Principal’s Message

There were many commendable achievements and successes during the 2013 academic year. Our school’s greatest strength continues to be the comprehensive education that it provides for a large number of students from our local area and beyond in both mainstream and special education classes.

It is with a great sense of pride and satisfaction that our school community works cooperatively and harmoniously to provide an excellent comprehensive, co-educational learning environment. Together we continue to develop a school which is happy, safe, encouraging, stimulating and rich, in which all students are supported to reach their potential.

Pennant Hills High School has an enviable culture where students strive for excellence and take great pride in their school and in their achievements, successes and contributions. This is evident in both classrooms and curriculum enrichment activities. In 2013, we were recognised as the champion sporting school in Sydney North. This wonderful achievement was the result of the hard work, dedication and motivation of students, coaches and parents. Students contributed to the school in a range of other ways, including involvement in the Prefect body, Student Representative Council (SRC), bands, music, drama productions, debating, the Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award and many other facets of school life. These efforts continue to enhance our school’s fine name in NSW Government education.

The level of student participation this year was tremendous. Students raised money for a range of charities. The $12 500 raised for the World Vision 40 Hour Famine appeal made us the top fund-raising school of all public high schools in Northern Sydney and second amongst the 25 schools that participated. The $2000 that was raised to support victims from Winmalee and Springwood High Schools, who lost their homes in the devastating bushfires in October, was also a notable achievement and gesture. The fact that so many of our students laboured solidly alongside fellow students, parents, teachers and other volunteers on the second ‘Great Penno Reno’ weekend to improve our school environment speaks volumes of the spirit which exists within the school and its community.

Few schools are able to consistently boast high levels of achievement across such a broad range of endeavours. This year has again been marked by success across all areas of school life. Our HSC students achieved great recognition for their major project work and there were excellent HSC results across most Stage 6 courses. Our intermediate level Theatresports team became state champions; our athletics team’s results saw them awarded top school in the NSW Combined High Schools (CHS) athletics competition; and one of our Robocup robotics teams was again crowned national champion.

I would like to thank all of the dedicated and highly committed teachers and support staff who have worked tirelessly this year to help our students achieve such wonderful learning outcomes.

It is with pleasure that I present the Annual School Report of Pennant Hills High School for the 2013 academic year. 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.

Geoff Wing
P&C Message

The Pennant Hills High School Parents & Citizens Association (P&C) is an active, vibrant and diverse group of parents, caregivers and teaching staff which aims to enhance the learning of students by providing funding, through voluntary contributions, fund-raising and canteen contributions, for resources not otherwise available.

These resources can be additional equipment requested by faculties, or environmental improvements to areas used by the students for both study and relaxation. In 2013 more than $54 000 was directed to improvements in outdoor seating and planned upgrades to the school ovals, as well as assisting with the establishment of a new Vocational Education and Training (VET) course in construction.

The funds also covered our second annual ‘Great Penno Reno’. Started in 2012, it brings together the P&C, staff, students, parents and the wider community over a weekend to take care of ongoing maintenance projects in the school. In 2013, over 300 volunteers worked tirelessly to weed and plant gardens, paint and clean walls and walkways, scrub, sweep and otherwise spruce up the school and grounds in a remarkable show of community spirit and willingness to provide the best environment for our children. As experienced in 2012, the event once again proved the strong relationship that the school has with the community, including not only parents and friends, but also businesses and service providers in the area.

Apart from fund-raising for specific purposes, the P&C also acts as a forum for open and lively discussion with regard to all educational matters affecting Pennant Hills High School and education in general, including primary schools in the area and education options outside high school. Members of staff and the community are invited, and welcome, to make relevant presentations to the meetings, which are held monthly.

The P&C also plays a role in assisting the school executive by having representatives involved in areas such as staff selection and out of school placement.

Our other key role is to provide and support the school canteen. Operated by paid staff and volunteers, the canteen provides a wide range of nutritious snacks and meals for students and staff, while raising funds to support the school.

This year saw the introduction of EFTPOS facilities to the canteen, making purchasing simpler and more convenient.

All parents and caregivers are encouraged to play an active and involved role in the P&C, and we look forward to welcoming you at our meetings.

Suelen McCallum, P&C President

SRC Message

The SRC had a very productive and successful year for student advocacy and governance. Membership was increased to represent a more diverse range of our students, and it is hoped this will expand further in future years.

The SRC also reintroduced three sub-committees in order to boost productivity and make their objectives more focused. The Environment Sub-Committee focused on the maintenance of the school gardens as well as donating money for he ‘Great Penno Reno’. The Press Sub-Committee focused on communication with the student body to ensure the SRC is taking action in the best interests of the student body. The Welfare Sub-Committee helped to organise charity and fund-raising events.

The year began with an independently planned and funded leadership day, which built student capacity to work collaboratively on projects. Our student representatives evaluated this event as beneficial and motivating.

Spirit Week was a very popular event and remained a focal point on the SRC calendar. Council members planned activities designed to generate school spirit and teamwork, where students were able to enjoy a variety of games, food and entertainment throughout the week, culminating in Multicultural Day.

The SRC’s inaugural ‘Say Hi Day’ aimed to create a more inclusive environment for students in the mainstream by encouraging them to say ‘Hi’ to others and make new friends. As part of this initiative, SRC members organised an ‘Amazing Race’ style competition to further develop student interaction and conversation.

The SRC continued to provide financial support to our students who have reached elite levels in their chosen sporting or cultural pursuit.
Significant Programs and Initiatives

Positive Behaviour Engaging Learners (PBEL)

PBEL is a school-wide initiative in its second year of implementation at our school. Our team of committed teachers meets fortnightly to review school systems and plan practical strategies to create and support a positive learning environment.

The ‘free and frequent’ rewards system, using ‘RIA’ (responsibility, integrity and achievement) cards, encourages students to make positive behaviour choices and raises awareness of the current focus in the school. Students enjoy the weekly prize draw during assembly, which provides an opportunity to acknowledge these core values.

New signage is now in place to support the explicit teaching of behavioural expectations in the outdoor environment. The next phase of the program will include collection of data by our Department of Education and Communities (DEC) facilitators, so that the team can evaluate current strategies and then complete the second phase of training which will enable us to implement classroom initiatives.

GPs in Schools Program

This program, run since 1996, involves local doctors and medical students meeting with small groups of Year 11 students to discuss adolescent health issues and contacts available to young people.

Involving approximately 25 local doctors and medical students, the program has been a very beneficial way of disseminating information whilst allowing senior students to meet with medical practitioners in an informal manner to help boost their confidence and independence. It was a very successful program, with students, doctors and medical students all benefitting from the links developed.

Learning Hub

Following action research in 2012, we opened the Learning Hub, a flexible learning facility, in Term 1 this year. Funded by the P&C, the Learning Hub was created from three general learning spaces and provides options for collaborative learning, quiet reflection and structured presentations.

The Hub uses space and colour to challenge traditional approaches to teaching and to encourage creativity and collaboration. Sixty netbook computers enable students to work on projects based on critical thinking and problem solving.

Year 7 History students used the Hub as a base for their project-based learning (PBL) activity, researching aspects of Ancient Roman life before presenting their findings as a Roman Festival. Two classes at a time shared the Hub to research and performance rehearsals, which encouraged interaction, sharing of ideas and mutual support. The students’ highly engaging performances were enthusiastically welcomed by their peers.

World Challenge

A group of 36 students planned, researched, budgeted and raised funds for a private three week student-led expedition to Malaysia and Borneo, which took place during the summer vacation.

The expedition was preceded by 16 months of training and preparation. During this time, team members studied their destination and researched their itinerary options with the support of their program manager, teacher Fiona Ackerman, and a support co-ordinator from World Challenge Expeditions. The teams also undertook an overnight training expedition to further prepare them for what lay ahead.

The four stages of the expedition included an acclimatisation phase, where participants travelled to, then trekked around, the Niah Caves and Lambir Hills in Borneo. This was followed by an opportunity to gain a greater understanding of the local culture by working on projects within local communities such as Long Atip Village and volunteering at Kuala Gandah elephant sanctuary. The main trekking phase included Camp Walter in the
Kelabit Highlands of Borneo and Kenong Rimba State Park in Malaysia. The final phase included the Semenggoh Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre.

The rewards for the young people who participated in the expedition were immeasurable, providing them with skills and insights that would otherwise take many years to accrue. The program developed participants’ essential life skills, including financial management, leadership, teamwork, organisation, communication and decision making.

Aboriginal Education

Pennant Hills High School is committed to the provision of high quality, culturally sensitive education about Aboriginal Australia. We support the development and implementation of programs and strategies to improve learning opportunities for Aboriginal students, and to educate all students about Aboriginal Australia. The school has an Aboriginal education co-ordinator and works with families and Aboriginal education consultants to develop personalised learning plans to support student achievement.

Aboriginal education is a mandatory component of all Key Learning Areas (KLAs) and is successfully embedded in all faculty programs. In particular, the study of Indigenous culture is an important aspect of the English, Human Society and its Environment (HSIE) and Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) KLAs. The Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) Faculty incorporates units of work on the history of Aboriginal sport and leading Aboriginal sportspeople into the Stage 4 Physical Activity and Sport Studies (PASS) elective. Musical and dance performances, film, art, drama and Indigenous guest speakers all facilitated student understanding of Aboriginal perspectives across all stages.

All Year 7 students participated in a full-day visit to Muogamarra Nature Reserve at Cowan, where they participated in a range of activities designed to enhance their understanding of Aboriginal perspectives in the English curriculum.

The school is a member of the Dare to Lead Coalition, which provides valuable resources to support both students and teachers in the implementation of the Aboriginal Education Policy.

In this way Pennant Hills High School continued to promote Aboriginal cultural perspectives and ensure that all students learnt about, and valued, Aboriginal culture.

Multicultural Education

Our school prioritises the recognition, understanding and appreciation of multicultural Australia and the contributions made by people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Opportunities existed for students to acquire the knowledge, skills and positive attitudes required for life in a culturally diverse society through the integration of multicultural perspectives in both whole school and faculty programs.

We were privileged to host students from Finland, France and Norway as exchange students. These young people provided an insight into the culture, education and history of their home countries whilst learning much from our students and our school system.

Students participated in the Australian Government’s Harmony Day program and the Regional SRC Harmony Day celebrations, which involved activities highlighting the challenges and opportunities relating to integration.

Students and staff celebrated our school’s diversity and harmony with a highly successful Multicultural Day in Term 3.

The support of the school’s English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher provided targeted assistance to students from language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE) and was important in helping them to reach their academic potential. Students in Stage 4 gained awareness of other cultures, their food, dress, language, sports and traditions through immersion in programs developed by the Languages Faculty. Mandarin was successfully introduced as an option in the Year 8 curriculum.

The Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO) continued to play a significant role in assisting students to understand the differences in cultural beliefs that people may have and how we can all contribute to understanding and celebrating these differences.
SES Cadet Program

The State Emergency Service (SES) Cadet Program has now been running for five years. This year’s group of cadets was our largest to date, comprising 22 students from Years 9 and 10.

Operating during the winter social sport timeslot, the program provided cadets with an insight into the roles and responsibilities of emergency services, including a more in-depth look at the NSW SES. Through group discussions and activities, students also developed skills in the areas of effective and safe work practice, communication, teamwork and leadership.

Over a ten-week period, SES Cadet activities have included visits to Hornsby SES Local Headquarters and Hornsby Police Station, a radio ‘treasure hunt’ and a two-day camp at Milson Island. Their training culminated in a formal assessment which was held as part of their tenth and final session, and a graduation ceremony held during a school assembly in August.

The efforts of school staff members, combined with the time and expertise generously provided by over 30 SES volunteers, ensured that this year’s group of cadets enjoyed a rewarding program from week to week and during camp.

The Learning Centre

The Learning Centre has the primary focus of re-engaging some students with their learning through one-on-one or small group support. Where appropriate, students were connected to other services outside the school through programs such as Links to Learning.

A trial reading program, designed to boost reading levels into the functional range for high school, operated in the second half of the year. During the program, selected students participated in reading practice as well as literacy activities based on current classroom topics in Science, History and Geography. This program dramatically boosted the confidence of these students in the classroom environment, as evidenced by the positive feedback from staff and parents.

The Learning Centre now includes a new Learning and Support Library. This resource, along with the expertise of the Learning and Support Teachers, is available to all teachers to empower them to support the needs of every student in their classroom in line with the recently introduced Every Student Every School model.

Drama Enrichment Programs

*Secret Bridesmaids’ Business*, a play produced and performed by Year 11 Drama students, was a highlight in 2013. The students produced and performed the play over two evenings.

All students across the school had the opportunity to participate in the Drama Ensemble, a curriculum enrichment activity which ran one afternoon each week after school. Predominantly Year 7 and Year 8 students formed the Ensemble.

The Intermediate Theatresports Team won the NSW Theatresports Schools Challenge, competing against students from private, independent and performing arts specialist high schools across the state. A Junior Theatresports Team also competed. In March, a Theatresports incursion for students from Year 8–12 supported this program.

Over 2500 people attended the school musical, *Beauty and the Beast*, which involved more than 170 students in band, dance, performance, backstage, costume, makeup, set design, painting, technical support and front of house. Our students were supported in this exceptional celebration of talent by 20 Stage 3 students from three of our partner schools, Cherrybrook, Pennant Hills and West Pennant Hills Public Schools.
Supporting our Students

Year 6 to 7 Transition Program
The Transition to High School Program operated for selected students from local partner primary schools to enable the most positive transition to high school possible. This program familiarised students and parents with key staff members able to provide assistance if necessary when they come to the school, and provided students with Year 8 ‘buddies’ who will become another point of contact for their transition from primary to secondary school. Students participated in planned activities, designed to stimulate discussions, to smooth the transition to the high school setting. This program received positive feedback from parents of participants. It links to the ‘Touching Base’ system in Term 1, where students meet with mentors for a short period before school to ensure a positive start.

Driver Education
Year 11 students attended a Rotary Youth Driver Awareness (RYDA) Program at the St Ives Honda Australia Roadcraft Training Centre. RYDA is aimed at reducing road death and injury amongst young people. It specifically targets 16–17 year olds, who are at the stage of their lives when they start to drive or ride in a vehicle driven by their peers. The students attended interactive sessions on topics including hazard perception, fatigue, safe celebrating, car maintenance, finance and insurance. It was an extremely valuable and meaningful day for the students, with just the right combination of relevance, education and fun.

Social Inc.
Social Inc. is a program supported by the Cerebral Palsy Alliance to encourage students to form connections with other students with a disability. Introduced to Pennant Hills High School in 2013 to replace the Best Buddies Program, Social Inc. aims to develop the foundations of a culture of inclusion, and to ensure acceptance of students with a disability within the school. An Inclusion Council was established consisting of student leaders, staff, parents and trained community volunteers. Activities included lunchtime games, movies and a Christmas barbecue. Social Inc. also planned activities for the school’s Open Night. Connections formed between students through this program have also resulted in many social meetings outside of school hours.

Student Leadership: Prefects
Representing and supporting the school community, the prefects welcomed parents and students to the school at the Year 7 barbecue and coordinated the Year 7 dance. They also led tours for prospective students and parents on Open Night, as well as being involved in many of the performances and displays provided on the night. Prefects provided guidance and refreshments for parents and staff at parent–teacher interview nights.

The prefects continued their tradition of charitable support, holding many barbecues and mufti days. A Valentine’s Day event raised money for Beyond Blue, The Heart Foundation and the Leukaemia Foundation, causes which had personal significance for students in the prefect body.

This year a major project was the renovation and complete overhaul of the senior study area within the school library. Prefects donated an entire weekend of their time to strip, paint and decorate the area to provide a welcoming and practical space to better meet the needs of our senior students.

Links to Learning
The Links to Learning Program is a work skills program designed to give students a taste of the workplace and establish an educational path for students to navigate. This year saw the successful graduation of a Year 9 student from the Retail, Hair and Beauty course.

Links Café
This program continued to provide students with the opportunity to develop their communication skills, self-confidence and ability to work effectively in a team. Professionally trained student baristas prepared and served coffee and snacks to staff at the Links Café. With the support of supervising teacher, Mrs Christensen, the more experienced students also took on the role of manager, training and supervising newer participants.
Learning 2 Learn

The Learning 2 Learn thinking skills program operated for all Year 7 students. This six-session program is designed to equip Year 7 students with important skills required in all KLAs to better enable them to benefit from the learning opportunities provided in high school. The Learning 2 Learn program aims to foster:

- a smoother transition to high school;
- effective independent learners;
- student empowerment;
- awareness of important rules;
- responsible digital citizens; and
- strong student–teacher relationships developed through teacher facilitators.

‘At the Crossroads: My Life, My Future’

Year 10 students once again participated in a five day conference, specifically developed to address some of the personal and social issues facing young people today, and to prepare them for the transition into Year 11. The first three days, spent at Vision Valley, included presentations from Brent Sanders, a former police officer who spoke about protective behaviours and life skills; and Norm Spalding, a paramedic who enabled students to reflect on personal safety and risk-taking behaviours in relation to road safety.

In response to the student evaluations from 2012, we increased the number and choices of workshops for the remaining two days of the conference, which were conducted at school. These included: successful essay writing, effective note taking and study techniques, time and life management, research and referencing skills, developing a portfolio for practical courses, public speaking, presentation skills and digital literacy, motivation and goal setting, cybersafety, CV and interview skills, and a very successful careers market.

As a result of informal feedback from students, an Edmodo group was created for students to continue to access resources and gain support in relation to their study skills. Further resources will be placed in a Moodle course accessible to all students.

Supporting our Community

Fund-raising

The student body, led by the SRC, generously gave their time to supporting the wider community through a variety of fundraising activities spread across the year.

Money was donated to the Fred Hollows Appeal and the Cancer Council Daffodil Day. A significant number of students participated in the World Vision 40-Hour Famine, and raised funds for the Children’s Hospital, Oxfam and the RSPCA.

Students also held a mufti day, cake stall and other events which raised well over $1000 to support the students and staff of Winmalee and Springwood High Schools who suffered devastating losses in the bush fires of October 2013. With the support of our P&C, students were able to reach their goal of donating $2000 to these school communities.

GP Synergy Program

Through the GP Synergy Program, the school assisted the University of Sydney in teaching medical students and GP registrars skills to enhance their communication and engagement with adolescents. In 2013, four Year 11 and four Year 12 Drama students gave up their time to role-play various scenarios at training days and evenings. We also introduced six Year 10 students into the program. The students attended sessions over the course of 12 months at various venues. The feedback that they provided, along with their drama skills, was highly valued by the medical students who claimed it was the best way to learn about communicating with young people.
Community Concert

Year 12 students produced and performed a concert for our community’s senior citizens and our neighbours in September. This annual event provides our students with an opportunity to recognise local senior citizens for their contribution to our community. The concert, held in our school hall, was attended by approximately 80 senior citizens and their carers, who also enjoyed a morning tea prepared and served by our students.

‘Great Penno Reno II’

Once again, the results of ‘Penno Reno II’ strongly indicate that the project has now been firmly entrenched in the school’s calendar. It was the culmination of several weekends of work and was achieved through the tireless organising efforts of the ‘Penno Reno’ Committee, and the many parents, students, staff and contributing sponsors.

Objectives achieved during the ‘Penno Reno II’ included the establishment of new garden beds and ongoing maintenance of existing gardens, including re-mulching where needed. A collection of river stones was relocated and re-used in the construction of a dry creek bed feature; the car park garden was further developed; new turf was laid in selected playground areas; and new timber borders were constructed around a number of playground seating areas.

Volunteers used high pressure hoses to clean hard surfaces, and also undertook painting projects in the bus bay, canteen, student reception and adjacent hallways; and sound proofing battens were installed in the band practice room.

Open Night

This new event was a feature of Term 1. Approximately 500 staff, students and parents opened our school to visitors, showcasing our school in ways ranging from work samples to practical activities to performances. The evening was extremely well-attended by both prospective students and their families and our current community of learners.

Working With our Partner Schools

A Community of Schools initiative was the expansion of the Literacy and Numeracy Priorities Program, with a focus on writing as preparation for the implementation of the K–10 English curriculum in 2014. A coordinated approach to the implementation of the 7–10 transition matrix focused on pedagogy to better support students through the middle years. Visits by primary school staff to the high school and high school teachers to primary classes were planned to enable staff to view pedagogical practice. The Community Partnerships Program maintained strong links with our partner schools in art, science, sport, digital photography, creative and performing arts, musicals and bands.
School Performance 2013

Academic Achievements

Statewide and National Competitions

Students are encouraged to enter a wide variety of statewide and national academic competitions.

Fifty students across Years 7–12 took part in the Rio Tinto Science Competition which provided them with an opportunity to test their scientific prowess. Fourteen per cent of Pennant Hills High School candidates achieved a High Distinction, 18% a Distinction and 23% a Credit.

NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 4 to Band 10.

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

Year 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest)
Year 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest)

The Year 7 reading, spelling, writing, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy scores were all above the Australian schools average.

The scores for Year 9 in all areas of literacy - reading, writing, spelling, and grammar and punctuation were above the Australian schools average. Scores for Year 9 numeracy were also above the Australian schools average.

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing (NAPLAN).

Click on the link [http://www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au) and enter the school name in the Find a school and select GO to access the school data.

NAPLAN Year 7: Reading

Reading levels in Year 7 for 2013 indicate that 17.3% of students were in the highest band (Band 9), which was above the state average of 10.2% and 0.2% below the 2009–2013 school average of 17.5%. Those who gained the second highest band comprised 24.5%, which was above the state average of 17.0%.

NAPLAN Year 7: Writing

Writing levels in Year 7 show that 3.1% of students were in the highest band, which was 3.8% below the 2011–2013 school average. The percentage of students who were placed in the second highest band (19.8%) was significantly above the state average of 11.5%.
NAPLAN Year 7: Spelling
Spelling levels in Year 7 indicate that 11.7% of students were in the highest band in 2013, which was below the state average of 12.8% and below the 2009–2013 school average of 15.0%. The proportion of students placed in the second highest band (34.6%) was considerably higher than that of the state average (21.5%).

NAPLAN Year 7: Grammar and Punctuation
Grammar and punctuation levels in Year 7 indicated that 15.4% of students were placed in the highest band in 2013, which was above the state average of 13.4% and below the 2009–2013 school average of 19.7%. The proportion of students in the second highest band (23.5%) was higher than the state average of 16.7%.

NAPLAN Year 7: Numeracy
Numeracy results for Year 7 revealed that 24.2% of students were placed in the highest band (Band 9), which was significantly higher than that of the state average (13.9%) and the school average 2009–2013 (22.8%). The proportion of students in the second highest band was 19.3%, which was also significantly higher than the state average of 13.2%.

NAPLAN Year 9: Reading
Reading levels in Year 9 indicate that 7.1% of students in 2013 were in the highest band (Band 10), which was significantly higher than the state average of 5.1% and below that achieved on average at the school from 2009–2013 (9.3%). The proportion of students placed in the second highest band (Band 9) was 32.7%, which was considerably higher than the state average (15.9%).
NAPLAN Year 9: Writing

Writing levels in Year 9 indicate that 11.2% of students in 2013 were in the highest band, which was significantly higher than the state average of 6.1%. Students placed in the second highest band indicate that 17.1% of students achieved higher results compared to those on average in the state (8.1%) and higher than the 2009–2013 school average of 16.6%.

NAPLAN Year 9: Grammar and Punctuation

Grammar and punctuation results in Year 9 indicate that 14.7 % of students were placed in the highest band (Band 10), which was higher than the state average of 9.0% and the 2009–2013 school average of 13.7%. The proportion of students placed in the second highest band (21.8%) was significantly higher than for the state as a whole (10.1%).

NAPLAN Year 9: Spelling

Spelling levels in Year 9 indicate that 10% of students were placed in the highest band (Band 10), which was higher than the state average of 9.4% and down on the 2009–2013 school average of 11.3%. Students placed in the second highest band indicate that 19.4% of students achieved higher average results compared to those in the state (13.0%).

NAPLAN Year 9: Numeracy

Numeracy results for Year 9 revealed that 26.2% of students were placed in the highest band (Band 10), which was significantly higher than the state average of 15.1% and the level achieved by the school on average from 2009–2013 (20.0%). The proportion of students in the second highest band was 19.0%, which was also significantly higher that the state average of 10.4%.
ESSA

The Essential Secondary Science Assessment (ESSA) is a statewide Science assessment for Year 8 students based on the Years 7–10 NSW Science syllabus. Students are asked questions about Science knowledge and understanding, skills in planning and conducting investigations, critical thinking and problem solving. This year, ESSA was an interactive multimedia assessment that students completed online. The results of ESSA are recorded on a scale from Level 1 to Level 6, the highest level of achievement.

The results obtained by Year 8 students in the 2013 ESSA were excellent. Eighty-three per cent of students were in the top three levels (Levels 4–6), with 40% of students in Levels 5 and 6, which is above the state average of 27.5%. Compared to 5.5% in the state, 14.8% of Pennant Hills High School students achieved a Level 6.

Higher School Certificate (HSC)

The average result in all KLAs was generally comparable to the corresponding means for all schools across the state. In the Higher School Certificate, with the exception of extension courses, the performance of students is reported in six bands, with Band 1 being the lowest level of achievement and Band 6 the highest. In extension courses there are four bands, with E4 being the highest. The results of small candidature courses (less than 11 students) are not permitted for publication as it difficult to effectively and reliably analyse such data. Twenty per cent of the Pennant Hills cohort achieved a Band 6 (or E4) result in at least one course, and 285 results of either Band 5 or Band 6 were achieved by the group.

English

In English Standard an average mark of 68.1 was achieved, which was above the state average (63.8) and the 2009–2013 average for the school (67.8). The average mark of 79.0 in English Advanced was higher than the state (78.5) and lower than the school average since 2009 (79.3). The average mark for English Extension 1 (78.5) was below the state average (81.3) and slightly lower than the school average since 2009 (78.8).

Mathematics

The average mark for the Mathematics course (74.3) was below the state average (76.3) and lower than the 2009–2013 school average (75.9). General Mathematics students gained an average result (69.8) which was above the state average (64.00), yet lower than the school average over the last five years (71.6). Extension 1 Mathematics students achieved an average mark of 81.9, which was higher than both the average mark in the state (81.4) and the school average since 2009 (79.1).

Science

The average marks achieved by students in Chemistry (78.0) were above state average (75.4) but below the 2009–13 school average (78.4). Biology (72.6), Earth and Environmental Science (71.3) and Physics results were all slightly below the state and school averages since 2009.

HSIE

Ancient History (72.8), Business Studies (74.2), Legal Studies (80.0), Modern History (77.8) and Society and Culture (82.6) all achieved averages above the state average, and all except Business Studies exceeded the school average result for 2009–2013. The average mark for Economics (62.2) was below both the state and school average results since 2009.

Technological and Applied Studies (TAS)

Industrial Technology results (average 84.9) significantly exceeded the state average (69.9) but were below the outstanding school average between 2009 and 2013 (86.3). Average results in Engineering Studies (77.5), Food Technology (77.3) and Software Design and Development (76.0) were above both the state average and school average since 2009.

Languages

The small size of candidatures (less than 10 students) in the language courses (French Beginners, French Continuers, Japanese Beginners, Japanese Continuers) makes it difficult to effectively and reliably analyse data, and individual course results are therefore not permitted for publication.

PDHPE

Students undertaking Community and Family Studies gained an average mark (81.9), which was significantly better than the state average (71.9) and also above the 2009–2013 school average (79.8). The average result for PDHPE (70.8) was also above the state average (68.8) but slightly lower compared to the school in the period since 2009 (74.2).
Creative Arts

The average result achieved in Visual Arts (83.8) was considerably above the state average (77.5) and slightly above the 2009–2013 school average (82.7). In the Music 1 course the average result (81.2) exceeded both the state average (78.7) and the school average since 2009 (77.5). The Music 2 students received a result (86.2) which was comparable to the state average (86.4) but significantly surpassed the school average for the last five years (81.2).

Individual Achievements

School Dux, Alana Willis, achieved an ATAR of 97.60, while Benson Koschinski was the highest achieving male student with an ATAR of 96.65. At the 2013 HSC the school’s results were above state average in 24 courses. Of the 167 students who sat the HSC, 74 achieved results above 90% in various courses and were recognised by being named in the Board of Studies Distinguished Achievers List. Brodie Ennever placed fifth in NSW in English Extension 1 on the statewide merit list. This achievement is fitting acknowledgement of Brodie’s effort and talent.

HSC Major Works

Emily Huang’s Textiles major project was included in the 2013 Texstyle Exhibition.

Seven students had their HSC Industrial Technology major projects identified by Board of Studies examiners as being of sufficiently high standard to be suitable for inclusion in one of the InTech displays. These students were Samuel Clarke, Isaac Elliott, Joshua Gianville, Jacob Kowalski, Marcus Kraefft, Lisa Maynard and Matthew Waterson.

Music 2 student, David Johnson, had his core composition nominated for possible inclusion in Encore, a program of outstanding performances and compositions by HSC students, held annually at Sydney Opera House.

Average Higher School Certificate Relative Performance from Year 10 (value-added)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Band</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School 2013</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Average 2009-2013</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSG Average 2013</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: SSG = Statistically Similar Group
By definition, the State average relative performance is zero.

National Benchmarks

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum desirable standards for reading, writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar, and numeracy at particular ages. These are referred to as national benchmarks. The performance of the students in our school in Year 7 and 9 NAPLAN is compared to these benchmarks. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these benchmarks are reported in the following tables.

| Percentage of Year 7 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students excluded) |
|------------------------|---|---|---|
| Reading                | 100.0 |
| Writing                | 96.3 |
| Spelling               | 98.8 |
| Grammar and Punctuation| 95.7 |
| Numeracy               | 99.4 |

| Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students excluded) |
|------------------------|---|---|---|
| Reading                | 97.6 |
| Writing                | 92.9 |
| Spelling               | 97.6 |
| Grammar and Punctuation| 95.3 |
| Numeracy               | 96.4 |

Other Achievements

Sport

Our school was Champion Sporting School in Sydney North Region. This is the first time in the school’s history we have achieved this honour. This magnificent achievement is just reward for the huge amount of training, effort and work put in by a large number of students, staff and parents across a wide variety of sports. It is a source of great pride which truly reflects the school spirit.

Swimming

Pennant Hills High School placed third at the Zone Swimming Carnival. The school had three age champions: Patrick Field (16), Sam Hedges (17+) and Alison Blundy (13). Four individual swimmers and a staggering seven relay teams qualified for the Sydney North Area Swimming Championships. At the Combined High Schools (CHS) championships, four of our students competed as individuals along with three relay teams. Sam Hedges won a bronze medal in the 100 metres Freestyle and Charlotte Westheater received a silver medal in the 100 metres breaststroke. Patrick Field won three gold medals, in the 200
metres individual medley, 100 metres backstroke and 100 metres breaststroke and was named Swimmer of the Meet. Our school was placed fifth overall at the CHS Championships.

**Cross Country**

The school team was placed a very close second at the Zone Cross Country Carnival. We were successful in winning four age groups, and four students were individual winners in their age group: Eleanor Lidbetter (12 Years), Liam Duncan (12 Years), Oliver Lidbetter (14 Years) and Toby Menday (18 Years). Thirty students went on to represent the school at the Sydney North Carnival, where Toby Menday won his age group, as did the 12 Years Girls and 17 Years Boys teams. At the NSW All Schools Carnival, Toby was placed second in his age group, and the 12 Years Girls won gold and the 17 Years Boys silver in their respective events. This was an amazing achievement considering they were competing against all other state, independent, GPS and Catholic schools in NSW. Toby then competed in the National Schools Cross Country Carnival in Adelaide where he was placed seventeenth in the Under 20 age group.

**Athletics**

The school was Champion School at the NSW CHS Athletics Carnival for the fourth time in the past five years. Seven students and two relay teams competed at the State Carnival, with four students gaining medals: Eleanor Lidbetter (third in 12 Years 800 metres), Jessica Midavaine (second in 16 Years Javelin), Charlie Dorman (third in 90 metre hurdles) and Toby Menday (first in both the 1500 metres and 3000 metres). Both relay teams also won medals: 15 Years Girls winning gold and 17+ Years Boys winning bronze. Fifty-nine athletes, including eight relay teams, competed at the Regional Carnival which we won for the fifth year in succession. This was a great achievement considering the large enrolment numbers of some of the other competing schools. We were also placed second in the Zone Athletics Carnival, and again, by the narrowest of margins.

**Athletes with Disabilities (AWD)**

Our students performed magnificently in the AWD categories, winning the Champion AWD School title at the Regional Swimming, Cross Country and Athletics Carnivals. Sean Brown represented the school at the Regional and CHS Carnivals in both swimming and cross country. The following AWD athletes qualified to compete at the CHS Athletics Carnival: Sean Brown, Sophie Ferguson, Jacob Hampson, Emmanuel Karlaftis, Tristan Sassen, Jasper Brown, Jaz Standen, Nathan McKibben, Seamus Garvey, Morgan Boss, Ahrian Vogels, Kimberley Warne, Louisa Tong, Natalia Antelmi, Jordan Twist and Haabid Zikria. Gold medals were won by Tristan Sassen (Senior Boys 100 metres) and Jaz Standen (Discus), and Kimberley Warne won silver (100 metres) and bronze (200 metres) medals.

**Team Sports**

Aside from major carnivals, triathlon continues to be our biggest sport in terms of participant numbers. Eighteen teams participated in the NSW All Schools Triathlon. The Open Boys Cricket knockout team won their way to the final 16 in the statewide competition. The following students were selected to represent Sydney North Region in their chosen sports: Jack Warwick (Baseball), Sam McMahon (Cricket), Anthony Johnston (Cricket), Will Johnston (Cricket), Dela Amirikia (Volleyball), Chris Habib (Soccer), Hannah Taylor (Soccer) and Abbey Walker (Hockey). Sam McMahon (Cricket) was selected in the CHS and NSW All Schools teams.

**Individual Achievements**

Jordan van Hagen (Diving) and Toby Menday (Athletics and Cross Country) were both awarded Sydney North Regional Blues. Sam McMahon (Cricket), Jack Warwick (Baseball), Tristan Sassen (AWD Athletics), Toby Menday (Athletics and Cross Country), Hannah Taylor (Soccer), Chris Habib (Soccer), Jordan van Hagen (Diving), Abbey Walker (Hockey) and Patrick Field (Swimming) were all winners of Ku-ring-gai Zone Blues. Hannah Taylor was the school’s recipient of the Premier’s Sporting Challenge Medal, and Rebeka Field was awarded the prestigious Pierre de Coubertin Award.
Rotary Pride of Workmanship Awards

Two classroom teachers received recognition from the Rotary Club of Pennant Hills for their efforts at Pennant Hills High School, which truly exemplify the Rotary Pride of Workmanship principle of ‘Do it once, do it well’.

Mrs Jennifer Christensen is an enthusiastic and highly capable teacher and educational administrator. She works tirelessly to engage students in the study of Mathematics and to help them achieve at high levels. Mrs Christensen is committed to the corporate life of the school and demonstrates this commitment through her work on the challenging and complex task of producing the school timetable. She places strong emphasis on student wellbeing and has mentored many students formally as a Year Adviser and informally in her role as manager of the school’s student-operated café.

Mr Christopher Raper is a teacher in the Special Education Unit at Pennant Hills High School. He demonstrates wholehearted commitment to improving the school experience for all students. Mr Raper is an exceptionally caring and involved teacher and mentor, who works very hard to ensure that students are secure, happy and engaged in meaningful and enjoyable learning experiences. He has made many significant contributions to the school, involving many hours of extra work in the organisation and execution of programs such as large-scale working bees, operating camps and excursions and coaching sporting teams.

School Bands

Our school’s band program consists of four ensembles: Concert Band 1, Concert Band 2, Big Band and Stage Band. This year, these bands participated in over 30 performances, including the DEC Opera House Festivals, local primary school events and functions at our own school.

At the Yamaha Band Festival, Concert Band 1 received a highly prestigious Diamond Award, whilst Concert Band 2’s outstanding performances earned them a Silver Award.

A highlight of the year for Concert Band 2 and Stage Band members was their Western NSW Tour in Term 4. Our talented musicians enjoyed the opportunity to workshop and perform with bands from several primary and secondary schools in Dubbo and Parkes, including a rehearsal at the Macquarie Conservatorium. On the last evening of the tour, they were rewarded with a twilight visit to Western Plains Zoo.

Youth of the Year

Lions Youth of the Year is designed to encourage, foster and develop interest in leadership in conjunction with other citizenship qualities in our youth, at the age when they are about to enter the fields of employment or higher education. Senior Prefect, Callum Moses, progressed to the District Final of the Lions Youth of the Year Quest, having previously won at Club and Zone levels. He was required to present a prepared speech and several impromptu speeches, each of two minutes duration. Callum brought credit to our school by the way in which he so skilfully competed in this competition.

Young Endeavour

Jack Pun was selected from a competitive field of candidates for the Young Endeavour Leadership Award, offered by the Rotary Club of Pennant Hills as part of its program to promote the development of self-confidence, cooperative teamwork and leadership skills. His prize was an 11-day voyage on Australia’s national training ship, the 44-metre brigantine, Young Endeavour, which allowed him to develop his leadership skills as part of a 24-strong youth crew sailing from Devonport, Tasmania to Sydney. Other outstanding candidates—Eloise Croft, Casey Meyer, Lauren Dwyer, Jemma Ryan, Larissa Turton, Jessica Williams and Laura Hoek—were rewarded with a day of sailing on the three-masted sailing ship James Craig, which was built in 1873 and is the only one of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere.
School planning and evaluation 2012–2014

School Evaluation Processes

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used include review teams following a structured evaluation process, surveys, gathering and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, and the determining of future directions.

Educational and Management Practice: The 10% on Top Teacher Mentoring Program

Background

Many teaching staff volunteered to mentor Year 12 students on an informal basis—working with individuals and/or in small groups. The program focused on encouragement, improvement, time management, involvement, confidence building and stress management. The purpose of the program was to provide support for senior students so that they reached their academic potential and increased their learning outcomes by at least 10%, to provide students with an array of appropriate strategies to assist improvement in learning outcomes and to provide ongoing support.

Findings and Conclusions

In late July 2013, Year 11 students completed a survey in preparation for their participation in the ‘10% on Top’ Program, commencing in Term 4 and continuing into 2014. Results from the survey indicated that 76% of students plan to go to university, 8% plan to go to TAFE or into the workforce, and 16% are uncertain.

Ninety-four per cent of students surveyed, who believed they were not achieving their personal best, indicated that to improve their progress they needed to improve time management; reduce distractions and restrict other activities; make better use of study guides; and seek teacher support.

The remaining 6% of the students surveyed indicated that they believed they were currently achieving their personal best across all subjects and attributed their success to significant study time and homework completed; peer relationships; and lesson preparation.

Future Directions

The survey results strongly demonstrated the role the program plays in the enhancement of student results and supported its implementation for the 2014 HSC cohort. Thirty-two members of staff volunteered to commence mentoring the students in Term 4, 2013. Comprehensive resources and templates have been provided on the school shared drive to support the teacher mentors in implementing the program.

Curriculum: Evaluation of Mathematics Faculty

Background

The review team conducted an evaluation of the teaching and learning practices of the Mathematics Faculty as part of the school’s continuous improvement process. The faculty comprises very committed teachers with a range of experience, some of whom are qualified to teach in other faculty areas, such as Science. Student achievement in external examinations is generally good, but teachers need to extend students more fully to achieve higher bands. In 2013, Mathematics teachers continued to focus on ways to improve results, and voluntary participation in this evaluation was seen as a means of developing strategies for further improvement.

Findings and Conclusions

Programming across all stages ensures that all course requirements are covered. All programs are clearly referenced to syllabus content and with the introduction of the new Australian curriculum, indicators of achievement to meet syllabus requirements will be developed. There is a strong reliance on textbooks and worksheets in all Mathematics classes. There needs to be use of a broader range of teacher resources to support learning, in particular to accommodate the introduction of the Australian Curriculum in 2014–2015. Staff actively engage in professional dialogue to best develop and refine lessons, making use of the vast experience of the senior teachers. This practice may be formalised in the future to include peer lesson observation and critical feedback.

Assessment practices are consistent with school, DEC and Board of Studies requirements. The mix of assessment strategies will be an area of future development, with the current practice having an emphasis on traditional examinations. Marking
guidelines are succinct and well understood by the senior students. Lessons are well planned, reflecting the excellent knowledge by teachers of syllabus content and enthusiasm for the subject. Desired outcomes for each lesson were clearly explained to students at the beginning of each lesson. Successful traditional strategies in gaining proficiency and above were employed by staff, with a mix of teacher and student-centred activities. A trial of group work in some classes with peer tutoring seems to be paying educational dividends, as does the introduction of numeracy with an ICT base with the intention of gaining the interest of students of different learning styles. Streaming of classes is currently the model used to cater for students of different abilities and needs. Evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching and programs is currently a mix of examination results from both internal and external sources. Gathering of lesson evaluation based on bookwork was something identified as a need, and will be implemented in 2014.

Mathematics teachers are actively involved in whole school activities and programs such as timetabling, Work Health and Safety (WHS), PBEL and various curriculum committees. They also work collaboratively with teachers from other schools to develop better teaching programs and introduce new mandated ones. This has led to a mix of ideas and procedures that has enhanced the teaching and learning at Pennant Hills High School.

Future Directions

The Mathematics Faculty will continue to refine and consolidate teaching practice to deliver high quality, challenging and differentiated units of work. In 2014, staff will reflect on the analysis of data from external examinations, along with the findings of this review, to incorporate strategies into future programs and practice that will enhance student performance. This should be built around staff maintaining high expectations of student performance. Ongoing faculty evaluation and feedback from students and parents should inform and guide this practice.

Parent/Caregiver, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

The P&C Association is a very active body which meets monthly. This forum allows for parental opinion to be canvassed and addressed. A number of improvements to school organisation ensue from P&C involvement in school life. For example, in 2013 the Stage 4 and Stage 5 assessment notification procedures were revised following parental suggestions. Parents are consulted and involved in preparation of a number of key areas of school operation, including this Annual School Report, preparation of the school’s three-year Strategic Plan, and the running of curriculum enrichment activities such as the band program. School staff have ongoing opportunities through various surveys and forums, such as staff meetings and school development days, to provide feedback about the school and to suggest ways to improve organisation, management and the learning environment.

A major focus again in 2013 was the surveying of exiting students, in particular Year 12 before their Higher School Certificate examinations. The DEC ‘Quality Learning Environment School Satisfaction Survey’ was completed by most Year 12 students prior to them leaving school.

The majority of students indicated that they felt safe in the school’s environment, experienced high quality teaching and were encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and success.

Other indicators pointed to an area for further development in the use of technology in teaching and learning. Some students expressed a need for increased recognition of their interests and talents and for greater promotion of the school’s anti-bullying policy.

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. A school team has developed our strategic directions for 2012–2014. These are:

- to improve the literacy skills of all students;
- to improve the numeracy skills of all students;
- to assist all students to reach their academic potential and ensure engagement across all areas of the curriculum;
- to continue to build on the positive links between the school, our partner schools and other community networks that provide support for student learning; and
- to provide a quality learning environment for all students and a professional working environment for all staff.

Within these priority outcomes, the school has identified a number of specific yearly targets, and updates of these are recorded below.

School Priority 1

Outcomes from 2012–2014

To improve the literacy skills of all students.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- NAPLAN Year 9 writing: 11.2% of students were in the highest band (state average 6.1%), and 17.1% achieved results in the second highest band compared to the state (8.1%).
- NAPLAN Year 9 grammar and punctuation: 14.7% of students were placed in the highest band (state average of 9.0%), and 21.8% achieved results in the second highest band compared to the state (10.1%).
- NAPLAN Year 7 writing: 22.9% of students achieved in the top two bands compared with 15.3% statewide.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- publication of weekly literacy rules through a variety of school communication strategies to enhance teacher and student promotion of the importance of literacy and to encourage further development of students’ interest and skills;
- teachers placing emphasis on the importance of literacy in all course work and teaching literacy skills by an explicit and consistent approach;
- a consistent approach by all faculties to assessment task design and implementation of marking criteria that incorporate appropriate levels of literacy for students in all stages;
- incorporating appropriate and challenging ICT strategies into all teaching and learning programs to enhance literacy levels, student engagement and develop student ICT skills;
- professional learning for all staff in literacy according to relevant course work being delivered; and
- analysis of NAPLAN results to identify areas of greatest need in literacy.

School Priority 2

Outcomes from 2012–2014

To improve the numeracy skills of all students.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- NAPLAN Year 7 numeracy: 24.2% of students were in the highest band (state average 13.9%), and 19.3% achieved results in the second highest band compared to the state (13.2%).
- NAPLAN Year 9 numeracy: 26.2% of students were in the highest band (state average 15.1%), and 19% achieved results in the second highest band compared to the state (10.4%).

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- publication of weekly numeracy rules through a variety of school communication strategies to enhance teacher and student promotion of the importance of numeracy and to encourage further development of students’ interest and skills;
- all teachers demonstrating a knowledge and understanding of the numeracy plan by explicitly teaching relevant content from the plan and using effective strategies for the delivery of numeracy in course work;
- providing all staff with professional learning in numeracy according to relevant course work being delivered; and
- a consistent approach by all faculties to assessment task design and implementation of marking criteria that incorporate appropriate levels of numeracy for students in all stages;
- increased student participation in external numeracy competitions;
- incorporation of the Mathletics program and other appropriate mathematics programs for students in Stages 4, 5 and 6, with the aim of extending students in Mathematics;
- acknowledgement of student pride in numeracy by staff, with student best-practice samples recognised, e.g. merit certificates; and
- analysis of the NAPLAN results to identify areas of greatest need in numeracy.

School Priority 3
Outcomes from 2012–2014
To assist all students to reach their academic potential and ensure engagement across all areas of the curriculum.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:
- reduction in the number of referrals for disengaged behaviour in class.
- a 55% increase in the number of courses above state average in the 2013 HSC as compared to 2012.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:
- faculties sharing successful strategies in teaching and learning and assessment at whole school professional learning sessions;
- embedding Quality Teaching Framework strategies in all teaching and learning, with staff involved in leading school improvement teams;
- linking of teaching and assessment strategies to the elements embedded in the dimensions of Intellectual Quality and Significance within the Quality Teaching Framework;
- increased focus on recognition of academic achievement by all faculties, at assemblies within the school environment and at other public functions;
- the introduction of PBEL as a school-wide initiative to assist students and staff in ensuring a consistent approach to teaching, learning and student welfare;
- the use of exemplar answers by all faculties when giving feedback on assessment tasks and examinations to students;
- provision of additional resources for ‘10% on Top’ mentors to assist students in preparing for assessment tasks and examinations;
- sharing across faculties of successful strategies used to ensure student achievement;
- co-ordination and monitoring of staff professional learning by the TPL team to ensure a focus on quality teaching;
- school teams working effectively towards improvements in teaching and learning in priority areas;
- an evaluation of the 2012–14 Strategic Plan; and
- providing staff with professional learning to equip them to lead school improvement teams.

School Priority 4
Outcomes from 2012–2014
To continue to build on the positive links between Pennant Hills High School, our partner schools and other community networks that provide support for student learning.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:
- the positive links between Pennant Hills High School, our partner schools and other community support networks that can provide support for student learning have been extended through regular meetings to develop literacy and numeracy support.
- the creation of the Hills Learning Community (Castle Hill, Cherrybrook Technology, Galston, Muirfield and Pennant Hills High Schools) to provide greater resource efficiency for TPL.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:
- many activities across a variety of KLAs in which our students and staff collaborate with our partner schools; and
- regular meetings with partner primary schools to develop strategies to identify and target aspects of literacy and numeracy.

School Priority 5
Outcomes from 2012–2014
To provide a quality learning environment for all students and a professional working environment for all staff.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:
- provision of high quality student support for learning through curriculum differentiation;
- professional learning for staff on the principles of assessment for learning;
• the development of detailed and explicit advice for assessments in Stage 4 and 5; and

• significant environmental improvement of grounds and teaching spaces through the ‘Great Penno Reno’.

**Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:**

• school bodies such as the P&C, SRC and prefects taking an active role in providing support for improving the physical environment of the school;

• explicitly teaching and demonstrating knowledge and understanding required to achieve at the highest levels;

• clear statements of all requirements on each assessment task notification;

• marking rubrics and criteria clearly explaining requirements for students to achieve at the highest level;

• the active encouragement of students through school awards systems to achieve at the highest level;

• a PBEL team to develop strategies to build a positive classroom climate;

• ongoing training for staff in PBEL;

• consistent application of school welfare and discipline policies and procedures by all staff; and

• linking of school welfare and discipline policies and procedures to PBEL.

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**School Context**

**Financial Summary**

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

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<th>Date of financial summary</th>
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<td>Balance brought forward</td>
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<td>Global funds</td>
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<td>Tied funds</td>
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<td>School and community sources</td>
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<td>Interest</td>
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<td>Trust receipts</td>
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<td>Canteen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Expenditure</strong></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and learning</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
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<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
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<td>Library</td>
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<td>Training and development</td>
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<td>School-operated canteen</td>
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<td>Utilities</td>
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<td>Maintenance</td>
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<td>Trust accounts</td>
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<td>Capital programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
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**Balance carried forward** $311509.24

A full copy of the school’s 2013 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meeting of the P&C. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.
Student Information

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

Student Enrolment Profile

[Graph showing student enrolments by year and gender]

Student Attendance Profile

[Graph showing student attendance rates by year and type]

Management of Non-Attendance

Pennant Hills High School is active in the management of student non-attendance. Class rolls are marked online every lesson, and the system identifies attendance conflicts instantly, enabling swift corrective action from executive staff. Executive staff and the home school liaison officer meet regularly to identify potential issues, to discuss students who have established a frequent pattern of non-attendance, and to develop plans for students whose attendance is of concern. The support and involvement of parents and caregivers is routinely enlisted to enhance the school’s efforts to minimise non-attendance.

Retention to Year 12

[Graph showing retention rates from SC to HSC]

Post-School Destinations

Year 12 students selected a variety of post-school pathways depending on their vocational interests. From this cohort, 110 students (65.01%) received university offers. A further 12 students (7.10%) enrolled at TAFE colleges studying courses including Information Technology, Business and Hospitality. An additional four students gained apprenticeships and three moved into full-time employment.

Year 12 Students Undertaking Vocational or Trade Training

Thirteen Year 12 students (7.7% of cohort) undertook a TAFE-delivered vocational education and training (TVET) course, including courses in Animation, Human Services, Business Services, Nursing, Retail, Automotive and Music Industry, with six students completing school-based apprenticeship and traineeship (SBAT) qualifications. The six SBAT students completed their training in Finance, Automotive, Construction, Plumbing and Electrotechnology. The two SBAT students studying Finance and Automotive, and one of the Construction SBAT students, have progressed into the second year of their apprenticeships.

Year 12 Students Attaining HSC or Equivalent Vocational Educational Qualification

Out of 169 students, including seven students from the Special Education Unit, only one student didn’t complete their HSC credential. That one mainstream student began a HSC Pathways pattern of study, hoping to accumulate their HSC over two years. Five students were accelerated in one subject.
Workforce Information

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

Workforce Composition

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principals</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>64.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Careers Adviser</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Administrative and Support Staff</td>
<td>17.172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>102.472</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Three members of the school’s permanent staff have identified as having Indigenous heritage.

Teacher Qualifications

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>20.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation</td>
<td>16.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Professional Learning

Total funding for professional learning activities in 2013 was $50,462 (up from $46,260 in 2012). This sum was allocated to a variety of professional learning activities, with 56% of the funds spent on quality teaching, 19% on syllabus implementation, 12% on career development and the balance of 13% spent across the remaining four Teacher and Professional Learning areas. National Curriculum Implementation Funds were used across curriculum areas to support the new programs. Priority project funding will be set aside in 2014 for Project Based Learning, PBEL and literacy and numeracy programs.

Staff satisfactorily completed DEC mandatory training for 2013. They also attended school-based professional learning courses and workshops throughout the year to support implementation of the school targets, to develop their skills in specific subject areas and to meet the needs of all students. A number of workshops focused on integrating ICT into the classroom to enhance communication and feedback and to develop skills in Web 2.0 tools for students to collaborate and present their work. Teams of teachers were involved in planning and programing for the new Australian Curriculum to be implemented in 2014. Teaching staff participated in the newly established Hills Learning Community professional learning network meetings to collaborate and share ideas and resources amongst the five schools. They examined data supplied by DEC to evaluate teaching and learning programs across all stages, with the aim of improving student outcomes.

Teachers from Galston and Castle Hill High Schools joined us in a full day workshop presented by Bill Rogers on understanding and engaging Gen-Y students in our classrooms. Staff gained valuable insights into effective behaviour management strategies to use in the classroom. This will support the implementation of PBEL.
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.

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Brendan O’Byrne Deputy Principal
Phil Morris Head Teacher (Chair)
Bernadette Jebbink Teacher Representative
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Parents can find more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the report and have the opportunity to provide feedback about the report at: