2010 Annual School Report
Orara High School
**Significant initiative**

In 2010 Orara introduced a “Super Wednesday” for senior students to help expand curriculum choices. This enabled the establishment of a Community of Schools concept, called “C4”, with other high schools in the district to have joint discussions for developing increased curriculum choice.

As a result of this, senior students from Orara, Woolgoolga, Coffs Harbour and Toormina High Schools study vocational and other practical courses at each other’s schools on the Super Wednesday.

**Messages**

**Principal’s message**

2010 was a very successful and rewarding year for Orara High School. I am sure that when reading this report, you will be impressed with the incredible achievements of our students and staff. All of these accomplished with the support of parents and a dedicated and supportive Parents and Citizens’ Association (P&C).

Along with the numerous successful programs and activities, the school’s infrastructure benefited through the Federal Government’s Building the Education Revolution (BER). Three science laboratories, a demonstration laboratory and a Covered Outdoor Learning Area (COLA) were part of a $1.45M upgrade.

I am sure that you will enjoy reading this report and like me, marvel at the success of our young people at the complexity of our school.

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.

Frank Stanton (Principal)

**P & C message**

The year has again brought new challenges with changes to the education system. Frank Stanton has provided information to the P&C about any changes or opportunities to make the school experience for our children better. Our children again were excited to receive their laptops which happened during the middle of the first term. The roll out was carried out more easily and efficiently by the Deputy Principal Mr Michael Bleakley and the Technical Support Officer (TSO) Lisa Jones. Constable Bernadette Snow the Coffs Harbour Command/School Liaison Officer attended for the day to educate children on the issues of ownership around the laptop computers.

Through the canteen, the P&C was able to raise the amount of $20,000 for the year. This money has been put aside to assist with obtaining a grant from the Government to provide a shelter for one of the basketball courts. The most recent quote for this project is $106,600. The P&C has now raised half the amount required and we are just waiting to hear when applications will be open.

The school was again successful in receiving a grant of $1,800 from the Coffs Harbour City Council for the Drumming Program.

The P&C was again involved in supplying community representatives for selection panels. Meg Kitchner has participated in another three panels as the parent representative. We need to seek other parent representatives to participate on these panels.

P&C members have been actively involved in various Year 6 information nights at Orara High School and primary schools were visited by students from the drama group towards the end of the year. The Year 6 students again enjoyed the trial lessons that were part of the Year 6 to 7 Transition Program. This was very successful with a very positive response from Year 6 parents and students.

The ongoing environmental groups have been hard at work beautifying the school. The efforts of students, staff and parents with new plantings and pruning, are most noticeable along the Joyce and Bray Street boundaries. Most significantly the path from Joyce Street entrance to the Administration Block has had a major overhaul and the plants are now established and the gardens looking fabulous.

A very successful Year 7 sausage sizzle was held last in February. The sausage sizzle was well attended. There was good interaction between P&C members, parents, students and teachers. We would like to thank Jo and the canteen helpers for their organisation as well as the ever helpful chefs Rob Kingsford-Smith and Brian Saunders.

The P&C have been handing out pamphlets advising parents that we do need more help to run meetings and make decisions and that our P&C differs to Primary School P&Cs in that fundraising is not frequently required. This is because the canteen at Orara High School is a P&C canteen with all profits being invested in the students through many projects. These projects include the Basketball Court shelter, school environmental beautification and supporting our sporting representatives. Also we have contributed to lighting in the car park and the end of year presentation awards.
The P&C has held two successful BBQs at Bunnings raising over $1300 this year. We also raise awareness about the P&C by conducting sausage sizzles at the parent/teacher interviews. These raise only small amounts of money but a lot of awareness. Thank you to Meg Kitchner and Jo Carter at the canteen as well as the parents and students who have assisted.

I would like to thank the committee, Meg Kitchner, Debbie Shilling, Ingrid Gardner and Cathy Floyd for their enormous contributions.

Di Kingsford-Smith (P&C President)

Student representative’s message
Orara High’s student leadership team is made up of the four school captains, four representatives from each year, two SLIKK (Student Leadership is for Koori Kids) representatives, one representative from the ESL student body and two representatives from the Support Unit. The Sport House captains are also an important part of the SRC. All members have been elected by their peers in each of the respective years.

The SRC meets every week with the coordinators to discuss issues that need to be addressed and these formal meetings are run by our elected chairperson. Minutes are taken and distributed to all members at subsequent meetings.

The student leadership team organises many school events and fundraising activities. The SRC chooses to raise money for local charities, and this year the Cancer Council was an extremely popular choice due to the number of people within our school community who have been directly affected by cancer. We proudly raised over $3000 to donate to this popular charity. We willingly assist organisations such as Legacy, the Cancer Council, and Red Cross with their annual collection days. Requests for financial assistance by both sporting teams and individuals representing Orara High at Regional, State and even National levels are always met with favourable consideration. The SRC organises a social each term and the chosen themes continue to prove to be extremely popular - we are very proud that they are always so well attended. Another highlight for the leadership team is organising fun activities and a barbecue for the Year 6 students from our feeder primary schools on the Orientation Day held at the end of the school year. The interaction with the older students appears to give them greater confidence when they enrol as Year 7 students at Orara High.

SRC members welcome visitors to our school for such important events as Parent/Teacher evenings and Information nights, as well as taking an extremely active and high profile role during our more formal occasions such as Presentation Day (hosted entirely by the 2011 Captains and Vice Captains) and Farewell Assemblies. Our captains lead the full school assembly every week until they leave to sit for the HSC. Remaining SRC students are then rostered on a rotational basis to run the remaining assemblies.

Our elected representatives attend District Meetings that are held each term, and also participate in the annual Leadership Camp. Our captains fly to Sydney to meet with the Governor and other student leaders each year. This visit is funded jointly by both the P&C and SRC. The captains lay a wreath at the Anzac Day Dawn Service and the entire SRC body takes part in the march to the Cenotaph.

D Rugendyke (SRC Mentor)

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
The following table shows the school’s enrolment over the last five years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student attendance profile
The following graph shows the school’s attendance patterns over the last four years compared to State and North Coast Region figures.

Management of non-attendance
Class rolls are marked at the start of each day and a swipe on card system is used to monitor late arrivals
and early leavers. From this, a daily absentee sheet is produced and electronically distributed to all staff who are asked to check attendance each lesson and report unexplained absences to the head teacher administration. Parents of students not in attendance at morning roll call are notified through an SMS message. Regular letters are sent home to parents and carers of students who have unexplained absences. In 2010 all staff commenced marking class rolls electronically each lesson and this has improved school attendance as shown on the previous graph where the school is now almost at state average.

Retention to Year 12

The retention rate of Year 10 completing their HSC has seen a small decline over the last few years and the school’s retention rate remains marginally lower than that of other local high schools in the district.

![Proportion Staying On (SC to HSC)](image)

Post-school destinations

The following table shows destinations of Year 12 students completing the HSC in 2010:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>SEG</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek Employ’t</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

Orara continued to offer a range of Vocational Education and Training (VET) and TAFE Education and Training (TVET) courses to senior students. In Year 12, 37% of students undertook a VET course, while in Year 11, 55% of students were involved in a school based VET course, a TAFE delivered VET course or a school based traineeship or apprenticeship.

Courses undertaken in 2010 included: Business Administration, Hospitality, Entertainment, Retail, Aged Care, Information Technology, Sport and Recreation, Automotive, Concreting and Electrical.

Several students who were involved in school based traineeships have been offered employment with their traineeship providers.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification.

Of the 62 students who presented for the HSC, all were successful in attaining the HSC credential. In addition to HSC courses studied, other TAFE and Framework courses were also undertaken.

Staff information

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

Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers of ESL</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the staff listed above, the school employs a full time Aboriginal Education Officer (AEO). Under the Norta Norta program, the school also employed two part time teachers and two part time Aboriginal Education tutors who worked with students in the classroom to support the development of Literacy and Numeracy skills.

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>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary:</th>
<th>30/11/2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong> $</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>352,586.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>479,182.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>549,435.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>118,561.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>17,068.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>44,297.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>1,561,133.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expenditure**            |            |
| Teaching & learning        |            |
| Key learning areas         | 68,332.93  |
| Excursions                 | 27,711.59  |
| Extracurricular dissections| 89,400.19  |
| Library                    | 11,247.53  |
| Training & development     | 6,592.03   |
| Tied funds                 | 422,699.06 |
| Casual relief teachers     | 163,624.96 |
| Administration & office    | 111,409.40 |
| School-operated canteen    | 0.00       |
| Utilities                  | 75,730.96  |
| Maintenance                | 33,701.01  |
| Trust accounts             | 37,965.74  |
| Capital programs           | 71,594.74  |
| **Total expenditure**      | 1,120,010.14 |
| **Balance carried forward**| 441,123.11 |

A full copy of the school’s 2010 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2010

Achievements

Arts

The Arts are a major focus of school life and remain very popular elective choices at Orara High School. They reflect the vitality and cultural diversity of our school with the rich and varied views of life this involves.

The music faculty continued its enthusiastic teaching of instruments and theory with the results being seen in the high quality of performances at the CAPA evenings. One of our star performers, Sharnay Phelps, received the Chimes Award from the local music teachers and also performed outstandingly at the Make - a - Wish Foundation fund raising event. Jake Knight, from Year 10, performed outstandingly in the Coffs Harbour Eisteddfod. Another honour was given to Aboriginal student Ryan Donnelly who was chosen to do a workshop with famous opera singer Deborah Cheetham and this will continue in 2011.

Other highlights include performances by the Year 10 Rock Band Capital Crimes (who participated in the Young Blood competition) and the school’s drumming group who always perform with great energy and chic.

The drama faculty also had a highly active year with a series of varied drama performances. The Year 11 students won the regional Theatresports event showing particularly good improvisation and thought skills. There were also a number of excellent individual and ensemble performances at CAPA evenings. In the second semester, a play Small Poppies was toured around to the local primary schools developing performance skills, as did the Comedy Night where Year 10 and 11 students did some challenging and amusing pieces.

The visual arts faculty had a busy and creative year, producing a lot of varied artworks reflecting the creative nature of our students. Highlights included some 40 Year 8 murals, with the theme of “Hero’s and Childhood Memories”, being hung around the school. A major art exhibition was also set up during Term 4 with more than 300 works displayed. The highlights of this exhibition were the Year 12 artworks which were both creative and engaging. The visual arts faculty also made advances in digital art and have started a digital photography class in 2011.

Overall, it has been a very productive and positive year for our creative students.

Sport

2010 was witness to many great achievements from the Swimming Carnival at the start of the year through to Cricket and Beach Volleyball in Term 4, with both individuals and teams competing in school carnivals, CHS knockout competitions and selection trials.

The Swimming Carnival gave an early indication of the competitive spirit that was displayed by students throughout the year. The carnival also unearthed some excellent swimmers in Year 7 with Chloe Attwood, Chloe Chapman, Makor Malou and Euan Willis excelling on the day. As expected Joshua Chapman was a standout at the Mid North Coast, North Coast and State swimming carnivals making it all the way to the School Sports Australia Swimming Championships.

Once again Orara High had a very large contingent of students travel to Woolgoolga for the Zone Cross Country. Taylor Wicks, Stephanie Mann, Britney McMullen and Joshua Chapman excelled at the Region
Cross Country and represented Orara High proudly at the NSW All Schools Cross Country.

In athletics, we had a large number of individual and relay team successes at the MNC carnival. After the North Coast Athletics Carnival at Kingscliff was cancelled, Orara High had sixteen students selected for the State CHS Athletics Championships. David Sheridan performed strongly at State level and competed at the Youth Athletics Australia National Titles early in 2011.

The year saw younger students compete for Orara High teams following a number of accomplished athletes finishing school last year. As expected, with this rebuilding phase, teams have not progressed as far in Combined High School competition. Having said this there have been some excellent results over the year. Some of the most notable performances included:

- Alannah Rosewood played for the NSW All Schools 15s Girls Soccer Team as goalkeeper. The team played in the State of Origin Championships against Queensland. During the game Alannah was spotted by the Matilda’s Coach Tom Sermanni who invited her to train at the Institute of Sport.

- David Sheridan competed at both the CHS and All Schools State Athletics Championships. His times in the 100 and 200 metre sprint events qualified David for the Youth Athletics Australia National Titles to be held early in 2011.

- Joshua Chapman represented NSW at the School Sports Australia National Swimming Championships, winning two bronze, two silver and one gold medal as an Athlete With a Disability (AWD). Joshua also received an award from School Sports Australia recognising his sportmanship and dedication to swimming.

- The 16 Years Boys Futsal team made it to the North Coast final for the second successive year. While unsuccessful against Kingscliff High, they played very skillfully and impressed all who saw them play.

- The Open Boys Touch team made it to the final sixteen teams in the state. Expertly coached by Mr Tim Rodgers, the team played strongly at the Mid North Coast Knockout Gala Day displaying solid defence and flair in attack. The team’s run was eventually halted by Chatham High School.

Following these achievements, we look forward to seeing a continuation of the current successes in 2011.

Academic

In the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), 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.

- For Year 7, achievement ranges from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest).
- For Year 9, achievement ranges from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest).

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

In the Year 10 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

The following graphs show the percentage of students achieving in each band compared to state wide figures and schools of similar socio-economic drawing area.

There has been a small improvement in our higher achievers at the higher bands 8 to 9 in writing, and also a small improvement in our higher achievers at the high bands 7 and 8 in spelling compared to the average over the last few years. The school’s focus remains on improving the area of writing.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7

The school remains focused on moving a greater number of students into the higher bands through its application of the Quicksmart program in numeracy. There has been a small improvement in students achieving in the high Bands of 7 and 8 compared to the average over the last few years.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9

2010 was the third time Year 9 has been involved in a national literacy assessment program. NAPLAN (Literacy) and reports on the areas of reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Progress in literacy

It is pleasing to see there is a positive movement towards students achieving in the higher bands of 9 and 10 in the area of writing, which has been our main focus area, and in moving students from Band 7 to Band 8 in the area of spelling and grammar and punctuation compared to similar school groups.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9
As with Literacy, 2010 was the third time Year 9 have been involved in a national numeracy assessment program. NAPLAN (Numeracy).

Progress in numeracy
While there was a slight drop in improvement in the number of students achieving in the higher bands of 8 and 9, our school average in highest bands 8, 9 and 10 remains higher than those of similar school groups.

School Certificate
Results in all external exams are shown below. The graphs show a slight general increase in the number of students achieving in the higher bands 4, 5 and 6 compared to the school average over the previous five years in the areas of English Literacy, Mathematics, Science, and Australian History Civics and Citizenship.
School Certificate relative performance comparison to Year 5 (value-adding)

The school’s average value added performance in English, mathematics and Australian Geography Civics and Citizenship (AGCC) remain within expected state performance ranges (+1 to -1). However, student performance in Science, Australian History Civics and Citizenship (AHCC) and Computer Skills showed a positive improvement above the expected state average.
Higher School Certificate

The graphs below show the performance of students in subjects presented at the 2010 HSC. Students showed improved achievement, compared to the school average over the past five years in the following subjects: Business Studies, Community and Family Studies, English (Advanced), Legal Studies and General Mathematics.

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

Results at the 2010 HSC were very pleasing with students from all ability ranges performing above the state expected growth. Students of higher academic ability performed well above other schools of similar socio economic status and students in the lower ability ranges excelled to be well above state average expectations.

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 students in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) 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 the minimum standard in 2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>86.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>75.7</td>
<td>80.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>78.5</td>
<td>86.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>80.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>91.4</td>
<td>91.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2010, compared to 2009.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>78.5</td>
<td>80.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>77.4</td>
<td>80.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Significant programs and initiatives

### Aboriginal Education

Currently 16% of students at Orara high school identify as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander (ATSI).

In both the areas of Literacy and Numeracy, our ATSI students are showing, on average, to be performing within the state average range over the past few years.

The school has a full time Aboriginal Education Officer, and also employed two part-time Aboriginal in-class tutors to work with individual students and assist Aboriginal students in both main stream classes and with the Quicksmart numeracy program.

In 2010 the school received additional funding, through the junior Norta Norta state initiative, to support students in Years 8 and 10 in the areas of literacy and numeracy. The manner of supporting students in the junior school can be improved and will be modified in 2011. For the senior school, the Norta Norta program provided funding for a trained teacher and there was a strong focus on English and Literacy development. This approach showed more positive outcomes over what was trialled in 2009 and will be further developed in 2011 with the introduction of a full-time Aboriginal mentor, but continuing with a major focus on literacy across all KLAS.

A number of celebrations of Aboriginality form part of the school calendar including Deadly Days and NAIDOC week which was celebrated with Aboriginal Elders and our closest feeder school, Tyalla Primary.

The school also piloted an initiative of introducing a junior Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) team and reintroduce aspects of the former SLIKK leadership program. These initiatives enabled a more proportionate representation of Aboriginal students in 2011 on the SRC and as Year 10 Peer Mentor leaders supporting Year 7 students. In 2011 the school aims to introduce further opportunities for Aboriginal students to develop leadership skills.

Since 2009 the school has been a strong supporter in working with the Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME) program that operates in collaboration with Southern Cross University (SCU). This provided additional support for Aboriginal students in Years 9 and 10 to attend a 17 week program at SCU, which focused on building pride, belonging, leadership and academic skills. Through SCU, the school also introduced a homework study centre during lunchtime which operated two days per week. Both programs provided positive experiences and were well supported by students. The AIME initiative will be further expanded in 2011 to support all students in Year 7 to 12 through both the SCU lessons and a school-based homework centre as part of a community of high school initiative run through SCU.

In 2010 the school carried out a Dare to Lead (D2L) snapshot evaluation of Aboriginal Education. This involved external D2L evaluators interviewing a range of both Aboriginal and non Aboriginal students, about 18 self nominated staff and some 30 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal parents, along with all Aboriginal workers in the school. The D2L team also interviewed some staff from Tyalla Primary school. From this, Tyalla Primary will conduct their own D2L snapshot evaluation in 2011 which will also involve Orara High. This will establish a Community of School partnership between the two schools in promoting aspects of Aboriginal education. The D2L report produced has been issued to all staff and parents involved and has provided some valuable insights that have become part of the school management plan.

In 2010 the school also established its first Aboriginal education team involving staff, community workers, parents and elders. One of the main team aims is to work on increasing broader parental involvement and assist in the development of Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) for all Aboriginal students. Of significance, the team’s recommendation to introduce Aboriginal Studies in to the Year 7 curriculum was supported unanimously by the school executive to commence in 2011.

### Multicultural education

Orara High School has a number of students from non-English speaking backgrounds. Many of these are refugee students from Africa, Burma and the Middle East. To support these students the school has an
extensive English as a Second Language (ESL) program, including an Intensive English Class for newly-arrived students. The school has been recognised across the state for the outstanding work done for these students. Initiatives to promote multicultural education include an African drumming and dance group, which is in demand for performances in the wider community, a Refugee Transition Program and professional development for mainstream teaching staff to develop awareness and skills in teaching refugees. Multicultural Education is celebrated at school assemblies on Harmony Day and during Refugee Week. Non-English speaking parents are invited to the school for information sessions about educational pathways and laptop use. A strong network of support staff and volunteers also contribute to the learning and social needs of the ESL community.

**Respect and responsibility**

The school uses a merit system to provide tangible rewards for students who show respect for others rights to learn and act responsibly.

The Peer Support program which involves training peer leaders to support the incoming Year 7 students, continues to work well and helps promote respect and responsibility. Students find that it helps bring about a smoother transition from Year 6 into high school by helping to develop a sense of connectedness. The development of optimism, empathy, positive self talk, perseverance, resilience and coping strategies are developed through the use of Year 10 students, who act as mentors. Peer Support leaders who nominate when in Year 9, undergo training and start assisting at the Year 6 Orientation Day.

Peer Support leaders ran regular weekly sessions during Weeks 1 to 4 of Term 1, followed by a Peer Support Camp in Week 5. In 2010, Peer Support leaders were representative of the cultural make up of the school and included Aboriginal and ESL students. This proportionate representation will now continue in future years.

Feedback from Year 7 students shows they valued being led by older students, with many stating that they would like to be peer support leaders in the future. For Year 10 peer support leaders, this provided opportunity for them to accept a leadership role with all gaining much from being a mentor.

**Connected learning**

The school continues to support the use of technology through the installation of Interactive White Boards (IWBs). This resource is used in conjunction with the DER laptop program for Year 9-12. The school, through Priority Schools (PSFP) and professional learning (TPL) funds, has prioritised for expanding the use of technology through use of Video Conference (VC), special classroom teaching programs and the uploading of teaching resources through Moodle. Teachers are embracing the technological revolution and our classrooms are becoming more connected. This is bringing increased engagement in to the learning process.

