Ashcroft High School
Annual School Report
Our school at a glance

Students
The number of students in 2011 totaled 575. Indigenous students represent approximately 12% of this enrolment and more than 50% of the students enrolled are from Non-English speaking backgrounds.

Staff
There were 50 full time teachers and an additional four temporary teachers supported by Priority Action Schools Program (PASP) funds. The executive consisted of the Principal, two Deputy Principals, eight faculty Head Teachers and one non-substantive, school funded head teacher position – Student Support Services.

Significant programs and initiatives
Quality Teaching, student leadership and student support services were the major focus areas for the school in 2011. Integrating literacy into daily classroom practice and clear lesson structures inclusive of lesson outcomes and evaluation was a marker point in professional learning and reflection on practice for all staff. Aboriginal programs were once again a significant component of co-curricular activities. Performing arts and sport remained areas of notable achievement.

Student achievement in 2011
Students in Year 7 and 9 undertook the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards or benchmarks for reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy for students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7
89.5% of students achieved at or above the benchmark in reading, 77.9% in writing, 80.2% in spelling and 75.6% in grammar and punctuation.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7
89.7% of students achieved at or above the benchmark.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9
82.4% of students achieved at or above the benchmark in reading, 55.2% in writing, 90.4% in spelling and 69.2% in grammar and punctuation.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9
82.4% of students achieved at or above the benchmark.

ESSA
Students in Year 8 completed the Essential Secondary Science Assessment (ESSA). The test is completed online. Our students performed similarly to comparative schools in our region.

School Certificate
Students in Year 10 achieved a total of six Band 6 and 30 Band 5 results in English, mathematics, science, history and geography – our strongest performance in recent years. Students achieved a total of 321 results above Band 2. This represents 70% of the total student achievement.

Higher School Certificate
Band 6 results were achieved in IPT (one), Mathematics (three) and Mathematics Ext 1 (one E4). 18 Band 5 results, or the equivalent extension band were awarded in 12 courses.

Messages

Principal’s message
Ashcroft High School has been undergoing transformational change over the last nine years through the implementation of high-level teaching and learning practice. The benefits of this work are evidenced in the level of confidence of teachers as highly skilled practitioners, and students as the beneficiaries of a shared understanding of the art and science of teaching and learning. Teachers are also increasingly exposed to a complex mix of student learning abilities at entry level, and are able to effectively integrate their exceptional pedagogical skills with a deep understanding and empathy for the students in their care.

The school has developed highly effective support structures, including a Student Support Services faculty comprising a large range of highly skilled teachers and support staff able to
diagnose and integrate students into multiple pathways within the school and with the support of outside agencies. In addition, the school is undertaking six unique research projects as a means to improving our practice, including the addition of a clinical coordinator who will commence in 2012 as part of a large research project initiated by the school and providing for health screening of students scoring in the low bands of NAPLAN. The results of this and other work will inform practice at Ashcroft High School and in the wider community.

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.

Ted Noon

P & C and/or School Council message

2011 was a busy year in our school community. Miller TAFE ran two semesters of Basic Computing Course in our school library for our parents and community. This program has been a great success over the past years as it gives our parents and community the skills to return to the workforce as well as being a great asset to helping their children with homework.

The 2168 Coffee Club is still going strong. This is a group of women from our community who meet in our school common room once a month and hold special events twice a term. In 2011 we held a special Mother’s Day event with pampering workshops and cooking classes. As well, every mother went home with a potted Chrysanthemum. This was only one of our successful events we have had since starting our coffee club. Our members vary in age from new mums to grandmothers from nursing homes in our community.

Community cooking classes operated throughout 2011. A group of parents, students and staff would meet on Tuesday afternoons and work together to create meals for families that were both tasty and nutritionally balanced. This group also would provide meals for members of our community in times of hardship. They have also assisted with catering for community events when assistance was required.

Ashcroft Angels is a group of four staff, including myself who stand at the front of the school to welcome students and staff each morning. We remind students about uniforms, lateness, and equipment, and generally check in on the students to see how they are travelling for the day. We are a welcoming and caring face in the mornings for the ones who need it.

Carmel McNamee (on behalf of the parents and community)

Student representative’s message

The Ashcroft High School model of leadership requires student leaders to complete an application and interview process to gain a place on the council. The interview process is led by students and the previous year’s Captains who work with the SLC coordinator to select the successful candidates. Students in Years 10, 11 and 12 make up the council and are placed in portfolios by the Captains. The portfolios are: Healthy Schools; Partnerships in Learning; Positive Behaviour and Welfare; and Global Connections. Captains are chosen by a further interview process, part of which is addressing the staff at a meeting. The Captains for 2011 were Lara Pearce and Lauren Jones.

Over the year the SLC raised funds for the purchase and adaptation of a bike for a local family with a child with a disability. This allows mobility and equality with other family members for the first time. In conjunction with Rotary enough money was raised to give a bike to a local family and early in 2012 students will attend the handover meeting.
Students also participated in leadership at a higher level. Bridgette Logan (Year 10) became both a regional and State SRC representative, attending conferences and preparing workshops for other SRC students.

Bridgette Logan, Callum Croft and Dennis Nguyen spoke at the Youth Leadership Day organised by the Community Relations Commission. Their presentation was outstanding and very well received.

Members of the SLC were involved in numerous teaching and community projects throughout the year, including:

- Leading the orientation day for enrolling Year 7 students and their parents
- Preparing Christmas boxes for community members undergoing hardship
- Serving at the Christmas Dinner hosted by Harry Hunt and the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce
- Running leadership days for students in Years 7, 8 and 9
- Running a school disco for students in the evening
- Working with World Vision in sponsoring a child
- Developing a new school merit system
- Introducing elements of Quality Teaching to Year 7 students
- Working on the school’s anti-bullying policy

Students at Ashcroft are at the centre of driving the educational changes needed to bring a 21st century education to our community.

Daniel Monley and Hayley Blyton, Captains 2012

School context

Student information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.
may then proceed with steps to exclude the student from school for unsatisfactory participation in learning.

Retention to Year 12

<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>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Education Officer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Aide</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional staff are funded via PASP and include above establishment classroom teachers employed on a temporary basis and additional school counsellor time of two days per week. In 2011, three additional support staff were employed to manage the school canteen.

Staff retention

Permanent staff retention from 2010 was 100%. Temporary staff retention was also 100%.

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>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Post-school destinations

In 2011, students who were under the age of 17 and wishing to leave school at the completion of Year 10, were required to prove employment of engagement in further studies at another institution. Most students who left after Year 10 were successful in securing work and a small number continued their studies at TAFE.

59 students sat for the HSC in 2011 and 10 gained places at university. A significant portion of the remainder secured work and 17 are studying at TAFE.

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

50% of the student candidature in 2011 undertook vocational training course.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification

100% of the student candidature who sat for the HSC gained the credential.

Staff information

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary:</th>
<th>30/11/2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>$308641.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>$374802.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>$572956.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>$101440.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>$24138.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>$71319.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>$144071.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>$1597011.31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expenditure**            |            |
| Teaching & learning        |            |
| Key learning areas         | $106403.41 |
| Excursions                 | $26914.80  |
| Extracurricular dissections| $30843.76  |
| Library                    | $5292.27   |
| Training & development     | $0.00      |
| Tied funds                 | $607820.45 |
| Casual relief teachers     | $65489.11  |
| Administration & office    | $140820.87 |
| School-operated canteen    | $139079.20 |
| Utilities                  | $53264.86  |
| Maintenance                | $58414.21  |
| Trust accounts             | $115885.71 |
| Capital programs           | $23634.76  |
| **Total expenditure**      | $1373863.41|
| **Balance carried forward**| $223147.90 |

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

Students were provided with a range of opportunities to showcase their skills and abilities in 2011 both within and outside the classroom.

Achievements

Arts

- Jordan Mose and Christine Garcia were selected for the Sydney South Western Talent Identification Program. All students performed at a final concert at Revesby Workers Club on 16th of June.
- Jordan Mose was selected to perform at Director’s Choice and NSW TAFE Award Night. These events feature the best performers from South Western Sydney.
- Elective Year 9 Music students participated in a Latin American Drumming Workshop at Ashcroft High School. Students learnt a number of drumming patterns from Brazil and Peru.
- The Creative and Performing Arts Evening Performances saw many of our students perform a variety of talented quality items in front of parents and community members. The importance of quality teaching and learning was highlighted through dance, drama, music, visual arts, performing arts, band, and dance ensembles. Year 12 student work was well featured over the course of the event where they were able to display their well-rehearsed recital and individual/group projects for the HSC.
- Performance ensembles in 2011 included the Dance Company and Dance Ensemble. Tutoring occurred before and after school for HSC students and gifted and talented students.
- Talent Quest 2011 featured duo dances, band performances, singing, group dances, drama skits and instrumental pieces. The winners of the competition were a Year 12 Drama group that had the whole school mesmerised with their hilarious skits.
- The Primary Liaison Program for Drama and Heckenberg Public School, Sadleir Public School and Mt. Pritchard East Public School all took part in developing their creative skills in a stimulating and supportive environment.
- Visual Arts students from Year 9 to 12 participated in excursions to the Armory at Homebush to see Art Express and the National Art Gallery in Canberra to see the permanent collection.
- Kascha Munday, Hayley Blyton, Jordan Mose and Tamara Summers took part in The Dobell School at the National Art School. The intensive four-day drawing workshop extended the students’ art studies through a demanding and rewarding experience.
Students who were involved in the Digital Logic Program of Term 4 2010 entered their video ‘Metal Kingdom’ into the Short Cuts film festival and won! The students involved in the program included Corey Bolton, Skylie Moss, Maddison Croft, Sonja Blom, Hayley Franke, Chris Mathers and Kelsie Davidson.

The Ashcroft High School Dance Company performed in the South Western Sydney Regional Dance Festival. They performed a routine called ‘Urbanisation’. The company did an excellent job in entertaining the audience. Congratulations to Rhianna Pavez, Corrina Baars, Jessica Situlia, Shanece Tucker, Stephanie Baker, Kascha Munday, Kieren Glasspole and Kaysie Brooks.

Towards the end of term four, students took part in a Dance Recital Evening. This evening had the prime focus to showcase the talents of our dancers, especially those on a Performing Art Scholarship.

Sport

Swimming

- 22 students attended Zone Swimming and the Under 13 boys relay qualified for the Area carnival.

Cross Country

- 64 students competed at Zone
- 16 qualified for Area

Athletics

- First place in the boys competition (first time in over 15 years), third place in the girls competition and third overall at the Zone Carnival. We then placed first on overall handicap percentages (number of students/school).
- Mason Dawra was the Under 12 Zone Age Champion.
- Josh Brown was the Under 16 Zone Age Champion.
- 44 students in 52 individual events qualified for Area Athletics.

- Joshua Brown (javelin and open boys’ pentathlon) and Jordan Mose (shot put and discus) qualified for State Athletics.

Zone/Area/State/Australian Sporting Teams

- 16 boys were selected in the Bernera Zone sporting teams in touch, soccer, volleyball, rugby league and basketball.
- 11 girls were selected in the Bernera Zone sporting teams in touch, soccer, volleyball and netball.
- South Western Sydney (SWS) Area team selections:- Penny Windhoer, Johnathon Mose and Ben Williams for touch football, Junior Paulo and Jonathon Mose for rugby league.
- Junior Paulo was a member of the SWS Gold Rugby League team that competed at the State Carnival. He was selected in the NSW Combined High Schools (CHS) team and competed at the National Championships at St Marys. He was named CHS Player of the Tournament. He was then selected into the Australian Schoolboys team and toured New Zealand.

Knockout teams

- Ten boy’s teams, nine girl’s teams and one mixed team competed in SSW and/or CHS knockout competitions.
- Buckley Shield rugby league teams, girls netball, touch football and girls volleyball teams all won their early pool rounds and moved on to central venue days in their respective sports.

Rugby League

2011 was our most successful year in recent memory. The second Rugby League Presentation night was held to recognise excellence in the sport and held for the first time at Liverpool Catholic Club with over 150 guests. An Ashcroft ‘Team of the Year’ was announced, along with the presentation of other recognition awards.
Boys rugby league teams:

- Won the Under 13 and Under 15, nie a side tournament at Liverpool Catholic Club.
- Under 14 won West’s All Schools Weight for Age tournament.
- Under 15 Division 1 West’s Leagues Cup winners.
- Under 13 Division 1 West’s Leagues Cup Runners Up.
- Open Boys semi-finalists in the Australian Schoolboy Trophy (a National Competition) and winners of the West’s component of the tournament (beating Mt Carmel in the final). The team beat Parramatta, South’s and Manly group winners before losing to Penrith group winners (Chifley College) in the semi-final.

Girls rugby league teams:

- Travelled to Cootamundra to play the Riverina Girls’ League Carnival and won both the Year 9/10 and open divisions.

Awards

Zone Blue’s are awarded to the best players and athletes in the zone for each sport annually.

- Junior Paulo received a Zone Blue for Boy’s Rugby League, Jonathon Mose received a Zone Blue for Boy’s Under 15 Rugby League, and Joshua Brown received a Zone Blue for Volleyball.
- Joshua Brown received a Zone Blue ‘Principals Award’ for outstanding achievements as a Bernera Zone representative in several sports over several years. Joshua was recognised specifically for his achievements in basketball, athletics, touch football and volleyball.
- Junior Paulo was awarded Zone Blues ‘Presidents Award’ for outstanding achievements as a Bernera Zone representative in several sports over several years. Junior was recognised specifically for his achievements in rugby league, athletics and volleyball.
- Jordan Mose captained the Under 16’s Samoan Rugby League team and the was named a League Ambassador for his leadership skills.

**Academic**

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

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)

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7**

- **Year 7 Reading**
- **Year 7 Writing**
- **Year 7 Spelling**
- **Year 7 Grammar & Punctuation**
Progress in literacy
Students in Year 9 performed better than the comparative school group in writing and spelling. Results were on par with the group in reading.

Progress in numeracy
Numeracy results are variable and suggest that students do not easily integrate mathematics knowledge across subject areas to allow them to be effectively numerate. There was improved performance in Band 10 in 2011.

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

The table below indicates the average mark achieved by students in 2011 in subjects that improved against their own scores when compared to the school average for 2007-2011, and/or performed better than the comparative school group in 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>67.7</td>
<td>68.8</td>
<td>75.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Ext 2</td>
<td>76.0</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>78.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Technology</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>69.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Studies</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>67.7</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Mathematics</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>66.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>79.7</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>76.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics Ext 1</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>76.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>81.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>89.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>77.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>80.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>75.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>89.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>82.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>55.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>90.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>69.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>82.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

Combined Schools Aboriginal Dance Ensemble

This ensemble consists of Aboriginal students from not only our school but also students from Ashcroft Primary, Busby Primary, Heckenberg Primary, Sadleir Primary, and Mount Pritchard East Primary School. Together they produced two dances which are a mixture of traditional and contemporary choreography pieces. Our dance ensemble was established to enable the Aboriginal students in our local feeder schools to not only learn about dance and their culture, but also to give them opportunity to build friendships and relationships with the staff and students at our school. We hope that the success of these relationships will mean these students have a smoother transition from primary school into high school.

Reconciliation Day

As a school community, with the Hoxton Park elders group and local feeder primary schools we gathered together to celebrate National Reconciliation Day. National Reconciliation Week celebrates the rich culture and history of the First Australians. This year marked the 15th Anniversary of National Reconciliation Week, a time to reflect on achievements so far and to renew commitments to reconciliation by exploring ways to help create a better future for Indigenous Australians.

The theme for National Reconciliation Week 2011 was ‘Let’s talk recognition. You + Me = Us’. This theme is reflected the need for us a nation to continue to work together to see true reconciliation. It also allowed us as a school to recognise and acknowledge the true history of this country and acknowledge past mistakes and present successes.

Our ceremony clearly demonstrated that not only as a nation are we are moving forward in our efforts to see true Reconciliation, but also as a school community. This is evident in the way we continually promote the true notions of Reconciliation; justice, recognition and healing. As a school and community we are proactive in ensuring we recognise, appreciate and learn from
each and every cultural group represented within our school community.

‘Vocal Identification Program’ (Regional Initiative)

In 2011 we had five students audition for the program and two were successful. The VIP project allowed students from different High Schools in the region to come together and form a vocal ensemble. The project identified talented Aboriginal students in performance and provided them with the opportunity to develop their talents in performance skills and with the chance to showcase their talent in the area of vocal performance.

Aboriginal Buddy Camp

For buddy camp this year our Aboriginal students and their non-Aboriginal buddies attended Stanwell Tops Convention Centre. This year we had nine Year 6 Aboriginal students from our local feeder schools who attended our camp as part of our middle schools transition program. This year’s camp was centered on the sharing of cultural knowledge and team building. In partnership with the National Parks and Wildlife Service we had an Aboriginal Ranger teaching our students about the local area, fauna and flora and local Dreaming stories. This year we used the Quality Teaching Framework to assess the effectiveness of the teaching and learning that occurred on camp.

Aboriginal Community Christmas Luncheon

This year our school, Aboriginal community, feeder primary schools and the interagencies that we have worked with throughout the year gathered together to celebrate the year that was and the achievements of not only our students, but also our community and the strong partnership we have with them. At this year’s luncheon we were able to celebrate the year that was with over 80 parents and community. It was a very successful event and a lovely way to finish a great year.

Norta Norta Program

The Norta Norta program aims to accelerate learning for Aboriginal students in Years 7, 8 and 9. Tutoring is available for all subjects with an emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Our in-class tutor has been working with students in class and assisting them with note-taking, organisation, understanding content and assisting students with preparation for assessment tasks. We believe that this program has been highly beneficial to the students involved and look forward to continuing this program in 2012 in cooperation with both school and family communities.

South West Sydney Region Aboriginal Student Achievement Awards Ceremony

In November this year we nominated five of our Aboriginal students for an Aboriginal Student Achievement Award. These awards acknowledge outstanding achievements of Aboriginal students in the areas of; culture, courage and commitment, literacy, numeracy, sporting achievements, attendance and leadership, citizenship and community services. Of the five students we nominated two were chosen to receive an award for their year group and category.

Deadly Didz – South West Sydney Didgeridoo Ensemble

A group of eight students from across South Western Sydney Region were chosen to be involved in a didgeridoo ensemble that would be used to perform across the region at various events and special occasions. Our school was able to have two of our Indigenous students involved in the ensemble. For these two students the ensemble provided for them an avenue to not only utilise their talents, but also gain a deeper cultural understanding as well.

Multicultural education

Our Pacifica community liaison officer Mr Asa ran several parent consultation session throughout 2011. Through these forums we were able to seek advice and guidance from our Pacifica community as to their aspirations for their children.
Our Aboriginal community group continues to meet regularly and be our strongest community advocates. They are regularly consulted regarding school planning and initiatives. The inclusivity of non-Aboriginal students in many of our indigenous programs is indicative of our integrated approach to our multicultural community.

Respect and Responsibility

The school continues to promote the expectation that all students have a right expect a school where bullying will not be tolerated and where the rights of all community members are respected. In 2011 several initiatives supported this approach:

- The welfare team worked collaboratively to develop and implement a variety of anti-bullying strategies. During 2011 students from Years 7-10 attended the theatre performance CyberShorts, followed by small group discussions in pastoral care which focused on online safety and responsible behaviour. A unit of work titled Bullying, Bystanders and Sexting was piloted in Year 10 aimed at educating students about the dangers of the online world, their responsibilities as bystanders and the real legal consequences of sexting. Students were educated about keeping safe online and encouraged to be active bystanders in the prevention of all forms of bullying.
- The school continues to use Mind Matters and other resources to reinforce students’ knowledge of their rights and responsibilities in regard to preventing bullying at school. Students continue to develop a sense of self-worth, and build skills to maintaining positive relationships. Students feel connected to school and encouraged to be safe and respectful members of the school community.
- The Peer Support program gave 24 Year 11 students the opportunity to develop leadership skills by working with Year 7 students as they transitioned into high school.
- Selected boys and girls from Years 7, 8, and 9 participated in the Drum Beats program run by a Salvation Army School Chaplain. This program fosters team work and self-esteem.
- The program also teaches students empathy and encourages students to take on leadership responsibilities within the school.
- Selected boys from Years 10 and 12 participated in the Strength program run by a Salvation Army School Chaplain. The program focused on exploring the expectations of men in society and encouraged students to develop positive attitudes to school and work and to be leaders in the school community.
- Selected Year 7, 8 and 9 girls participated in small group mentoring sessions run by a Salvation Army School Chaplain. This program fosters self-esteem and positive relationships. The girls developed skills in team work and developed a greater understanding of themselves and the world around them.
- Approximately 20 students from Year 9 were given the opportunity to attend a Youth Camp hosted by the Salvation Army at Teen Ranch. Students developed skills in team work, were challenged with new activities and developed self-confidence.
- Local community health and welfare agencies worked with the school to run the WEEO Wiser (Women Educating Each Other: Women is safe and equal relationships) Program. Ten Year 9 girls were targeted to participate in the program. This domestic violence prevention program educated girls about developing healthy and safe relationships, being assertive and building resilience. Through this program the girls were able to recognise abusive relationships and learnt how to deal with them.

Priority Action Schools Program (PAS)

The school continued to be funded by the PAS program in 2011. PAS funding supports:

- An allocation to Head Teachers to facilitate the implementation of Quality Teaching.
- Additional temporary teacher appointments to our school, enabling us to keep class sizes smaller and offer a far broader curriculum than other schools of a comparable size.
- Additional student support services including a new Student Support Services faculty Head
Teacher in 2011 and a Pacifica Community Liaison Officer.

- Additional school counsellor time of two days per week.

Other programs

Quality Teaching

In 2011 the Quality Teaching team continued to support all faculties through a rotation of one faculty at a time. The team supported them in unpacking NAPLAN results and using student data to support the classroom teacher in applying this information to the individual learning needs of each student in the class. The faculties were guided through developing tasks that differentiate learning approaches and strategies. Unit overviews were designed to help both staff and students see the learning objectives in each unit and to allow the student to unpack what is needed to reach the highest level of learning in that unit or program. Lesson outlines provided a uniform approach across all faculties and all lessons. Each lesson was designed to incorporate an explicit beginning and end with a particular focus on clear objectives, grammar, spelling and punctuation. Student engagement with the Quality Teaching Framework continued to be a primary focus for the Quality Teaching team.

Students and Quality Teaching

Student Leadership Council members from the quality teaching portfolio team continued their work on unpacking the elements of the framework so that they would be able to teach particular elements to Year 7 students. The aim was to promote the idea that students are partners in their own learning and therefore they need to have the practice of teaching and learning demystified so that they can take responsibility and be participants in learning. With the support of the Quality Teaching team, students chose two elements they felt could relate to and support them in their learning. Problematic knowledge and metalanguage were chosen, and the students developed lessons including videos that were connected to scenarios in their real life. The student team conducted a review of their work in order to ensure that there was compatibility with their original objectives. The aim is to cover one element from the Quality Teaching Framework each term.

Quality Teaching and integrating co-curricular programs and research

The Quality Teaching team utilised the expertise of a head teacher to explore co-curricular programs in the school as equal partners in learning. Data was gathered over time through the filter of the Quality Teaching Framework. The focus is to develop all such programs through this process in order to ensure maximum learning opportunities with students at the centre of learning choices. The aim is to share this data and to look at how these learning experiences and approaches translate into the classroom. Of particular interest have been activities that promote student leadership and the notion of students leading their learning. Programs such as the Student Symposium (in 2010) and student performances are examples of programs in which the Quality Teaching framework is utilised to ensure learning is maximised and students are at the centre of the continuum of learning.

Faculty review process

In 2011 term both deputy principals observed and coded a lesson from all teachers as they had done in 2010, on this occasion with the staff allowing choice of lessons by the deputy principal. The focus was on classes that may have been particularly challenging and also included extension classes. The aim was to provide feedback, share strategies and to encourage collegial discussions between teachers. The data provided through these observations along with student focus groups was synthesised into a comprehensive report which was then shared with all executive staff. The data provided valuable insights, including an overall trend with a correlation between weaker elements and the
elements which align to the teaching of literacy. Teacher focus on these elements we believe is above the state mean, but our attention to these particular elements provided for a very sharp focus on literacy as it matched with the Quality Teaching Framework. Student focus groups allowed the coding data to be triangulated and provided a wonderful insight into how students like to learn. Feedback also provided information about teacher consistency of practice. It was noted that greater opportunities for student direction and substantive communication needed to replace teacher talk, which is a world-wide trend.

**Professional learning journals**

Head Teachers were asked to continue developing their reflections of teacher practice and conversations in journals as they had done in 2010. Teachers were also provided with a reflective journal. The focus of the journal is to record the dialogue between teacher and head teacher to ensure professional development and support in improving classroom practice. Head teachers continued to have a four period allowance to support their staff in their understanding and implementation of the Quality Teaching Framework within their programs, lessons and classrooms. The journal must provide evidence of lesson study, head teacher coding sheets, professional profiles and recorded dialogue between the head teacher and each teacher on their staff. The head teacher journal was required for the faculty review processes which took place once per semester. The principal reviewed the journals and sought to correlate information between the teacher and head teacher, and provided a written review.

**Focus on Reading (FOR)**

In 2011 the senior executive, the head teachers of English and Student Support Services, and a highly experienced classroom teacher who has taken an executive role in teaching and learning in 2012, were trained in the comprehension component of Focus on Reading (FOR). The program was adapted by a consultant upon request by the senior executive so that it blended with current pedagogical practice – the Quality Teaching Framework. The intention was to avoid being seen as yet another new idea, but one which aligned seamlessly to existing practice. The super six metacognitive strategies were matched to the identified quality teaching elements. The Focus on Reading team in turn trained one representative from each faculty and assisted the representatives in providing professional support to their faculties.

**Horizons**

Horizons was developed as a not-for-profit company by David Willis who was previously CEO of HBOS (Australia) and supporter of programs at Ashcroft High School for many years. It was developed in conjunction with Ashcroft High School with the focus of lifting the aspirations of students in disadvantaged school communities. Students are selected on the basis of significant disadvantage and are matched with national and international companies. They undertake paid work during school holidays, and receive a $500 clothing allowance in order to feel comfortable and fit into their new work environment. This is the second year of the program with two students involved in 2011 and four students in 2010. Other schools are to be included in 2012. Horizons are keen to evaluate pre and post program involvement in order to ensure the experience has the most advantageous impact on student career aspirations.

**Middle Schools**

Early in 2011 Ashcroft High School senior executive staff reviewed the middle school program with the help of principals from the four feeder primary schools. This reflective process sought to develop a more sustainable and authentic approach to student learning transition and to be better able to delve deeper into common learning language and concepts in a way
that was seamless. The Focus on Reading program will help to provide a common language and approaches to teaching and learning. The decision was made in 2011 to utilise National Partnerships funds for 2012 and create an executive position whose focus will be on teaching and learning and middle schools – specifically experiencing primary school strategies and translating them to a high school setting. Ms Jones, a highly experienced Music teacher will take this role. It is hoped that these experiences will provide for a much more informed and shared understanding between the two settings.

Dance and drama continued as a shared project between the primary schools and the high school, with Ashcroft High School providing class time to develop joint performance projects with Stage 3 students and Year 7 in the high school. The Aboriginal Buddy camp is organised each year at Ashcroft High School, with students from primary schools invited to be part of this experience each year.

Vocational Education

- School based delivery of vocational education courses (VET) included hospitality, information technology and retail and sports coaching.
- Seven vocational education teachers delivered the courses.
- 47% and 50% of Year 11 and 12 students respectively undertook a VET course. 100% of the information technology candidature achieved a statement of attainment working toward certificate III, 86% of the hospitality candidature achieved certificate II, 100% of retail students achieved certificate II and 75% of sports coaching students achieved certificate II in Sports Coaching.
- 21 students in Year 9 commenced the Stage 5 information technology vocational education course.
- 15 students were enrolled in TVET courses.
- Vocational education continued in pastoral care periods for Year 10 students where the Work Ready Program was delivered. This program prepared Year 10 for work experience. Seven students completed work experience at the end of Term 3. The work ready program was also the foundation program for preparing students for work placement which is compulsory for all students undertaking a vocational education course.
- Vocational education lessons were delivered to Year 9 students in pastoral care periods in Term 4. This took the form of scenario activities from The Real Game program.
- A careers program was delivered by the careers teacher to all Year 10 students. The program focused on developing a resume and job interview skills through role plays. It also explored career websites and prepared students for the task of selecting subjects for their senior years.
- Students had the opportunity to access vocational information in a number of ways. 40 Year 10 and Year 12 students explored career options at the Careers Market. Eight students interested in careers in health visited Liverpool hospital. 13 students attended UWS days and ten students attended a UTS day to access information about university courses.

Progress on 2011 targets

Target 1

Student growth of greater than 5% in Year 9 literacy including reading, grammar and punctuation as indicated by movement from low bands to high.

Our achievements include:

- 7% of students moved from Band 5, 6 and 7 against the mean for the school for preceding years in reading, with 7% moving to the higher Bands 8, 9 and 10.
- 7% of students moved from Band 5, 6 and 7 against the mean for the school in preceding years for grammar and punctuation.
- Continued Implementation of GPS (Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling) program and resources for all staff.
• Continued development of the Quality Teaching model with literacy as an inclusive skill, together with an additional focus of 3-periods per fortnight in Year 7 to enhance targeted areas.

Target 2

*Student growth of greater than 5% in Year 9 numeracy as indicated by movement from low bands to high.*

Our achievements include:

- 7.4% of students moved from Band 5, 6 and 7 against the mean for the school for numeracy, with 7.4% moving to the higher Bands 8, 9 and 10.
- All teachers were provided with a thorough analysis of numeracy skills and deficit areas via SMART Data analysis.
- Continued development of generic skills across all faculties, with all lessons to commence with stated identified key numeracy objectives were appropriate. Skills to be inclusive in specifically allocated 3-period program per fortnight for Year 7.
- Analysis of key areas of weakness in Stage 4 learning as a prelude to strengthened development in 2012 and beyond.

Target 3

*(Teacher Quality) 100% of teachers will have their lessons observed by colleagues including the deputy principals using the Quality Teaching model. Data to be collected and collated and a report developed. Student leaders are to be trained in the Quality Teaching model and to coding of co-curricular activities.*

Our achievements include:

- All teachers have had their lessons coded by the deputy principals using the Quality Teaching model. All teachers were provided with feedback, as were the head teachers. Data was collated and incorporated in an excel sheet where the mean was calculated. Student focus groups assisted triangulation of data (n=120), which was subsequently put into a report and provided to all staff for analysis and review of classroom practice across the school.
- All teachers used a learning journal and head teachers showed evidence of collegial conversations utilising the Quality Teaching Framework as the basis of high-level pedagogical practice. The principal provided a report for each head teacher as part of evaluation of its effectiveness.
- Teaching and learning team provided support on a differentiated curriculum to Mathematics and English faculties.
- Head teachers provided support, coaching and feedback processes for each of their teachers, utilising the Quality Teaching model and NAPLAN data and various data sources for analysis. Head teachers and teachers to provide learning journals and a review of faculties to support learning improvements.
- Student leaders – the Quality Teaching portfolio, develop innovative projects utilising the Quality Teaching model as part of their work unpacking the elements in order for Year 7 students to understand the nature of being a learner in a quality learning environment. Students chose *problematic knowledge* and *metalanguage*.
- Coding of co-curricular activities was undertaken across all non-subject specific school activities, providing a significant data base of research data for subsequent analysis regarding the integration of learning.

Key evaluations

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2011 our school carried out evaluations of student support services and Year 10 careers lessons.

Educational and management practice

The provision of student support services across the school.

**Background**

The structure and provision of personnel and programs to support students was the focus of
review in 2010 and resulted in the development of a Student Support Services faculty in 2011.

**Findings and conclusions**

This faculty and its integration with other school teams was a focus of review in 2011 as planning was underway for the school joining the National Partnerships Program in 2012.

Funded via PAS, the team is led by a highly skilled history teacher Mrs Canobra with extensive experience teaching students with special needs. The team encompassed the Learning Support Team (LST) and had representation from the senior executive, head teacher welfare (non-substantive) and school based support teacher behavior (STB). The school counsellors, our careers teacher, STLA, ESL teacher, AEO and teacher’s aides made up the remainder of the team.

Connections were made with community agencies in areas of TAFE and work readiness programs, thereby creating a mechanism for students at risk of disengaging from school early options to continue further education and training they may otherwise not access outside of school.

In addition, the LST met fortnightly and operated on a program of referral and case management and mentoring. Upwards of 150 students were supported in 2011, the majority of whom have underlying learning support needs that may inhibit their educational outcomes. The LST also became the vehicle via which class placements, referrals to our support teacher behaviour and specialist educational settings were made as this was identified as an area of increased need.

**Future directions**

The Student Support Services team is now firmly embedded as a faculty in the school and is an integral part of our work in ensuring equity of access for all students.

With the increased capacity to support students and teachers towards maximum learning outcomes, the decision was made in 2011 to expand the executive roles within the team. Our head teacher welfare Ms Field is now funded under National Partnerships as a full member of the executive. She continues to lead the welfare team and pastoral care initiatives. Our STB Mr Luu has taken the role of Head Teacher Students, also funded under National Partnerships. His specific areas of responsibility are to support the work of the deputy principals with students in Years 7 and 8.

These positions will be reviewed as part of our National Partnerships evaluation in 2012.

**Curriculum**

Year 10 careers classes.

**Background**

For the first time in 2011 students in Year 10 had a regular careers lesson once per cycle. This was in response to our concerns that students were not accessing the opportunities of careers support and future planning along with the careful decision making that was required at subject selection points for the senior school. The volume of work required to meet Board of Studies (BOS) requirements for Year 10 and entry into Year 11 also placed a burden on class time.

**Findings and conclusions**

In consultation with the school executive it was determined that this was a significant and worthwhile area to investigate. The recommended hours of study for courses in Year 7 through 10 was examined and we determined that the most appropriate area to take one hour per fortnight from was an elective period in Year 10.

Thus each cycle, Mr Cross the careers adviser and the classroom teacher team taught a dedicated careers lesson. Topics covered included future planning, employment applications, interview skills and workplace readiness. The BOS requirements for course entries and ‘All My Own Work’ were also completed during these lessons, thus reducing time taken out of class for year meetings to cover such material.

Students also were carefully guided and interviewed by a team of experienced staff, including Mr Cross, Ms Drapalski (executive in charge of careers) and their year adviser when the time came for subject selections for Year 11 2012. This process had begun some years earlier however was strengthened by the cyclical lesson approach.

For the 2012 curriculum structure, we have been able to offer a dedicated university pathway
parallel to a TAFE/work pathway for students in our subject offerings, thus ensuring that all students are equally catered for.

Future directions

This model continues in 2012 and will be reviewed again as the decision regarding credentialing for students at the end of Year 10 by the BOS is known.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

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

The faculty review process undertaken in Term 2 saw teachers and students reflecting on teaching and learning very deeply. Teachers were observed and coded by the deputy principals and reflected on these lessons with critical conversations about learning in their classrooms. Students focus groups were conducted for each faculty and students provided thoughtful and insightful feedback for all classes. An extensive report was written and tabled at an extended executive meeting open to all staff in Term 3.

Parents and community were consulted broadly as we planned for joining the National Partnerships program in 2012. Again, our indigenous parent group provided guidance and feedback on how school directions could best support students.

Professional learning

The average expenditure per teacher on professional learning was $540. All teachers participated in the least three professional learning opportunities at the school level. All teachers had opportunities to attend professional learning external to the school in their specific area of interest.

The school prioritised the following areas for professional learning:

- implementing the Quality Teaching Framework
- syllabus implementation
- leadership and career development
- welfare and equity
- literacy and numeracy
- new scheme teachers

School based professional learning in 2011 included:

- quality teaching workshops
- curriculum differentiation
- literacy in the classroom
- lesson study
- laptops for learning
- network meetings for executive staff
- six staff began an abridged training in Focus on Reading

School planning 2012—2014

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

School priority 1

Outcome for 2012–2014

Improved student outcomes in literacy scores as they relate to national benchmarks.

Target

To reduce the number of Year 7-9 students not meeting national minimum benchmarks in reading by 3% in 2012.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- To consolidate current progress in whole school pedagogical practice, and develop transformational adjustments to Year 7 to flow through to subsequent years.
- Aligning Focus on Reading (FOR) with current Quality Teaching (QT) practice in the classroom
• Develop elements of the Quality Teaching model which align with explicit teaching of literacy, including specifically problematic knowledge, metalanguage, student direction, cultural knowledge connectedness, knowledge integration and narrative.

• Continue three periods per cycle of literacy classes for Year 7 with a focus on explicit teaching of comprehension skills, and to develop protocols for effective formative assessment.

• Provide additional support through staffing (1.0) to support student learning in Year 7.

• Develop an action research model of learning in the four feeder primary schools that capture the essence of pedagogical practice that aligns primary language to high school language.

Our success will be measured by:

• Evidence of super six reading comprehension strategies being observed as part of practice.

• Evidence of improved teacher performance in Quality Teaching elements that explicitly connect to literacy.

• Data showing improved literacy outcomes for Year 7 measured against the literacy continuum.

School priority 2
Outcome for 2012–2014
Improved student performance in numeracy scores as they relate to national benchmarks.

Target
To reduce the number of Year 7-9 students not meeting national minimum benchmarks in numeracy by 3% in 2012.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

• To consolidate current progress in whole school pedagogical practice, and develop transformational adjustments to Year 7 to flow through to subsequent years.

• To investigate and implement a model of enquiry-based learning in Year 7 Mathematics with a view to developing a paradigm shift in secondary approaches to teaching.

• Numeracy team to conduct an in-depth assessment of learning through numeracy opportunities across curriculum areas.

• Enhance cross-faculty partnerships via lesson study to develop common approaches in teaching and learning through numeracy.

• Students to develop numeracy targets linked to the introduction of personalised learning plans (Stage 4) and reflect on their progress with their teacher mentor.

Our success will be measured by:

• Engagement in Year 7 Mathematics enhanced through problem-based learning scenarios.

• Teaching and learning programs reflect the explicit implementation of core numeracy skills linked to contextual learning experiences across all curriculum areas.

• Professional learning opportunities are undertaken by all teachers in the strands of numeracy and the language of numeracy in a non-mathematics classroom.

• Strategies from Stage 3 via liaison with local primary schools are used to build a common language through the middle years.
School priority 3

Outcome for 2012–2014

A whole school approach to student-centered learning.

Target 3

To continue to progress improvement in student-centered learning and therefore student literacy and numeracy skills through a focus on specific Quality Teaching elements including student direction and substantive communication.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Continue to develop teacher confidence in the Quality Teaching model through the alignment of teacher practice, (all) teacher learning journals, student feedback through focus groups and analysis via reports and evaluations reported to staff.
- Effective alignment of the Quality Teaching Framework and Focus on Reading, as it relates specifically to the seven identified elements.
- Development of effective assessment of student learning as measured by newly developed indicators (Stage 4).
- Continuing research of co-curricular programs across the school, through analysis of an extensive data base and the progression of how learning is integrated in a way that enhances student outcomes.

Our success will be measured by:

- All teachers continue to develop their confidence in the Quality Teaching model using data from the classroom, collegial discussion including continued refinement of learning journals, and student feedback through lesson evaluations and focus groups.
- Evaluations of the effectiveness of targeted coding of Quality Teaching elements as they link to a Focus on Reading.
- Development of effective assessment of student gains in classroom learning of literacy skills as they combine with Quality Teaching (Stage 4).
- Development of a report of co-curricular coding and recommendations as they apply to the integration into the learning continuum.

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.

Mr Ted Noon, Principal
Ms Kylie Landrigan, Deputy Principal
Mrs Teena Haslehurst, Deputy Principal
Ms Janene McPherson, Aboriginal Education Officer
Mrs Carmel McNamee, parent

School contact information

Ashcroft High School
Maxwells Avenue, Ashcroft.
Ph: 9607 8011
Fax: 9607 6562
Email: Ashcroft-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Web: www.ashcroft-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
School Code: 8397

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