Orara High School

Annual School Report

Opportunity, innovation and success in a diverse and welcoming environment
Principal’s message

Orara High is a very dynamic and vibrant school characterised by academic, sporting and cultural success and excellent sporting and cultural facilities.

Our success has been achieved by a dedicated staff and supportive parent and student bodies.

I am sure that you will enjoy reading this report and marvel at the successes of our students in such a diverse and complex 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)

Opportunity, innovation and success in a diverse and welcoming environment.

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. The ongoing rollout of the laptops is very beneficial to our children’s academic success. Constable Snow was in attendance again to brief the students and parents on the safe use of the laptops.

The P&C was able to raise through the canteen the amount of $17,000 for the year. This money has been added to the existing funds that are put aside to assist with obtaining a grant from the Government to provide a shelter for one of the basketball courts. The P&C have applied for the grant but as yet have not heard back from the Department of Sport and Recreation. The most recent quote for this project is $106,600. The P&C has the funds in a fixed term deposit earning interest while we wait to hear.

The P&C was again involved in supplying community representatives for selection panels. Neah Williams, Carina Fry, Cathy Floyd and Meg Kitchner have all participated as the parent representatives. We need to seek other parent representatives to participate on these panels. The training is carried out by Frank Stanton at the school and takes around half an hour.

Again 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 provided by the school. This was very successful with a good response from Year 6 parents and students. Year 7 this year has been the largest intake of students in recent years.

The ongoing environmental groups have been hard at work beautifying the school. As a result of his contribution, Peter Heffernan was nominated by the P&C for a Rotary Pride of Workmanship Award. The entrance area has been extended past the admin building and the plants are establishing beautifully. As part of the tree survey undertaken previously, dangerous trees were removed from the school grounds. Robyn Purcell was also nominated for a Rotary Pride of Workmanship Award for her ongoing contribution to the students and the school community.

A very successful Year 7 Sausage Sizzle was held 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 Carter and the canteen helpers for their organisation as well as the ever helpful chefs Rob Kingsford-Smith, Rod Floyd and Brian Saunders. I would also like to thank all the P&C members who attended and helped, making it a very rewarding evening.

The P&C have been handing out pamphlets advising parents that we do need more help to run meetings and make decisions and that the P&C is not like a Primary School P&C where fundraising is 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. We also contribute to the end of year presentation awards.

The P&C, by continuing to conduct sausage sizzles at the parent/teacher interviews raises awareness of our activities for those parents who are yet to attend our meetings. Thank you to Meg and Jo at the canteen as well as the parents and students who have helped on the days.

I would like to thank the committee, Meg Kitchner, Debbie Shilling, Grahame and Cathy Fry for their wonderful help and contribution during the last year. As this has been my final year as a committee member I feel that the outgoing committee over the previous four to five years has achieved a lot in beautifying the grounds and recognising outstanding teachers for the job they do. This, as well as Meg & Cathy’s diligent work with the canteen committee and supervisor which has seen the profits increase and has made the shelter possible. Thank you both. I would also like to acknowledge Frank Stanton and thank him for his efforts. We have had frank and friendly discussions over issues and at times have agreed to disagree but have always been able to work for the betterment of the students.

Di Kingsford-Smith (P&C President)

Student Representatives’ message

The Student Representative Council (SRC) is made up of the four School Captains, four representatives from each year, two Student Leadership is for Koori Kids (SLIKK), one
representative from the English as a Second Language (ESL) student body and two representatives from the Support Unit. The SRC is our student leadership team.

The SRC meets every week with the teacher mentors to discuss issues that need to be addressed and these formal meetings are run by our elected chairperson. Minutes are taken by an elected secretary and then 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 donated money to the Queensland Flood Appeal and the RSPCA. The SRC willingly assist organisations such as Legacy, the Cancer Council and Red Cross with their annual collection days. Requests for financial assistance for representing Orara High, at regional, state and national levels, are always met with favourable consideration for both sporting teams and individuals.

The SRC organises a social each term and the chosen themes continue to be extremely popular. We are very proud that they are always well attended. Another highlight for the SRC is the organisation of activities and a barbecue for the Year 6 students from our feeder primary schools on Orientation Day. This held at the end of the school year. The interaction with the older students appears to give the Year 6 students greater confidence when they enrol at Orara High. The team also organised a School Sporting House Challenge to help clean up the school, and this was deemed to be very successful.

SRC members welcome visitors to our school for such important events as Parent/Teacher Evenings and Information Nights. They also take an extremely active and high profile role during our more formal occasions such as Presentation Day (hosted entirely by the 2012 Captains and Vice Captains) and Farewell Assemblies. Our captains lead the full school assembly every week until they leave to sit for the HSC. At Year Meetings, members of the SRC report back to their respective year groups on activities that the SRC have been involved in.

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 student body takes part in the march to the Cenotaph.

Trent Woodcock (SRC Mentor)

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**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 six years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>296</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.

![Student attendance rates](image)

**Management of non-attendance**

All class rolls are now marked electronically on teacher laptops at the start of each day and in each lesson throughout the day. 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 during the first lesson of each day are notified through an SMS message. Regular letters are sent home to parents and carers of students who have unexplained absences. The marking of class rolls electronically each lesson 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 (SEG).
Post-school destinations

The following table shows destinations of Year 12 students completing the HSC in 2011:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek Employment</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

Orara continued to offer a range of Vocational Education and Training (SVET) and TAFE Education and Training (TVET) courses to senior students. In Year 12, 32% of students undertook a VET course, while in Year 11, 58% 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 2011 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 58 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.

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>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of financial summary:</td>
<td>30/11/2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income $</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>602 311.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>528 215.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>557 941.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>127 741.74</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>45 083.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>577 604.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>2 438 897.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>81 994.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>35 337.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>101 718.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>13 311.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>6 062.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>573 057.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>196 185.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>129 418.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>88 465.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>44 187.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>47 174.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
<td>1 316 914.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance carried forward</td>
<td>1 121 983.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A full copy of the school’s 2011 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 2011

Staff information

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

<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>50.5</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>1.4</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>80.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Itinerant teachers such as vision and hearing are included in the figures above.

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 one full time and one part-time Aboriginal Education teacher mentors and three 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>

Achievements

Arts

2011 was a highly successful and productive year for the Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) faculty. HSC results were well above students’ average unit results and elective numbers grew substantially.

Highlights of the year in art included very good HSC results which were just under 15% above their average mark and our Annual Art exhibition contained more than 350 artworks that were mounted and displayed during Education Week. These were well received by parents, staff and visiting schools. Another highlight was our innovative and creative Bodies of Artwork completed by our Year 12 students.

A second new digital photography class started and showcased their skills in some skilful and original photographs. We are confident these again will do well in the HSC exams.

The music faculty also achieved good HSC results of around 10% above students’ average results. The music faculty also showcased our talented students in CAPA nights, Orara’s Got Talent and multiple assembly performances. Another highlight was the success of the drumming group, reflecting our African students’ heritage. The group performed at major conferences and public venues to wide acclaim. Our music teachers, Mrs Hawley and Mrs Compton, started a concert band and the students are growing in skills and confidence weekly.

The drama faculty also had a productive and successful year with a series of great performances. Some of these included:

- the local eisteddfod, where multiple prizes were won;

- Platform 12, where our seniors were chosen to show their skills;
- CAPA nights where groups and individuals performed; and
- Theatresports where great comic and timing skills were gained.

- performances for visiting schools and excursions to great plays such as Stolen and Ruby Moon.

Our good HSC results reflect the skills and intellectual development of our students. We look forward to enjoying more creative teaching and learning throughout 2012.

Sport

2011 was a great year for sporting achievements at Orara High School. Throughout the year, our students competed in a wide variety of sports including equestrian, golf and beach volleyball. There have been both individuals and teams competing in school carnivals, Combined High School (CHS) knockout competitions and representative selection trials.

The swimming carnival gave an early indication of the competitive spirit that was displayed by students throughout the year. The carnival unearthed some excellent swimmers with Anna Fry and Kieran Riches excelling on the day. Joshua Chapman competed at the NSW CHS Swimming Championships winning a number of silver and one bronze medal in open competition. Diamond House rose from the shadows to claim Champion House and never looked back by also dominating the cross country and athletics carnivals.

Orara continued to unearth outstanding cross country runners. Taylor Wicks, Stephanie Mann, Lachlan Forbes, Paige Channells and Makor Malou excelled at the North Coast Region (NCR) Cross Country. Paige and Makor won their events and were NCR Age Champions. Donna Helm, Kyla Dooley and Babeka Tong won the Open Girls’ School Team event at NCR and competed in the NSW All Schools Cross Country where the girls finished with a silver medal. Stephanie Mann also competed strongly at State running as an individual and as part of the NCR 15 Years Girls’ Team. Her efforts assisted the team in winning a gold medal, making them the best team in the state.

The Athletics Carnival was very successful and well attended. A vast contingent of students competed in individual events and relay teams at the Mid North Coast (MNC) and NCR carnival. David Sheridan, Catherine Down and a staggering three relay teams represented Orara at the NSW CHS Athletics Championships. David Sheridan performed strongly at State level and will now compete in the National Titles early in 2012.

David also excelled in Rugby League, representing the MNC and NCR 15 Years Rugby League sides. Playing in the wing and fullback positions, David’s exceptional speed and solid
defence made him a valuable team asset. After scoring numerous tries at the State Titles he was selected in the NSW 15 Years Rugby League side.

Lauren French also shone in 2011, with outstanding performances as a touch player. Playing in the link and wing positions, Lauren displayed sharp bursts of speed and natural agility. She displayed her excellent skills at the MNC Touch Trials and NCR Trials. She went on to represent NCR at the State Championships where she has been a vital part of the NCR Open Girls Touch Team for the past three years by her commitment, impressive performances, and excellent sportsmanship.

2011 saw many special performances from sporting teams. Teams deserving special mention include the 14 Years Boys’ basketball, the 16 Years Boys’ Futsal Team and the Open Boys soccer team. The 16 Years Boys’ futsal & Open soccer teams have reached the NCR final three years in a row. The 14 Boys’ basketball team made it all the way to the top eight in the state led by the basketball powerhouses Nicholas Betts and Hayden Davie.

Following these achievements, we look forward to seeing a continuation of the current successes in 2012.

**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.

**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 (SSG).

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

There has been an improvement in students achieving in the high Bands of 7 to 9 compared to the average over the last few years. It is particularly pleasing to see the improved performance of students at Band 9 level.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9

It is pleasing to see there is a small but positive movement towards students achieving in the higher bands of 9 and 10 in the area of reading. The school needs to further develop its focus on improving to move students into the higher bands in areas of writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9

There was a slight drop in the number of students achieving in the higher bands of 8 to 10 compared to previous years. The school clearly needs to focus on developing strategies for moving students towards the higher bands.

School Certificate

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).

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 area of English Literacy. There has also been a slight general increase in the number of students achieving in the higher bands 5 and 6 compared to the school average over the previous five years in the area of Numeracy.
School Certificate relative performance comparison to Year 5 (value-adding)

The school’s average value added performance in English and science remain within expected state performance ranges (+1 to -1). However, student performance in Mathematics and Australian Geography Civics and Citizenship (AGC&C) showed a reduced performances. Australian History Civics and Citizenship (AHC&C) and Computer Skills showed a slight but positive performance above the expected state average, shown by the “0” line.

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

Results at the 2011 HSC were lower than experienced last year although our higher achieving students showed an improved performance to the average of the previous five years and around the same performance for schools of similar socio-economic status (SSG).

Higher School Certificate relative performance comparison to Year 10 (value-adding)

The graphs below show the performance of students in subjects presented at the 2011 HSC.

Data is not available for subjects with a candidature less than ten.
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 7 students achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2011 compared to previous years.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2011, compared to previous years.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal Education
Currently about 18% of students at Orara high school identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI).

In 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. During the year the school employed three part-time Aboriginal in-class tutors to work with individual students in Years 8 and 10 and assist Aboriginal students in mainstream classes and with the Quicksmart numeracy program. Towards the latter part of the year, a new initiative was trialled in developing Numeracy where in-class support was offered to all students in targeted classes. This involved close liaison between the mathematics teacher, the junior tutors and the Learning Support teacher. This model proved to be very successful and will be further explored in 2012.

In the senior school, two full-time mentors were employed to support Aboriginal students develop literacy, planning and organisational skill across all subject areas. Support was also provided to other students in the classroom. This approach proved to be extremely successful and will be expanded in 2012 to include Years 10 to 12.

In 2010, the school received additional funding, through the Norta Norta Federal Government initiative, to support students in Years 8 and 10 in the areas of literacy and numeracy.

For the senior school, the Norta Norta program provided funding for two trained teachers to work with students with a strong focus on English and literacy development 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.

In 2011, the school introduced Aboriginal Studies into the Year 7 curriculum for all students. This course will be further developed in 2012 and it is anticipated this will develop a broader understanding of Aboriginal culture to all students. It is also anticipated to involve elders from our Aboriginal community to further enrich the content of this course.

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 AIME, the school also introduced a homework study centre which operated each Tuesday afternoon. Both programs provided positive experiences for students who chose to participate. The AIME initiative will be further expanded in 2012 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 AIME and SCU.

The establishment of the school’s first Aboriginal education team involving staff, community workers, parents and elders proved very successful. 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. Significant involvement included parents taking part in Harmony Day, and the introduction of mentoring our higher achievers and also involving Tyalla PS in celebrations of achievement in 2012.

During the year, the Norta Norta team trialled a systematic approach in developing PLPs for Aboriginal students. By the end of 2012 it is anticipated this process will be further streamlined so we have PLPs developed for all Aboriginal students.

Multicultural education
Orara High School has a large number of students from non-English speaking backgrounds, many of whom are refugees. They come from Africa, Burma and the Middle East. To support these students the school has extensive
English as a Second Language (ESL) program, including an Intensive English Class for newly-arrived students.

Initiatives to promote multi-cultural education include an African drumming group, which is in demand for performances in the wider community, a Refugee Transition Program which operates a coffee shop for teachers two days a week, and professional development for mainstream teaching staff to develop awareness and skills in teaching students from a non-English speaking background.

Harmony Day activities celebrated the diversity of cultures in the school with all students in Years 8 and 9 participating in workshops on different aspects of African, Asian and Aboriginal culture.

An ESL homework club runs in the library one afternoon a week and provides afternoon tea, tutoring and transport. Non-English speaking parents are invited to the school for information sessions about educational pathways, work experience and laptop use. Police liaison officers and health workers visit the school to increase ESL student awareness and knowledge. A strong network of support staff and volunteers also contribute to the learning and social needs of the ESL community.

**Priority School Program (PSP)**

Orara High School just completed the 7th year of the PSFP program that commenced in 2005 and will continue until 2012 where a review will be carried out to determine if this funding is to continue. In 2011 some $94 530 was expended in areas which include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher release for professional learning</td>
<td>$1 692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Teaching</td>
<td>$61 594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSP network activities</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources: teaching and learning</td>
<td>$578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Aide</td>
<td>$20 257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Liaison Officer, parent &amp; community development / initiatives</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other - Attendance</td>
<td>$5 800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Student Learning Camps</td>
<td>$1 343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Competitions</td>
<td>$100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The PSP program has provided 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 has improved 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 KLAs.

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

The school's Learning Support Team (LST) meets weekly and has representatives from the school and the district. 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.

**Respect and responsibility**

The school uses a merit system to provide tangible rewards for students who show respect for others 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 2011, 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.

Thanks to the efforts of Mr Howard Spearing and the Positive Behavior for Learning (PBL) Team, PBL has gained a much higher profile in the school. Our symbol is the Osprey and our Motto is Safety, On task with learning, Always responsible and Respectful. (SOAR).

Our matrix of positive behavior has been developed and explicit lessons have been developed and delivered to students.

**Connected learning**

The school continues to support the use of technology through the installation of Interactive White Boards
(IW Bs). This resource is used in conjunction with the DER laptop program for Year 9-12. The school, through PSP and professional learning funds, has prioritised the expansion of technology through the use of video conferencing, 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 direction will bring increased engagement in to the learning process.

Progress on 2011 targets

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

Our achievements include:
- All staff have had training in SMART2 data. Staff have started to analyse individual classes and access the support provided through the SMART2 analysis package to focus on key areas for improvement.
- In 2011, Aboriginal students demonstrated increased engagement and completed all set assessment tasks. As a result, there were no N Determinations issued to students who had a satisfactory attendance pattern.
- The establishment of the Towards 100 initiative continues to be a focus for 2012, however, all Year 12 Aboriginal students are being mentored and are following a 10% improvement program.
- There was a small number of Aboriginal students in the junior school who regularly accessed the Aboriginal Learning Centre (ALC) that was supported by Southern Cross University mentors.
- An increasing number of classes are utilising technology to enrich learning opportunities for students. In a recent survey on assessment and reporting, some 75% of students have reported the use of technology in their learning.

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

Our achievements include:
- There has been a steady increase in the number of staff who are utilising technology to enrich the educational experience of students.
- A number of school based and externally provided training opportunities have been taken on by staff which has encouraged them to make greater use of laptops and associated technology.
- The Year 10 folios had a mandatory component that required students to incorporate the use of laptops and technology as part of their presentation.
- The school has developed a stronger emphasis in moving towards a “paper free” environment where tasks have a more technology based approach, such as online marking.

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

Our achievements include:
- The implementation of Interim Reports at the end of Terms 1 and 3 for Year 7 and 8 students has been well accepted by parents and the reports focus on building a positive work ethic.
- In 2012 all staff started utilising laptops for marking their roll each lesson and this has greatly streamlined monitoring of attendance and encouraged the use of technology by staff.
- Parent involvement in the process of developing PLPs for Aboriginal students has greatly increased with PLPs for all Year 11 students and the majority of Year 12 students being completed.
- There is a growing commitment by staff in applying the PBL philosophy and principles with a number of focus lessons developed and introduced to students at assembly and in class groups.

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.

The 2011 the focus area of evaluation was Assessment and Reporting and the Key Learning Areas chosen were English and Science.

Assessment and reporting

Background

Assessment and reporting is an essential part in communicating with parents and students on the achievement of outcomes. Assessment handbooks are developed for Years 10 to 12 and assessment tasks are planned and co-ordinated throughout the year. The school issues a detailed report on academic achievement each semester and runs two parent-teacher evenings through the year. In the last two years the school has trialled a one page Interim Report for Years 7 & 8 to inform parents on how their child is progressing in terms of effort and application. These have been issued at the end of Terms 1 and 3 in an effort to build a more positive work ethic. This has been very well received by parents.

Findings and conclusions

The school developed a brief survey of assessment and reporting practices. All questions issued to both staff, students and parents were similar for comparative purposes. The survey was issued to all staff and all Year 10 to Year 12 students and parents. It was also issued to two selected class groups in Year 7 to Year 9 and their parents. Students completed the survey in class.
The return rate was: students (35%), parents (11.5%) and staff (46%). From the data received, all results were graphed and the following areas were highlighted.

- Approximately 90% of households have internet access.
- The employment folio for Year 10 is well supported by staff, students and parents.
- There was strong support amongst students and parents for more regular and briefer reporting on student progress.
- There was a strong indication that parents and students were seeking more information in semester reports that indicated how a student was performing in terms of marks and comparison scales. This was also supported by staff opinion.
- Interim reporting was very popular amongst both students and parents.
- There was concern about attendance at parent/teacher evenings and communication with parents.
- There was strong support for the school to celebrate student academic achievement more often.
- There was significant discrepancy between staff opinion and that of students and parents regarding:
  - clarity of task expectations given to students,
  - quality of feedback provided to students on how to improve performance,
  - student awareness of assessment schedules,
  - adherence to published assessment schedules,
  - notifying students on change of date for assessment tasks in Years 10 – 12,
  - adherence to the 10 school day notice for any given task,
  - adherence to the amnesty prior to exam periods, and
  - guidelines given to students on grading of tasks.

**Future directions**

Following the data received through surveying staff, students and parents, the school will:

- Investigate more effective ways of communicating with parents, including email, internet and reporting.
- Evaluate assessment policy and practices to address the concerns/perceptions amongst parents, students and staff as expressed in (ii) above.
- Further investigate increasing the relevance of the Year 10 employment folio to include technology.
- Investigate ways of addressing the desire of students and parents for more regular reporting on student application and progress.
- Investigate more effective/relevant ways of reporting and celebrating academic achievement.
- Explore ways of improving attendance of parents.

**Curriculum area: English**

**Background**

English is a core subject which is the only compulsory study area from Years 7 to 12. It is the cornerstone of all learning as good literacy skills lays the foundation for life long success.

In Years 11 and 12, the school offers courses to cater for the needs of all students. These include: English Studies, Standard English, Advanced English, Extension 1 and Extension 2 Courses.

The school conducted a survey to assess teaching practices throughout the faculty. The NSW Department of Education and Communities (NSWDEC) Schoolmap surveys were issued to students in Years 7 and 11.

Teachers completed a survey related to teaching practices and were asked to choose a response of Almost Always, Usually, Sometimes or Rarely from a series of nine statements. Students completed a similar survey of eight questions related to their perceptions of teaching practices. Surveys were confidential.

**Findings and conclusions**

The most positive response for teachers was to the statement *I have classroom management strategies in place to maximise student learning* with 100% of teachers responding with Almost Always.

Other positive responses from staff were to the statements: *I clarify intended learning outcomes and the purpose of learning with students. My assessment processes provide information on students’ strengths and areas for further development. I maintain records of students’ progress. 83% of staff responded with Almost Always for each statement.*

Other statements drew less positive responses from teachers:

- *My students are provided with relevant curriculum.* (34% as Almost Always and 83% as Almost Always or Usually)
- *My teaching programs respond to students’ interests, needs and abilities.* (17% as Almost Always and 83% as Almost Always or Usually)
- *My assessment strategies are understood by students and parents.* (17% as Almost Always and 100% as Almost Always or Usually)

Positive responses from students include:

- *What I am asked to learn is important.* (85% as Almost Always or Usually)
• My teachers tell my what I am learning and why. (76% as Almost Always or Usually)

Negative responses from students include:
• My teachers keep records and samples of my work to include in my school report or portfolio. (50% as Almost Always or Usually)
• My teachers plan class activities that are interesting and help me learn. (57% as Almost Always or Usually)

In general, girls responded slightly more positively than boys. As an example the statement What I am asked to learn is important drew an 88% (Almost Always or Usually) response from girls and 82% from boys.

In general, Year 7 students responded slightly more positively than Year 11. As an example the statement My teachers keep records and samples of my work to include in my school report or portfolio drew a 62% (Almost Always or Usually) from Year 7 and 33% from Year 11.

Future directions
The results of the survey will be presented to staff so that an analysis is conducted on strengths and weakness, and results incorporated into teaching programs and related school plans and practices.

Other evaluations
Curriculum area: Science

Background
Science is a core subject which is a compulsory study area from Years 7 to 10.

In Years 11 and 12, the school offers courses to cater for the needs of all students who wish to pursue their studies in the science area. These include: physics, chemistry, biology and general science.

The school conducted a survey to assess learning practices throughout the faculty. The NSW Department of Education and Communities (NSWDEC) Schoolmap surveys were issued to students in Years 8 and 10.

Teachers completed a survey related to teaching practices and were asked to choose a response of Almost Always, Usually, Sometimes or Rarely from a series of twelve statements. Students completed a similar survey of eleven questions related to their perceptions of teaching practices. Surveys were confidential.

Findings and conclusions
The most positive response for teachers was to the statement I provide learning opportunities within a stimulating and secure environment and The school supports communication about student learning between home and school with 100% of teachers responding with Almost Always or Usually.

Other positive responses from staff were to the statements: I use a wide range of appropriate resources to assist students with their learning. (71% as Almost Always and 85% as Almost Always or Usually)

Other statements drew less positive responses from teachers:
• The school community has high expectations of students. (0% as Almost Always and 28% as Almost Always or Usually)
• My students reflect on their learning and engage in self assessment (0% as Almost Always and 14% as Almost Always or Usually)

Positive responses from students include:
• The school expects me to do my best. (86% as Almost Always or Usually)
• I try to do my best and take pride in my learning. (83% as Almost Always or Usually)

Negative responses from students include:
• My teachers talk to my parents about my learning. (8% as Almost Always or Usually)
• People other than my teacher help me to learn. (36% as Almost Always or Usually)
• I try to do things in my classroom that are new and different. (47% as Almost Always or Usually)

In general, girls responded more positively than boys. As examples the statement The school expects me to do my best drew a 92% (Almost Always or Usually) response from girls and 80% from boys. The statement I try to do my best and take pride in my learning drew a 92% (Almost Always or Usually) response from girls and 75% from boys.

In general, Year 8 students responded slightly more positively than Year 10. As examples the statement My school has good equipment that helps me to learn drew a 78% (Almost Always or Usually) response from Year 8 and 52% from Year 10. The statement Samples of my work over time help me see how I have improved drew an 83% (Almost Always or Usually) response from Year 8 and 46% from Year 10.

Future directions
The results of the survey will be presented to staff so that an analysis is conducted on strengths and weakness, and results incorporated into teaching programs and related school plans and practices.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction
In 2011 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**

In 2011 all staff actively participated in professional learning activities. $30,114 was expended during the year which equates to $527 per teacher. The breakdown of expenditure for 2010 was:

- use of ICT for teaching: $588
- literacy and numeracy: $1,149
- quality teaching: $4,944
- syllabus implementation: $3,253
- leadership: $15,759
- welfare and equity: $3,948
- beginning teacher: $474

The school maintains an accurate database of all Teacher Professional Learning (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 to all staff through the school intranet.

In 2011, all TPL activities were determined by the school executive and all approvals were based on school priorities. Feedback to staff is encouraged with major TPL activities providing feedback at staff meetings or school development days.

In consultation with staff, the school executive determines School Development Day agendas based on school needs and NSW Department of Education and Communities priorities.

**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.

**Priority 1**

**2012**

**Organisational Effectiveness**

Outcomes for 2012 to 2014

- Orara High School is perceived by its school community as being well managed with all appropriate policies and procedures in place.
- Orara High School is successfully promoted to its school community as having high quality students, staff and physical surroundings.

Targets to achieve this outcome include:

**Priority 2**

**Student Engagement and Attainment**

Outcomes for 2012 to 2014

- All school policies regarding school routines are developed in writing and made available to all staff.
- All appropriate procedures are implemented to improve and maintain the overall school appearance.
- A thorough evaluation of school uniform is completed in 2012 for implementation in 2013.
- A successful 40 year school reunion will be conducted in 2012.
- All committees and teams will be operating with goals and role statements.
- Healthier eating habits will be promoted to students and parents.
- Substantial progress is made towards a “paperless” school.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Systematically evaluate and update school policies according to school priorities.
- Use School Development Days and Staff Meetings to allow teams to meet and develop action plans.
- Establish a committee of school community members to evaluate the School Uniform Policy.
- Establish a Staff Welfare Team to develop Staff and Casual Teacher handbooks.
- Maintain cleaner school grounds, staff rooms and buildings eg leaky roofs.
- Phase out soft drinks and other “unhealthy” items from the school canteen.
- Establish a committee to conduct a feasibility study on the use of paper.
- As part of the school’s technology priorities, evaluate the effectiveness of the school’s website.
- Increase parent involvement through invitations, morning teas, list of parents to see at PT evenings, etc).
- Ensure that the Student Welfare Team develops Year Advisor Handbooks.

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**Priority 2**

**2012**

**Student Engagement and Attainment**

Outcomes for 2012 to 2014

- Attendance, retention and suspension rates at Orara High School are commensurate with regional averages.
- Discipline and welfare programs successfully cater for the needs of the vast majority of students.
- Orara High School is a proactive member of School Education Group (SEG) programs such as C5, NSLA, LCOPS and SNPs.

Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- Improve the mean attendance rate of students by 2% each year.
- Raise the attendance rate of indigenous students by 2% each year.
• Decrease the number of long suspensions by 5% each year.
• Reduce the number of suspensions of indigenous students by 5% each year.
• Increase the retention rate of students from Year 10 to Year 11 by 5%.
• Increase the retention from Yr10 to Yr12 for indigenous students from by 5%.
• Maintain number of students accessing school-based traineeships.
• Decrease the number of ‘N’ Award letters by 5% across Years 9 to 12.
• Evaluate, develop and implement the school’s Welfare/Discipline and Attendance policies.
• Develop Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) targets and action plan for 2012.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

• Establish a school team to examine ways of better acknowledging students’ achievement; especially academic achievement.
• Carefully monitor the attendance of all students and implement a comprehensive system of rewards and sanctions.
• Ensure that Orara High School is benefitting from School Education Group (SEG) initiative such as the five combined high schools (CS), New School Leaving Age (NSLA) and Self Nominated Projects (SNPs).
• Provide the PBL Committee with the opportunity to develop an Action Plan to 2012.
• Provide Professional Learning to staff and students in PBL.
• Comprehensively evaluate factors that influence students’ decisions regarding choice of schools.
• Implement and evaluate the Year 9 alternative program.
• Successful implementation of Rock and Water and other welfare programs.
• Each faculty to seek a scholarship from the community of $400 by the end of 2012.
• Portfolios project including teacher mentors.
• Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) to have attendance goals and curriculum planning.
• Successfully implement processes to award student scholarships in Year 10.
• Implement School to Work interviews to include parents in subject selection.
• Conduct regular information sessions on Board of Studies (BOS) requirements for assessment.

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.