**Other programs**

**Priority School Program (PSFP)**

Orara High School just completed the fifth Year of the PSFP program that commenced in 2005 and will continue until 2012. In 2010 some $48 174 was expended in areas which include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher release for professional learning</td>
<td>$14029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Teaching</td>
<td>$14288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSP network activities</td>
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<td>- Competitions</td>
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The PSFP program provides the school with a significant boost through supporting many programs and initiatives: the Year 10 portfolio project, the planning room, Quicksmart, gifted & talented programs, peer tutoring and peer support, a part-time community liaison officer which has improved communication between the school and its community, and an attendance monitoring system that is improving school attendance.

**Special Education**

Orara High School has a Special Education unit that caters for students with moderate or severe intellectual disability. In 2010 there were 31 students enrolled in the unit. These students access a specifically designed Life Skills curriculum which covers all KLA.

The school also had 27 students in the mainstream, who access funding support.

In 2010 the school restructured its Learning Support Team (LST), so that it meets weekly and has representatives from broad areas of the school. Its role is to identify and provide appropriate support for students with learning difficulties and disabilities and
to coordinate appropriate strategies for students with behavioural issues.

**Progress on 2010 targets**

**Target 1**  To increase attendance and retention rates in Years 10 to 12.

Our achievements include:

- the establishment of a broader curriculum by liaising with our cluster of high schools to forming of the “C4” curriculum team with students from all four high schools now accessing curriculum across schools;
- increased use of the library by seniors through supervised library days to establish a stronger work ethic;
- the introduction of support programs to assist learning and welfare including: Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL), Norta Norta, Rock and Water, Love Bites and AIME;
- a proportionate number of Aboriginal and ESL students selected on SRC and Peer Mentoring programs;
- establishment of a lunchtime homework centre to support Aboriginal students in collaboration with Southern Cross University; and
- improved attendance rates due to the introduction of BER teacher laptops to mark rolls each lesson (refer “School Context - attendance profile” earlier in this report).

**Target 2**  To improve communication between the school and its community and enhance community perceptions.

Our achievements include:

- the formation of an Aboriginal Education Team involving staff, Aboriginal parents/elders and Aboriginal community members;
- the Dare to Lead external snap shot completed on Aboriginal education involving staff, and Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal parents and students;
- increased liaison with feeder primary schools through school visits, drama visits and taster lessons; and
- the implementation of an Interim Report for Year 7 students at the end of Terms 1 and 3.

**Target 3**  To improve outcomes for all students in Literacy and Numeracy.

Our achievements include:

- a focus on staff training in use of technology programs for implementing BER school laptop initiative, increasing student engagement; and
- the high achievement of Aboriginal students in NAPLAN which was well above state average of Aboriginal students.

**Target 4**  To improve the use of technology to enhance quality teaching and learning.

Our achievements include:

- increased use by staff accessing ICT skills through use of interactive White Boards (IWBs) and BER laptops in roll marking, development of resources, and downloading of lessons and information using Moodle;
- the majority of Year 10 students presenting Folios with ICT involvement. Each KLA identified an ICT type task for selection in the Folio presentation; and
- a 52% increase in the number of ICT courses accessed by staff from 2009 (27 courses) compare to 2010 (52 courses).

**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 2010 the school looked at evaluating its Teacher professional Learning (TPL) and in the curriculum areas in evaluating PDHPE and mathematics.

**Educational and management practice**

- **Teacher Professional Learning (TPL)**

**Background**

TPL is a high priority and staff regularly participate in further developing their knowledge and skills through attending individual and group training programs at school, district, regional and state level. In 2009 a need was identified to maintain an accurate record of all TPL activities to increase accountability and assist in the future management of TPL. In 2009 a school policy was developed to ensure equity and clarify procedures.

**Findings and conclusions**

In 2010 all staff actively participated in professional learning activities. $34445 was expended during the year which equates to $611 per teacher. The breakdown of expenditure for 2010 was:

- use of ICT for teaching  $4176
- literacy and numeracy  $778
The school also maintains an accurate database of all TPL activities offered and attended by all teaching staff. This was established in 2009 and each year all KLAS are issued with details of involvement from each staff member. The database is also used to identify areas of training and/or expertise for building ‘professional depth’, sustainability and accountability. The database is accessible by all staff through the staff intranet.

A TPL team only meets when required to decide on any application that involves whole school issues. All approved activities are determined based on school priorities. Feedback to staff is encouraged with major TPL activities providing feedback at staff meetings or school development days.

The TPL team, in liaison with the school executive, organise school development days in support of arising school needs, and both school and district priorities.

**Future directions**

- the database be maintained for future reference and accountability;
- with a tightening of general school budget requests, each KLA needs to identify areas of need, based on school priorities;
- the TPL team identify clear school priorities to support school and district priorities;
- improved training of staff in accessing TPL activities online;
- promote use of technology in the management of TPL activities and in providing feedback to school personnel; and
- promote the analysis of SMART data for improving student outcomes.

**Curriculum: Mathematics**

**Background**

Mathematics is a core area of both practical and academic learning. It is a compulsory study area up to the end of Year 10 due to the important role it will play in all students’ lives after they leave school. Senior mathematics attracts many students who see the value mathematics will play in their final careers. The study of mathematics teaches creativity, problem solving and logical thought as well as developing an exact and exacting medium of communication which is common to people of all cultures.

**Findings and conclusions**

Academic results in 2010 were at a level comparable with recent years. One highlight was that, after a hiatus of several years, two students, both from an ESL background, studied the highest course of mathematics (Extension 2 Mathematics) available at school level. These students both gained a highly respected band E3 in the Higher School Certificate. They are looking at careers in engineering and accounting. Many students in the HSC had mathematics as their best or second best band result.

Again in 2010 Orara High School sent two teams to compete in the Mathematics Challenge at the University of New England as well as entering over 50 students in the Australian Mathematics Competition. All these students gained the experience of competing against students from other schools and countries and many gained success in their respective competitions.

Student survey results indicated students were positive about their mathematics teachers and the work presented to them, including their level of achievement and the relevance of the mathematics they studied.

**Future directions**

The retirement of two senior mathematics teachers in 2010 and the imminent retirement of further staff in 2011 and 2012 will dramatically change the landscape of the mathematics faculty. This staff turnover presents a challenge to the faculty, and the school, to maintain a high level of skill and experience in the presentation of lessons, but also an opportunity to develop new staff with a different range of skills and ideas.

The ‘Digital Education Revolution’ is changing the types of lessons traditionally presented by mathematics teachers. Laptop computers and ‘Smartboards’ provide increased opportunity to enrich mathematics lessons and produce greater student interest and incentive. Staff development and training to strengthen teaching practice in these areas is a challenge for this year and beyond. Mathematics teaching programs such as *Maths On Line* and *Mathletics*, which will be introduced in 2011, will produce some of the required variety.

**Other evaluations**

**Curriculum: Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE)**

**Background**

The PDHPE faculty plays an important role in the education and welfare of Orara High School students. The faculty consists of one Head Teacher and four...
classroom teachers. In 2010, two PDHPE teachers also held the positions of Year Advisor, one teacher is the school’s Girls Supervisor, and the other teacher is the Sport Organiser.

In PDHPE students learn about retaining a healthy lifestyle, through exercise, nutrition, relationships and maintaining mental health. The subject emphasises the importance of decision-making, appropriate assertive behaviour and conflict resolution as the students develop in their teenage years. Other subjects taught within the faculty include the Stage 5 elective physical activity and sport studies and the Stage 6 non-ATAR subject sport, lifestyle and recreation studies. These two subjects are based around sport and active lifestyles, and have a high practical component to them.

Findings and conclusions

The HSC results for PDHPE in 2010 were very pleasing. 50% of the students who completed the PDHPE course gained their highest mark in this subject compared with the other subjects that they studied. Another four students gained their second highest mark in PDHPE. This demonstrated that the students were well engaged in the subject, and that they made the understanding of the course content one of their main priorities. The Quality of School Life (QSL) survey that was completed by students in relation to PDHPE showed that a very high proportion of students had a positive and effective relationship with their PDHPE teacher. This aspect is one of the most crucial in providing students with a positive school experience, and is undoubtedly a reason why students have achieved excellent results in this subject for many years.

It was noticeable that there were three students who achieved lower bands in the HSC course due to their limited academic ability that they had demonstrated coming into the subject in Year 11. Although the value added data is mostly good for these students, it did highlight that some students needed to be better advised when considering the subject, as PDHPE is a fairly strenuous HSC course.

Future directions

The PDHPE faculty is in a transition phase, with two long term teachers ending their careers over the last couple of years. Some very capable teachers have temporarily fulfilled the needs of the students in this subject, but the students will benefit from some permanent teachers being placed in the faculty. Technology in the classroom, and in particular the DER Laptops, has been well implemented into teaching in PDHPE, and this will be further developed over the following years. The PDHPE teachers are well versed in the use of the student laptops and other technologies, however, this will be an ongoing challenge as technology changes and the needs of students vary.

The Quality of School Life survey showed that some students displayed lower levels of self-esteem. The topic of self-identity is explored regularly in PDHPE, but this is an area that needs further investigating to improve the self-esteem of students, particularly in Years 8 and 9.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2010 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their responses are represented under the “Key Evaluations” section of this report.

Professional learning

Refer to the above section under “Key Evaluation: Educational and Management Practices”. Evaluation of Teacher Professional Learning (TPL)

The school is following a three year improvement plan and has chosen to retain consistent targets.

Targets for 2011

Target 1 To improve outcomes for all students in Literacy and Numeracy with a focus on Aboriginal students.

Strategies to achieve this target could include:

- increased use of SMART2 data analysis by KLAs;
- further development of the Quicksmart program;
- develop support programs including AIME, Learning Centre, Personalised Learning Plans and Norta Norta, to build greater achievement among Aboriginal students;
- establish a Towards 100 mentoring program for “top end” Aboriginal students;
- further development of Assessment Tasks to incorporate an extended written response wherever possible;
- improving the use of technology to enhance teaching and learning.

Our success will be measured by:

- increased KLA focus and strategies on developing literacy and numeracy based on SMART2 data;
- improved NAPLAN results for Years 7 and 9 students in Literacy and Numeracy;
- improved engagement/achievement amongst Aboriginal students;
- student and staff involvement in the “Towards 100” initiative;
• students accessing an Aboriginal Learning Centre (ALC) in liaison with Southern Cross University;
• inclusion of written responses in KLA tasks;
• improved ‘value added’ results in the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate; and
• increased engagement of students through utilisation of technology for improving learning.

**Target 2 To improve the use of technology to enhance quality teaching and learning.**

Strategies to achieve this target could include:

• increased professional learning opportunities to develop ongoing teacher skills;
• expand the use of laptops, Interactive Whiteboards (IWBs) and other technology in the classroom;
• improve access to increase student use of laptops in the classroom, including uploading of teaching resources through use of Moodle; and
• establish “how to” protocols for students and staff in the use of DER laptops;

Our success will be measured by:

• a significant number of staff utilising technology training courses;
• increased teacher confidence and skills in accessing laptops for learning and uploading of resources through use of Moodle;
• establishment of more technology based assessment tasks; and
• increased utilisation of ICT in the development of Year 10 portfolios.

**Target 3 To improve and develop school tone by promoting positive behaviour programs.**

Strategies to achieve this target could include:

• increased focus on achievement and study skills for Years 10-12;
• increasing the monitoring of attendance patterns;
• investigate alternative programs for improving student learning/welfare;
• increasing student leadership opportunities, in particular for Aboriginal and ESL students in areas such as SRC, and Peer Support;
• increasing parent and carer participation in a range of school activities (eg parent evenings); and
• a commitment by the majority of staff to promote and apply Positive Behavior for Learning (PBL) strategies to improve school tone and learning.

Our success will be measured by:

• increased involvement of students improving work ethic and study skills;
• improved attendance patterns for junior and senior students;
• evidence of greater parent and carer participation in Parent/Teacher evenings and development of PLPs;
• positive results in a Quality of School Life whole school survey to measure the impact of PBL with staff, students and parents;
• a 5% decrease in suspension rates; and
• an 80% level of staff commitment to applying the PBL philosophy and principles as indicated by external survey results

**About this report**

In preparing this report, the self-assessment 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-assessment committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school’s future development.

Frank Stanton Principal
Di Kingsford Smith P & C President
Andrew Minisini Deputy Principal
Michael Bleakley Deputy Principal
Kim Harland Careers Adviser
Doug Willis Head Teacher (Mathematics)
Tony Wilson Head Teacher (PDHPE)
Guy Morgan Head Teacher (CAPA)
Warwick Hatfield PD/H/PE teacher

**School contact information**

Orara High School
PO Box 911 COFS HARBOUR NSW 2450
Ph: 02 6652 1077
Fax: 02 6651 3842
Email: Orara-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Web: www.orara-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
School Code: 8469

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: