Our school at a glance

Macarthur Girls High School was founded in 1934 on a parcel of land which was originally part of the second oldest land grant in Australia. The land was later given to Reverend Samuel Marsden who built Newlands on the site. The school is situated on the Parramatta River.

Students

The school maintained strong student enrolment numbers throughout 2011 with a total of 1040 students. The school’s positive reputation has created a demand for enrolment into Macarthur Girls High School. Approximately 88% of our students are from language backgrounds other than English with 63% of our enrolments from out of area.

Staff

Our school had a teaching entitlement of 70.6 staff with an additional 13 school assistants. As a Centre for Excellence (C4E) we had a Highly Accomplished Teacher and a paraprofessional employed for two years, 2010 and 2011.

The school’s teaching staff is a strong mix of very experienced teachers and new scheme teachers, all of whom are committed to providing continuing excellence in teaching and learning.

Significant programs and initiatives

In 2009, Macarthur Girls High School was the first school in NSW to be announced as a Centre for Excellence. The school introduced a program to improve student literacy in the early years of the secondary education. Enhanced literacy skills will underpin the achievement of higher learning outcomes throughout their life.

Student achievement in 2011

Literacy: NAPLAN Year 7 and Year 9

Student performance in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) once again matched the strong literacy achievements demonstrated by students in previous years.

In 2011, Macarthur Girls High School average scores for Year 7 were well above state average in 2 of the 4 areas with Year 9 well above average scores in 3 of the 4 literacy areas. For example, Writing: Year 7 scored 562.6 compared with state average of 527.9 and Year 9 scored 606.4 compared with state average of 564.7. Student progress and growth in all areas of literacy, made from Year 5 to Year 7 and from Year 7 to Year 9, were also well above state averages.

Numeracy: NAPLAN Year 7 and Year 9

Students have consistently performed well in statewide numeracy assessments with results close to, or above, state average in recent years. In the 2011 NAPLAN, average scores were again above state levels in Year 9 (School average 595.1 versus 592.3 statewide). Year 7 average scores were at the state average. Progress or improvements made by students from Year 5 to Year 7 and from Year 7 to Year 9, were also well above state averages.

School Certificate

173 students sat the 2011 School Certificate (SC), with the percentages of students achieving in the top two bands being above state level for each of the externally tested courses.

Student improvement, the measurement of student relative growth from Year 5 to Year 10, was strong in every course. Australian History and Geography, Civics and Citizenship, Mathematics, Computing Skills and English added the most value to the average relative performance of Year 10 students.

Higher School Certificate

Higher School Certificate (HSC) results were excellent with our dux for the year achieving a 98.85% Australian Tertiary Assessment Rank (ATAR). There were 75 Distinguished Achievers who attained either a Band 6 or E4 in 27 different HSC courses.

Average improvement from Year 10 to Year 12 was well above state levels in all bands and student growth was very high across all subjects. Excellent results were achieved in a large number of courses with the percentage of students attaining one of the top two bands far exceeding state performance.
Messages

Principal’s message

We consistently encourage our students to strive to achieve their personal best, both within and outside the classroom. We provide our students with extensive opportunities to grow personally, and to have a positive influence over the life of others; “vis viva – the living force.”

The Annual School Report (ASR) provides a major source of information for our school community to learn about the achievements of our students. Our ASR shows that, in 2011, a variety of school initiatives enhanced the life, academic and leadership skills of students. It provides evidence of Macarthur students putting our PRIDE values into practice. Through participation and through striving for excellence, outstanding achievements have been attained.

I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school's achievements and areas for development.

Gail Cluff

P & C message

Macarthur Girls High School staff have maintained strong partnerships with the Parents and Citizens Association (P&C). Members are informed of the latest activities and programs operating in the school and collaborate on school policy and decisions. Items discussed have included school uniform, Centre for Excellence initiatives, external test results, curriculum for stages 4, 5 and 6 and anti-bullying strategies.

A commitment to positive home-school partnerships remains a core value of the school. Throughout 2011, the P&C met twice per term on Tuesday evenings from 7.30pm. Members of the P&C were active representatives on numerous committees and staff selection panels, after participating in merit selection training.

Sue Palmer
P&C President

Student representative’s message

The Student Representative Council (SRC) aims to uphold the PRIDE values and voice the needs of the student body through the practice of active leadership. Composed of Prefects and Junior SRC members, we have been able to effectively run a series of campaigns and events that encompass the PRIDE values of our school.

The Have a Heart initiative saw Macarthur Girls support a high school in the flood affected regions of Queensland. The funds raised by selling red hearts during Valentine’s Day and throughout Term 1, assisted the victims of the devastating floods. Hundreds of hearts were sold and displayed in the school office. This was a rewarding initiative that saw the students work together to support others.

International Women’s Day is an annual celebration where women within our school and community are acknowledged. The SRC commemorated the event by selling purple ribbons and empowering students through activities such as popping of balloons to represent stamping out the inequality of women.

Shades for Aids was one charity that we supported within the school. The proceeds of the collection assisted in the prevention of Aids in afflicted areas within Africa and Cambodia. The generosity of the school community surpassed our expectations, with many students and teachers supporting this cause.

The Just the Way You Are Campaign was our big campaign for 2011. On 30th May, the students were given a free gerbera kindly donated by the owner of Church St Florist and a note with positive body image messages. The VIBE concert, in which the group Capree played, was another component of this campaign. The SRC emphasised the importance of recognising your own identity in the UParade, which saw students and teachers embracing their personalities and accepting themselves for whom they are. Further supported by the former Miss Universe Australia, Jesinta Campbell, the campaign encompassed all of the PRIDE values.
The SRC members represent our school not only as student leaders within the school but also at district and regional events. Students from Years 9 and 10 represented Macarthur at the Western Sydney Regional SRC Campference as well as the Mitchell Youth Leadership Forum. On 31st August, the SRC organised a prefect cluster, inviting student leaders from other schools to share their visions on student leadership.

With the assistance of the Blood Ambassadors, the Prefect body organized a series of blood donations throughout the year to support the Red Cross. Students from Years 10 – 12 donated.

The SRC and prefect body aim to motivate the students, celebrate their achievements, and advocate the PRIDE values within the school. We thank the outgoing Captains, Prefects and representatives for all their hard work.

2011 SRC members

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

Over recent years student enrolments have remained strong, reflecting the very positive reputation of our school in the broader community. New students were drawn from more than 50 primary schools. The largest groups of students representing non-English speaking background families included: Arabic, Dari, Hindi and Cantonese speakers.

Enrolment trends in recent years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1018</td>
<td>1028</td>
<td>1026</td>
<td>1034</td>
<td>1040</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student attendance profile

The focus on improving student attendance processes is reflected in the following graph that compares Macarthur Girls High School attendance rates to the state and regional figures.

The 2011 attendance data showed a marked improvement in attendance of 1.5 percent over two years. This reflected student and parental acknowledgement of the relationship between school attendance and student outcomes.

Management of non-attendance

The 2011 strategies to achieve improved student welfare outcomes incorporated reviewing and redeveloping whole-school systems for student attendance. This included the development and implementation of a new attendance policy along with associated processes and procedures.

The new attendance policy specifically targeted whole day absences and lateness. All school staff had a role in the process and implementation.

Chronic individual non-attendance was managed within the Department of Education and Communities (DEC) guidelines and with the support and assistance of regional student welfare support team members.

Retention to Year 12

85.6% of the 2009 School Certificate cohort completed Year 12 in 2011. Macarthur Girls High School’s retention rate for the School Certificate cohort to the completion of the HSC was approximately 7.5 percentage points greater than the school education group and over 21.2 percentage points greater than the state.
Retention rates: SC to HSC completion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>51.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers and Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>83.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Post-school destinations
University offers were made to 68% of the HSC students. There were 7 students who received early January offers with the majority, 99 students, receiving main round offers. Many students were offered positions in courses they had listed with higher preferences.

To the 4 international students going to university, six 1st round offers were made, 2 had 2nd round offers and 1 received a 4th round offer.

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training
One student successfully completed a school based apprenticeship in hairdressing and has continued to work at the salon.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification
100% of students attained the Higher School Certificate. Seventy-four students were awarded a Certificate II or III or both in their chosen Framework course(s).

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
The number of teachers appointed to the school is dependent on the number of students enrolled. Our substantive staff comprised 70.6 teachers and 12.8 school administrative and support staff. The allocation of English as a Second Language teachers (ESL) decreased from 2.4 to 1.8 in 2011.

The workforce at Macarthur Girls High School has no identified indigenous personnel.

Staff retention
Staff retention remained strong at Macarthur Girls High School with the majority of staff changes in 2011 resulting from increased enrolments or teacher retirements. A number of temporary teachers were employed to assist with the increased number of staff on maternity leave.

Teacher qualifications
All teaching staff met the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools. Our teachers enhance their knowledge and skills through attendance at school based, regional and state professional learning activities which were scheduled at various times throughout the year.

Teacher Awards
Sally Best, Home Economics Head Teacher, received a Professional Teacher’s Council NSW award for outstanding service at the Annual Award ceremony in November 2011.
The award was given for the commitment and effort made in Sally’s role as President of the Technology Educator’s Association of NSW. The association provides ongoing support for teachers through professional learning activities, subject related workshops and conferences. It also provides activities including video conferences and seminars for students across the state.

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>30/11/2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>458366.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>667893.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>268113.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>453638.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>30829.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>46005.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>1924847.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Expenditure</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>144271.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>63548.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>78120.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>17164.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>1799.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>259488.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>118720.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>242224.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>96679.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>82911.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>47699.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>286165.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
<td>1438793.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Balance carried forward   | 486053.13  |

A full copy of the school’s 2011 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent body, the P&C. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2011

Achievements

Arts

The annual school concert *Flying Colours* was a great success with night-time and matinee performances at the end of Semester 1. Students explored the theme of colour within their performances. There were 27 items and over 380 students performed and provided backstage, front of house and hospitality support.

Drama

In 2011 we farewelled Mr McNamara at the end of Term 1. He taught Drama at Macarthur for 36 years. His dedication and intellect brought changes to the curriculum that enabled the students to express themselves in a way not previously envisioned in our education system.

The school concert was the main focus of the drama classes during Semester 1 with four groups from Years 7, 9 and 10 participating. In class, students explored themes of women’s rights, the playground and comedy through playbuilding activities which led to their concert performances.

The Year 8 Drama Club started at the beginning of 2011 and was organised by enthusiastic Year 11 thespians. The group of over thirty students enjoyed Tuesday lunch times playing drama games, learning acting skills and techniques. During Term 3, the Year 12 Drama students performed individual and group works for staff and Year 11 drama students.

Dance

Both the Junior and Senior Dance Companies were selected to perform at the *Sydney West Dance Festival* and the *Celebrating the Arts Festival*. Students also had the opportunity to enhance their skills at state and regional dance camps.

Students successfully auditioned for the *Schools Spectacular* combined dance ensemble, performing at the Sydney Entertainment Centre.
Years 7 and 9 dance classes and the Junior and Senior Dance Ensembles developed nine pieces for the school concert, *Flying Colours*.

**Music**

Music classes and extra-curricular groups concentrated on 13 musical items for the school concert including instrumental ensembles, vocal groups and rock bands.

Another addition to our performing groups in 2011 was the Instrumental Group that included flutes, clarinets, saxophone, violins, piano, electric keyboards, bass, guitars, drum kit, tuned percussion and untuned percussion.

Ten Rock bands continued developing their skills and performed at concerts, assemblies, the *Celebrating the Arts Festival* and *JesterFest*. This year four of our musical groups entered *JesterFest*. Out of 32 entries the groups *Platinum Five* came fifth and *Inside Out* came sixth.

Students performed two musical items for the annual *Celebrating the Arts Festival* at the Riverside Theatre.

Music students had an engaging time in a Drumming Workshop run by two guest tutors from the Roland Company, and Allans and Billy Hyde Music. They came to the elective music classes, demonstrated drumming techniques and gave the students instruction in using a jam hub (a piece of equipment that allows silent music rehearsal).

In Terms 3 and 4 the *Mac Factor Singing Competition* was run at lunchtimes in the music rooms. Belinda Saha attended the Regional Music camp as a vocalist.

A professional composer and performer, Graham Hilgendorf, came to work with students for four days of workshops. We are thankful to the generous donors, the *Musica Viva* organization, for giving Macarthur students the opportunity to learn from a professional composer.

Years 9, 10 and 11 music classes attended the *Sydney Symphony Orchestra* education concert at Olympic Park.

Ms Haydon left Macarthur Girls High School at the end of 2011 to pursue a new career path. We would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her many years of commitment in developing the musical skills of so many of our students and organising the extra-curricular instrumental, band and vocal groups.

**Visual Arts**

The *Artist of the Week* program continued to recognise our talented young artists at Macarthur during our fortnightly assembly. Their works were displayed along the bottom corridor outside the Deputy Principal’s office.

The Mosaic Club continued at lunchtimes in 2011 with many enthusiastic participants.
A number of students entered, and had their works hung in the Castle Hill and Districts Agricultural Show. Emma Chee, Meshva Mehta and Wandi Wei received a first and Tanmayi Kundap a second.

Chelsea Xing, a Year 10 Visual Design student came second and Nowshin Hassan came third in the Design an Ad Education Project.

HSC student Laily Gafori was successful in having her Body of Work, titled ‘A life that changes lives’, selected for the prestigious ArtExpress exhibition. Her body of work was a series of drawings and a wearable jacket based on gene research.

A life that changes lives
Laily Gafori

In 2012 her work will be exhibited at the Female Orphan School, University of Western Sydney. Congratulations to Laily for this wonderful achievement.

Year 8 Visual Arts students visited the Art Gallery of New South Wales in May. They explored the Asian, European and Aboriginal collections on display.

Sport
Due to the ongoing renovations to the school pool it was not possible to hold the annual Swimming Carnival. Students are looking forward to having full use of the pool for PE and sport groups in 2012.
The Athletics Carnival was well attended and participation levels were good. Due to construction at Barton Park, students could not do the high jump event on the day. The school introduced egg and spoon races which were a great success. Thanks to Parramatta Little Athletics Club for the use of their equipment.

The school fielded teams in the Zone swimming, cross country and athletics carnivals with a number of students moving on to represent the Zone at Regional level. Rosie Paka deserves special mention for her outstanding results at Zone level in 13 year old discus and shot put.

Grade sport competition is played during Terms 2 and 3. Our teams participated with enthusiasm and sportsmanship in netball, oztag, softball and soccer. Macarthur also entered teams in the statewide soccer, tennis and touch football knockout competitions. Students trained and competed enthusiastically, with the tennis team making the second round.

Year 7 and 8 Games Days were held at Doyle Park and Pennant Hills Park respectively, with students participating in a variety of sports against the other schools in our Zone. All students demonstrated the PRIDE values, good skills and sportsmanship.

Other

Sister School Exchange

We had the privilege of hosting a return visit in August from our sister school Da Jing High School. A full program which included a formal assembly where gifts were exchanged, classroom visits and a traditional Australian barbeque provided students and staff from both schools with memorable educational and social opportunities.

The students had previously communicated online, but the opportunity to interact in our wonderful school setting allowed for greater cultural and personal insight.

Mathematics Nationwide Competition

The mathematics Nationwide Competition attracted 172 students with 49% of the students receiving a Credit or higher.
Academic

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10. The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments with Year 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7) and Year 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9).

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7

In Year 7, student overall performance in NAPLAN was strong in 2011, with average scores in Writing and Spelling well above state levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2011 NAPLAN Year 7</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>538</td>
<td>533.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>562.6</td>
<td>514.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>568.3</td>
<td>539.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar, punctuation</td>
<td>536.5</td>
<td>526.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Writing Year 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average score, 2011</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>SSG</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>562.6</td>
<td>533.2</td>
<td>514.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Band Distribution</th>
<th>Band</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number in Band</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage in Bands</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSG % in Band 2011</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State DEC % in Band 2011</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15.5% of Macarthur Girls High School students achieved the highest band in NAPLAN Writing compared with 7% statewide and 29.2% achieved Band 8 compared with 13.2% statewide.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9

Outstanding results were attained in NAPLAN Writing by Year 9 students, a targeted area of the Centre for Excellence initiative. At Macarthur Girls High School, 20.8% of Year 9 students achieved the highest band compared with 8.1% statewide and 19.1% of students achieved a Band 9 compared with 9.6% statewide.

Writing Year 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average score, 2011</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>SSG</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>606.4</td>
<td>571.2</td>
<td>547.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Band Distribution</th>
<th>Band</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number in Band</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage in Bands</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSG % in Band 2011</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State DEC % in Band 2011</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of NAPLAN data for Years 7 and 9 literacy showed Macarthur Girls High School students achieving well above state in all areas except reading where they were at state level.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7

Our Year 7 students performed to the state average in the numeracy test with 55.6% achieving one of the top 3 bands.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9

Our Year 9 students performed above state average with 58.8% achieving one of the top 3 bands (Band 8 to Band 10).
well above state averages, demonstrating that writing programs have yielded positive results. The focus for 2012 will be on enhancing student performance in Reading comprehension.

Our Peers and Learners Scheme (PALS), in which Year 10 tutors support selected Year 7 students in their reading, continues to operate.

**Progress in numeracy**

Year 7 students performed above state average in growth from Year 5 to Year 7 with a 53.8 mark improvement. Year 9 students performed above state average in growth from Year 7 to Year 9 with a 43.7 mark improvement.

**Essential Secondary Science Assessment**

In Year 8 162 students participated in ESSA online in 2011. Results have continued to show strong improvement. 62% of students achieved at Level 4 or above compared with 52% in 2010 and 43% in 2009.

**School Certificate**

In 2011 173 students sat the School Certificate examination. In the School Certificate the performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from Performance Band 1 (lowest) to Performance Band 6 (highest).

**English**

In the School Certificate 90% of students achieved in Bands 4, 5 and 6, compared with 81% state-wide. 83% of students had value added growth from Year 5 to Year 10. 6% of students achieved a Band 6 compared with 4% of the state cohort while 45% of students achieved a Band 5 compared with 28% of the state.

**Mathematics**

Average student performance was higher than that of the state with 65% of students achieving one of the top three bands compared with 41% statewide. 23% of students achieved a Band 6 compared with 9% statewide. Student growth from Year 5 to Year 10 was excellent with all three performance groups at the very top of performance in the state.
Australian Geography, Civics & Citizenship

With the change in curriculum pattern in HSIE in 2011, students we able to focus on mastering the skills and concepts of this course. As a result, staff was able to fully prepare students. Performance improved dramatically, especially in the top 2 bands. Achievement in Band 6 was over twice that of the state average and significantly increased over 2010. Our achievements in Bands 4, 5 and 6, exceeded state average by over 10%. Growth in geography again exceeded the level of the previous year, with our Band 4 and 5 students demonstrating the strongest growth.

There was strong growth in the number of students achieving in Band 5, with 32.36% of students in this band compared with 24.71% statewide.

Australian History, Civics & Citizenship

School Certificate results continue to be impressive, with students achieving a Band 6 result at over twice state average rates. Students also achieved above average results in the next 2 bands with almost 65% of our students gaining a Band 4, 5 or 6 compared with 44% statewide. This can be attributed to the significant changes in the timetable and day structure which occurred in 2011, allowing for enhanced teaching.

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

The following table highlights the excellent growth shown by students in all School Certificate external assessments when compared to their Year 5 Basic Skills Test scores. The tables demonstrate that significant value-adding occurred in all courses.

Computing Skills Assessment

Once again, the students completed the test on-line and performed well. The test assesses student knowledge across a wide range of areas including email, operating systems, application software and internet use. 61.9% of students achieved a level of Highly Competent compared with 56 percent for the state. 34% of students achieved a level of Competent.

Science

Close to half of the students (43.34%) achieved the 2 highest bands (Bands 5 and 6) while 74.55% of students achieved the top 3 bands (Bands 4, 5 and 6).
Higher School Certificate

In 2011, 173 students sat the HSC. Student performance was very strong with the highest ATAR being 98.85.

English

In Advanced English, 98% achieved one of the three higher bands, compared with 84% statewide. 90% of students achieved a Band 5 or 6. 81% achieved a Band 5 compared with 39% of the state.

In Standard English, 57% of students achieved one of the three higher bands, compared with 29% state-wide. 19% of students achieved a Band 5 compared with 5% in the state.

In Extension English 1, 100% of students achieved one of the higher bands, compared with 48% statewide. In Extension English 2, 67% of students achieved one of the higher bands, compared with 80% statewide.

In English as a Second Language (ESL), 86% of students achieved one of the higher bands, compared with 67% statewide.

Mathematics

Honour Roll credits for students having obtained marks of 90 or more in their courses were achieved by 31 students (10 in Mathematics Extension 2, 9 in Mathematics Extension 1, 11 in Mathematics and 1 in General Mathematics).

In Extension 2, 83% of students achieved one of the top two bands, compared with 91% statewide. In Extension 1, 73% of students achieved one of the top two bands, compared with 84% statewide. In Mathematics, 80% of students achieved one of the top three bands, compared with 78% statewide. In General Mathematics, 51% of students achieved in the top three bands, compared with 50% statewide.

Science

In Biology, 58% of students achieved in the top three bands compared with 55.3% statewide.

In Senior Science, 71.5% of students received Bands 4, 5 and 6 compared with 72.6% statewide. In chemistry, 52.5% of students achieved one of the top three bands compared with 68.2% statewide.

In Physics 43.8% compared with 26.1% in the state achieved Band 5. 68.8% of students achieved in the top three bands compared with 67.3% statewide.

HSIE : History

For many students, their History subjects were the highest achieving subjects they presented for the Higher School Certificate examination.

Society and Culture results continue to be exceptional with 86% of students achieving in the top three bands. Some outstanding results were gained in their Personal Interest Projects with students demonstrating the depth of investigation demanded by those aspiring to the highest standards in this course.

Sound improvement was shown in Modern History, with strong overall performances. Ancient History and Extension History students excelled with many achieving their personal best scores.

Creative and performing Arts (CAPA)

Visual Arts results were sound with 50% of the cohort gaining a Band 5 and 68% having Visual Arts as one of their best two HSC results. 81% of the students achieved a Band 4 or 5.

Music students achieved strong results with one Band 6. 100% of the students had Music as their best or second best HSC result achieving a Band 4, 5 or 6 compared with 87.46% for the state.

