2008 Annual School Report
Muswellbrook High School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
Messages

Principal's message

In the area of achievement, Year 12 2008 students, achieved the highest number of HSC Band 6’s in the Upper Hunter. As well, over 33% of Year 12 students achieved one or more Band 5’s. This resulted in the 2008 Year 12 students being recognized as showing the greatest improvement in their achievements (Value Added) from the School Certificate to the HSC, of all public schools in the Maitland-Muswellbrook Education Area. This followed similar strong HSC achievements for the Year 12 class of 2007.

The cultural highlight for the last 12 months was the school’s musical “Leader of the Pack”. A cast of over 50 students, and many student and staff helpers presented one of the school’s most successful musical productions for many years, and was widely applauded by the community, for being an entertaining and professional performance.

Muswellbrook High School presents many extra-curricular opportunities to all students, including overseas exchange visits to Japan. Students also participated in the Annual Trip to the Snowy Mountains in July, 2008.

Agricultural students participated for the first time in the Upper Hunter Beef Bonanza. They raised and trained a steer to lead, and presented it at the show in October 2008.

Sport demonstrates the high achievements of the students at the school with Regional and state representation in swimming, athletics, cross-country, hockey, basketball, Rugby League and Touch Football. The school’s Touch Football team came third in the state wide CHS competition and the U15’s Basketball team won the National Schools’ Basketball Tournament in 2008.

Muswellbrook High School is providing leadership and opportunities for achievement for our students and I am most pleased with their efforts and the efforts of the staff and community in supporting them in making the most of their education at the school in 2008.

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.

Peter Crick
Principal

P&C and/or School Council message

During 2008 our P&C association has continued to work hard for the students and staff of our school. This symbiotic relationship enables Muswellbrook High School to provide our children with a solid, caring and fulfilling environment in which to pursue their academic goals.

The P&C are very proud of Muswellbrook High School’s new school uniform and the positive response by staff, students and parents alike. It is wonderful to see our children looking so good and representing Muswellbrook High School in this positive manner.

Thank you to Mr Gareth Erskine and the Uniform committee for their exceptional efforts in bringing to fruition our new school uniform and the shop.

The P & C were again able to contribute a substantial amount of money to the school to enhance the educational and teaching resources that are required. These purchases are funded by the profit made at our healthy canteen. Please continue to support our school canteen and remember to give the assistants a warm smile and a big ‘thank you!’ as they volunteer their time, allowing us all to reap the benefits.

The P & C meet on a regular basis (2nd Thursday of the month, unless otherwise notified) to allow a forum to discuss the relevant issues that may concern the school. P & C representatives hold positions to assist the school in decision making through Curriculum, School Improvements, Budget Committee, Uniform, and where appropriate in the selection process for school personnel.

Parents and community members also assist by participating in the special programs and activities conducted at the school.

Mrs Jenni Bulivant
P&C President

Student representative's message

2008 provided yet another prolific year for the Muswellbrook High School Student Representative Council. Through four major areas; representation, leadership, charity and in school events, the SRC were involved with many projects around the school and community to boost their profile, raise funds and improve the schooling environment.

At the end of the April school holidays the SRC were involved in both Denman and Muswellbrook ANZAC day ceremonies. This including marching by students and SRC members, wreath laying and public speaking by the captains, who proudly represented the school.
The SRC was involved in many leadership opportunities during 2008. This not only included in-school leadership, but also external opportunities that aided in improving leadership, communication, delegation and the role of the SRC in the school. This began with the annual training day for the SRC wherein the members bond, vote on official roles and determine major focuses for the year. The junior SRC members attended SRC workshops in Newcastle where they were able to converse with other school's SRC members, exchange ideas and become inspired. So too, the senior SRC members attended an immensely beneficial National Leaders Day in Sydney. This enabled them to listen to the stories of current high profile people, such as Catriona Rowntree, to gain an insight in their role as leaders and to convey and apply this information to the SRC. Four SRC members also attended the District SRC meetings, including; Sam Hume, Ali Ward, Kailah Worth and Heidi Mainey, and obtained ideas on improvements for the school SRC.

At the training day each year the charities to support are determined. For 2008 this was the Westpac Helicopter, World Vision and Canteen. A chocolate drive was held to raise funds for Westpac, and not surprisingly, the support was overwhelming. This, in conjunction with a coin line, raised $3550 for the valuable service Westpac Helicopter provides. By holding an out of uniform day, the SRC was successful in raising money for the child sponsored through World Vision. Students also participated in the 40 hour famine. Another out of uniform day was held for Dress Down Drug Free, raising money for Life Education who hold seminars at the school for various topics. A very successful Bandana Day saw much needed funds being raised for Canteen with many students purchasing a bandana for the cause.

The SRC regularly hold events for the enjoyment of students at school. The staff versus student sporting challenge was triumphant with some unknown talents being revealed. The dodgeball competition for students at lunchtimes was another event which saw the SRC provide the students with in-school entertainment. On Valentines Day flowers and chocolates were sent from student to student and saw the great support of the school for the SRC. A similar initiative at the end of term 4 was the candy canes which students were able to purchase for a small fee and it be handed out during roll call.

Overall the SRC had a very successful year in 2008 which has inspired them, and new members, to flourish in 2009.

Jessie May Hayne and Jesse Court;
2009 School Captains
Retention to Year 12

The proportion of students staying from SC to HSC has declined due mainly to the skills shortage in the area, and with robust economy of the local area making post year 10 employment and training options more attainable. Retention, to Year 12, is still higher then in the earlier part of the decade, and will be expected to increase with the declining economic activity, that is currently been experienced, in the local area in 2009.

Post-school destinations
Fifty seven students in the Year 12 group for 2008 attempted the HSC. The table below sets out the where those students have indicated their destination as at the beginning of 2009.

| University entry | 21 |
| University scholarships | 9 students (some with more than one scholarship/grant) |
| TAFE full time | 4 |
| Apprenticeship | 5 |
| Traineeship | 5 |
| Employment over 20 hours per week | 13 |
| Special needs transition programs | 2 |
| Seeking employment | 2 |

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>No.</th>
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</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>40.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of Emotional Disabilities</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Mild Intellectual Disability</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Moderate Intellectual Disability</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Severe Intellectual Disability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Careers Adviser</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Mentor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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School Administration and Support Staff

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<td>General Assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm Assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Aides Special</td>
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Staff Attendance

In 2008 the average daily attendance rate for staff was 95.5%

Note: The staff attendance is determined by subtracting the number of short-term, unplanned days absent from the total available teaching days.

Staff retention

In 2008 93% of staff was retained from the 2007 staffing period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resigned</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transferred</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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>75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>25%</td>
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</table>

Financial summary

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

\[
\begin{array}{lrr}
\text{30/11/2008} & \text{Income} & \text{Expenditure} \\
0 & $ & \\
\text{Balance brought forward} & 457,312.63 & \text{Total expenditure} 1,114,847.95 \\
\text{Global funds} & 438,423.23 & \\
\text{Tied funds} & 282,762.69 & \\
\text{School & community sources} & 330,450.05 & \\
\text{Interest} & 36,340.68 & \\
\text{Trust receipts} & 30,144.30 & \\
\text{Canteen} & 0.00 & \\
\text{Total income} & 1,575,433.58 & \\
\end{array}
\]

School performance 2008

Achievements

Arts

Andrew Hermon achieved 95%, a Band 6 in the HSC Music 1 course and was nominated for the Encore Concert for his Composition Elective piece “Dawn” written for a small instrumental ensemble. This is the ultimate highlight for a dedicated Music student who is valued as a natural leader to other students. Andrew has dedicated his skills in service to the MHS School Band for many years and was recognised as the recipient of the Service to the School Award at our Annual Presentation Evening.

Hannah Baum achieved 93%, a Band 6 in the Visual Arts HSC. Hannah gained such excellent results through commitment in learning to write with a deep knowledge in response to Artworks and spending time perfecting her photographic Major Body of Work which featured photograms of sentimental or meaningful clothing.

A full copy of the school’s 2008 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the Muswellbrook High School Parents and Citizens Association. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.
100% of Creative and Performing Arts students achieved their best raw result with their Drama, Music or Visual Arts subject in the 2008 HSC.

