annual Showcase by handing out programs to all attendants and ushering members of the public to their designated area. Members from the SRC also represented our school by performing in the Showcase itself in Drum Corps, Drama and Vocals. Other S.R.C. students were involved in support activities in the backstage area.

Student information

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

Student enrolment profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>'08</th>
<th>'09</th>
<th>'10</th>
<th>'11</th>
<th>'12</th>
<th>'13</th>
<th>'14</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Declining student-aged numbers in Raymond Terrace have combined with the increased number of specialist (including senior) schools in the Newcastle area to reduce student numbers over the last few years.

Retention to Year 12 data has historically been calculated as a 'within school' match of students who sat the School Certificate (SC) and Higher School Certificate (HSC) at the same school.

In 2014 the retention data has been calculated using the 'within school' match of students who sat NAPLAN in Year 9 and the HSC at the same school. As Year 9 NAPLAN represents the most consistently sat prior examination to the HSC, it has been identified as the best starting point for the apparent retention of students within the school to the HSC available.

Retention data for years prior to 2014 has been displayed but has been shaded grey to emphasise a break in the time series. Comparisons of the previous calculations with those using the 2014 NAPLAN (Year 9) to HSC (Year 12) retention are inappropriate.
Student attendance profile

The population of Raymond Terrace and its surrounding area have a high degree of both mobility and disadvantage. Both of these factors contribute to a slightly higher than expected absentee rate among our students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>88.8</td>
<td>89.8</td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td>90.6</td>
<td>90.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
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<td>89.2</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>84.3</td>
<td>86.1</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>85.2</td>
<td>84.3</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>86.7</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td>88.3</td>
<td>83.6</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>83.7</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>87.0</td>
<td>87.6</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>88.8</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>86.3</td>
<td>85.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>92.5</td>
<td>92.4</td>
<td>93.2</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>90.1</td>
<td>90.1</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>91.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>88.8</td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td>88.8</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>89.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>88.3</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td>87.0</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>88.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td>87.6</td>
<td>87.6</td>
<td>88.3</td>
<td>88.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>89.8</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>90.1</td>
<td>90.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>89.7</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>90.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

National Partnership funding between 2010 and 2013 enabled the school to employ extra staff to help to improve the attendance rates. The school is investigating possible ways to reintroduce some of this additional support.

Post-school destinations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-school destinations</th>
<th>Year 10</th>
<th>Year 11</th>
<th>Year 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>seeking employment</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employment</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE entry</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some former students who have entered the workforce are also engaged in TAFE training. This accounts for the overlap between those in employment, and those in TAFE.

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

42 students (48.8% of the 2014 HSC cohort) undertook vocational or trade training courses as part of their senior studies. Many of these courses are provided by the school; students study other vocational or trade courses at Newcastle TAFE.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent Vocational educational qualification

69 students gained their HSC in 2014. Of these, 42 (48.8%) also gained an Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR); leaving 51.2% with a non-ATAR-HSC. There were also 17 students (19.8%) who achieved a Record of School Achievement.

Workforce information

The reporting of information for all staff here is consistent with privacy and personal information policy requirements.

Workforce composition

<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>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Australian Education Regulation, 2014 requires schools to report on the Aboriginal composition of their workforce.

In 2014, Irrawang High School continued to fund the full-time employment of an Aboriginal Education Worker (AEW), and to involve two
more Aboriginal workers as part-time in-class tutors through the Norta Norta program.

**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>8.87%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Professional learning and teacher accreditation**

All staff participated in professional development days covering: Australian Teaching Standards; Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL); literacy strategies (Focus on Reading and Super Six Comprehension strategies); Child Protection; DEC Code of Conduct; Sentral (new administrative program).

As well, selected staff participated in training in numeracy teaching strategies, including the application of Newman’s Error Analysis and the Counting On strategy. Selected staff from most Key Learning Areas (KLAs) had more extensive training in the literacy initiatives to assist the embedding of these strategies across KLAs.

Staff in both English and Mathematics faculties were trained in understanding and applying the Literacy and Numeracy 7 to 10 continuums.

Some staff had further training in: Middle School initiatives; Gifted and Talented Students; classroom management. Three more staff were trained in the Positive Behaviour for Learning framework.

Executive staff, and selected teaching staff, participated in professional development in leadership and management strategies, and in DEC initiatives impacting on the future of schools.

**Beginning Teachers**

The school had no beginning teachers in 2014.

**Financial summary**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
<th>30/11/2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>822996.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>612878.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>1083061.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>271132.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>28218.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>43612.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>2861900.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Expenditure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching &amp; learning</th>
<th>143033.88</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>129428.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>82872.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>2247.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>3178.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>241803.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>961849.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>172711.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>149565.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>38293.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>49595.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>41203.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>49959.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>38293.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
<td>2015871.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance carried forward</td>
<td>846028.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A full copy of the school’s 2014 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meeting of the P&C Association. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

**School performance 2014**

1. **Academic achievements**

**NAPLAN**

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 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)
Year 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)
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)

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

Click on the link http://www.myschool.edu.au and enter the school name in the Find a school and select GO to access the school data.

NAPLAN Year 7 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)

Irrawang High’s Year 7 students performed above those in similar schools in the higher bands in Reading, and above the school’s average for the years 2011-2014

Our Year 7 cohort achieved results above similar schools across the top three bands in Spelling. They also achieved above the schools long-term average across these higher bands.

In Grammar and Punctuation, our Year 7 students achieved results above both similar schools, and the school's long-term average.
The Year 7 group did not perform well in the Writing aspect of the NAPLAN tests. This section of the test was problematic, introducing a different approach for the 2014 tests, which is being modified for 2015.

**NAPLAN Year 7 - Numeracy**

Year 7’s numeracy results were quite strong in Bands 7 and 8.

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**Percentage of Year 7 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students excluded)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>91.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>84.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>86.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>90.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>94.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NAPLAN Year 9 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)**

The performance of Irrawang High’s Year 9 cohort in Reading was similar to that in similar schools, though slightly better in having less students in the lower bands (5 and 6).
Our Year 9 students did not perform as well in the Spelling section of the NAPLAN tests.

The Year 9 groups’ performance in Grammar and Punctuation improved both the school mean, and the proportion of students above expected growth. In these regards, the school’s cohort exceeded that for similar schools.

Like Year 7, the Year 9 cohort did not react well to the different requirements of the 2014 Writing section of the tests. This is reflected in the preponderance of school, state and similar school cohorts in the lower bands.

Year 9 Numeracy results were above the school’s long-term average in 2014 in the top bands. Growth of this cohort in the Numeracy section of the tests was above that of both state and similar schools.
Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students excluded)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>85.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>68.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>83.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>82.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>95.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Higher School Certificate (HSC)**

In the Higher School Certificate, the performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from Performance Band 1 (lowest) to Performance Band 6 (highest). Courses with fewer than 10 students are not shown in these charts.

The following charts show comparisons of the means for selected courses taken by the Irrawang High 2014 cohort with those in similar schools, and with the state.

Previously student performance in the Year 10 SC compared to the HSC was used to assess the progress students made between Year 10 and Year 12 attainment. The SC combined results were broken into High (SC band 5 and 6) Middle (SC Band 4) and Low (SC Bands 1, 2 and 3) groups to provide an indication of progress of student groups based on prior attainment.

A combined NAPLAN Year 9 Reading and Numeracy score has been used in 2014 as the starting point for the calculation of Relative Performance. The High, Medium and Low band groups have been maintained but modified to fit NAPLAN Year 9; High (NAPLAN Bands 9 and 10), Middle (NAPLAN Band 8) and Low (NAPLAN Bands 5, 6 and 7). Modelling of this data has demonstrated comparable results to those calculated using the previous methodology.
2. Other achievements

Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) Faculty

Art Department
- The Artist in Residence Program concluded in 2014 with the official opening of the mural “Silhouettes of Youth” on the Pump house at Raymond Terrace. The semester project mural guided by Art staff was designed by students from Irrawang High School, Grahamstown Public and Irrawang Public schools. The Art Department was also successful in obtaining a grant for a mural project at Finnan Park near Grahamstown Dam, due to begin 2015.
- The 4th Annual Art Exhibition entitled “EGGxhibition”, showcased a variety of art mediums displayed throughout the Artblock which was set up as an Art Gallery during Education Week. Outstanding works from years 7 to 12 were featured within separate spaces for grouped art works.
- The Art “Eggxhibition” Roadshow was initiated this year, where outstanding student works were displayed at Marketplace Raymond Terrace, also during Education Week.
- The ‘After School Art Club’ was facilitated throughout the year by a member of the Art staff and met weekly on a Tuesday afternoon. Projects included the completion of numerous faculty ‘snapshots of art’ now located throughout the school.
- Talented students – Claire Louise Bury and Kyah Dawson were selected to attend a series of workshops at the NSW Museum of Contemporary Art in the Term3 holidays.
- Art staff organised numerous excursions for Art students including the Yr 12 Visual Art class to the NSW Art and the White Rabbit Art Galleries at Sydney and the Year 7 ‘Cityscapes’ Visual Arts excursion to the Newcastle foreshore.

CAPA Collaborative Activities
- Starstruck 2014: in Term 2 involved over 60 students from IHS (Stages 4-6) in the regional production, including 32 dancers and 32 drummers. The dance ensembles were selected to perform in 2 items within the show and the Senior Drum Corps once again provided pre show and interval entertainment to large crowds. Students Annabel Bisley and Monique D’Arcy (Year 9,) were selected as dancers for the STARSTRUCK ‘Featured Dance Ensemble’ that performed within the show.
- Showcase 2014 celebrating Education Week involved an audience of over 1,800 guests and over 560 staff, performers and backstage crew participating in the themed “It’s Always a Good Time”, two night extravaganza. An Art competition was again held for Primary students to design the artwork that became the logo for posters, programs and tickets. Judged by IHS Art staff, the successful student came from Wirreanda Public School. Showcase included an array of performances from IHS and our partner primary schools – Irrawang Public, Grahamstown Public, Medowie Public and Wirreanda Public. Performers were represented from all Stages (K-Stage 6) and a variety of genres of performances were showcased including: Bands; Choirs; Dance; Drama; Musical Ensembles; Vocal solos and ensembles. Each evening culminated in a Finale that featured all performers, and again soloists from partner primary schools were auditioned to be selected to perform within the Finale.
- Launch of the Irrawang High School CAPA Facebook Page - which highlights the array of CAPA activities and successes within the school community, the region, the state and Australia wide. This has proved to be an
extremely positive promotion of Irrawang High School overall, through a current social media avenue, and is ongoing.

- The **Stage 6 Celebration Evening** highlighted all individual and group HSC students works from not only the CAPA areas of Dance, Music, Photography and Visual Arts, but also Extension English, Industrial Technology (Timber) and Multi Media.

- An **Excursion** to “Chooky Dancers” at Sydney Seymour Centre involved 40 Dance and Music students attending, with a private Dance Workshop held with 16 selected dancers from Irrawang High.

- Inaugural pre tour **CAPA Roadshow** – held at Raymond Terrace Public School, which was a ‘dress rehearsal’ to their whole school, for the upcoming tour.

- Annual **CAPA tour** a 5 night / 6 day tour in late Term 3 that covered parts of Victoria and the ACT. The tour featured an hour’s show highlighting 44 talented students in Senior and Elite Dance Ensembles, Senior Drum Corps, Girl’s and Boy’s Drum Corps’, Music ensembles, as well as auditioned Soloists. Performance venues included Federation Square, Melbourne and ‘Floriade’, Canberra. Other educational highlights included: workshops for Dance students with Jason Coleman’s ‘Ministry of Dance’; workshops for Drum Corps section leaders with Scotch College(both held in Melbourne); and a visit by all participants to Sovereign Hill, Ballarat – a reconstruction of an early gold mining town, in regional Victoria.

- The annual **CAPA Performance Evening was again** held in Term 4. It showcased the talents of Dance, Drama and Music students from Years 7 through to Year 11. Performances covered the array of Performing Arts at IHS, with all ensembles performing and record audience numbers attended.

- The annual **End of Year CAPA Roadshow** held in late Term 4 featured the CAPA Tour Ensembles and soloists as well as Junior Drum Corps, performing at Irrawang Public, Medowie Public and Miller’s Forest Public schools.

- The annual **Christmas Parade** at ‘Marketplace’ Raymond Terrace. The Senior Drum Corps led the annual parade with selected dancers.

- The annual **Presentation Evening and Year Assemblies** in late Term 4 featured Dance, Drama and Music students, both in solo and ensemble performances.

### Dance and Drama Department

- **Excursion** to “Call Back” at the Sydney Seymour Centre involved the HSC Dance Class (including accelerated student Amber Elwes) attending the event.

- Assistance by selected Stage 5 Drama Students with Irrawang Public’s annual **Easter Hat Parade**. Stephanie Baker, Annabel Bisley, Monique D’Arcy, Joshua Ede, Dakota Skara and Amy Weston dressed up and in character roles to assist the younger students.

- **Hunter Central Coast Regional Dance Festival**: Three ensembles auditioned and all 3 were selected to present at this prestigious annual event. The **Junior Ensemble** (Years 7/8/9), the **Selective Ensemble** (Years 7/8/9/10/11) and the **Elite Ensemble** (Years 7 to 12) performed over the week.

- ‘**Theatre Sports School Challenge**’ drama competition: IHS entered this competition, involving students from HCC and Sydney regions, for the first time with an outstanding team made up of Stage 5 students Stephanie Baker, Abi Chambers, Joshua Ede, Shannon Riley and Amy Weston. This event has been placed in the Drama Department’s annual performance calendar.

- **Hunter Central Coast Regional Dramaworks**: talented students from Stage 5 were once again selected to participate in a five day workshop that culminated in an evening performance. Students involved were: Brook Gardiner; Dakota Skara; Sarah Swainson; Amy Weston and Allyson Wright.

- A rigorous **Weekly Rehearsal Schedule** that included before school and break rehearsals for all including; Drama, **Elite Dance, Selective Dance and Senior Dance** ensembles.

### Music Department

- **Senior Drum and Junior Drum Corps** performed at YMCA’s official launch of “**Dive In and Help Out**” held at Lakeside Aquatic Centre.

- Selected students from the **Senior Drum Corps** led the **Anzac Day Dawn Parade** at Medowie: Jade Bennett; Annabel Bisley;
Renaya Blackie; Tyess Cook and Miller Tomlin.

- **Senior and Junior Drum Corps workshop with students from Wallsend South Primary School** and performances to the whole school, including combined performances with their band students.

- **Official Opening of ‘Artspace’** at Raymond Terrace Library with performances by Stage 5 music students Bailey Keeley, Ricky Vallen and Lachlan White.

- **Bi-annual Education Week Ceremony** held at IHS involved not only performances from our Senior Drum Corps and a duet by Jazmin Hughes and Lachlan White (Yr 10) but featured coordinated items from all partner primary schools.

- Incursion “Bridging the Gap” for all Year 7, Elective Music and ATSI students, who attended this performance in the hall.

- **NSW Performing Arts Unit Boys Vocal Workshops:** Selected Stage 5 boys attended a two day workshop at Merewether High School – Trey Betham, Liam Bower, Tyess Cook, Joshua Ede, Bailey Keeley, James Lawrence and Corey Petheridge.

- **‘McHappy Day’ performances by Junior Drum Corps at Heatherbrae McDonalds**

- **‘Enrichment Day’ workshop at Wirreanda Public: Senior Drum Corps** Section leaders from Stage 5 Annabel Bisley, Jade Bennett, Riley Blunt, David Bowden, Tyess Cook, Monique D’Arcy, James Lawrence and Dakota Skara workshopped with selected Primary students that culminated with a combined lunchtime performance to their whole school.

- A rigorous **Weekly Rehearsal Schedule** that involved break time rehearsals for Junior Drum Corps, Senior Drum Corps and Vocal Ensemble

**Enrichment Program**

The Enrichment Program (devised mainly for gifted and talented students) has continued to grow in 2014. The school has continued its implementation of a selective GATs class in Year 7 and extension classes for Mathematics, English, Science and HSIE have continued in all other years. A variety of additional extra-curricular activities formed a substantial part of our Enrichment program.

Some of the opportunities offered in 2014 included:

- Two teams, nine students in total, competed in the Newcastle University Robocup challenge for the second year. One of the teams was placed 7th out of 38.

- Two teams represented Irrawang High School at the Hunter Valley Electric Vehicle Challenge. Three staff members and ten students participated in this long term challenge, building two electric bicycles that were raced at Cameron Park. The design team came third in their section of the challenge. The teams fundraised over $1500 and represented the school at the Rotary Club, Raymond Terrace.

- Two Tournament of the Minds teams represented Irrawang High School at the Newcastle University on Sunday 25th August. One team participated in the Language and Literature challenge, and the other team participated in the Social Sciences challenge. Three staff members and twelve students participated in the long-term challenge, with one team achieving Honours.

- Year 4 students from five partner primary schools completed an engineering project with Mr. Everingham and two Year 10 mentors, producing and testing load-bearing bridges.

- Year 5 students from five partner primary schools completed various enrichment activities during Term 3 and 4, attending two full days at Irrawang High School.

- Year 6 students from five partner primary schools completed a project over three days throughout 2014 to produce one page out of a picture book, learning Photoshop, and attending a seminar with a children’s book author.

- Approximately one hundred students participated in the Australian Mathematics competition, an increase of thirty students, and achieving a number of credits.

- Sixty year 7 and 8 girls participated in an **Aim High Program**, called Robogals, with the goal of encouraging more females to enter a career of engineering.

Approximately fifty students, eight staff members and over one hundred and ten members from the community attended an
afternoon where students who were involved in the above Enrichment activities throughout the year displayed their completed projects.

Sport:

- Eight students attended the Port Stephens Zone Swimming Carnival with one student (Emily Allanson) qualifying to attend the Regional Swimming Carnival.
- Forty eight students attended the Port Stephens Zone Cross Country Carnival with six students qualifying to attend the Regional Cross Country. One student (Christopher O'Neil) qualified for the NSW Combined High Schools Cross Country. Christopher finished thirty second in his event.
- Fifty two students attended the Port Stephens Zone Athletics Carnival with twenty eight qualifying for the Regional athletics Carnival. Three Students then qualified for NSW Combined High Schools Athletics. These were:
  - Dakota Gordon qualified to compete in the 14 Years Girls High Jump;
  - Ryan Marshall qualified to compete in the Open Boys Walk;
  - Dylan Petith qualified to compete in the 12 Years Boys High Jump and Long Jump.
- Twelve students and thirty six staff members participated in the Premier’s Sporting Challenge.
- Irrawang High School participated in sixteen of NSW Combined High Schools Sports Knockout competitions.
- Chanel Misifosa of Year 11 was selected in the Hunter Area Rugby Union Team
- On Monday 31st March Corey Petthebridge, a Year 9 student, competed in the Hunter region Bowls Championship. Corey played five matches and qualified for the Boys' Singles final. In the final he was defeated by 17 shots to 12. Corey’s performance at this carnival earned him entry into the Combined High School Championships at Warilla Bowling club. At these Championships Corey was fifth in the state in singles and third in Pairs
- Jack Caban of Year 10 was selected in Australian Under 16 team to tour Brazil in November 2014.
- Alannah Newell of Year 11 was selected to attend the Tim Cahill Soccer Camp in Sydney.
- Year 10 student Lachlan White was selected to represent and train with the Australian Junior Sailing team
- Mrs Pulsford coached the NSW All-Schools Tennis Team in Perth. This Team was Australian All-Schools Champions

Community Relations:
An improved image of the school and promotion of its successes are achieved through the role of the Community Engagement Officer (CEO) which is to:

- Provide parents with effective strategies to assist their children in the learning process.
- Promote the school in the community, establish partnerships and engage with and increase participation with parents.
- Build the collective expertise of the school and the community.
- Engage parents, community and business members in our school and our students’ learning.
- Increase student participation in community service activities.
- Connect our school and other agencies in new and positive ways.
- Recognise student excellence, for example, in attendance, academic excellence and community participation.
- Explore options for greater electronic communications between school and parents/community.
- Build the capacity of the school staff to work with external organisations.
- Increase parental participation in school-based workshops on student learning strategies and providing parental support.

The CEO successfully built on the collective expertise and engagement of the school and community, increasing partnerships and promotion of the school:

- One hundred and four news stories and magazine articles were published in local media/other media.
- Major contributor to school newsletter
- Organised and facilitated the new 2015 School Diary.
- Continued to established Community and Business Partnerships with local businesses, service agencies and clubs, politicians and
government agencies (local, state and federal).
• In particular, the CEO has maintained an on-going and successful partnership with Port Stephens Council in areas of staff coming to IHS for portfolio presentations, Human Resource expertise for resumes, funding for EV Bike Challenge.
• Co-ordinated all community/business volunteers for Year 10 portfolio presentations
• Continued to maintain links with MarketPlace Raymond Terrace as a very generous sponsor of the school, along with Tomago Aluminium and Raymond Terrace Bowling Club, Kip McGrath Raymond Terrace, RAAF and local service clubs
• Initiated and co-ordinated the four Kip McGrath IHS Scholarships per year for students in the Areas of Literacy and Numeracy
• Coordinated the Woolworths’ “Earn and Learn” Program with solid school and community participation enabling hundreds of dollars in resources to be ordered for the school.
• Took photos, wrote stories, updated and maintained the school’s website which now receives approximately 12000 total page views per month
• Maintained and secured sponsorship for school app/newsletter
• Assisted with $2000 grant from Hunter Water for mural creation at Finnan Park
• Facilitated and organised new signage in the student and public car park
• Organised catering for functions in the school hall, homework centre, special morning teas, and parent workshops.
• Organised special guests for Annual Art Exhibition and Showcase
• Organised Parent Workshops each term to develop parent support for numeracy intervention activities.
• Organised annual volunteers’ luncheon
• Co-ordinated and secured funding for EV Bike Challenge – a GATS project
• Organised and co-ordinated Career Quest for Year 10 students with ten local business organisations
• Co-ordinated Education Week celebrations at IHS for all partner primary schools of IHS and Hunter River HS

Irrawang High School’s successful Transition Program involves both the transition and orientation of Stage 3 students from our partner primary schools (Irrawang, Grahamstown, Medowie and Wirreanda Public) as well as a small group of students from Raymond Terrace Public School. The program is also designed to include students and families from out of zone, and extra support for Defence families transferring to the area is always provided by our Defence Transition Mentor. The Transition Program is not only designed to encourage a smooth transition from Year 6 to Year 7, but also focuses on activities to encourage positive engagement and retention of students in a variety of activities including:
• Interactive visits to our Science Labs by Primary students
• Inter School visits by IHS staff to Primary campuses
• Ongoing visits to IHS for students who may be anxious about the Transition to high school
• Extra support for students with learning and support needs throughout Transition
• Annual ‘Open Evening’ for Stage 3 students and families
• Access for Year 6 students to our ‘Snack ‘n Study Centre’ held every Monday from 3.30pm – 5.30pm
• ‘Enrichment’ activities for Years 4 – 6 within the LMG GATS Calendar

Defence Transition Program
The Defence Transition Mentor (DTM) supports young people from Australian Defence Force (ADF) families in secondary schools throughout Australia. The purpose of the program is to facilitate the best possible educational outcomes for children of Australian Defence force members through on-site, direct and flexible assistance to children, parents, teachers and other support services.

The program also:
• Assists young people from ADF families to integrate into the school community
• Co-ordinates appropriate welcoming and farewelling strategies/functions
• Encourages students to explore options and make the most of opportunities
• Assists students to manage the challenges of transitions
• Refers students where necessary to appropriate student support services
• Identifies individual issues and needs
• Monitors day to day social and emotional well-being
• Supports students at school during times of parental absence from home
• Links students/families to school and community programs

The students are also offered various mentoring programs, including Plan-it Youth Mentoring Program (which is a school-to-work transition program). The program helps to promote self-discipline, develop leadership skills and to build self-esteem in ADF students.

Significant programs and initiatives – policy

Aboriginal education

The school’s policy and plans reflected those of the DEC, working to increase Aboriginal students’ attendance, participation and performance. It also worked to increase the inclusion of ATSI students and their community through activities involving the ATSI community and the whole school that recognised and acknowledged Aboriginal heritage, issues and contributions. Details of the schools’ working with its ATSI students and community can be seen in the report on School Priority 3 below.

Multicultural education and anti-racism

All staff participated in inclusive training activities and school events which reflected the school’s policy of inclusion and acceptance. Multicultural and anti-racist perspectives were incorporated into Positive Behaviour for Learning lessons during morning roll calls, and were linked to anti-bullying and harassment policies and education. Programs, especially in English, HSIE and PDHPE classes, incorporated multicultural and anti-racist perspectives.

The school’s participation in Harmony Day, and its support for a Cambodian humanitarian project, were highlights of our efforts to foster multiculturalism in our community.

Significant programs and initiatives – equity funding

Aboriginal background

In 2014, 10% of the population of Irrawang High identified as ATSI.

As a priority for these students, the school continued to fund the employment of a full-time AEW. As well, two support staff were employed part-time through the Norta Norta program.

These support staff worked to:

• Provide well-being support to ATSI students to improve their attendance, retention and participation in the school.
• Develop and implement in-class assistance to students, especially in the areas of literacy and numeracy, but also in such key matters as organisation, application and participation. In Year 9 NAPLAN results, the proportion of ATSI students above expected growth in Numeracy was equal to that of the school as a whole. The average growth of our ATSI students in Numeracy was above the growth of both all students, and ATSI students, across the state, and in similar schools.
• Increase the involvement of ATSI parents and the community in the school. More parents participated in school activities, including the development of Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) for all ATSI students. Community members participated in school events, and in consultations regarding planning and development within the school.
• Increase the involvement of ATSI students in leadership opportunities within the school. The junior Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) was reformed, and took an active part in school planning as a representative voice of ATSI students in the school. The Junior AECG also participated in activities in the wider community, and regularly represented the school at district AECG meetings.
• Increase the knowledge, understanding and acceptance of ATSI culture across the school and its community through celebrations and similar activities.
• Support training and development of staff across the school in strategies and approaches which have been shown to assist ATSI students.
**Socio-economic background**

Irrawang High sits near the top of the lowest quarter of schools on the FOEI measures. 57% of our students come from the lowest quartile of ICSEA measure, while only 3% come from the top quartile.

Based on the evidence showing the positive impact of Quality Teaching on student performance, especially in low-SES schools, Irrawang High has continued to develop effective teaching, learning and assessment strategies across the school, supported by a range of wellbeing and involvement programs to improve engagement and achievement.

The school’s mentoring program (employing a full-time teacher to work with senior students) is an important part of our efforts to assist students to overcome the disadvantages suffered by their community. This program was introduced during our National Partnership years, and the school has continued to fund the position as a positive support to senior students.

The school continued to fund scholarships for students in Years 7 and 11. These scholarships were introduced in 2010 as part of our National Partnerships program to assist students and families to overcome disadvantage, and to improve retention rates in the school. In 2014, the scholarships were funded out of equity funding. Six students (three juniors and three seniors) shared these scholarships after a rigorous selection process.

**Learning and Support**

The school continued to fund extra staffing, both at teacher and support levels, to assist those students needing learning support for academic, social or medial reasons. In-class support was provided by School Learning and Support Officers (SLSOs). Withdrawal programs were run in both reading and numeracy for students at below-expected levels in both achievement and growth.

The impact of the numeracy program can be seen in the report on Priority Area 1 below.

**School planning and evaluation 2012—2014**

**School evaluation processes**

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used included:

- Parent surveys and discussions
- Student surveys and feedback evaluations
- Staff surveys and feedback evaluations
- Feedback from associated primary schools’ staff and students
- Data analysis of external and internal data, such as performance and achievement; participation; conduct; attendance; retention.
- Collation of anecdotal information from community and excursion sites and personnel.

**School planning 2012-2014:**

**School priority 1**

Numeracy (Improving Literacy Numeracy National Partnerships Program)

**Outcomes from 2012–2014**

- Teachers participate in professional learning around improving students’ numeracy outcomes
- Maths teachers implement best practice pedagogy for improved student learning in Maths and Numeracy
- Maths teachers use a range of data to plan for and differentiate the learning within their classes.
- The proportion of students below minimum standard in NAPLAN is reduced by 5%

**Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:**

- Provide 0.2 timetabled relief for Maths HT to oversee the school’s numeracy program.
- Lesson Study program to provide professional pedagogic development for numeracy improvement in Maths faculty, reflected in TARS program.
- Further training for staff in collecting and using data to plan and differentiate learning for numeracy achievement.
- Counting On and the 7 to 10 Numeracy Continuum to be integrated into Maths teaching/learning programs.
- Newman’s Error Analysis implemented as a tool for teachers to increase focus on student learning.
- Professional development with primary school colleagues to increase teachers’
understanding and implementation of numeracy strategies (including use of the numeracy continuum) within classes in Maths faculty, and across KLAs.

- Intervention program continued for low-achieving students in Numeracy, targeting those identified as operating below national minimum standard in NAPLAN tests.
- Intervention teacher to assist teacher professional learning in Maths faculty, leading towards incorporation of strategies for sustained improvement in numeracy outcomes.
- Numeracy requirements across the curriculum are mapped and understood by all KLAs.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

- Year 9 Students in the Numeracy Withdrawal Group showed significantly stronger average growth than the rest of the school, state and similar schools in NAPLAN Numeracy results.
- The proportion of Year 9 students above expected growth in NAPLAN Numeracy increased from 50% to 67.7%
- The average scaled growth of Irrawang High Year 9 students in Numeracy was greater than that for their cohort in state and similar school groups. All except four students showed positive growth compared to their Year 7 achievements.
- The proportion of Year 9 students in the top two bands for Numeracy increased from 10.5% to 14.4%
- The proportion of Year 9 ATSI students achieving above expected growth slightly exceeded that for non-ATSI students in the school, the state and similar school groups.
- The average scaled growth of Year 9 ATSI students improved from 33.9% to 56.2%
- All Maths programs and units incorporate Counting On strategies, measuring students’ performance against the Numeracy continuum.
- Newman’s Error Analysis has been implemented across the school, especially in lessons involving numeracy learning.

School priority 2
Engagement and Attainment

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- Establish a culture of high expectations in everything we do, utilising the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) model.
- Reduction in referrals, suspensions, truancy, & N-award notifications and increases in whole day attendance
- Increased retention from Year 6 into Year 7 and Year 10 into 12
- Maintenance of the attendance and participation data for all students, across all years in 2014

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Professional learning (PL) for all staff on teaching and learning in the middle years, via Head Teachers and executive meeting professional learning, to lead the embedding of Quality Teaching practices into lesson plans. Faculty plans and faculty discussion to be reflective of specific curriculums and pedagogies, as accounted for through the Teacher Assessment Review Schedule (TARS) and Executive Assessment Review Schedule (EARS) processes.
- The PBL Behaviour/ Expectations Matrix will be applied in all school contexts, to ensure consistency of positive and high expectations of students’ learning and behaviour.
- PBL lessons will take place in Tutor Groups across the school, with a new focus each week that focuses on explicitly teaching expected student behaviours.
- Four staff members to attend regional PBL Universal Training and implement whole staff TPL.
- Continue extensive transition/ orientation programs with partner primary schools to assist retention of Stage 3 students
- Year Advisors and the Learning Support Team (LST) will monitor identified students for case management regarding high absenteeism, with the support of a student elected mentor to act in an advocacy role.
- Monitor the implementation of texting parents to follow up absenteeism, to ensure replication of effectiveness data.
- Continue celebrating and rewarding attendance above 95%.
- Head Teacher Administration to support tutor group staff in monitoring, following-up and communication regarding attendance.
- Provide professional learning (by Head Teacher Administration), around attendance
and truancy processes for all staff, particularly tutor group teachers.

- Head Teacher Administration to facilitate training all staff in utilising the new attendance management software.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

- TARS and EARS processes continue to reflect increasing understanding and implementation of Quality Teaching principles in programs, units and lessons
- Weekly PBL activities are embedded into roll call lessons. A PBL assembly every Monday highlights PBL focus activities and acknowledges student cooperation with PBL guidelines.
- Three more staff participated in PBL Universal Training. One of these is now a member of the school’s PBL team.
- Fortnightly Inter-Agency meetings have been introduced to assist the school’s efforts to improve attendance.
- Case Meetings were held with parents and students when attendance became poor. Community cooperation has been increased through these meetings.
- SMS communication with parents when students were absent from school lead to a reduction in the number of unexplained absences.
- Recognition of excellent attendance activities saw four hundred and thirteen students (17.5%) receive certificates for Excellent Attendance over the first three terms.
- All staff have been trained in monitoring and supporting attendance patterns among students, and in using the new administrative software.

School priority 3
Inclusive School Communities

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- Improved attendance, retention, literacy, numeracy outcomes and engagement of Aboriginal students
- All Aboriginal students have PLP’s in place with effective parent involvement
- The impact of the Aboriginal policy is evident in school practices and programs
- Recognition, celebration and identification with Aboriginal culture.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Continue the role of the AEW and the support programs provided to ATSI students.
- The Stronger Smarter Team (SST) will implement whole school teacher professional learning, utilising external agencies to assist in driving the school Aboriginal Education Action plan.
- Norta-Norta in-class tutors and SLSO’s trained in Super 6 Comprehension Strategies and relevant intervention strategies to support all ATSI students in relevant classes.
- Norta-Norta in-class tutors and SLSO’s trained in Newman’s Error Analysis and relevant intervention strategies to support all ATSI students.
- The Aboriginal Education Focus Group (AECG) to co-ordinate and implement (i) a professional learning plan across all KLAs on effective use of PLPs and (ii) embedding the Aboriginal Education policy into programs for teaching and learning, as evidenced by class plans and the TARS process. Professional learning would be supported by Stronger Smarter Team and the AEFG.
- Implement early intervention strategies with any ATSI attendance concerns via the Learning Support Team, AEW, Aboriginal Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO), and the Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer (ACLO).

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

- The proportion of Year 9 ATSI students achieving above expected growth in NAPLAN Numeracy slightly exceeded that for non-ATSI students in the school, the state and similar school groups.
- The average scaled growth of Year 9 ATSI students in NAPLAN Numeracy improved from 33.9% to 56.2%
- All SLSO staff were trained in literacy strategies (Focus on Reading and Super Six strategies) and numeracy strategies (Counting On and Newman’s Error Analysis) and were able to apply these strategies in supporting student learning in classes, and in withdrawal programs.
- The school continued to fund the AEW as a full-time position. Together with two Norta Norta staff, she supported students, both in class and across the school, academically, socially and psychologically.
The AEW, Norta Norta staff, and the Junior AECG, all contributed to the school’s participation in ATSI celebration events, including NAIDOC Week and Sorry Day. These events increased the community’s involvement in the school, and furthered the aims of increasing understanding and acceptance among non-ATSI students and staff.

**Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction**

In 2014, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. The school’s website receives approximately twelve thousand page views per month, providing a valuable avenue of communication between the school and its community. Feedback sought from parents at Parent-Teacher evenings and information evenings, and through the monthly Parents and Citizens’ Association and AECG meetings, has indicated a high level of satisfaction with the school’s welfare and support processes and practices, together with some positive suggestions of ways to further reduce instances of bullying or harassment among students. Discussions with parents during the transition process, including the welcome barbecue breakfast held early in Term 1, indicated strong satisfaction with the school’s transition processes, and with the integration of new students into the school community. The school encourages personal feedback from parents and students, and prides itself on its prompt responses to issues, suggestions and complaints.

A web-based survey late in 2014 indicated that the community would like to have more opportunities to make a greater contribution to school planning and decision making. A proportion of the community felt that the school needs to make more effort to seek feedback from its community. These issues are to be addressed in planning during 2015. Following a proportion of results in the community survey indicating a belief that teaching programs, strategies and professionalism are not consistent across the school, the Teacher Assessment Review processes are being revised for 2015 and beyond.

ATSI community feedback through the school’s PLP processes indicated that some parents would prefer the meetings were held off-site. The school is investigating these possibilities for future PLP meetings.

Students use their Student Representative Council (SRC) to communicate with the school staff, as well as taking advantage of opportunities provided through Tutor Group periods each morning, and avenues provided for individuals to raise issues, including through their Year Advisers. In 2014, students generally indicated strong satisfaction with welfare support programs provided by the school, especially the presence of support staff and the part-time clinic nurse. They also indicated strong appreciation of the many opportunities provided for participation in creative and performing arts activities, sporting competitions, and leadership activities. Some students expressed a desire for further action in the school’s anti-harassment practices, and some senior students were disappointed that the curriculum offerings in the senior school could not always meet their wishes. Junior students gave strong support to the school’s moves towards more innovative learning environments (especially through Project REAL learning in the HSIE faculty) and senior students expressed strong satisfaction with the school’s provision of extra senior study spaces, which will become fully active in 2015. They also expressed support for the senior mentoring program, recognising its contribution to their successes in the HSC years. Almost all students have reacted favourably to teachers’ efforts to make the learning spaces more positive through their voluntary work in painting class rooms and developing murals around the school. Some students have given their own time and energy to assist these improvements.

Students generally voiced a high level of satisfaction with the school canteen, though some expressed a desire for a wider range of options among the food and drinks offered. The guidelines and principles of healthy canteens have been explained to these students. Students and parents all indicated strong satisfaction with the canteen’s low prices, and their generous annual contributions to teaching and learning programs across the school.

While students have mostly accepted and appreciated the school’s practices and guidelines in introducing the PBL program, some students would like to see a more flexible approach to some practices, especially those relating to lining.
up before entry to classrooms. Student feedback has led to the abandonment of the practice of handing out major commendation awards on the school assembly each week. These awardees are now announced, then receive their awards privately after the assembly. New processes are being planned for commendation awards in 2015.

Regular staff and faculty meetings, including the weekly “muster meeting”, provide a forum for staff to be informed and involved, and to raise issues, concerns or suggestions. Staff also have many avenues through which to raise matters with the Principal and other staff in formal or informal ways. Feedback from staff during 2014 will lead to a reorganisation of the school’s weekly “muster meeting” in 2015 to better suit their preferences for the timing of this meeting. In 2014, they expressed strong satisfaction with the school’s continued program of upgrades to facilities and resources. A continuing increase in the school-wide collegiality among staff was noted and appreciated by most teachers. Strong involvement of a core of teachers and executive staff in the school’s new planning processes throughout the second semester of 2014 was both a reflection and a driver of this collegiality. Measures of the staff’s overall satisfaction with the school are seen in the very high retention rate among its teachers, their willingness to be involved in extra-curricular activities out of school hours, and in their willingness to offer their time and efforts to continue to improve the learning spaces across the school.

The web-based survey late in 2014 showed that there were some inconsistencies in the school’s implementation of the PBL program. Extra training through development days and staff meetings, as well as further education through tutor group lessons, are directed at improving this perception during 2015.

Future Directions
2015-2017 School Plan

NSW DEC is implementing a new school planning process for 2015-17. The new plan will be published on the school’s website from the beginning of Term 2 2015.

After consultation with staff, students, parents and community groups, including our local ATSI community, the school has adopted three focus areas for development within this plan: Student Learning Outcomes; Teacher Professional Development; and Supportive School Environment.

**Strategic Direction 1: Student Outcomes:** Developing positive learning elements for successful 21st century learners and citizens.

**Strategic Direction 2: Teacher Quality:** Fostering a professional learning community in which all members strive towards the development of excellent teaching and leading elements.

**Strategic Direction 3: School environment:** Creating a supportive environment and culture in a community espousing high expectations for respectful, responsible, and sharing participation by students, staff and parents.

A copy of this plan will be available on the school’s web site in Term 2 2015.
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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D. Garner; Head Teacher Mathematics
A. Robinson; Head Teacher Creative and Performing Arts
J. Tonks; Head Teacher Welfare
S. Bailey; Teacher (Mathematics); GATS Coordinator
L. Fagan; CEO Community Relations
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Parents can find more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the report and have the opportunity to provide feedback about the report at: