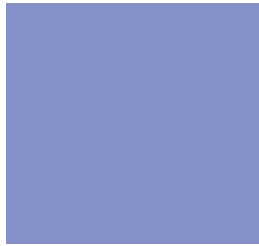


2009 Annual School Report Keira High School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way



Messages

Principal's message

Keira High School is a comprehensive, co-educational high school that draws students from central Wollongong and suburbs adjacent to North Wollongong. The school has a long tradition of delivering quality public education to the community of the Illawarra since 1917.

Keira High School is proud of its traditions. This Annual School Report shows also that it looks to the future, confident that it is a dynamic and innovative school.

Keira is a school with many dimensions and strengths: academic achievement, integrated technology, strong sporting traditions, performing and creative arts opportunities, effective welfare / discipline strategies, an inclusive curriculum and a quality teaching approach that enables the school to cater for all students, both boys and girls.

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.

Mr M. Mulheron

P&C Message

Keira High School continues to provide many opportunities for students, enabling them to succeed in a variety of areas, whether it be academic success, sporting excellence, creative and performing arts opportunities or human rights and charity work.

Keira High School is viewed as a desirable place of learning and places for Year 7 students are highly sought. High academic achievement, an effective welfare policy and strict uniform standards make Keira High School the school of choice for parents and children alike.

This year the P&C Association in conjunction with a dedicated group of teachers organised a trivia night which raised much needed funds and allowed parents and teachers to interact in a pleasant social setting.

Parents recognise the invaluable role teachers perform at KHS and this year we celebrated P&C Day by providing morning tea to all staff, thanking them for their professionalism and dedication. Parents are always welcome and encouraged to

attend sporting carnivals, art exhibitions, public speaking assemblies and parent teacher nights.

I warmly invite all parents to become involved in their child's secondary education by attending P&C meetings on the 1st Wednesday each month in the staff common room.

Lauren Borst, President

Student representative's message

Keira High School provides a positive school environment for a student to grow up and learn in. The school is extremely supportive of all its students, teachers have excellent relationships with their students and the school offers many extra curricula activities and programs to make sure all are welcomed and enjoy their time whilst studying at high school.

From a student perspective, it is so comforting to know that your teachers are there to care and nurture your academic abilities. Furthermore, it is reassuring to know that in our school we are encouraged to pursue excellence in a manner that is not focussed on competition and instead individual growth. The students at Keira High School always strive to be kind and considerate of others.

Keira High School accepts students from all different backgrounds and from families of any socio-economic status. Keira High School is also home to a support unit for students with learning difficulties. This, therefore, accounts for the incredibly diverse range of students that attend the school. The school encourages students to be engaged in many extra-curricular activities including sports teams, an environment group, Student Representative Council, Interact, Human Rights group, public speaking competitions, Southern Stars, band and many more.

Keira High also has a strong relationship with the local primary partner schools, which is important and very effective as many students feel a sense of security at Keira, even before they are attending the school.

On behalf of the student body we are very thankful to attend Keira High school as an example of a highly successful public high school that ranks the needs of us as students as a top priority. We are fortunate to be motivated to achieve excellent personal results and be the best we can be.

Keziah Bennett-Brook, School Captain

School context

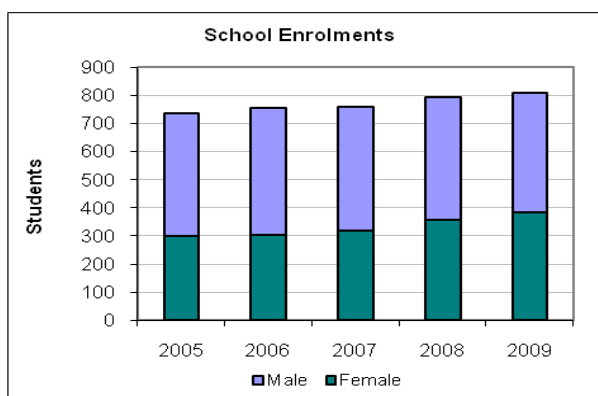
Student information

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

Student enrolment profile

Keira's enrolment in 2009 was 836 students, including 46 students in the school's Support Unit. This is an increase from 816 students enrolled in 2008. The school's partner primary schools that comprise the Keira Community of Schools are Balgownie Public School, Coniston Public School, Fairy Meadow Demonstration School, Mt Ousley Public School, Pleasant Heights Public School and Wollongong Public School.

It is pleasing to note that Keira High School's enrolments are continuing to increase.

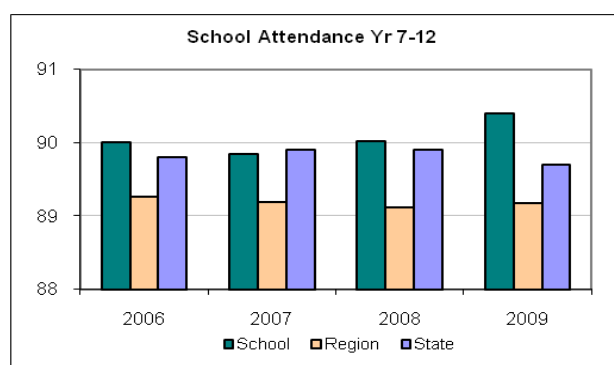


Student attendance profile

Regular attendance at school is vital for success at school. At Keira High School, attendance is a school priority.

Keira's attendance rates continue to be above both region and state average for Years 7-12.

As well as school rolls being marked each day, each student's attendance at every class is recorded by class teachers and reported to parents twice a year.



Structure of classes

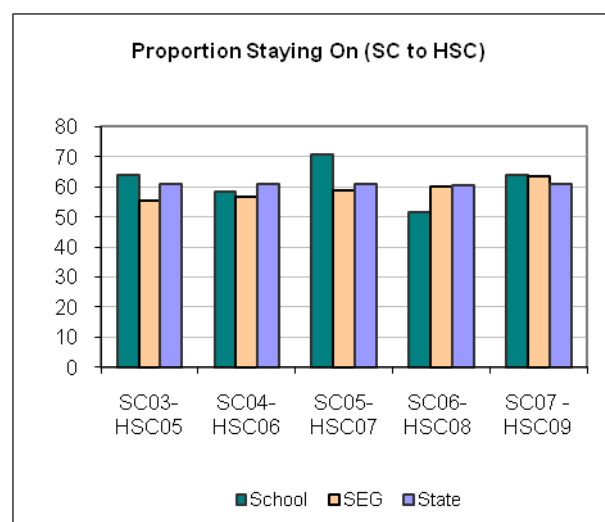
In Years 7 and 8, the school has created single-sex classes. Additional classes have been created in both Year 7 and Year 8 to allow for this program. This initiative is designed to foster a positive transition to high school.

In Years 9 and 10, the elective classes are vertically structured to allow for greater subject choice. These elective subjects are offered as either 100 or 200 hour courses.

The curriculum in Years 11 and 12 is traditionally structured but with an emphasis on relatively small class sizes in those subjects other than English and Mathematics.

Retention to Year 12

It is an important focus at Keira to encourage students to remain at school beyond Year 10 in order to gain their HSC. With this in mind, the school offers a broad range of both academic and non-academic pathways for senior students.



Post-school destinations

The school surveyed Year 12 (2009) students early in 2010. The following information is based upon a survey return rate of 87%. Of those students who participated in the survey, 44% are attending university. 40.2% are studying at TAFE and/or are engaged in an apprenticeship. 11.49% are working full-time. The remaining 4.31% are engaged in other activities such as travel or casual and part-time work.

Of those attending university, 81.58% are enrolled at the University of Wollongong with the remaining 18.42% enrolled in other Australian universities.

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 (2009)

Position	Number
Principal	1.0
Deputy Principals	2.0
Head Teachers	10.0
Classroom Teachers	46.0
Teacher of Mild Intellectual Disabilities	2.0
Teacher of Moderate Intellectual Disabilities	1.0
Teacher of Autism	1.0
Support Teacher Learning Assistance	0.7
Teacher Librarian	1.0
Teacher of ESL	1.4
Counsellor	1.0
Careers Adviser	1.0
School Administrative Manager	1.0
School Administrative Officers	8.5
Learning Support Officers	4.0
General Assistant	1.0
Total	82.6

Staff retention

Keira High School has enjoyed a period of stability with staff retention rates being quite high. 94% of the permanent teaching staff remained teaching at Keira in 2009 from the previous year.

Teacher qualifications

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

(This is in stark contrast to non-government schools which are exempt from such requirements).

Qualifications	% of staff
Degree or Diploma	100%
Postgraduate	28%

While there are no dedicated indigenous teaching positions at Keira, 2.4% of staff identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Financial summary

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

Date of financial summary:	30/11/09
Income	\$
Balance brought forward	509 550.23
Global funds	418 233.33
Tied funds	161 730.82
School & community sources	310 061.40
Interest	18 171.24
Trust receipts	46 230.05
Canteen	201 801.86
<i>Total income</i>	<u>1 665 778.93</u>
Expenditure	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	100 079.41
Excursions	37 140.95
Extracurricular dissections	188 002.57
Library	7 238.50
Training & development	3 192.87
Tied funds	356 555.56
Casual relief teachers	107 351.62
Administration & office	249 269.91
School-operated canteen	223 340.01
Utilities	47 962.91
Maintenance	106 106.68
Trust accounts	44 840.14
Capital programs	9 020.00
<i>Total expenditure</i>	<u>1 480 101.13</u>
Balance carried forward	<u>185 677.80</u>

A full copy of the school's 2009 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meeting of the school's P&C. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2009

Achievements

Creative and Performing Arts

Music

Students are provided with opportunities to perform in both vocal and instrumental musical groups. A continuing priority, the band represented the school with distinction at several prestigious events, including:

- Easter Jazz Festival in Crown St Mall
- Public Education Dinner at the University of Wollongong
- Engadine Band Festival, where they achieved a Gold award
- Music Excellence Evening.