The highlight of the 2008 school year for CAPA students has been the Muswellbrook High School Musical Production “The Leader of the Pack”. This production was highly acclaimed in the local community as a wonderful success involving over one hundred students and over 40 staff.

MHS Vocal Ensemble achieved 2nd Place and a Highly Commended in the Muswellbrook and Upper Hunter Eisteddfod. Our male vocal group was invited to perform in the Eisteddfod Highlights, judged by the organising committee as a thoroughly enjoyable entry.

Our Performing Arts Ensemble students were involved in performances at Education Week Assembly, Benefactor’s Morning Tea, Year 12 Performance Evening to showcase HSC Major Works prepared by MHS Drama, Music and Visual Arts students and Presentation Day.

Sophie Milwain and James Milwain were successful in their audition for the Hunter, Central Coast Symphonic Wind Ensemble.

2008 is the first year of Life Skills students from the Special Education Faculty selecting Music as a Year 11 subject. Two students have enjoyed widening their musical knowledge and their natural inclusion with mainstream students in a positive, welcoming environment.

Students attended a variety of performing arts excursions including the Encore Concert, On Stage and Schools Spectacular. These excursions allow students to be immersed in quality performing arts displays, whilst developing skills to cope away from their usual environment.

Dance has made a noticeable contribution to the quality performances by MHS students, beginning with the dancing in “The Leader of the Pack”. MHS Performing Arts Ensemble performed at the Bengalla Family Open Day, including a successful dance group.

**Sport**

Muswellbrook High School offers a variety of sporting opportunities for students in a range of recreational and competitive sports. The schools expanding sports program includes a diverse range of activities such as Boxing, Swimming, Golf, Indoor Soccer, Squash, Lawn Bowls, Mini Tennis and Girls Fitness. Our sports on offer are ever changing to provide students with the best and most wide variety of opportunities to become passionate about health and physical activity. Muswellbrook High School has continued its strong participation in traditional sports such as Rugby League, Touch Football, Cricket, Soccer and Basketball.

Five new school records were set throughout the year in our annual Swimming, Cross Country and Athletics carnivals, reflecting the sporting ability of our student cohort. Muswellbrook High School had eleven Hunter Representatives throughout the year in swimming, athletics, touch football, hockey and rugby league along with representatives in the NSW Indigenous Athletics Championships and Indigenous Rugby League teams.

Two students represented NSW throughout the year in Hockey and Touch Football. The school had improved results in Cricket, Rugby League and Girls Touch Football. The school basketball teams had a very successful year with the fifteen years boys reaching the semi finals of the CHS Knockout competition, the open boys reached the quarter finals of the CHS knockout competition. The most notable result was the under sixteen
boys, who won their division of the National Schools Basketball Competition. Muswellbrook High School Open Boys Touch Football team progressed through their competition to be placed third in the state, and were announced as team of the year.

Under sixteen boys Basket Ball Team, who won their division of the National Schools Basketball Competition in 2008

Other

Academic

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

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

Yr 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)

Yr 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)

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

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

and

In the School Certificate the performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from Performance Band 1 (lowest) to Performance Band 6 (highest).
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9

Progress in literacy
Year 7 Literacy was well below the state average and Like School Group average. The Year 9 NAPLAN results showed that the overall literacy was the same or slightly lower than Like School Group but still well behind the State average. Literacy has been the subject of a concerted staff development program and curriculum development for teaching to students across all syllabuses.

Progress in numeracy
Year 7 and 9 numeracy is behind both the State and Like School Group figures. This has also been the focus of concerted development in the teaching of Mathematics and numeracy across the curriculum.

School Certificate
School Certificate Results

School Certificate Results continue to improve as evidenced by results in English Literacy, Mathematics, Computer Skills and Science which were matched or were better than the Like School Group for achievement of students in the top three bands. On average students continue to improve and perform better compared with the cohorts of 2004 to 2008.

The schools Value added or relative growth from Year 5 to 10, with Mathematics students improved at a rate above the state average. Mathematics and English and Computer Skills matched or were better then the students in the Like School Group and outperforming students from previous School Certificate Groups at the school from 2004 to 2007.

The performance of Science slipped below the value added performance of previous years, and the performance of the students at the Civics and Citizenship continues to be the subject of review to improve student performance at the SC level.

Higher School Certificate

The Higher School certificate group was one of the most successful for many years and continued the high level of achievement that students at Muswellbrook High School have demonstrated in 2007.

In the area of achievement, Year 12 2008 students, along with Scone High School, achieved the highest number of HSC Band 6’s in the Upper Hunter. As well, over 33% of Year 12 students
achieved one or more Band 5’s. This resulted in the 2008 Year 12 students being recognized as showing the greatest improvement in their achievements (Value Added) from the School Certificate to the HSC, of all public schools in the Maitland-Muswellbrook Education Area, as the graph below demonstrates. The students achieved value added figures or improvement figures, from the Year 10 School certificate to the HSC, well above the state average, and vastly improved the figures exhibited in the LSG.

**Minimum standards**

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

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

### Percentage of Year 7 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>90.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>84.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>89.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>86.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>93.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Percentage of Year 9 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>87.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>84.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>85.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>90.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Significant programs and initiatives

#### Aboriginal education

With 71 Aboriginal student enrolments in 2008 the school continued to develop a strong focus on Aboriginal student outcomes. There was a significant increase in the number of Personal Learning Plans (PLP’s) completed with improving parental involvement and Year 7 and 8 students continued to be assisted by the In-Class Tuition program.

In March the school students commemorated the National Apology by the Prime Minister to the Stolen Generation at a school assembly. The School Principal commented about the historic nature of the event and hoped that it would serve to help the cause of reconciliation from now and into the future.

In June approximately 50 Aboriginal students took part in a 3-day Aboriginal Culture excursion which included activities such as Aboriginal history and story-telling, boomerang painting and throwing, bush tucker, traditional art and cultural dance.

In July Muswellbrook High School teachers took part in a Staff Development Day focus on Aboriginal education including cultural awareness and understanding, identifying and supporting Aboriginal students and outcomes of the Aboriginal Education review and Aboriginal Education Strategy.
The school celebrated NAIDOC week with a dedicated school assembly involving a student music and cultural dance performance. During the week, faculty areas delivered lessons educating all students regarding Aboriginal knowledge, history and culture.

Over $5000 from a grant from the Coal and Allied Aboriginal Community Consultative Committee trust was awarded to students to assist with their education including support for academic, sporting and cultural interests and pursuits. A further $2000 was awarded to a student to assist with his studies of Japanese language and culture.

In 2008 three Aboriginal students completed their HSC, with two of these students achieving a band 5 result and undertaking tertiary education. Two Year 11 and eleven Year 10 students successfully completed their Preliminary Certificate and School Certificate studies respectively.

Multicultural education

After a three year hiatus, 2008 saw the reintroduction of an ESL program at the school with a number of Zimbabwean students enrolling at the school. These students were supported both in the classroom and in intensive specialist lessons by their teacher, Miss Walker. ESL students and their parents were fortunate enough to be involved in an excursion to Sydney which helped them develop a greater understanding and appreciation for Australian society and culture.

In April Muswellbrook High School students and teachers visited our Japanese sister school, Sayama Seiryo before reciprocating when Japanese students visited Australia in July and were hosted by Australian families. Students, staff and family members involved in this event were able to continue foster and develop the strong links between the two schools and gain greater cultural awareness and develop friendships.

Other programs

Gifted and Talented Education

GATS Program

Muswellbrook High School organises the GATS Project each year. This project is designed to extend the skills and thinking of students who choose their own learning path. In 2008, the project was extended to include students from Years 5 to 7. The high profile project is sponsored by Mount Arthur Coal and is offered to students from Muswellbrook High School and its local partner primary schools. The students completed projects, with Joshua Ingold and Jackson Keegan from Muswellbrook Public School winning the Primary division.

Year 7 and 8 Opportunity Classes

Muswellbrook High School runs a self-appointed Opportunity Class in Years 7 and 8. Placement for this class is through a Placement Test, interview and Year 6 teacher recommendation. In 2008, 64 students from local Primary Schools applied for 29 places.

2008 is the sixth year of the operation for the Opportunity Class, with the first group of students completing Year 12 after entering High School in the Opportunity Class in Year 7. The 2008 HSC results are some of the best for MHS, with students attaining 10 Band 6’s across the school. Using these results as evidence, it appears that the Opportunity Class has been a resounding success, ensuring a focus on recognising student talent and potential, and the implementation of differentiated curriculum across the school to maximise student potential.

Respect and responsibility

Our students supported the activities of local service clubs. Participating in the Lion’s Youth of the Year exposes students to the good work done by these clubs, including the Rotary public speaking programs.

Respect for Aboriginal people was demonstrated by the celebration of the National Apology to the Stolen Generation by the Prime Minister in February of 2008

An ANZAC Commemoration Observance was held at the school with visiting returned servicemen attending.

Our students participated in the town’s ANZAC Day Ceremony by marching, assisting with the service, laying a wreath on behalf of the school community and contributing by singing of the hymns.

SRC fundraising activities featured support for the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Appeal, with our school raising a record amount for another year.

The success of the Benefactor’s Morning Tea during Education Week and the Special Guests for Public Education Day further endorsed the respect for the school community held by our student body.

Barry and Helen French were the school’s guests for Public Education Day. Mr and Mrs French are prominent elders of the Muswellbrook Aboriginal community.
Progress on 2008 targets

Target 1: Improved retention of students through strategies to improve engagement of students to further learning.

Our achievements include:

- Careers adviser programs have given more information to students about their post school options, ensuring that students are making informed choices.
- Student advisory programs and information forums have been developed, in Stage 5 and 6, to ensure that students make informed choices and are knowledgeable about their options in School Certificate and HSC study.
- Increased range of transition programs in cooperation with the partner primary schools, to assist increased student engagement when students start high school in Year 7.
- Further investigation of more programs in 2009, to target improvement in Aboriginal retention and attendance.
- Increased course options and vocational training options for Stage 5 and 6 students, to be investigated in 2009 for introduction in 2010.

Improved retention is already noted in Stage 6 in 2009.

Target 2: Improved literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students.

Our achievements include:

- Measurement of literacy outcomes changed considerably in 2008, with the introduction of the NAPLAN tests in Years 7 and 9. These are national literacy and numeracy tests, and were introduced with little disruption and have now replaced the ELLA and SNAP tests.
- Strategies were implemented where all faculties have written into programs, how they are focussing on literacy and numeracy as part of their teaching of courses. Teaching of literacy and numeracy has become embedded across the curriculum.
- STLAs (Support Teaching Learning Assistance) programs have developed significantly, and being implemented to great benefit to those students with literacy and learning difficulties. The focus is on Year 7 and 8, with students with literacy and learning difficulties in years 9 to 12, being able to access the STLA’s, by application or teacher identification.
- The NAPLAN results demonstrated that students outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy can be improved compared to previous years, and that the strategies being put in place over 2008 and 2009 will result in significant improvement in these outcomes. Literacy and Numeracy will continue to be a Target for 2009.

Target 3: Improved teaching and learning outcomes for students and teachers through the development of access to, and use of hardware and software within the school.

Our achievements include:

- More access to computers and digital hardware has occurred with the rollout of modern computers through the T4L program.
- Purchase of two mobile digital technology trolleys, which enable teaching staff and visiting speakers to provide digital and video displays in a range of classroom settings.
- Enhancement of the school network to ensure greater access of school resources through the school and DET intranet.
- Staff skills increased through rollout of laptops to Head Teachers and Year Advisers and increased computers in staff rooms.
- Further detailed planning will occur in 2009, to further enhance the digital revolution for staff and students at the school and it will be the focus of a target for the 2009 school year.

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 2008 our school carried out evaluations of curriculum.

Educational and management practice

Background

A comprehensive survey of staff students and parents was conducted at the school in late 2007 under the banner of the Upper Hunter Local Management Group, which funded the Mind Matters organisation to conduct the surveys in all Upper Hunter secondary schools. The results were received in 2008 and have been used to help implement the aspects of the Mind Matters program into student wellbeing and confidence in learning.

The following questions are extracted from the surveys and focus on the provision of teaching and learning at MHS from the perspective of parents, staff and students.
Findings and conclusions

Parent Questions
1. My child is encouraged to achieve high personal standards at school
2. Teachers provide opportunities for my child to achieve success by using different ways of teaching and assessing
3. The school provides a range of activities, such as music, sport, debating, camps and excursions, and encourages my child’s participation
4. As a parent/carer, I am consulted and have the opportunity to be involved in a range of matters relating to school business eg policy development, curriculum

Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>Strong Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>29</td>
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<td>26</td>
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Staff Questions
1. I believe that building positive relationships with my students is fundamental to effective teaching and learning.
2. I use a variety of teaching methodologies and assessment practices which cater for a range of learning styles
3. I ensure that students in my classes are given the opportunity to achieve success
4. The school involves a diverse range of parents, carers and community members in school business, including decision making, curriculum and policy development

Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>Strong Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
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<td>9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>21</td>
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Student Questions
1. I have teachers who teach me in ways I understand
2. I think what I am learning at school will help me get a job
3. I find that there are sections of some subjects I do not understand
4. I am happy that I can choose subjects that suit my goals or skills

Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>Strong Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
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<td>11</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Future directions
The results indicate a range of views about the success of teaching and learning and opportunities at MHS. Generally parents and staff are satisfied with the teaching and learning that occurs, but both agree that parent involvement and consultation about their children’s learning could be better.

The School Improvement Team, executive and staff have been considering how communication with parents and teachers can be improved at parent teacher nights etc. Aspects such as Open Nights for the school are being planned and the Improvement Team is examining ways of ensuring that lines of communication, with parents and the school, staff, will enable students to have the best opportunity to achieve to their ability.

Parents, staff and students have representation on the School Improvement Team and students have further input through the Student Representative Council to improving the environment and practices at the school so that it becomes more conducive to student learning. This relationship is essential in order to enable a degree of student ownership for the school’s programs of curriculum and resource development.

Curriculum

Background
With the school focus on student performance in Stage 6 continuing to yield very positive results, the School Curriculum Committee throughout the course of the year explored changes that would endeavour to improve educational outcomes for stage 4 and 5 students and the efficient running of the school in general. Curriculum changes discussed included:

- Altering the existing model of elective choice for stage 5 to incorporate three 200 hour electives studied in both years 9 and 10, rather than up to five courses studied over two years. The aim of this change was envisaged to assist monitoring of Board of studies compliance, increasing student choice to study popular electives and allowing new student enrolments to study their electives of choice.
• The implementation of an Integrated Sport model to improve the quality of the delivery of sport education.

• A review of the bell timetable to ensure teaching hours are adhered to and allocated time is used logically and productively.

• Exploring the possibility of increasing allocated teaching time for HSIE in stage 5 to assist in curriculum delivery and improving School Certificate results.

• A rewriting of the homework policy and implementation of a homework booklet for each year, 7-10, to improve communication with parents and student compliance and learning.

Findings and conclusions

Outcomes and changes implemented from this review include:

• **200 Hour Electives** - The existing model for elective choices in stage 5 was changed to allow students to select three 200 hour courses to study. This change resulted in significantly more students being able to access their electives of choice leading to far fewer subject changes than previous years and led to a more even distribution of student numbers across each of the elective lines. The change also gave the school timetablers the added benefit of much greater flexibility when constructing the 2009 timetable.

• **Integrated Sport** - The proposal to adopt an Integrated Sport model was voted on by school staff and was successful in gaining support to implement the change. However, it was decided to delay this change until 2010 to adequately research models currently being used by other schools and allow school timetablers sufficient time to implement the change.

• **Bell Timetable** - A number of proposed models were reviewed by the Curriculum Committee. One of these options was selected and staff voted strongly in favour of adopting this option. The new bell times implemented in 2009 makes best use of teaching, assembly and break times for the schools’ circumstances and has been popular with staff and students.

• **Increase in allocated teaching time for HSIE** –Whilst all committee members agreed in principle that it would be prudent to increase allocated teaching time for HSIE in stage 5 there was no consensus on where this time would be taken from. Options included reducing teaching time in English, Mathematics and Science or removing an elective line to fund the change.

• **Homework Policy and Booklet** - A new homework policy was written in consultation with staff and the P&C and published in the new homework booklets. These booklets were distributed to students in Years 7-10 on the first day of Term 1, 2009.

Future directions

Further developments and goals for the Curriculum Committee in 2009 include:

• Implement 200 hour elective courses for students in Year 9 2010.

• Head Teacher PDHPE, Peter Harris, to use knowledge gained from contact with twelve schools operating successful Integrated Sport models to develop a model for implementation in 2010.

• Continue with newly implemented bell timetable model for the foreseeable future.

• Discuss further the allocation of teaching time for HSIE and the implementation of a Religious Education Program for one period per fortnight in years 9 and 10 at 2009.

• Review the implementation of homework booklet and modify and update if necessary to best support communication with parents and student learning

Parent and teacher satisfaction

The school has sought the opinions of parents and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented below.

Part One

Parents

Do you attend Parent Teacher Nights on a Regular Basis?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you find these sessions helpful?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No (%)</th>
<th>Sometimes(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:

• Well organised

• Interview sheets not handed out early enough

• Should be more follow up

• Content of meetings needs to be academically based

• Appointments always run too late

• Needs to be some way of ensuring that bookings are kept at time made

• Five minutes not enough for interviews

• Like to know about my child's social development as well as academic development
Teachers need to be available for more time, so that all parents, that need to see them, can see them

“I Like the time signal/buzzer”

Information and booking sheets should be mailed home and not sent home with students

Information is required on how parents can help their children with subjects they have difficulty with

Staff

Staff attend Parent Teacher Nights and in the survey made the following observations;

• Important that parents make bookings
• Five minutes not enough for a meaningful interview. More time needed.
• Timer system for interviews worked well
• Advertise the Nights in local media
• Need to see parents of those students causing concern
• Parents need to be informed and given booking sheets earlier.
• Parents can be surveyed to see what areas they most want to discuss at the interview.
• Have all years on one extended night which would better suit families, with a number of students.
• Good to be able to tell many parents how well their children are doing at school

Part 2 – Annual Presentation Ceremony

The Annual Presentation Ceremony has been held at night for the last two years.

Have you attended one of these Night Ceremonies?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you think the school should continue with the Night Presentation Ceremony or go back to the day Ceremony?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No (%)</th>
<th>Unsure (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments from Parents

• Night means more parents can attend
• Day is too hot in the MPC
• Concerns that less students attend at night ceremony
• Good for recognising deserving students
• Really like the performance/musical items
• Well organised

Professional learning

In 2008 staff accessed a variety of learning opportunities with Quality Teaching and syllabus implementation being the most popular areas of training. A significant proportion of Professional Learning resources were favourably allocated to VET teacher training and Beginning Teacher training and support. Staff also accessed professional learning opportunities in KLA conferences, teacher network days and coordinators workshops, programming and syllabus implementation, ICT and welfare and equity activities.

All staff received Emergency Care training from Royal Lifesaving Australia and were educated in Anaphylaxis management.

The overall direction of Professional Learning and support of outcomes from the School Plan was framed through professional development activities undertaken on Staff Development Days. The foci for the days included literacy and numeracy strategies, student welfare and Aboriginal education strategies.

School development 2009 – 2011

Targets for 2009

Target 1: Literacy and Numeracy outcomes for students are enhanced through emphasis on quality teaching practices.

Target 2: Student access to a range of digital technology will enable an improvement in teaching and learning outcomes.

Target 3: To improve the learning and career outcomes for Aboriginal students at Muswellbrook High School
**Target 1**

*Literacy and Numeracy outcomes for students are enhanced through emphasis on quality teaching practices.*

Strategies to achieve this target include:

1. Access to regional personnel to assist staff with development quality teaching practices in literacy and numeracy.
2. Training of key staff in the use of the SMART diagnostic package to help inform the areas of student need in skilling of literacy and numeracy, both at high school and with partner primary schools.
3. Preparation of students and school community for requirement of the NAPLAN testing system in literacy and numeracy.
4. All staff to review Best Practice Strategies which determine a quality teacher. Teachers to reflect how they can best demonstrate best practices in their teaching.
5. Focused programs and strategies of literacy education from years 7 to 12, using the schools STLA staff.

Our success will be measured by:

1. Increased proficiency of teaching staff in integrating the teaching of literacy and numeracy will result in increased literacy and numeracy outcomes for studies.
2. Improved achievements by Year 7 and 9 students at the NAPLAN test compared to other Like School Group schools.
3. Exchange of data between high schools and primary schools will enable teachers to focus on continuous improvements and best practice strategies for literacy and numeracy.
4. STLA program improving student literacy, engagement and achievement for students experiencing difficulty with literacy.

**Target 2**

*Student access to a range of digital technology will enable an improvement in teaching and learning outcomes.*

Strategies to achieve this target include:

1. Purchase and installation of interactive Smart Boards to enable students to access a range of unique learning experiences, increasing student engagement.
2. Distribution of laptops to all Year 9 students in 2009, will ensure students are able to effectively use computers as tools for learning.
3. A roll out of laptops to all staff accompanied by professional development will ensure teachers will become proficient in using computers as tools for learning.
4. The construction of a connected classroom in the next 2 years, will supplement the availability of the video conference facilities improved intranet facilities, computer pods and mobile media trolleys in the provision of the use of tools for teaching using technology.

Our success will be measured by:

1. Increased usage of computer and digital technology by teachers and students
2. Improved teacher and students skills in the use of digital technology as teaching and learning tools.
3. Increased student achievement due to students being able to access learning resources at school and at home through the laptops rollout program, a new school website and improved intranet access.
4. A wider range of digital technology resources, available at Muswellbrook High School, will ensure student learning out comes are maximised by enabling students to take more responsibility for their learning.

**Target 3**

*To improve the learning and career outcomes for Aboriginal students at Muswellbrook High School.*

Strategies to achieve this target include:

1. Implementing tutoring programs of Tutoring Students using resources from the Norta Norta program.
2. Employing teaching staff and aboriginal support officers to assist with improving learning outcomes, attendance and retention of aboriginal students.
3. To train key teaching staff in the Smarter Stronger Leadership program, to develop strategies within Muswellbrook High School to connect with the Aboriginal community, thus increasing support for the educational programs at the school.
4. To develop guidance and leadership through the resources of the Dare to Lead organisation and the Polly Farmer Foundation, to enhance the achievement of learning outcomes, and improve the post school options for Aboriginal students.
Our success will be measured by:
1. Improved retention and attendance of Aboriginal Students.
2. Achievements at the NAPLAN, School Certificate and HSC, for Aboriginal students, that match or are better than the wider student body.
3. Aboriginal students will have improved post school options with the possible support of Dare to Lead and the Polly Farmer Foundation.
4. Greater engagement with the Aboriginal community, and strong links, developed through and with the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Aboriginal Support Workers and Staff training in fostering cultural awareness and understanding.

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.

Peter Crick  Principal
Gareth Erskine  Deputy Principal
Keith Armstrong  Deputy Principal
Greg Morris  Head Teacher Admin(rel)
Peter Harris  Head Teacher PDHPE
Nicole Hunt  Head Teacher CAPA
Tracey Henderson  Teacher
Grant Herbert  Teacher
Tony Borg  Careers Advisor
Beth Halsted  School Admin Manager
Jenny Bullivant  P&C President
Graeme Whitehead  P&C
Vanessa Smith  P&C
Jessie May Hayne  School Captain
Jessie Court  School Captain
Heidi Mainey  Prefect
Sharon Freeman  SRC Coordinator
Mel Powell  Aboriginal Edn. Officer

School contact information

Muswellbrook High School
Kings Street, Muswellbrook
Ph: 02 65431033
Fax: 02 65433927
Email: muswellbro-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Web: www.muswellbro-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
School Musical 2008 – “Leader Of The Pack

Cast and Crew of “Leader of the Pack”

2009 – Muswellbrook High School Presents

“FOOTLOOSE”
Stage Adaptation by Dean Pitchford and Walter Bobbie
Music by Tom Snow
Lyrics by Dean Pitchford

August 6, 7 and 8, 2009
Muswellbrook High School MPC