Drama students achieved two Band 5 and seven Band 4 results in a class of eleven. 63% of the Drama students had Drama as their best or second best result.

Languages

Results in the 2011 HSC Courses were outstanding with 92% of the students achieving a Band 5 or 6 in Chinese and 100% achieving a Band 4 or 5 in Japanese Continuers. The Japanese Extension students produced sound results with 75% achieving a Band E3.
HSIE : Social Science

The positive results achieved by students in the Social Sciences subjects in previous years continued in 2011, with all students achieving at a high standard. Students found Legal Studies more challenging due to a new syllabus, although overall, there was good growth for individual students.

In Business Studies, students were above state average with some outstanding results including a “top ten” place by one student. Economics again showed strong improvement in achievement. Analysis of individual performances shows many students achieved results significantly greater than those expected based on prior performances.

Technology and Applied Studies (TAS)

Food Technology was comprised of a small cohort of 5 students sitting for the HSC. 57% of the students achieved a Band 4 or 5.

Sixteen students studied Textiles and Design for the HSC. Three students achieved Band 6 and three students achieved Band 5. This resulted in 40% of the cohort achieving either Band 5 or 6.

Two strands of the Hospitality course, Café Skills and Commercial Cookery, were studied with 21 students completing the Hospitality examination. Six students achieved Band 5.

Seven students completed the 2 unit course in Exploring Early Childhood, with the majority achieving good assessment marks for the course.

Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE)

85% of the PDHPE class attained a Band 4 or above compared with 67% in the state. Community and Family Studies (CAFS) achieved strong results. Four students achieved Band 6 results, with 82% of students scoring Band 4 or above, compared with the state average of 66%.

In Dance, Samantha Elderton was nominated for Callback, a presentation of the most outstanding HSC Dance performances.

Vocational Education and Training (VET)

Five Frameworks were studied in 2011: Business Services, Entertainment, Information Technology, Hospitality (Commercial Cookery and Café Skills) and Retail. School VET HSC results were satisfactory for those who sat the examination. Results in Business Services were excellent: Bands 5 and 6 were well above state average.

Saira Arshi in Year 11, won the regional World Skills competition in Information Technology and will progress to the State Final in 2012. Sixteen students completed courses at a number of TAFEs, including Accounting, 3 unit Health Services, Animal Care and Design Fundamentals.

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

Comparing the 2011 HSC results with the results achieved by the same students in the 2009 School Certificate, the average growth achieved by Macarthur Girls High School students in each of the three performance bands – low, middle and high – was 5.1 marks higher than the state level for similar ability students.
Macarthur Girls High School average HSC scores per course were equal to or higher than the state in a number of courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>School 2011</th>
<th>School Average 2007-2011</th>
<th>State 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ancient History</td>
<td>71.5</td>
<td>74.9</td>
<td>70.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>72.1</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>71.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Studies</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>70.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>74.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAFS</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>72.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>75.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>73.6</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>75.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>73.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English (Standard)</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>62.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English (Advanced)</td>
<td>84.4</td>
<td>83.8</td>
<td>79.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English ESL</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>76.8</td>
<td>73.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>69.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPT</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>76.1</td>
<td>69.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Studies</td>
<td>71.5</td>
<td>75.3</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Mathematics</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td>66.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>79.0</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>76.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics Extension 1</td>
<td>76.2</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>81.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern History</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td>73.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music 1</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>78.6</td>
<td>78.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDHPE</td>
<td>78.7</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>72.1</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>74.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society and Culture</td>
<td>77.9</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>73.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textiles and Design</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>73.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>76.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Background Speakers</td>
<td>85.6</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>81.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese Continuers</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>76.6</td>
<td>78.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Services Examination</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>68.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 or above minimum standard (exempt students included)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>95.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>98.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>98.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>95.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>96.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>93.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>91.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>98.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>89.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

All identified Aboriginal students at Macarthur Girls High School had personalized learning plans developed and implemented. This initiative was led by the Learning Support Team. Aboriginal students were assisted through Norta Norta funding that supported them with literacy and numeracy programs. Reconciliation Week was commemorated through an address to the whole school assembly acknowledging the important process of reconciliation.

Multicultural education

Our PRIDE values platform underpins the welfare program and multicultural educational activities at our school.

A number of cultural events were held throughout the year such as Diversity Day where students and families promoted and celebrated their diverse cultural backgrounds and Harmony Day where student activities reflected on global peace.

Australian culture was strongly acknowledged through Anzac Day commemorations with students from all cultural backgrounds proudly remembering as a school and also through participation in local community activities in Parramatta and Sydney.
National partnership programs

Centre for Excellence

Centre for Excellence planning in 2010 determined that the goal of improving student outcomes in Stage 4 Literacy would be driven by three interrelated areas:
1. Knowing your students
2. Enhancing Teacher Practice
3. Partnerships.

In 2010 and 2011 explicit literacy strategies were designed and implemented. The strategies used to achieve enhanced literacy outcomes were:
- Professional learning supporting the explicit teaching of persuasive writing
- The Write to Bite writing competition
- Student writing extension and writing improvement programs
- The literacy enrichment online learning activities Year 7 – Year 9.

Students were able to show significant improvement in literacy learning outcomes in external tests. Results of evaluations and external assessments showed:
- While only 10 percent of respondents reported that most staff members implemented quality literacy practices in 2010, this jumped to 40% in 2011.
- The proportion of respondents who reported that school leaders led professional learning sessions and attended professional learning activities in literacy grew from 6% in 2010 to 40% in 2011.
- In 2011 NAPLAN, 45% of Year 7 students achieved a Band 8 or 9 and 40% of Year 9 students achieved a Band 9 or 10 for writing compared with the State percentage of 24.7% in Year 7 and 21.9% in Year 9.
- Students who participated in the extension program showed an average increase of one band and 74 raw score points in Writing from Year 7 to Year 9.
- In 2010, 36% of students achieved in the bottom two bands for Writing in NAPLAN and this was reduced to 17% in 2011.

Other programs

Transition program Year 10 to 11

The Year 10 transition program was implemented in Term 4 2011 after the completion of the School Certificate. It was designed to meet the learning needs of students and better prepare them for the expectations, responsibilities and workload of senior study. Running for three weeks, the program gave students an introduction to each of their subject selections for their senior schooling. This included an overview of content, assessment and skills for their chosen senior courses.

For the three week duration of the program, students attended six to eight lessons for each subject. 89% of students felt that these lessons had helped them to better prepare for their Preliminary HSC in which 91% of students also found lessons more beneficial than attending their normal Year 10 subjects. 89% of teachers stated that the majority of students were more engaged than Year 10 cohorts of previous years after the School Certificate.

Students attended a number of enrichment activities. This included the completion of a CPR course with Royal Life Saving Society. 98% of students stated that they found this program beneficial to their development and life outside school. Students completed a financial literacy course in which 76% of students felt that it had given them financial skills for the future. 73% of students found the cyber safety course beneficial to their knowledge of the world, providing them with knowledge about responsibilities when using computers, mobile phones and other technology devices. Students also attended study skills seminars in which they learnt about study habits and strategies for senior study. 87% of students found the study program beneficial for future learning.

The 2011 program was a pilot and the program will be refined and modified to enhance its effectiveness. The benefit of continuing this program can be seen in students’ responses in which 93% of students stated that this program should be used for future Year 10 students to better prepare them for the HSC.
Blankets for Babies and the Elderly

Many students at our school joined together to knit blankets for people in our community. They knitted or crocheted squares at lunch time, at night time and on weekends. These squares were sewn together to create blankets for residents in our local nursing home, and for women and their children seeking shelter at the Penrith Women’s Refuge. All together, approximately 20 blankets have been distributed to the elderly residents in Nursing Homes. Over 60 blankets, jumpers, beanies, bootees and mittens have been delivered to the women’s refuge. Such was the girls’ enthusiasm and community spirit, there are many more squares still remaining to be sewn together. 20% of the student population was involved in this very worthy project.

English as a Second Language (ESL)

Language support was provided for students whose first language was not English, in the classroom and in the design and implementation of learning programs. Assistance was provided in the key learning areas of History, Geography and Science. Students in the parallel junior English classes were provided with additional support both in team teaching and withdrawal lessons. In the senior ESL English course, students were guided in meeting the strict qualifying standards, with the achievement of outstanding results. Over 70% of the candidature achieved in the top two bands.

Betty Cuthbert Gymnasium

Following the completion of building works, the PDHPE staff moved into the new gymnasium and staffroom. This space offers many opportunities for students and is being well utilised.

The official opening was held on June 24th, when a number of guests, staff and students gathered to celebrate the naming of the gym in honour of Betty Cuthbert, a former student and Australian Olympian. Due to ill health, Ms Cuthbert was unable to attend but she expressed her pleasure at having the gym named in her honour. The school has mounted a commemorative plaque on a piece of sandstone at the entrance to the gym and has created a garden with Betty Cuthbert roses. The gymnasium is a wonderful addition to the school’s facilities.

Vocational Education and Training

The value of Vocational Education, for a specific career and for employability skills is highly valued by students. At Macarthur Girls High School, 33% of senior students include a vocational education course, either at school or at TAFE, in their HSC. Fourteen students won AusSIP (Industry Partnership Brokers) awards which recognised their employability skills.

MOGDAH is the school’s enterprise project and a recognised part of the school vocabulary. It focuses on VET students applying their skills in community outreach programs. It also provides opportunity for staff and students to work together. Mogdahs events, led by Hospitality students, have included functions for residents of the Parramatta Aged Care Facility, Rotary Day breakfasts, the opening ceremony of the gymnasium and coffee shops and breakfasts.
Premier’s Sporting Challenge
This year saw a significant number of students take part in the Premier’s Sporting Challenge, which aims to increase participation in physical activity. Students, lead by the Sports Council, kept records of their activities, within the school and outside, working towards developing lifelong habits of engaging in physical activity.

Premier’s Student Volunteering Awards
Many students received the Premier’s Student Volunteering Awards for their ongoing assistance to others both within the school and in the wider community. Year 9 students were awarded 9 Bronze, 4 Silver, 1 Gold and 1 Diamond certificates and in Year 10, 10 Bronze, 9 Silver, 3 Gold, 2 Diamond certificates were awarded.

Library
The library continued to support the school by providing access to a wide range of resources. The 19 computers in the library were regularly accessed for student use. The library was constantly busy with 15,815 items borrowed. A high rate of regular use of the library for recreational borrowing continued.

Global Citizens Initiative
Senior students were part of a project to promote service learning. With students from MLC, Parramatta and Winmalee High School and West Ryde Primary school, they worked towards developing initiatives to help others locally or globally. Projects included promoting awareness of the Millennium goals and work in primary schools to make transition to high schools easier.

Progress on 2011 targets

Target 1:
Quality Teaching practices are evident in every classroom as students progress through a comprehensive continuum of learning in Years 7 – 12.
This target relates to the NSW DET Priority Area: Teaching Quality, to strengthen teacher capacity to improve student learning outcomes for girls.
Our achievements include:

- Creation and completion of a NAPLAN data analysis process. 100% staff involved in analysing external student data. 83% of staff stated they will use the process.
- Teacher survey results found 91% gained a better understanding of using data to inform and enhance teaching practices.
- Individual student profiles were made available to all staff through the Moodle.
- 92% of teachers stated that the individual student profile strategies increased their knowledge of the areas of literacy which needed improvement in their class.
- Enhanced teacher understanding of how to effectively teach writing (with a specific focus on persuasive writing) and giving explicit feedback. All faculties have embedded a persuasive writing strategy into their programs.
- Whole school cross faculty literacy strategies have been developed and implemented.
- Creation of a weekly, online homework Literacy Enrichment program for Year 7, 8 and 9 students which gives instant feedback.
- Completion of Data Analysis Skills Assessment (DASA) by all teaching staff.
- 100% staff using the SMART package.

Target 2:
School culture and practices enhance the social and emotional well being of every girl.
This target relates to the NSW DET Priority Area: Student Engagement and Retention and the National Safe Schools Framework of the provision of a supportive and connected school culture.
Our achievements include:
• PRIDE time sessions have been developed to incorporate the three identified ACARA capabilities of ethical behaviour, personal and social competence and intercultural understanding (our PRIDE values).

• PRIDE time sessions have been developed and implemented by staff. These sessions enhance the development of skills and capabilities required for student well being, effective learning and active citizenship.

• Procedures have been refined and clarified to ensure consistency across the school.

• Feedback from staff confirmed a more consistent and effective use of whole school welfare policies and procedures.

Key evaluations

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2011 our school carried out evaluations of Teaching and Learning and Literacy and the NSW DET Analytical Framework for Effective Leadership and School Improvement in Literacy

Teaching and Learning

Background

An Inner School Self Evaluation of Teaching and Learning was conducted to identify school strengths, areas for development and to provide recommendations on future directions for whole school planning. The evaluation focussed on two terms of reference:

• effectiveness of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) in enhancing student learning outcomes; and

• practices for student engagement and significance of learning.

A suite of processes was used to collect information from 364 students, 23 teachers and 35 parents. This included face to face interviews with staff and groups of students, lesson observations, and on-line questionnaires.

Findings and conclusions

Technology was used to enhance student learning outcomes by opening up communication channels and increasing students’ skills to undertake in-depth research. Students were keen to maximise their use of technology and looked to their teachers for guidance on best practice. The extent of connected classroom integration into teaching and learning was determined by the individual teacher’s knowledge and experience of the technology and its application.

The extent of netbook integration into teaching and learning varied. Although teachers were generally positive about the value of using netbooks during lessons, students displayed some reservations about netbooks in the classroom. Year 11 students rated computers as the least useful way of improving their learning.

The chart below illustrates the Year 11 students’ view of teacher expertise in using technology

Students also indicated that they would like to have greater direction and guidance from teachers on the use of technology. When technology was used in a relevant and engaging way, it provided significant opportunities for students to enhance their learning. Teachers understood the benefits of creatively using technology and applied it in different ways.
The table below shows the percent response of Year 7-11 students to the question: Is the use of technology providing you with a greater range of learning activities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 8</th>
<th>Year 9</th>
<th>Year 10</th>
<th>Year 11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student engagement improved through hands-on activities, group work, game play, question and answer sessions, presentations, debates and excursions. Active participation and physical movement in class was found to be the most interesting and engaging. Teachers reported that open-ended questions were the most popular teaching strategies for student engagement. Although teaching strategies such as field trips and excursions were valued by students, they were rarely or never used by teachers.

One half of the teachers always used a variety of learning strategies to address the developmental needs of students and connected with the real life experience of students (illustrated in the chart below).

While teachers were mindful of providing constructive feedback to students in order that they learn from assessment tasks and used a variety of assessment tools, not all students understood the feedback. Some students would like teachers to better explain assessment tasks and to receive consistent individual and class feedback on their performance in assessment tasks. Year 11 students appreciated teachers who showed them better ways of doing tasks and they rated consistent feedback as the most important way to improve learning.

**Future directions**

- Professional learning for teachers in some aspects of technology would improve their knowledge, for example, in using connected classrooms to present lessons and improving their skills to guide student learning with various types of software. Teachers need to focus students on using technology for specific purposes and demonstrating best practice research methods using technology.
• The School Executive to lead and encourage teachers to keep abreast of developments in technology for learning.

• Students require guidance on the use of netbooks for research. Lesson delivery using netbooks should demonstrate specific examples to assist students.

• Professional learning for teachers to ensure that they target their lessons to different developmental levels of students in the class. All teachers would be encouraged to adjust their teaching strategies to suit class abilities.

• Students need to see each lesson as part of their pathway and understand the aim of the lesson. Teachers should provide students with the purpose of each lesson.

• All KLAs need to provide learning activities such as excursions, game based learning, physical activity and group work, to involve the whole class in lessons.

• Students place great emphasis on assessment feedback from teachers and require clear and concise explanation of assessment tasks. Teachers need to ensure that they are providing consistent individual and class feedback to all students.

Curriculum evaluation

Background

The school implemented the NSW DET Analytical Framework for Effective Leadership and School Improvement in Literacy in Term 1 2010 and the evaluation was repeated in Term 4 2011. Teachers completed the 2011 online evaluation, with data analysed by the senior executive.

The 2010 data provided a benchmark for monitoring changes in literacy practice. In 2010, evaluation of 15 analytical statements noted three areas for improvement.

Strategies were developed and implemented to address the identified areas of:

1. Processes to collaboratively establish school goals and expectations;
2. Strategic planning, coordination and evaluation of teaching and the curriculum; and
3. Promotion and participation of all staff – including school leaders – in teacher professional learning and development.

Findings and conclusions

Analysis of data sets demonstrated the positive impact of strategies and showed consistent progress across all 15 analytical statements. The strong improvement in collaborative planning indicates the effect of focusing on processes to collaboratively establish school goals and expectations.

The school’s active promotion and participation of all staff in teacher professional learning was especially evident in the significant level of improvement in leader professional learning.

The school’s strategies successfully targeted the lowest evaluation outcomes of 2010, raising all their levels by 2011.

Future directions

Statements where the school evaluation outcome was lowest in 2011 were parent participation and leader data analysis, although both were substantially better than in 2010. There was a noticeable swing away from individual teacher participation or mainly executive decision making to whole school decision making and all staff involvement between 2010 and 2011, indicating the depth and breadth of the changes.
Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2011 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Apart from formal evaluations described above, the school seeks ongoing feedback. Regular forums that provide opportunities for this include P&C meetings, Parent/Teacher Nights, SRC meetings, class discussions, and faculty, stage and staff meetings.

Focus groups were conducted by the senior executive to discuss teaching and learning. The data collected informed planning for the 2012 Centre for Excellence transition plan and the School Management Plan 2012 – 2014.

Whilst the level of overall satisfaction with school programs remains very high, Macarthur Girls High School will continue to develop and further improve school programs in response to the feedback and suggestions gained through these valuable discussion forums.

Professional learning

Staff surveys indicated priorities for professional learning activities with the Professional Learning Team organizing and providing professional learning opportunities to support teacher professional growth.

Sessions during School Development Days included mandatory training and technology, data analysis and literacy. Staff attended a wide variety of professional learning activities outside school offered by DEC and other provider.

A total of $46,357 in Teacher Professional Learning Funds (TPL) was made available to the school in 2011 and the school expended $45,262 on DET priority areas. Two thirds of the TPL funds was spent on casual salaries and one third on course fees. Quality Teaching received one third of all TPL funds ($14,992) and reflects the school’s focus on Quality Teaching. The priority areas Use of ICT and Beginning Teachers was augmented by tied DEC funds, while Centre for Excellence funds targeted Literacy and Leadership programs.

61.5% of course fees was spent on Quality Teaching, Leadership and career development. Less than 15 percent each was expended on the other priority areas. Quality Teaching also used 31% of casual salaries with 23% spent on ICT. Syllabus implementation and Welfare and equity were each given equal portions of course fees and casual salaries, while casual salaries only were used in the Literacy and numeracy priority area.
School planning 2012—2014

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

School priority 1:

Literacy and numeracy improvements through embedding successful C4E initiatives

Outcomes for 2012–2014 are:

Explicit literacy and numeracy strategies embedded in all KLA programs in Stage 4, 5 and 6 to support students achieving their personal best.

Improved reading performance for Stage 4 and Stage 5 students.

Sustained performance levels in writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation for all Stage 4 and Stage 5 students.

2012 Targets to achieve these outcomes include:

- Increased number of teachers using Stage 4 Individual Student Literacy Profiles to understand strengths and areas for further literacy development to 100%
- Increased percentage of Year 7 students achieving in top 2 bands in NAPLAN reading from 26.7 to 31.7 by 2014.
- Increased percentage of Year 9 students achieving in top 2 bands in NAPLAN reading from 19.4 to 26.4 by 2014.
- Students achieving in the top 2 bands for writing remains double the State average.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- “Knowing your students” initiative implemented by all staff in Stages 4-6.
- Continuation of Individual Student Literacy Profiles based on Year 7 and Year 9 NAPLAN results.
- Access to Student Profiles to be made available to all staff on the school administration system.
- Analysis of Student Profiles and adjustment of teaching strategies to differentiate activities for all learners.
- Maintain existing Centre for Excellence strategies that have resulted in significantly improved results in Writing in 2011:
  - Year 9 Write to Bite Writing Competition;
  - Year 9 Writing Extension Program;
  - Year 9 Writing Improvement Program.
- Replicate and transfer the processes employed to establish and implement the successful writing strategies to improve NAPLAN reading results
- Whole school initiatives and programs to support enhanced student outcomes in literacy. These include:
  - Professional learning supporting the explicit teaching of persuasive writing;
  - Professional learning supporting the explicit teaching of reading and comprehension;
  - Extension of Year 7-9 on-line literacy homework program to Year 10;
  - On-line numeracy program investigated, developed and implemented in Stage 4.

School priority 2:

Leadership development and management capacity

Outcomes for 2012–2014 are:

Enhanced teacher quality and classroom practices through leadership capability development.

Increased number of staff seeking, gaining and maintaining accreditation against teaching and leadership standards at all levels of competence.
2012 Targets to achieve these outcomes include:

- Increased executive capabilities to assist and support the further development of quality classroom teaching practices.
- Constructive feedback for enhanced staff performance on classroom teaching practices.
- 100% New Scheme Teachers gaining and maintaining accreditation at professional competence level.
- 20% increase in staff seeking accreditation at higher levels of teaching standards.
- Staff, aspiring and substantive school leaders have understanding of national teaching and leadership standards.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Implementation of the Professional Learning and Leadership Development Directorate’s Leadership Learning Program online modules with the school executive including:
  - Leading professional learning using the Classroom Teacher Program;
  - Understanding performance management;
  - Skills in performance management;
  - Implementing the Teacher Assessment and Review Schedule (TARS) - an introduction.

- Aspiring Leaders Program implemented.
- Mentoring of New Scheme Teachers.
- Faculty executive to lead implementation of accredited professional learning modules from the Classroom teacher program with all faculty staff.
- Professional learning plans for individual teachers and faculties.
- Targeted professional learning with aspiring and current school leaders on national standards, NSW teaching standards, evidence collection and the developmental processes of PARS, TARS and EARS.

About this report

In preparing this report, the Self-evaluation Committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school’s practices and student learning outcomes. The Self-evaluation Committee and School Planning Committee have determined targets for the school’s future development.

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