Wollumbin High School
Annual School Report
2011
Messages

Principal’s message

We expect our students to make learning a priority, to act safely and be respectful within an environment of high expectations, educational excellence and student success. Quality education is further enhanced when the school, parents and community work in partnership to support student learning. Such a partnership exists amongst the Wollumbin High School (WHS) community.

I am constantly impressed with the achievements of students, the dedication of staff and the support of parents and community. Thank you for making my role so rewarding.

During 2011 we shared many success stories with our community through our newsletter, the Wollumbin Talkabout. The 2011 Annual Report is further testimony to the achievement of our students, the partnerships forged with our community, the challenges faced by the school and our commitment to continuous improvement.

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

Ms Karen Connell

P & C message

It is always a pleasure to be associated with the small, dedicated team of parents and citizens of our school who have the determination and vision to support the staff in providing an excellent education to all students at our school.

One of the highlights of the year was our inaugural fun run. On a fresh but sunny Murwillumbah morning 80 runners and walkers lined up to participate in the first WHS P&C Fun Run and Walk. Participants ranged from very serious runners of all ages contesting a 5km and 10km course, to walkers out to enjoy the morning with friends. The community support was outstanding providing prizes for 25 event categories in addition to many lucky draw prizes.

During the year we focused on making adjustments to the canteen menu to ensure it reflected the NSW Healthy School Canteens Association requirements. I am pleased to advise that we met our objectives and the school community is enjoying the benefits of our exciting healthy selection of food and drinks.

I acknowledge the efforts and support of the executive, an extremely hard working team who were united in meeting the challenges of 2011, always keeping the best interests of our school in mind at all times.

I urge all parents to seriously consider becoming involved in the school in whatever capacity they possibly can. The P&C meetings are the legitimate forums for parents to express their views and the meetings are conducted in a friendly manner with all in attendance given the opportunity to gain information on any aspect of our school.

Mr Viv Johnston
P&C President

Student representative’s message

The 2011 Student Representative Council (SRC) had a very successful year.

Four Year 11 students attended the Global Leadership Conference, which was a wonderful experience.

During 2011 SRC representatives from Wollumbin High School (WHS) and Murwillumbah East Primary School (MEPS) participated in an exchange program. MEPS visited WHS to observe how our meetings are run and to ask questions. This was reciprocated when the SRC students from WHS visited MEPS.

Throughout 2011 we raised a total of $2426.

A total of 300 roses were sold on Valentine’s Day. As a result we donated over $600 to the Queensland flood and cyclone appeal.

We ran the Athletics Carnival BBQ and organised a social to raise money for Motivational Media. The theme of the social was movie characters.

Motivational Media was attended by the whole school and targeted self reliance and resilience.

Mthokozisi (Kozi) is our sponsor child. The SRC raised the money for his sponsorship by having a
mufti day and BBQ, as well as some other activities.

Harmony Day was also celebrated by a mufti day, a chalk mural as well as a soccer game. Music was organised by the Student Voice group.

Pink and red was the theme on Pink Ribbon Day as the SRC raised money for Breast Cancer. The 40Hour Famine was strongly supported by students.

The 2011 Student Representative Council had a terrific year and all are looking forward to next year’s challenges.

The SRC would really like to thank Mr Shearman, our SRC mentor, who led us throughout the year.

Shae Penman

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

Student enrolment comprised 239 boys and 219 girls. There were 34 Aboriginal students enrolled.

<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>Male</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>219</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Student attendance profile

Student attendance is above region and just below state levels. It is vitally important that students attend school consistently to ensure learning is not compromised.

Management of non-attendance

Rolls for Years 7 to 11 are marked in mentoring each morning in addition to period by period marking by classroom teachers. Year 12 use a swipe card system. Discrepancies are reported to the Deputy Principal and Administration staff. Parents are contacted by phone or by letter if absences are not explained promptly. Concern regarding student attendance is raised with parents by the Deputy Principal and Year Advisers. The Home School Liaison Officer supports the school with individual cases.
Retention to Year 12

Retention data, which examines the proportion of students staying on from School Certificate (SC) to the Higher School Certificate (HSC) at WHS, indicates our retention rate was higher than that of similar schools and the state pattern.