The partnership with Mr Eric Dunan and the Wollongong Conservatorium of Music continued to support the band, providing excellent tuition, and the year culminated in the band recording its own CD, 'Unexpected.'

Individual students from the band performed with a range of ensembles, including:

- Wollongong Community Orchestra
- Illawarra and South-East Region Touring Ensemble
- Southern Stars Stage Band
- Wollongong Conservatorium of Music Jazz Ensemble and Jazz Orchestra

As well as performing, Music students participated in a variety of educational shows and workshops, including:

- Meet the Music
- Sydney Sinfonia
- Phil Slater workshop
- John Spence composition workshop
- Weekly guitar tuition
- Senior and Junior Vocal groups
- Junior and Senior Music Camps, where some of our students were invited to become tutors.

Drama

Drama students were given performance opportunities through the 'Night of Drama' and the biennial Keira Community of Schools Concert.

Activities beyond the classroom to support studies in Drama included visits to productions at Sydney Theatre Company as well as On-Stage.

Visual Arts

Year 11 student Barbara Komorowski was selected to participate in the National Art School HSC Extension Course- only a small number of students from across the state are selected.

Year 11 student Adam Skimmings was runner-up in the Connected Learning Digital Art Award. The expertise of Ms Mors was acknowledged when she and her students were invited to present at the media launch for the Digital Education Revolution program at the State Library.

Students in Year 7 & 8 worked with University of Wollongong Creative Arts Faculty to help create the 'Kids Guernica' mural, which travelled to Florida for exhibition in December.

'Guerilla knitters' from Years 7 & 8 took to the streets as part of the Viva la Gong Festival. Although anonymous, their activities generated a lot of interest from students and the citizens of Wollongong.

As part of our ongoing commitment to the Keira Community of Schools (KCOS), a day long 'talented artists' workshop was held in August, with the resulting artworks forming the backdrop for the KCOS Concert in September.

Year 10 students held a 'graduation show' in the foyer of the school in November, with outstanding examples of student work across a range of media areas.

Student learning was enhanced through a range of activities beyond the classroom, including visits to the Newington Armoury, Hazelhurst Gallery, Wollongong Botanical Gardens, Wollongong city Gallery and Sculpture by the Sea.

Year 12 Showcase

Keira's annual Year 12 student showcase was again well received, and featured:

- Performances from Drama and Music students
- Readings by students from Extension English
- Design and Technology Major Projects
- Visual Arts Body of Work submissions
- Delicious supper from Hospitality students

Southern Stars

Keira High School students once again featured heavily in the annual Southern Stars production. Some highlights were:

- the welcome to country by Keziah Bennett-Brook, accompanied by her (ex-student) brother Zach on didgeridoo
- 40 students in the dance ensemble
- 3 students in the orchestra
- 1 student in the Regional Ballet Company
- 1 student featured as a junior backing vocalist
- sets designed and painted by staff and students from the Support Unit
- larger-than-life horse and blowfly puppets constructed in the Visual Arts courtyard

- costumes designed and made by staff and parents of our school

Sport

Keira High School enjoyed another successful year in a variety of sporting arenas, engaging students in both recreational and competitive sport.

Recreational Sport (Terms 1&2)

A wide range of sports were offered to cater for all levels of ability and experience including tennis, swimming, basketball, soccer, volleyball, dodge ball, indoor cricket, surfing, ten pin bowling, rock climbing, gym, squash, table tennis and golf.

The Year 7 swimming program continued for its sixth year accommodating all levels of swimming ability.

Competition Sport

During Terms 2&3, Keira fielded 32 different sporting teams in the Northern Illawarra Baron Shield Competition, which resulted in thirteen teams making finals and eight being victorious. Keira was placed second at the completion of the Baron Shield competition.

Keira entered twelve knockout teams in the NSWCHS knockout competition.

Carnivals

There was a high attendance and participation in our successful swimming, cross country and athletics carnivals with talented athletes representing the Northern Illawarra at Regional Carnivals.

Regional and State Results

45 students were selected in various regional teams and nine were selected in NSW Combined High School State Teams. Sarah Carli, Christian Di Ciaccio and Olivia Lavallo – Athletics, Jake Swindells – tennis, Blake Holmes and Benjamin Robinson –rugby union, Maniso Michael – soccer, Kyle Kruger – cricket.

Swimming – Regional representatives

12-years girls – Chelsea Hurt, 13-years boys – Bradley Horne, 14 years girls – Kirsty Philpott, 12 years girls relay- (Chelsea Hurt, Laura Booth, Campbell Rutty)

Cross Country

12 years – Campbell Rutty – regional rep, 13years Holly Emmerson, Evan Johnston, Jackson Corby, Kurt Dorahy and Jarrod Sweeny- regional rep

13 years- Olivia Lavallo (2nd regional, 6th NSWCHS), Samuel Groeller (1st regional, 8th NSWCHS) Kirtsy Phillpot, Brock McCracken, and Liam Borst – regional representatives.

15 years- Sarah Carli (1st regional, 6th NSWCHS)

Athletics

13 years – Holly Emmerson (regional 2nd 800) Evan Johnston (regional 2nd – 800m)

14 years – Olivia Lavallo (regional 1st – 800m, 2nd -1500m, NSWCHS – 3rd -800m, 5th -1500m)

Naomi Polyzoidis (regional 2nd – 400m,90mhurdles, 3rd – 200m) Chelsea Veney (regional 3rd – javelin) Sarah Lancaster (regional 3rd -100m) Sam Groeller (regional 1st – 800m, 1500m) 14years girls relay (Sarah Broadhead, Jade De Bruin, Sarah Lancaster, Naomi Polyzoidis – 2nd regional)

15 years – Sarah Carli (regional 1st – 800m,100m 2nd -400m, 200m hurdles NSWCHS -3rd 200m hurdles, Australian All schools -3rd 200m hurdles) Thomas Polyzoidis (regional – 1st 400m) Christian DiCiaccio (regional – 2nd shot put, NSWCHS -1st shot put) Slavco Najdovski (regional 3rd shot put) 15 years girls relay (Sarah Carly, Jessica McGrath, Tara Cetinski, Laura Godkin – 2nd regional)

16 years – Lachlan Veney (regional 3rd javelin)

17+ years – Nathan Nikolich (regional rep 400m, 800m) Raffael Tzanis (regional-1st 110m hurdles)

17 years boys relay (Nataniel Richardson, Michael Robertson, Kyle Kruger, Nathan Nikolich – 1st regional)

The following athletes made regional teams in their chosen sports Kyle Kruger, cricket; Jack Swindells and Ashley Dunkle, tennis; Jake McCracken, hockey; Maniso Michael, Anthony Acevski, Lewyn Lightfoot, soccer and Paige Hegyi, touch.

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal Education

The school is continuing to work towards developing a range of strategies that meet the twin goals of Aboriginal education policy: to meet the needs of indigenous students and to increase the understanding of Aboriginal Australia across the wider school community.

Utilising funding from the Norta Norta programme Aboriginal students within the school were able to access additional funding for tutoring with our qualified teachers. It ran over a period of nine months with great results. In addition, we are developing Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) for all indigenous students to assist our school and these students for implementation in 2010. The PLPs will give the Executive, teachers, students and their families detailed information of academic, sporting, creative and extra-curricular activities that students participate in at school and in the community.

We are proud to announce the elected female School Captain for 2010 is an Aboriginal student Keziah Bennett-Brook. She follows in the footsteps of the immediate past female School Captain, Caitlin Arnold, who was also an

indigenous student. We know that Keziah will carry out the duties of this office with aplomb, dignity and pride. We look forward to her involvement at every level within the school community in the upcoming academic year.

Environmental Education

Keira's Environment Group was established in 2008. In 2009, the group maintained the involvement of 3 teachers, expanded to involve over 25 students in weekly meetings and environmental initiatives and attracted \$58,000 in funding.

National Events

Keira High School took part in Clean Up Australia Day again this year. Our Year 7 students worked at Fairy Creek, North Wollongong Train Station and the Mt. Ousley commuter parking area. The group collected seventeen bags of waste and rubbish from the sites.

Earth Hour was a great success across classrooms, staffrooms and offices. Many classrooms and staffrooms worked without artificial lighting. Others avoided using computers and electrical equipment.

Keira's Community of Schools (KCOS) participated in Schools Tree Day again this year. We planted over 350 native trees, shrubs and grasses at Wollongong City Council's Greenhouse Park.

This year we also established a collection point for old mobile phones. The phones will then be recycled and used in fencing, jewellery and stainless steel products. This initiative was introduced by our P&C.

School Projects

The diversity and scope of projects initiated by staff and students in 2009 has been impressive. We introduced over 60 native plants and created a number of bird attracting feature gardens around the school. Keira's Environment Group, the Industrial Arts and Home Economics faculties and parents from our school community, worked in a joint project to complete stage two of an organic compost and vegetable garden.

In 2008, Keira was awarded a \$2500 Eco Schools grant to build an outdoor classroom. With a generous donation of \$4,000 from our P&C, the classroom has been created in the school's rainforest space, and the project has used seating made from a recycled timber and plastic composite. A bird attracting flowering garden was also developed in the new learning space. The

classroom is scheduled to be opened in early 2010.

Keira High School was a successful recipient of the Federal Governments' National Solar Schools Grant in 2008. We have installed two 44,000 litre water tanks, to service the junior girls and boys toilets, as well as one 22,000 litre tank for the organic compost and vegetable garden. When full, each on the large tanks can supply enough water for two to three weeks of regular toilet usage.

Students responded to the devastating images of Victoria's recent bush fires by inviting an expert to speak to concerned students and staff. Luke Collins, a bushfire ecologist with the Centre for Bushfire Risk Management at The University of Wollongong, delivered a presentation on the impact of fire on native flora and fauna.

In 2009 we introduced an organic citrus fundraiser. The fundraiser allowed us to replace some citrus trees in our vegetable garden. In 2010 the fundraiser will take place in time for Christmas.

Our year concluded with a 2010 Planning Day and luncheon, where students lead projects such as, measuring garden beds for future planting, and planning activities for national events for 2010.

Grants and competitions

Many of our projects and activities have been made possible through winning competitions and successful applications for funding grants. Funding included: \$4,000 from P&C for outdoor learning space; \$1,000 Coles Junior Landcare grant for stage two of the organic vegetable garden; \$3,000 prize money for 1st place in the Enviro Inspiro student film competition; and \$50,000 for a Sustainable Schools Learning Community pilot study.

Many thanks to the staff and students who worked hard to make Keira a more environmentally aware and sustainable high school in 2009.

Multicultural education

Keira High School is proud of its diverse enrolment which includes 29.57% of students with a language background other than English. Indeed, a total of 37 languages were spoken by our 2009 student body.

There were two ESL teachers to cover a 1.4 staffing allocation.

There were English as a second language classes in years 9 -12 and students with the greatest need

in lower years were targeted as well. A group of students sat for the English (ESL) HSC course in 2009.

Students in years 10 and 11 attended the 2009 Multicultural Youth Conference at the University of Wollongong in June. This is always a beneficial day as the students mix with multicultural students from other schools in the Illawarra as they discuss and learn about issues relevant to them.

In September, Year 11 and 12 ESL students went on an excursion to the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) studios at Ultimo. Students were able to see the television studios where many of the programs on ABC are filmed and were actually able to stand at the side as a section of the first program of "Hungry Beast" was being made before it went on TV. Students were taken to makeup which includes wigs and face parts as well as makeup suitable for interviews and news presentation. They then went to the news and weather studio followed by radio studios where they met an author who was waiting to be interviewed about his new book and saw James Valentine talking on his afternoon show which runs on ABC 702. During this tour they saw the many people working in the background needed to produce these shows.

Harmony Day in March was celebrated by decorating the quadrangle with orange ribbons and streamers. Orange hands were linked across the stage area and all students were made aware of their significance.

Respect and Responsibility

Students at Keira High School are encouraged to develop a respect for themselves, for others within the school community and to extend this to their dealings with the wider community and society.

In this regard, the school has made the wearing of the school uniform, respect for the learning and teaching within the classroom as well as caring for the built and natural environment, high priorities. These principles underpin the school's Student Welfare and Discipline Policy.

One of the school's priorities in recent years has been to develop and maintain high quality formal assemblies, presentation evenings and award ceremonies.

The school has active student groups which promote and encourage respect and responsibility throughout the school community including the SRC, Interact, the Environmental Group, and peer support.

Interact is an important student leadership group that involves Year 11 students working with the Wollongong Rotary Club.

Student Representative Council (SRC)

The body of this council at Keira is made up of 24 councillors from Years 7 to 12. These students are elected by their peers by secret ballot. These students along with the elected captains and vice captains form the SRC. Occasionally volunteers fill vacated positions when a by-election is not feasible.

The SRC endeavours to address student issues and concerns and respond to initiatives offered by the school, external bodies and the DET. Throughout 2009 the SRC continued a shift away from fundraising for charities and disasters of an international scope to concentrate on its role as the political voice of the school. This was deemed essential so as not to conflict with Interact which primarily has a public service role. The inclusion of the captains and vice captains in the SRC was formalised in 2009 and this change to the SRC constitution will be evaluated in 2010.

In August 2009 the aforementioned shift in commission was exemplified by a district wide forum hosted by the SRC at Keira High School. Over 70 students from local high schools and their teacher advisers met for the day. Extensive discussion occurred on the role of student councillors following a brief talk by representatives from each school on their strong points. Given the enthusiasm for a 'round table' discussion, the original agenda was suspended to allow a more open forum to continue well into the afternoon. All schools agreed that another school should host a similar gathering in 2010. A fund-raiser for the school was also conducted in 2010 allowing for the purchase of resources for the PDHPE faculty.

Students are still developing the skills and forethought required to initiate and conduct meetings and other procedures to implement the actions of the SRC. This development has periods of progress, moments of stasis and occasional retrograde steps. Often these 'pace' variations coincide with changes in personnel. However, it is believed that the school must allow the students to take most of the responsibility for the success or failure of initiatives and that the role of the SRC Adviser should be primarily one of guide rather than instigator.

The SRC is a financially autonomous body but only to the extent where students pay their own way when possible. Still, with no substantial sources of income, the school often needs to

assist with the substantial costs involved in events such as Regional Conference and other gatherings.

It is anticipated that the ongoing development of the political role of the SRC will continue to require considerable guidance and facilitation.

Keira Community of Schools (KCOS)

The dynamic, innovative nature of Keira COS was consolidated in 2009 by the ongoing professional dialogue and sharing of pedagogy, focusing on the improvement in learning outcomes for all students. The sharing of NAPLAN data initiated in 2008 continued in 2009 with a School Development Day dedicated to the analysis, evaluation and discussion of NAPLAN data and the implications for program development and evaluation. Stage 3 and Stage 4 teachers had the opportunity to discuss program evaluation and modification in response to weaknesses and strengths identified in the data analysis.

Special Interest Days continued throughout 2009. Wollongong Public School was again successful in the Keira Chess Challenge, the Mathematics Enrichment Day was hosted at KHS, Computer Technology Day at Pleasant Heights PS and a visual arts day dedicated to creating the backdrops and advertising images for the Keira Community of Schools Concert. Keira High School students continued to assist in the organisation of Primary School athletics and cross country carnivals. Year 12 students initiated a sports coaching program as part of a Stage 6 Sports Lifestyle and Recreation Course with one partner school, this program required a commitment of one hour per week for six weeks by senior students.

The Keira Community of Schools Biennial Concert was again held at the Fraternity Recreation and Bowling Club. The Performing Arts talents of 150 students were showcased in *Flashy, Cooky a little bit Spooky* themed matinee and evening concerts. The concert was enjoyed by an audience of approximately 400 parents, siblings, grandparents and caregivers.

National Tree Planting Day 2009 was again celebrated in collaboration with Wollongong City Council Greenhouse Park volunteers and students from each of the partner schools. The propagation, planting and care of native plant seedlings continues to be integral to each school's Environmental Education targets.

The success of the Keira Community of Schools Environmental initiatives was realised with the

inclusion of all partner schools in the Sustainable Schools Learning Communities Pilot Project 2010. Keira Community of Schools is one of four learning communities across the state to be included in this initiative.

Keira Community of School's commitment to being an authentic learning community has been further demonstrated by the planning and discussion which began in Term 4 2009 for the creation and development of a longitudinal research project that all seven partner schools would participate in. The focus of the project is to identify programs and teaching strategies that enhance student engagement. The Regional Quality Teaching Coordinator and University of Wollongong Education Faculty have been approached to participate as research partners.

The term 2 School Development Day 2010 has been quarantined for all partner schools to collaboratively develop the project. It is anticipated that this project will be developed throughout 2010 and implemented 2011.

Special Education

Students in the Special Education Unit have accessed a number of programs during 2009 which have enhanced their learning opportunities and broadened their range of experiences.

English and Mathematics groups have been established to better cater for the individual needs of students. Initially each student is assessed and placed into a group depending on their ability and then their progress is closely monitored. New resources, including computer software and reading material, have been purchased to ensure the success of this initiative. To improve numeracy, teachers have introduced "Counting On" and Count Me In" programs and have implemented the "Accelerated Literacy" program to address students' literacy.

Work skills are an important area of study in special education and a number of initiatives have been put in to place to aid students in their understanding of the world of work. Students in Year 8 were given the opportunity to experience a variety of jobs within the school by working in the canteen, the office and with the General Assistant.

Other students in Years 9 and 10 were involved in a program with Para Meadows School which included attending a number of work skills seminars and participating in a group work experience program involving placement with three different employers. Senior students were placed in individual work experience settings

depending on their interests. All students have gained an insight into the working environment which will help them to make informed decisions about their future.

Students in the Special Education Unit enjoy the creative arts and were given several opportunities to showcase their talents. One of these was a joint initiative with the University of Wollongong which saw our students create artworks for and curate an exhibition at the university's Long Gallery. Students were involved in every aspect of the presentation of the exhibition which ran for a period of two weeks. An opening was held during which students made speeches and prepared and served a light supper to family, friends, teachers and dignitaries attending the night.

Other students, together with students from Para Meadows School, participated in the annual Wollongong Dance Festival. Students practised for many weeks before the event to perfect their dance and performed magnificently on the night. This performance required dedication and commitment from students and staff and resulted in students acquiring many useful skills. Some students were also involved in designing and creating some of the sets for Southern Stars. This was a massive undertaking as the sets consisted of very large canvasses which took many hours to paint. Interested students worked tirelessly, often in their free time, to complete the sets which had to be finished in quite a short time frame. Not only did students gain valuable skills in design and artmaking but they also learnt about team work, meeting deadlines, successful communication and the art of compromise.

Keira High School promotes a healthy lifestyle and all students in the Special Education Unit are encouraged to be active and participate in sporting events such as the annual Special Education futsal tournament involving teams from Special Education classes at various high schools in the area playing a round robin competition to determine the most successful school. Keira fielded two teams, both of which played extremely well, and the school was the eventual winner of the tournament, receiving a large trophy for their efforts.

In order to further promote a healthy lifestyle, the Special Education unit also focused on encouraging students to have a healthy diet to sustain their concentration levels to enhance learning. A breakfast program was established in the mornings before school where students were encouraged to develop the routines of setting up and preparing breakfast as well as cleaning up to the occupational health and safety standards.

Students' social skills were enhanced whilst they gained valuable experience in the hospitality area.

Academic

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

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

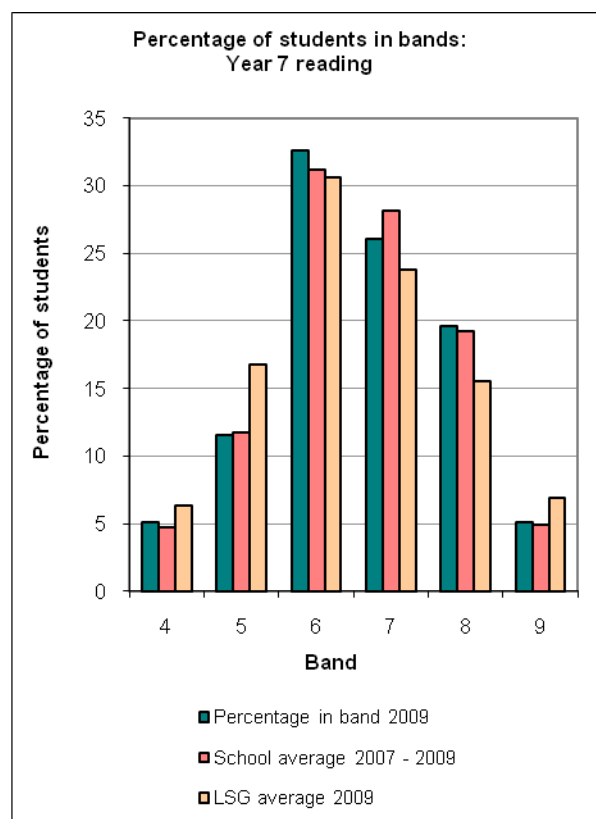
Year 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)

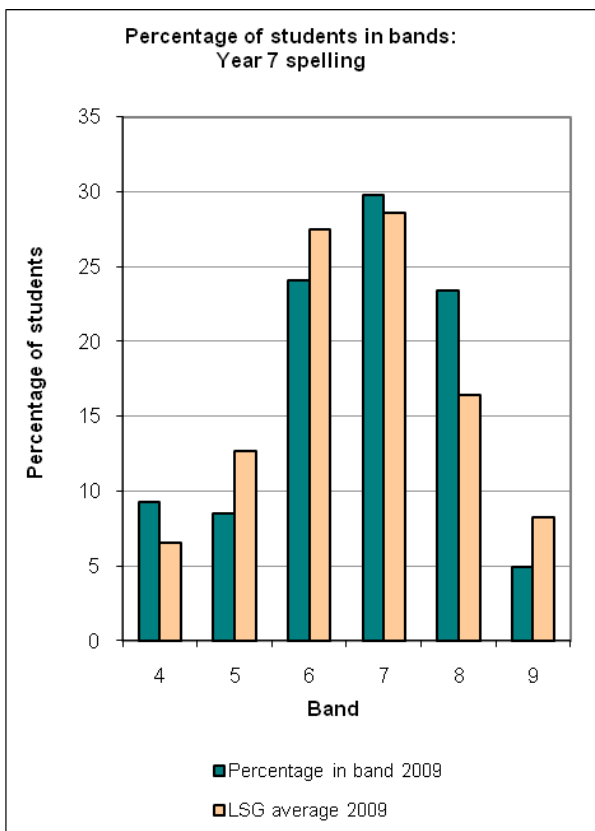
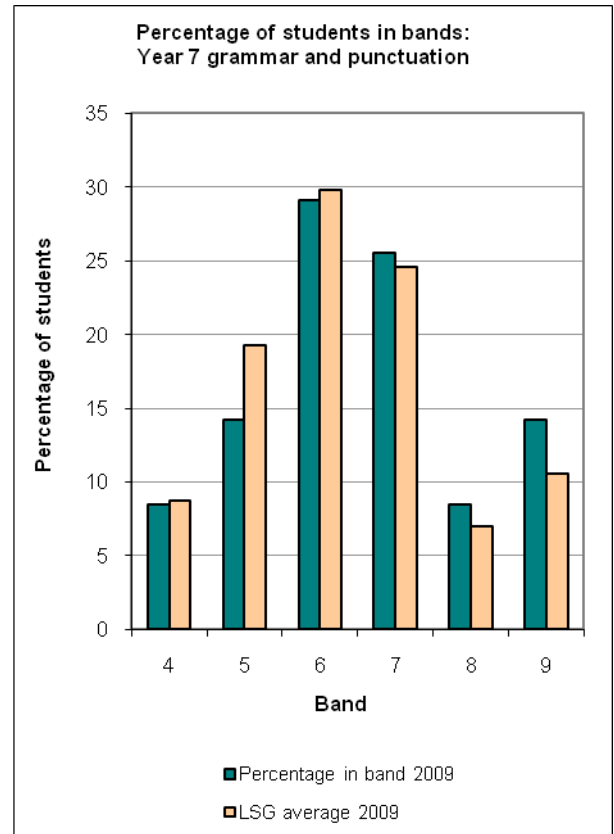
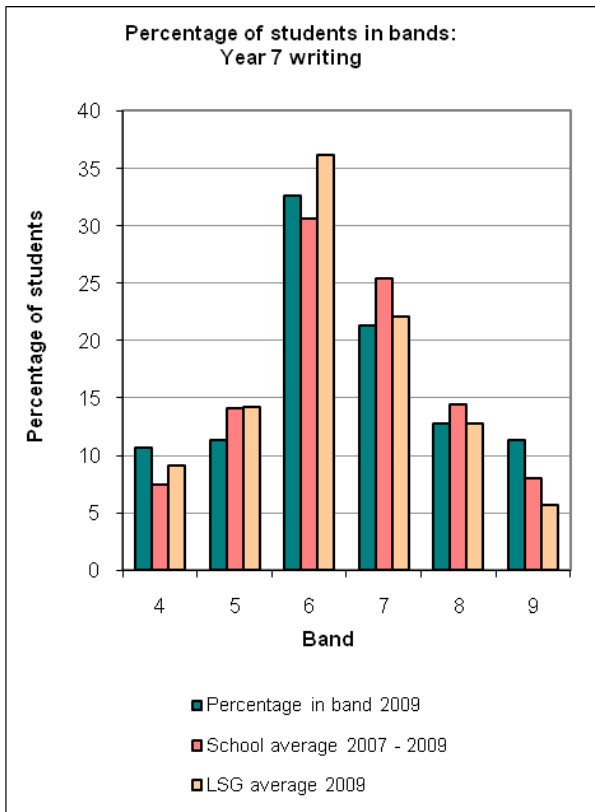
Year 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

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

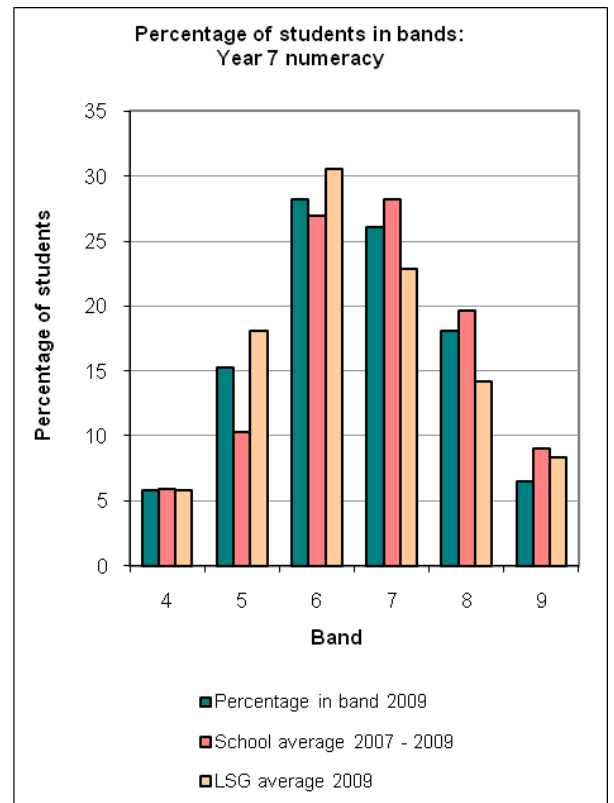
Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7

Year 7 NAPLAN data is not an indicator of school performance and achievement. It is entry level data. The importance of the data is that it gives a snapshot of the entry level literacy and numeracy strengths and weaknesses of the particular Year 7 group of students and enables the school to plan appropriate literacy and numeracy strategies across the KLA's.

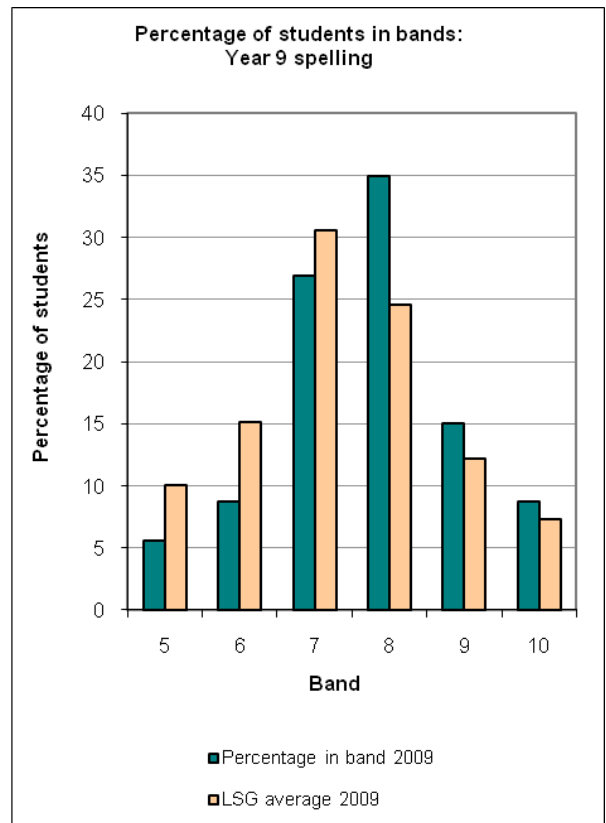
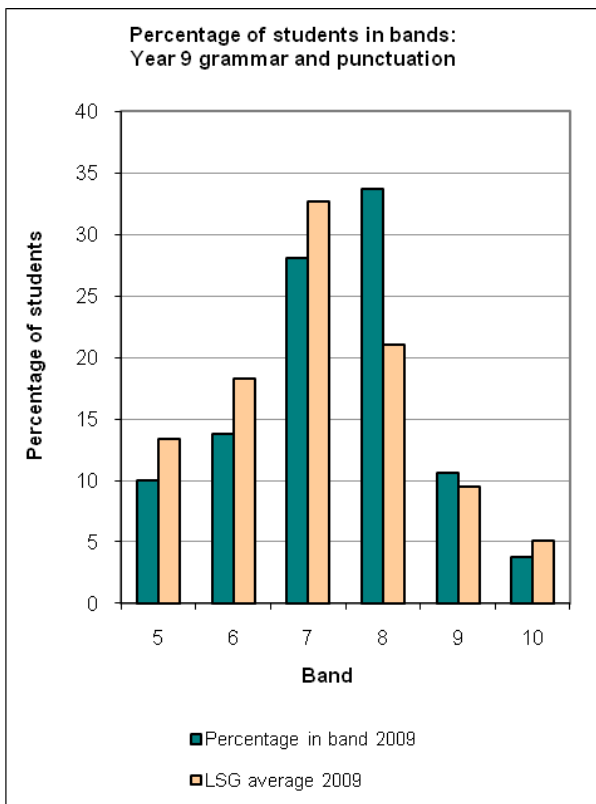
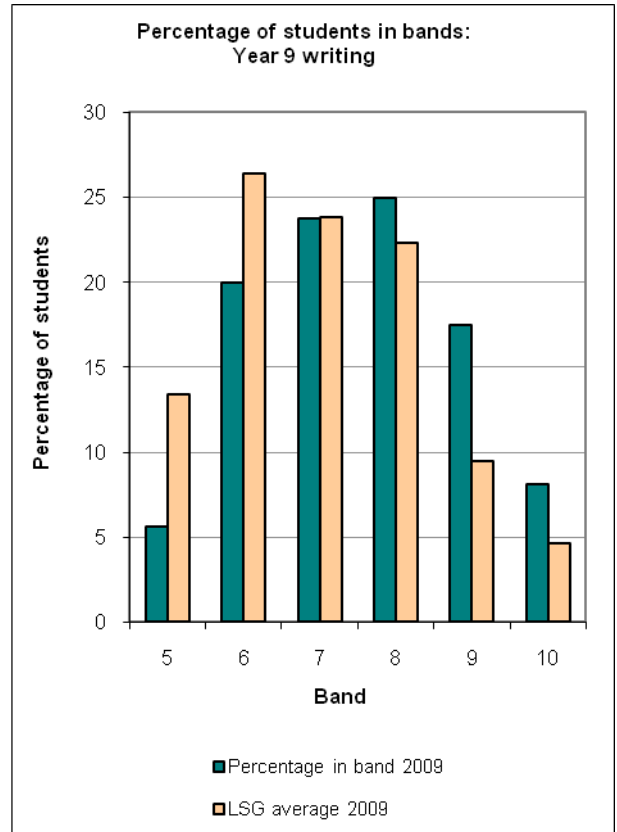
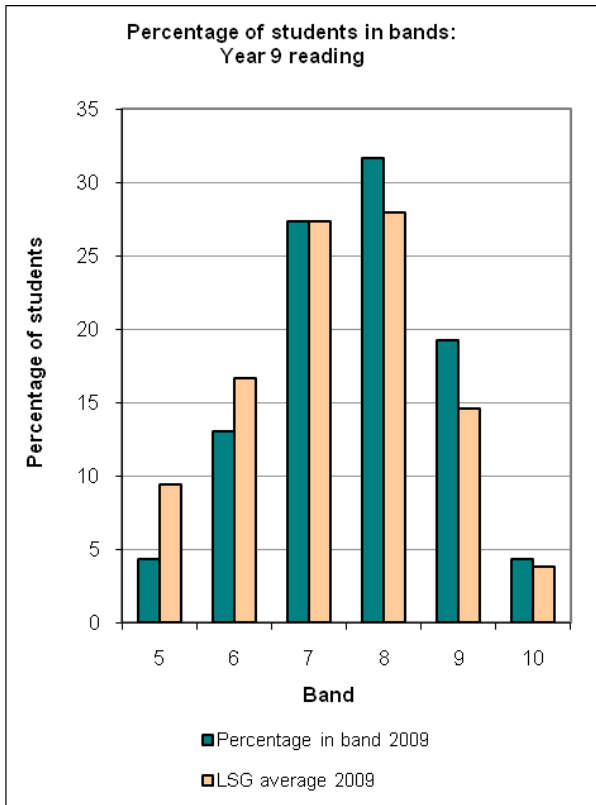




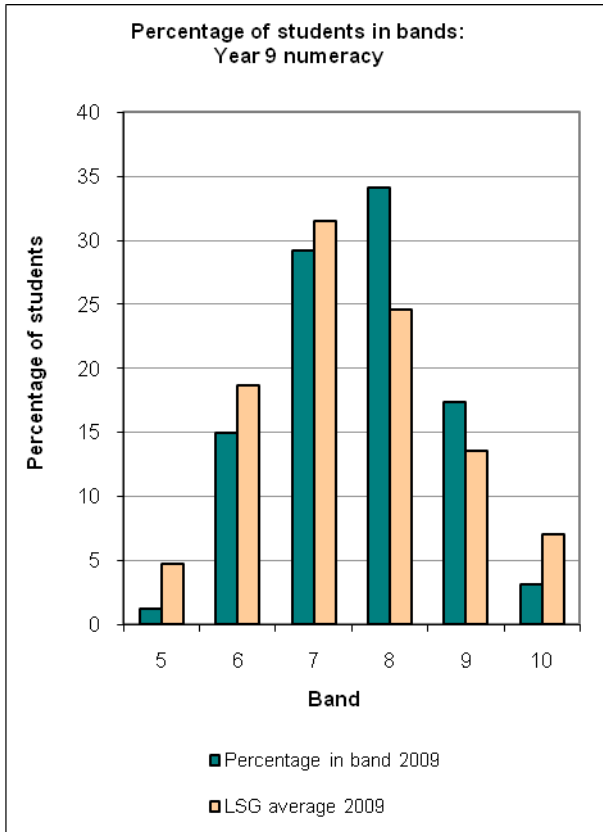
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7



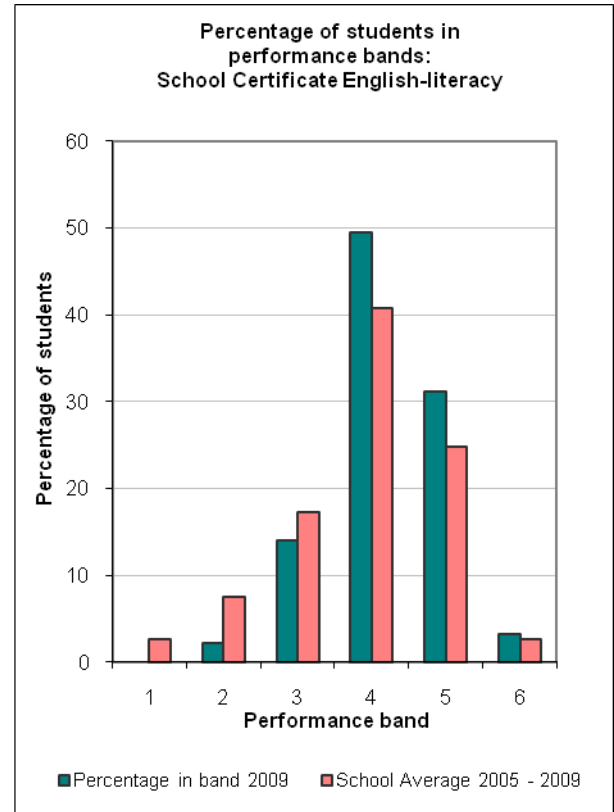
Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9



Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9



School Certificate

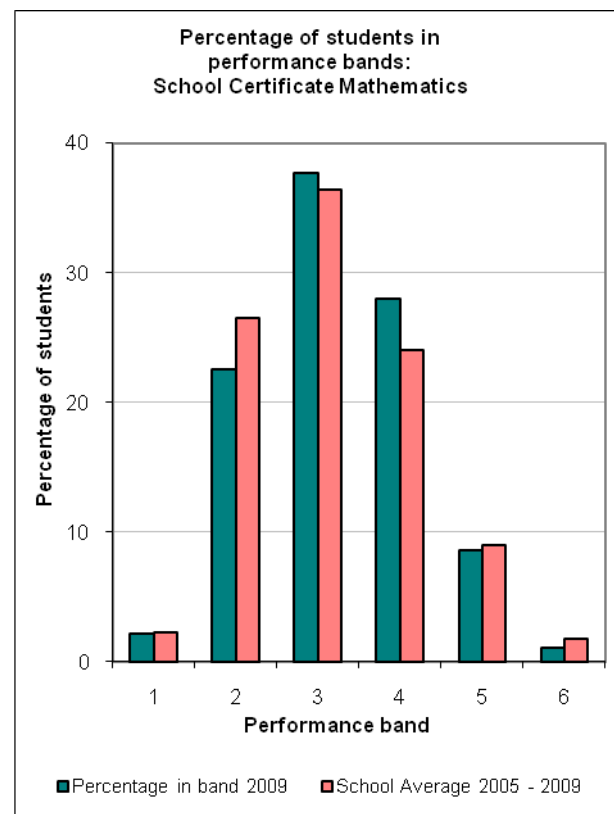


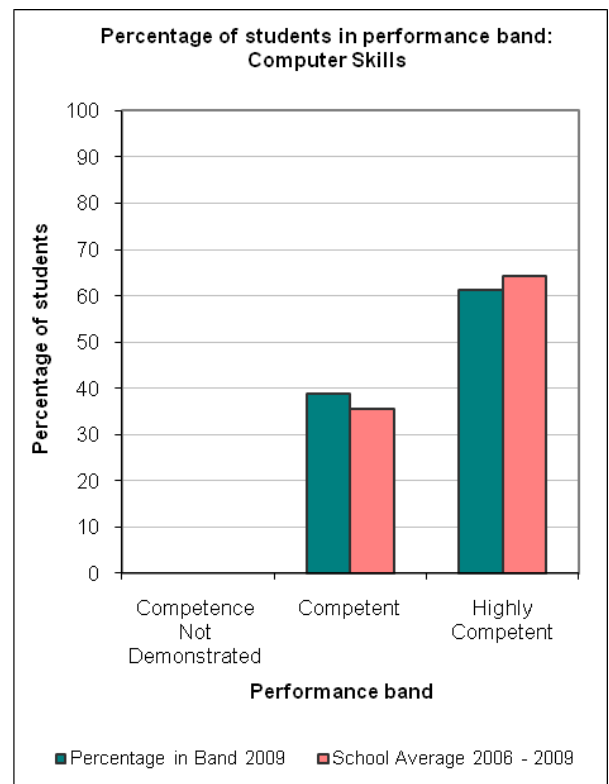
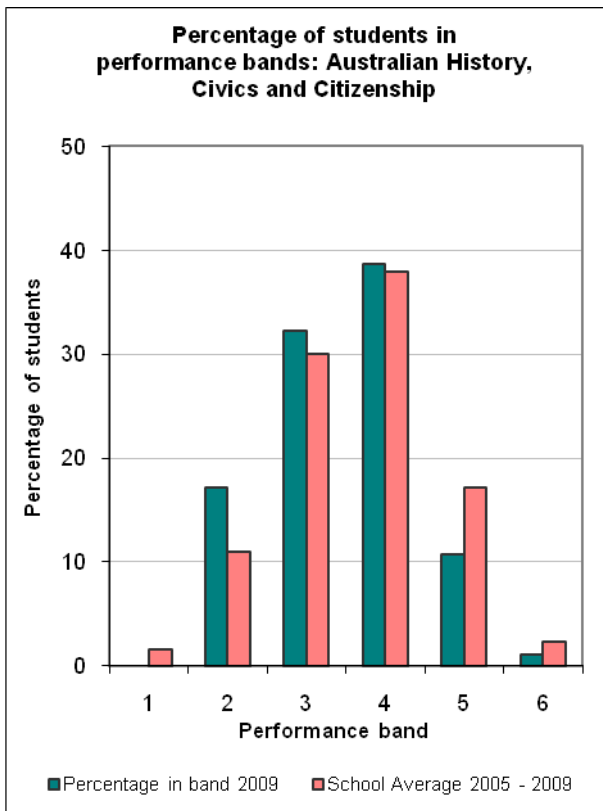
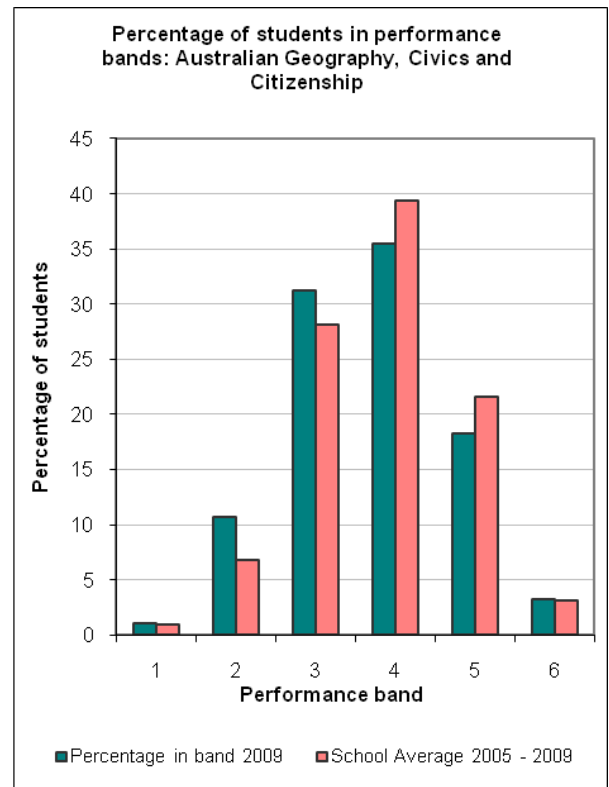
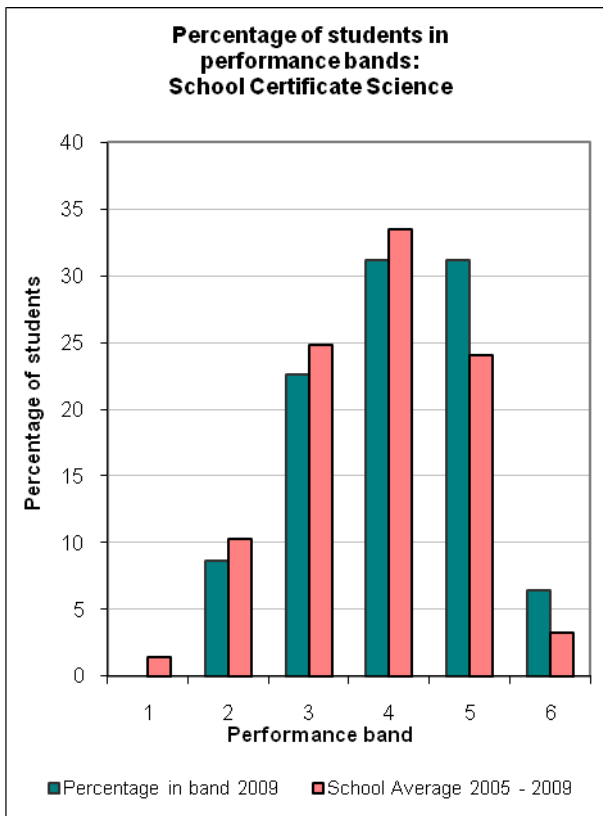
Minimum standards

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

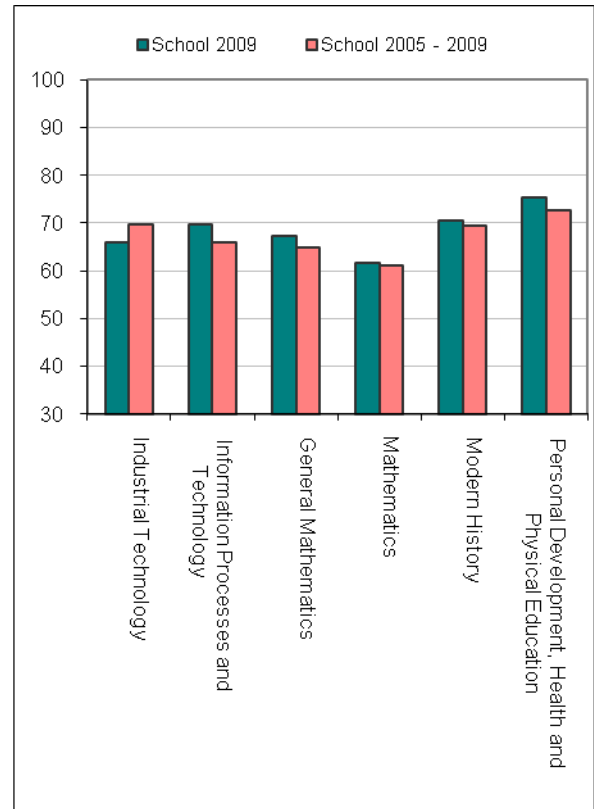
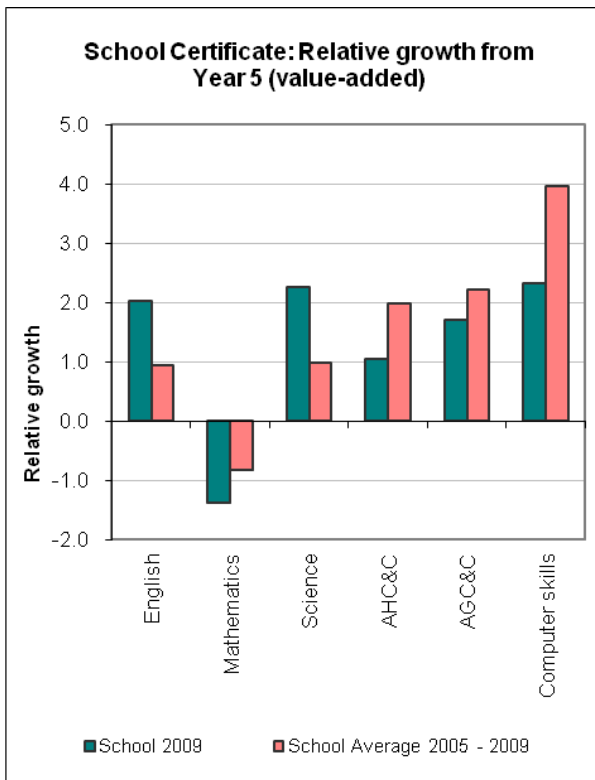
The performance of the students in our school in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy is compared to these minimum standards. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these standards are reported below.

Percentage of Year 7 students achieving at and above minimum standard	
Reading	94.9
Writing	89.4
Spelling	90.8
Punctuation and grammar	91.5
Numeracy	94.2
Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at and above minimum standard	
Reading	95.7
Writing	94.4
Spelling	94.4
Punctuation and grammar	90.0
Numeracy	98.8

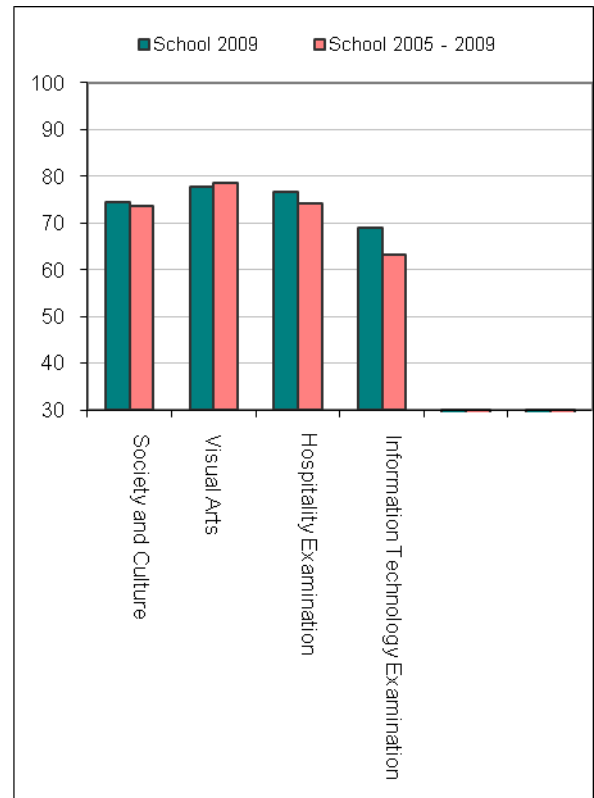
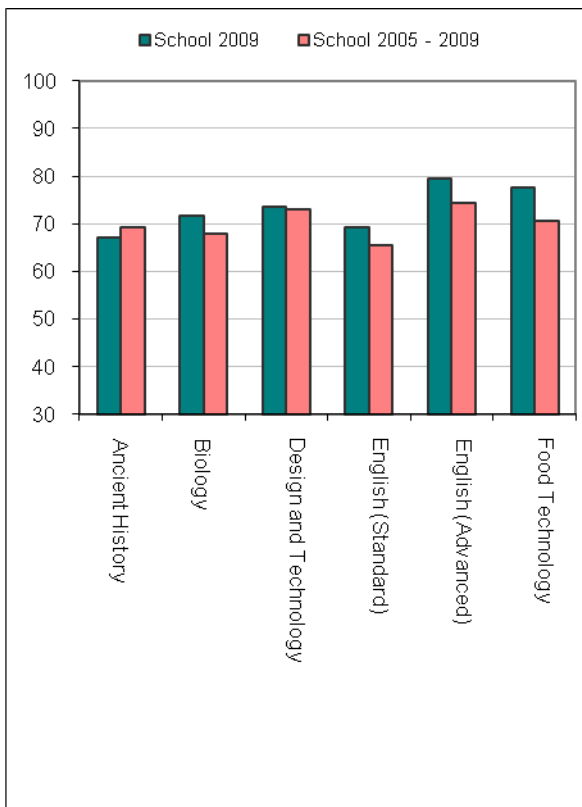




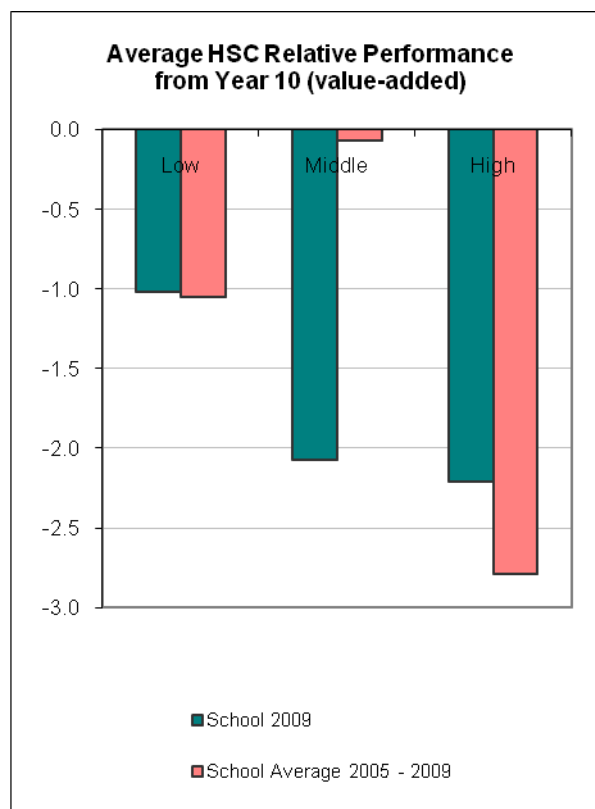
School Certificate relative performance comparison to Year 5 (value-adding)



Higher School Certificate



Higher School Certificate relative performance comparison to School Certificate (value-adding)



Progress on 2009 targets

Target 1

Retention - To increase retention into Year 7, and from Year 10 to Year 12

Our achievements include:

Student retention for Year 10, 2006 to Year 12, 2008 was 51.4%. For the period 2007-2009, this increased to 63.9%. This figure was above both the local school education group average as well as the above the state average. We are anticipating that this improvement will continue. The new mandatory leaving age (which will be measured in the 2011 Year 12 cohort) should consolidate this important achievement.

The school has continued to target our local public partner schools to ensure that Keira High School is the secondary school of first choice for our community. There has now been four years of growth in the junior school, led primarily by a large Year 7 enrolment each year since 2006. In 2010, the school will need to establish an enrolment ceiling to limit the number of non-local enrolments

in order to accommodate the increase in local area enrolments.

The increase in enrolments across all years has also included an increase in female student enrolments resulting from the gender classes program in Years 7 and 8.

Target 2

Numeracy - To improve numeracy skills

Our achievements include:

There is increasing evidence that basic numeracy skills in the junior school are improving following specific programs and interventions. The average mark for Year 7 students was 533.5 compared to 530.8 for the 'like schools group'. For Year 9 students, the improvement was even greater. The average mark for Keira was 588.8 compared to 580.2 for the 'like schools group'. This mark was almost on the state average of 589.3.

The school's Numeracy Team was consolidated by an increase in cross-faculty representation. The school employed, from school funds, an additional 0.6 (3 days per week) numeracy support teacher to target those students in need. The Stage 4 Integrated ICT/Numeracy Project was evaluated and maintained. There was an increase in staff trained in the Counting On Programs across Stages 3 and 4, in cooperation with partner schools.

Target 3

Technology - To maximise the effective use of new technologies according to quality teaching principles.

Our achievements include:

The successful introduction of the Laptops for Learning Program. Every Year 9 student was issued with a dedicated laptop for personal and school use. This followed an intensive training and development strategy that included targeting teachers of Year 9 across all faculties. The central focus for the 2009 Faculty Review was technology particularly in relation to the revision of Stage 5 faculty and class programs as well as assessment strategies.

The school purchased additional electronic whiteboards across the school as well as establishing a fully operational video-conferencing facility.

To further support the introduction of the new technologies, a targeted School Development Day was held with the focus: "Quality Teaching and Integrating Technology into Your Classroom".

There has now been an increase in demand from all faculties for additional new technologies, particularly electronic whiteboards that integrate with the new student laptops. This area is a funding priority for 2010.

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:

- Organisational structure and delivery of Learning Support
- Numeracy/ICT Stage 4 Project.

Educational and Management Practice:

Organisational structure and delivery of Learning Support

Background

A program to rationalise and enhance the identification of students with learning needs and to deliver effective levels of learning support to these students was developed and initiated in 2009. The school's learning support team in consultation with the senior executive developed a strategic plan whereby past practices were assessed, existing structures evaluated and literacy and numeracy initiatives considered as integral elements in the delivery of an improved model of learning assistance.

An evaluation of learning support highlighted the need to develop a structure whereby learning needs were more effectively identified by a set of diagnostic instruments along with information provided by NAPLAN. The development of a program that would better cater for a range of learning needs, meet the increased need for support in stage 4 and allow for varying degrees of assistance was seen as a priority.

The following areas were identified as the focal points of an improved learning support structure.

- A. The identification of students requiring support
- B. The grouping of students to allow for meaningful development of learning programs

- C. A rationalising of support delivery to meet levels of need in both an equitable yet effective fashion
- D. A system by which classroom teachers can participate in both the identification and support of students accessing learning support programs beyond the classroom

Findings and conclusions

1. The identification of students requiring high levels of support while successful would be enhanced by the development of a formalised approach utilising both external testing and a range of diagnostic and observational instruments
2. Classroom teachers must be provided with a process by which students experiencing difficulties may be referred for assessment
3. To most effectively meet the high demand for learning assistance, students requiring support need to be grouped according to level of need required
4. An appropriate level of assistance allocated to both groupings and individual students was required to allow for both consistent and effective support
5. A structure was required to provide assessment and transitional support for students whose level of need did not require assistance beyond the classroom for any significant period of intervention
6. Both individual and group learning programs while existing needed to be formalised to a level whereby a range of quality teaching practices are employed and learning outcomes can be assessed and reported upon.

Future directions

The learning support team in consultation with the senior executive will:

- evaluate the effectiveness of the learning support model in its capacity to best support the learning need of all students
- assess the structure's design in its attempt to provide levels of support appropriate to levels of need
- ensure that classroom teachers remain informed of how learning support is delivered and what level of support and STLA

intervention is appropriate to particular levels of need

- evaluate the impact of the school's learning support program.

Curriculum:

Numeracy / ICT Stage 4 Project

Background

Keira High School initiated an evaluation of the Numeracy/Integrated Computer Technology Project in 2007. The project was the result of a whole school evaluation of Numeracy which was carried out in Term 1, 2007. The project aim was to support the work being undertaken in improving numeracy results of students as measured by NAPLAN. The project was introduced to the Year 7 cohort in 2007 and expanded to include Year 7 and Year 8 in 2008.

The project was a cross faculty initiative with an Environmental Education theme. The faculties that delivered the project included; Visual Arts, Science, Mathematics, Social Science, PDHPE and Design and Technology. The Year 8 project was developed to build upon the skills and concepts acquired on the completion of the Year 7 project, maintaining the Environmental Education theme.

The evaluation was to review and report on:

1. Student and teacher attitudes toward the Numeracy/ ICT Project.
2. The possibility of incorporating other subject faculties into the project.
3. Alternative options for the structuring of a Stage 4 Numeracy Project.

The review team sought the information it required by surveying staff who taught the project in Years 7 and 8. The review team also surveyed a random selection of students who participated in the project in Year 7 and 8. Other documentation that was analysed included a selection of randomly chosen completed projects from both girls and boys classes in Year 7 and 8.

Findings and Conclusions

1. *Student and teacher attitudes toward the Numeracy/ICT Project.*

All students indicated that they had enjoyed the cross faculty nature of the project although some were unclear as to the purpose of the project. All students surveyed expressed their preference to having the theme of the project changed. The students clearly indicated that two years with the same theme reduced enjoyment and engagement.

Staff indicated that the project was very successful for some students but there were a number of students who had difficulty completing the project due to limited access to computer technology outside the classroom. Staff also indicated that organisational aspects of the project at times made sequential progression on the project difficult, i.e. computer room allocations, time allocations for the completion of different aspects of the project.

A significant number of staff expressed concern that they had insufficient information regarding the role of their faculty in the project and that their understanding of the concept of the completed project was limited. Staff indicated a greater need for information to be communicated to them directly rather than through Head Teachers or the Numeracy Team.

2. *The possibility of incorporating other subject faculties into the project.*

Staff supported the inclusion of additional faculties and suggested that faculties have responsibility for delivering the project on a biennial basis rather than the same faculties each year having carriage of the project.

Staff proposed that the Year 7 and Year 8 projects have a different focus and that different faculties deliver the project to each year group.

3. *Alternative options for the structuring of stage 4 Numeracy/ICT Project.*

- Continue to offer both Year 7 and Year 8 projects but with a different theme either for both, or alternatively have completely different projects for Year 7 and Year 8.

- That the focus of the project, particularly in Year 7, be on the four (4) mathematical operations (addition, subtraction, division, multiplication) rather than data and measurement. This was the result of NAPLAN analysis and teachers observations of student's mastery of the four operations.

Staff proposed that additional faculties be included in the delivery of the project but have responsibility for either the Year 7 or Year 8 project.

A strong recommendation from staff was that the projects be more aligned with curriculum outcomes to allow incorporation into existing programs rather than creating a standalone project that encroached upon curriculum periods. Staff suggested modifying existing programs to accommodate the subject matter of the project whilst maintaining curriculum outcome objectives.

Conclusions

It was apparent that both staff and students recognised that there were benefits to the current structure. However, to improve student outcomes and the depth of student learning in numeracy a revision of the content of the current Stage 4 Numeracy Project was required.

The findings of the surveys and analysis of data indicate that the optimum project structure move away from an Environment Education theme and develop projects that are more in line with curriculum objectives and with a focus upon the four mathematical operations

Future Directions

The school will:

- Maintain the Stage 4 Numeracy Project
- Create opportunities for students to participate in a project that in part reflects curriculum objectives
- Ensure project objectives, timeline and faculty responsibilities are clearly communicated to participating staff

Continue with the process of ongoing evaluation and modification to ensure that the project continues to meet the numeracy needs of students

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2009 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

The school community's positive attitude towards the school continues. Staff commented favourably on the school's stable and settled learning environment as well as the high expectations regarding student behaviour. Parents report that the school's emphases on uniform, discipline, the Year 7 & 8 gender classes and the school's

performing arts program as being strongly supported. Students remarked on the positive effect of the school's performing arts program, and the positive relationships formed with teachers. As well, the school's curriculum structures and sporting opportunities received favourable mention as did the improvements to the physical environment throughout the school playground.

Professional learning

The teaching and support staff at Keira High School take seriously their responsibility to continually develop professionally. Both SASS and teaching staff members engage in a range of activities to this end, some developed within the school and many offered as external courses. The school expended the tied funds of \$46,795 on teachers' professional learning in 2009. The main areas of professional development included Aboriginal education, syllabus implementation, student welfare and equity, career development, beginning teachers' programs, environmental education, literacy and numeracy and the integration of information technology.

School development 2009 – 2011

Targets for 2009

Target 1

Stages 4 and 5 Assessment Strategies – To evaluate the quality of our current Stages 4 and 5 assessment tasks and the nature and quality of staff feedback to students.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

As a priority area of the 2010 School Plan, resources will be devoted to evaluate existing Stage 4 and 5 assessment tasks. This will include a School Development Day devoted to the issue. As well, key teaching personnel, including Head Teachers, will specifically focus on the timing and quality of feedback to students.

Our success will be measured by:

A revision of Stage 4 and Stage 5 Assessment Schedules that include a more manageable timeline for effective return of tasks with teacher feedback.

A 30% reduction in the number of 'N' Award warnings issued to students in Years 9 and 10.

Target 2

Aboriginal Education - To develop, in collaboration with ATSI students and their families, a Personal Learning Program (PLP) for each student.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

The establishment of an Aboriginal Education Committee that brings in a number of teachers from across faculties. The Committee's chair will be charged with the responsibility of collaborating with staff, students and the parents and caregivers of Aboriginal students.

A number of sample PLPs will be used to develop a revised Keira High School PLP. The Committee will also investigate the feasibility of developing digital PLPs to allow for greater use of existing technologies to further engage Aboriginal students.

Our success will be measured by:

98% of all Aboriginal students developing a new PLP in 2010.

Target 3

Technology - To maximise effective classroom teacher use of new technologies, particularly in Stage 5.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Doubling the number of electronic whiteboards to ensure that every faculty has access to the technology.
- Key personnel trained in use of new technologies.
- Targeted training and development.

Our success will be measured by:

Continued evaluation of Stage 5 programs to monitor the use of laptops in classrooms. An increase in effective laptop usage by Stage 5 students as evaluated in student assessment tasks.

A continued increase in the number of staff trained in use of the video-conferencing facility and new interactive whiteboards.

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.

Ms S. Blackstock, NSWTF Representative

Ms L. Borst, President, P&C Association

Mr M. Mulheron, Principal

Mr D. Robson, Deputy Principal

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

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