Post-school destinations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESTINATION</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gap Year</td>
<td>22.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>TAFE</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working</td>
<td>21.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apprenticeships</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unfortunately we were unable to contact some of our students.

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

20% of Year 12 students studied one or more vocational courses, contributing to the successful completion of their HSC.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification

99% of our Year 12 students attained HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualifications.

Staff information

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

Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>30.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Careers Adviser</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning</td>
<td>0.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support</td>
<td>7.182</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>49.382</td>
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</table>

The school employed an Indigenous mentor and a Community Liaison Officer through the Priority Schools Program.

Staff retention

During 2011 we had three staff retire; two staff achieve promotion to other schools, and one transfer.

Teacher qualifications

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
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Financial summary

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.
A full copy of the school’s 2011 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2011

Achievements

The partnership with Southern Cross University enabled students from Year 7 to 9 to visit campus sites and six Year 9 students to attend a two day UNI-BOUND residential school.

Mr Brooker, Mr Trembath and Mr Lambert won the National Excellence in School Drug Education Award and the North Coast Regional Director’s Excellence in Education Award for School Achievement.

Bill Nobbs-O’Brien and Natasha Unwin Year 8 were chosen for the regional eGATS, web-based program, designed to cater for gifted and talented students.

Amy Fletcher Year 11 was selected to shadow Mrs Darlene Arkinstall, Far North Coast School Education Director, to learn about educational leadership.

Callum Warren Year 12 was awarded the North Coast Region Aboriginal Education Award for Student Leadership.

WHS Excellence Awards were presented to sixty students for outstanding achievement.

Four students received the Award of Honour, the school’s highest achievement award.

Teleah Andrews Year 12, Jaye Magnum Year 11 and Shae Penman Year 10 received the Australian Defence Forces Long Tan Award for Leadership.

14 students achieved at a high level in the Premier’s Student Volunteering Awards program.

Four distinctions and two credits were achieved in the RIO TINTO Big Science competition.

Four distinctions and eight credits were achieved in the Australian Schools English competition.

One distinction and twelve credits were achieved in the Westpac Mathematics competition.

Katie Hay Year 9 received a Kids in the Community Encouragement Award.

Callum Yeo Year 11 was selected to attend the National Youth Science forum in Canberra.

Kurtis Foulkes Year 8 received the Sustainable Futures Australia 2011 Environment Excellence Award.
Arts
Each year the NSW Department of Education presents Callback, a selection of outstanding performances and projects from HSC Dance students. Nobel Lakaev Year 12 was nominated in three categories and was chosen to participate in Callback. He has been accepted into Juilliard Dance School and Columbia University, New York City.

Libby Lawler and Candace Lee had their Year 12 artworks nominated for consideration in the NSW Art Express exhibitions.

MADDD was a huge success. Students entertained the audience with dance, drama, musical items and comedy.

56 visual arts students presented 37 animated short films to a large audience at the Murwillumbah Regent Theatre.

Fiona Stanley and Jesse-Lee Mahler were selected to play at the Opera House as members of the North Coast Region Band.

The WHS Band came second at the Murwillumbah Festival of Performing Arts in the Combined Vocal and Instrumental section. The band performed at the Cooly Rocks On Festival and the opening ceremony of the Jack Evans Boat Harbour.

Sport
Wollumbin High School students have enjoyed success on the sporting field. They participated in numerous combined high school sports, which included State Knockout competitions, Tweed Valley competition, individual trials and normal Wednesday sport.

The school tries to cater for a variety of talents and interests and it is important that students are involved in some type of physical activity. Feedback from the community is very positive with our students often being complimented on their behaviour and dress standards while in the public eye.

Students are offered a choice of approximately 20 non-competitive sports including yoga, dance, surfing, rowing, skateboarding, fishing, beach volleyball and beach walking.

Our achievements for 2011 included:

- Students selected in a variety of regional sporting teams including hockey, basketball, cross-country, rugby league, cricket, futsal, soccer, swimming and athletics;
- Tomas Edwards was presented with the Pierre De Coubertin sporting award for Outstanding Sporting Achievements;
- Fourteen records broken by ten students at the athletics carnival and six students progressed to Combined High School (CHS) State Championships;
- Eight swimmers were selected in the zone team to compete at regional level with Clancy Whiteman being junior boys AWD Champion, and Isaac McKay being both Zone and Regional 12 Yrs Age Champion. Seven swimmers progressed to the CHS State Championships;
- Eleven students were selected in the Far North Coast hockey team. Allie Farrell was selected in the NSW CHS Hockey Team (16 Yrs and under);
- The boys’ open netball team was Far North Coast zone champions;
- Under 15 Boys volleyball team won the Tweed Valley championship;
- Under 15 Girls Tweed Valley tennis team was undefeated the whole season;
- Girls volleyball team won the Far North Coast State Knockout;
- Seven students competed at Regional Cross Country with Credence Donoghue progressing to state level; and
- Sheridan Gorton achieved a gold medal in the team event at the All Schools State Golf Championship;

**Academic**

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Year 7 and Year 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.

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

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

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

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7**

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<th>Bands</th>
<th>Percentage of Students in Bands</th>
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Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9

School Certificate

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

A total of 68 students sat for the formal School Certificate examinations.

Please note on the following graphs: Similar School Group (SSG) information assists schools to consider their students’ performance in relation to schools serving similar communities.
School Certificate relative performance comparison to Year 5 (value-adding)

A comparison of performance data by students who sat the Year 5 Basic Skills Test (BST) during 2007, matched against their SC test in 2011, indicated that in English-literacy, mathematics, science, history, geography and computing studies all students reflected state growth or higher.

Higher School Certificate

We congratulate Year 12, 2011 on their HSC achievements. Madeline Carroll was Dux of Wollumbin High School. 57 students sat the HSC. 26 early entries to university offers were received.

40% of our students achieved in the two highest bands across fourteen courses. Five students achieved band 6 (the highest achievement band) in one or more courses. Twenty four students achieved band 5 (the second highest achievement band) in one or more courses.
Higher School Certificate relative performance comparison to School Certificate (value-adding)

Students in Year 12 in NSW Public Schools have been grouped into performance bands based on their previous performance in the SC external tests where matching results are available. Trend data indicates that students in the middle performance bands were below state growth patterns. Students in the higher and lower performance bands reflected state patterns.

Minimum standards

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

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

Minimum Standards data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 7 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96.2</td>
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<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

In 2011 8% of Year 12 students were of Aboriginal heritage and they successfully completed the Higher School Certificate. One of which was our first Indigenous school captain.

Three students undertook School Based Traineeships with the ANZ and Commonwealth Banks.

Students participated in Vtracks, TAFE taster days and Work Experience Programs.

Eight students received Two Ways Together: Scholarships for Aboriginal Students.

Students shared their personal stories and goals through the implementation of Digital Personal Learning Plans (PLPs.) Digital PLPs were launched at a special evening for parents and staff and were extremely well received.

With the support of several grants the Indigenous Student Mentor, Mrs Colleen Poudal extended her role to include strengthening relationships between students, staff, parents and the community. Partnerships were formed with local community organisations, Southern Cross University, Griffith University and the Tweed Wollumbin Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG).

In 2011 Wollumbin High School focused on improving and implementing the mandatory Aboriginal Education perspectives through the use of the Quality Teaching Framework. Professional learning provided staff with strategies to build connections to learning.

We celebrated NAIDOC Week with all students participating in activities provided by community members and staff. The Aboriginal Dance Group performed at these celebrations. Senior Aboriginal students and staff jointly produced two beautiful Reconciliation/NAIDOC murals. We also celebrated and acknowledged Reconciliation Week, Sorry Day and Year 10 students led a Hands Across Australia activity. Indigenous students performed the Archie Roach song Brown Skin Baby at the Sorry Day Assembly.

Mr Ridgway and 3 senior students continued their involvement in the establishment of the Wollumbin Dreaming Junior AECG Association.

Several staff members became full or associate members of the Tweed Wollumbin AECG.
Multicultural education

Wollumbin High School’s cultural understanding was enhanced by:

- the Year of Friendship being celebrated by a visit from Cheongju Foreign Language High School and our reciprocal visit to them. These visits firmed our sister school relationship and enhanced our cultural understandings of Korea;
- elective PE classes participating in multicultural games units;
- the SRC running Harmony day activities;
- English texts focusing on multicultural themes;
- Food Technology students preparing food products from the native bush tucker gardens. They also studied multicultural and fusion cooking;
- Year 8 Design and Technology studying a unit focusing on foods of the world and an extensive research project on the use of jewellery with various cultures around the world;
- students attending Fusion Day at Southern Cross University; and
- hosting exchange students from Russia, Finland and Brazil.

Write On

The Write-On Project that was established in 2007 continued in 2011. The program focused on the development of creative writing skills for talented junior students and provided an authentic audience for their published work. A series of student workshops was conducted by author and teacher Melaina Faranda. Students received detailed individual feedback and developed a range of self editing skills.

Twenty one students had stories or poems published, with a number of other students being involved in the project at different stages. In addition, sixteen students had art work included in the publication.

The ongoing development of creative writing skills is reflected in the excellent HSC results for Extension 2 English, where once again the school performed above state average. All four students were involved in the Write-On project in their junior years.

Literacy

In alignment with the Stage 4 and 5 Syllabuses in all subject areas, Wollumbin High School emphasises the development of literacy skills across all Key Learning Areas (KLA). Writing skills continued to be an important focus in 2011, reflecting the need for students to develop more sustained and sophisticated responses. Classroom work was supported by grammar and spelling activities implemented in mentoring classes.

Literacy across the KLAs is supported by the Links to Literacy website on our intranet. This extensive site provides information, examples and activities on basic punctuation, grammar, spelling and word building along with text type scaffolds and hyperlinks to other literacy sites and literacy games.

Opportunities for sustained first draft writing were integrated into all classroom programs and a cohesive school correction code was introduced at the end of 2011.

The introduction of DER laptops in Years 9 and 10 facilitated an emphasis on online and multimedia texts. This is an important shift as these texts have an increasing impact on learning and society in general. Critical literacy and visual literacy are taught explicitly to assist students to understand and analyse these texts.

Peer Tutoring

Seventeen Year 11 students trained with Murwillumbah TAFE to act as peer tutors for fourteen Year 7 and three Year 8 students. The tutors were dedicated and contributed significantly to the literacy improvements of the Year 7 and 8 students. Every one of the junior students improved on their initial test results when they were reassessed. All of the peer tutors completed the necessary theory and field work to gain their TAFE certificate.

Debating and Public Speaking

Teams competed in all three Premier’s Debating Challenges. Our senior debating team (Years 11 and 12) progressed to the zone final where they were narrowly defeated by Kadina High School. The junior teams gained valuable experience through their participation in a number of
debates with a large number of students building skills and confidence in public speaking.

Wollumbin High School was represented at the Murwillumbah Lions Club Youth of the Year by Teleah Andrews. She acquitted herself extremely well and was a worthy representative in this prestigious competition.

**Respect and Responsibility**

Encouraging students to become responsible and considerate citizens, exhibiting a spirit of community service where the school’s values of respect, resilience, relationships and responsibility are reflected is demonstrated by:

- Ongoing support for the Red Shield Appeal, strong participation in the 40 Hour Famine and continued sponsorship of a child through World Vision.
- A large contingent of students participated in the ANZAC Day March and Ceremony representing the school with pride and exhibiting respect for others.
- The explicit teaching of resilience, tolerance and positive relationships in Boys’ Group, in mentoring, in the Year 8 Take a Stand Day and through the Volunteering Program.
- Recognition of students through citizenship awards, this being an element of Quality Portfolio presentations.
- Non denominational religious lessons for Year 7 and Year 8 students.
- The mentoring program’s themed approach to school values emphasising anti-bullying, anti-racism, multiculturalism, reconciliation and environmental education.
- Year 11 students participating in the Reduce Risk – Increase Student Knowledge (RRISK) Seminar.

**Priority Schools Program (PSP)**

Improved student learning outcomes are supported by:

- Quality Portfolio program;
- targeted parent partnerships programs by the Community Liaison Officer (CLO);
- Peer Tutor Literacy program;
- Transition to High School program;
- Workplace Literacy and Numeracy program for identified boys;
- Write - On program;
- additional resourcing of the library and Key Learning Areas;
- employment of an Indigenous mentor;
- staff professional development;
- the Student Voice group trained in peer mediation;
- after school mathematics tutoring;
- additional junior classes in English and Mathematics; and
- additional resources for the Learning Support room;

**Quality Portfolio**

Wollumbin High School students from Years 7 to Year 11 collected examples of quality work and compiled the samples in a portfolio. Towards the end of their studies students used their portfolio as a basis for an oral presentation to a panel, reflecting on their achievements as learners.

Panels consisted of a teacher, parent or community member and a student drawn from a lower academic year. Year 7 presented cross-curriculum projects along with their portfolio.

Student feedback was provided formally in the end of year report issued to parents. Extensive surveying of students and panel members indicated the initiative has been very successful and will continue in 2012.

**Learning Support**

A total of twenty volunteer community members assisted with assessment tasks, homework, class work and individual learning programs. Their assistance contributed to individual student success, task completion and improvements in literacy and numeracy outcomes.

Seventeen Year 7, seventeen Year 8, fourteen Year 9, nine Year 10 and four senior students received targeted literacy or numeracy support. Students participating in this program demonstrated above state average growth in reading and grammar in Junior NAPLAN tests.

Six students were involved in an intensive spelling program. NAPLAN growth from Year 7 to Year 9
for students in this program was 22.7 above state growth.

Students involved in literacy programs in Year 7 were reassessed by the support teachers in Year 8. All students made significant improvements in fluency, accuracy and comprehension.

**Premier’s Student Volunteer Program**

2011 was another very successful year for students undertaking the Premier’s Student Volunteer Program.

14 students from Years 9 and 10 received major awards including one nomination for NSW volunteer of the year.

- **Diamond Award (100 hrs)** – Kendall Smith
- **Gold Award (60 hrs)** – Shaun Clifford
- **Silver Award (40 hrs)** – Allen Ryan, Damien Singh, Thomas Stewart and Dylan Wake.
- **Bronze Award (20 hrs)** – Marcus Boyce, Maddison Carter, Bradey Hayes, Adrian Heymann, Ebony Keech, Samuel O’Brien, Vrinda Sagar-Doyle and Jake Swift.

Wollumbin High hosted a meeting for participating schools in the Tweed Shire. Each school nominated school leaders to highlight the importance of volunteering in the local community.

**Think Tank**

The Wollumbin Think Tank is a group of specially selected Year 5 students from the partner primary schools. Students meet one day per week at WHS to learn about, discuss and pose solutions for major world issues. The project has been established to cater for high achievers and inquisitive students within the public education system. Students presented their projects to parents and teachers at a special evening. In 2012 the program will be extended to Year 5 and 6 students.

**Progress on 2011 targets**

**Target 1**

50% of the School Certificate Student cohort will achieve band 4 or above in the English literacy test.

Our achievements include:

- Reaching the target, however, the school was under represented in bands 5 and 6, and over represented in band 4.

**Target 2**

50% of the students sitting the School Certificate in 2011 will achieve band 4 or higher in the Maths test.

Our achievements include:

- An over representation in band 3 and under representation in the higher bands, hence the target was not met.

**Target 3**

Maintain student retention at 70% for Year 10 2009 completing Year 12 in 2011 and achieve a junior attendance rate at or above the state rate.

Our achievements include:

- A retention rate above that of similar schools and the state, however we did not maintain our 70% target.
- Junior attendance rates, whilst stronger than region, did not reflect the state rates

**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 our mentoring program and Science.

**Educational and management practice**

**Background**

Mentoring runs for 20 minutes, four mornings per week. Following a guided program of activities, mentoring provides opportunity for staff to lead discussion on identified school targets and priorities, guide student preparation of their Quality Portfolios, reinforce whole school literacy and numeracy strategies, implement SRC or Student Voice initiatives, respond to needs of the particular group and gain feedback from students on school initiatives. During the past four years mentoring has undergone some modifications in structure and programming. Gender based groups were formed and groups restructured from across year groups to more specific age groups.
Findings and conclusions
260 students and 26 staff were surveyed to determine the overall effectiveness of the mentoring program. 65% of teachers and students feel the program is conceptually good as it connects students with other year groups, enables students to give and receive assistance from each other and promotes the teacher/student relationship.

Whilst the stage 5 (Year 9 and 10) groups were functioning well, the inclusion of Year 11 with Year 7 and 8 students in a leadership capacity was not an effective group structure. Year 11 were disengaging with the program.

The guided program, of a one size fits all approach, did not always meet the needs of specific groups. Consideration could be given to more hands on activities for boys, maturity and gender appropriate topics, and increase activities that focus on social and emotional development.

There is a need to streamline the number of topics covered each term to improve the understandings and outcomes of the key concepts. In addition activities need to fit into the 20 minute time frame as some have been too lengthy to complete in the given time.

Future directions
Year 11 mentoring groups will be established with activities designed to support the needs of senior students.

Stage 4 and stage 5 gender groups will be maintained. The mentoring program will be modified so that a two year program of activities for each junior stage is implemented, building on previous learnings and focus topics.

A range of suggested activities will be provided, with staff adapting them to the needs of their groups.

Curriculum - Science

Background
During 2011 the Science faculty carried out a major curriculum review to address problems of student engagement and achievement.

As a result of the evaluation process, new teaching programs were developed with greater emphasis on relevance, interesting practical experiences, higher order thinking and creativity.

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<tr>
<th>Old Programs</th>
<th>New Programs</th>
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<tr>
<td>Topics derived from existing textbooks</td>
<td>Topics designed around real life experiences students have or will encounter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks major resource to support teaching programs</td>
<td>Textbooks one of many different types of resources used to support teaching of contextual units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topics 6 to 8 weeks in length</td>
<td>Contextual unit taught over one term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topics were discrete areas of science e.g. electricity</td>
<td>Complex units build from a number of relevant areas of science e.g. The Kitchen Connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topics did not link relevant areas of Science</td>
<td>Contextual units link learning between relevant areas of science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical work determined by textbook</td>
<td>Practical work “open ended” and designed specifically to suit learning context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher centered with an emphasis on rote learning</td>
<td>Student centered with emphasis on research and rote learning, problem solving and creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis on testing</td>
<td>Combination of testing and creative assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Future directions
New programs will be implemented term 1, 2012. Teaching programs will continue to evolve to better meet the needs of different cohorts of students.

Explicit quality criteria and student choice form the basis of all assessment in stage 4 and 5 in the new programs designed to improve achievements of personal best.

Staff will continue to seek new and interesting practical activities to incorporate into programs. Science students will be “connected” to scientists via the internet.

The revised programs have been designed for easy adaptation to the National Science Curriculum when it is implemented in the near future.
Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2011 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their responses are presented below.

There was consensus that information about the school’s programs and activities is regularly communicated to parents. The posting home of the newsletter was acknowledged as a valuable source of information. Personal contact by the Community Liaison Officer and Indigenous Mentor contributes positively to the communication flow between school and home.

Whilst staff, parent and student respondents felt that information about student progress is clearly communicated to parents, there were some parents who felt this could be improved. Staff recommended that an increase in parent attendance at parent teacher evenings would further enhance communication about student progress. The postcards sent home to parents on student achievement were identified as a positive communication tool.

There was consensus that information about student learning is shared between home and school and that the teachers and families work in partnership to support student learning. Parents also identified that they felt supported by the school when assisting their child’s learning.

The parents who responded to the survey also agreed that the school considers the needs of families when organising school activities, actively encourages parents to be involved and includes parents in decision making. The role of the P&C in this process was acknowledged.

Students, parents and staff agreed that positive relationships exist between the school and its community and that the wider community actively supports events.

The school and community could improve student learning outcomes, by bringing more community people into the school to share their knowledge and expertise, establishing a parent email contact list, increasing contact between home and school on individual student progress, encouraging more parents to attend information evenings and parent teacher nights, and encouraging more students to volunteer for community activities.

Professional learning

The Professional Learning Plan for Wollumbin High School is built around the Department of Education and Training priorities:

- beginning teachers;
- use of Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) for teaching and learning;
- literacy and numeracy;
- quality teaching;
- syllabus implementation;
- career development; and
- welfare and equity.

Funds for professional learning were provided by the Department of Education and Training and the Priority Schools Program. The average expenditure per teacher on professional learning was $704.

Staff ensured any knowledge or strategies gained through professional learning was shared with colleagues. Professional learning contributed to the professional growth of staff and improved student outcomes at Wollumbin High School.

ICT professional learning needs were met through activities on school development days and by teachers accessing special workshops. Release time enabled teachers to design learning activities incorporating ICT. The school was allocated $6350 for ICT professional learning.

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

Outcome for 2012-2014

WHS results reflect NSW DEC achievement levels in spelling, grammar and punctuation.
2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
• Increase the number of Year 9 students achieving at proficiency level in NAPLAN reading by 1% and spelling by 2%; and
• Commence working toward the 2013 target of increasing the number of Year 9 students at proficiency in Grammar and Punctuation by 5%.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
• whole school focus on sustained writing;
• whole school focus on spelling and vocabulary;
• reading focus: to increase the amount of inferential questioning in classrooms; and
• improving NAPLAN exam technique for Years 7, 8 and 9 to reduce the number of non attempts at questions.

School Priority 2
Outcome for 2012-2014
Strengthen representation of students in the top two bands in numeracy

2012 targets to achieve this outcome
• increase the number of students in the top three bands by 10% in NAPLAN numeracy test in Years 7 and 9.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
• an explicit focus on the teaching of problem solving for Years 7, 8 and 9;
• posing a NAPLAN style problem solving or critical thinking question at the beginning of all lessons for Years 7, 8 and 9; and
• improving NAPLAN exam technique for Years 7, 8 and 9 to reduce the number of non attempts at questions.

School Priority 3
Outcome for 2012-2014
Improved retention rates to HSC completion

2012 targets to achieve this outcome
• maintain student retention rate above state level

Strategies to achieve this target include:
• active participation in Tweed 5 collaborative curriculum program;
• junior school student nomination for top class placement;
• all Aboriginal students have a digital Personal Learning Plan;
• implement Year 11 senior studies focus program during mentoring;
• implement an alternate curriculum for identified stage 5 & 6 students focusing on work readiness; and
• enhanced student leadership opportunities.

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 Karen Connell – Principal
Wollumbin High School Executive
Mrs Sue Turner – School Administrative Officer
Mr Viv Johnston – P&C President
Mrs Jenny Unwin – Parent Representative
Mrs Nicole McKay – Parent Representative

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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: