2009 Annual School Report
Newtown High School of the Performing Arts

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
Messages

Principal's message

Newtown High School of the Performing Arts is a dynamic, caring and rigorous school established in 1990.

NHSPA specialises in the performing and creative arts and is committed to excellence in student education by providing a challenging curriculum that enhances the talents of its students. The school’s comprehensive programs strive to instil discipline and self-esteem, and to encourage creativity, enabling students to develop to their fullest potential and to excel in their chosen endeavours. This report reflects the consolidated energies and efforts of the staff, students and the parent body.

Each year in Term 2 the school auditions students from all over NSW in music, dance and drama for intakes in Years 7 and 11. The school continues to enjoy an international and national reputation for excellence in the performing arts.

The school enhances student motivation and achievement through learning support and welfare structures and programs, and by establishing close working relationships within the 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.

Stephen Gray

P&C and/or School Council message

Newtown High School of the Performing Arts Parents and Citizens Association plays a significant role at the school providing an active community of support for students and teachers. The contribution of parents is essential to students’ learning and enjoyment of their high school years.

A number of major highlights occurred in 2009. After many years of fundraising, along with Government grants, a major new rehearsal space, the Robin Amm Building was opened, adjacent to the Studio Theatre. The P&C Building Committee had assisted the School with its completion and the school community was pleased to participate in the opening of the facility by the Minister for Education and Training, Verity Firth and the local member, Deputy Premier, Carmel Tebbutt.

The P&C introduced a Voluntary Fundraising Contribution as a way of helping more families contribute financially to the needs of the school. In its first year, the VFC initiative raised $22,258 enabling the funding of significant Studio Theatre upgrades.

Another successful initiative of the past year was the holding of the first World Earth Festival in partnership with students and teachers. The Festival was an opportunity to build the school community, raising awareness of sustainability and diversity through performance, food and presentations.

Successful application was made for various grants to improve the school environment. A Water Saving Project ($79,000) saw the installation of rainwater harvesting and efficient toilet systems that will not only reduce water consumption but reduce costs.

A $50,000 National Solar Panels grant will enable energy saving measures including solar power and hot water systems.

A $16,000 Sport and Recreation grant (50% of total cost) enabled the upgrade of the basketball court. The upgrade has made the court multipurpose with lines for netball and tennis, and new fencing has been installed.

A Volunteers grant ($4,036) has provided for small equipment purchases to support the ground maintenance work of the P&C.

Much of the work made possible through these grants was devised and carried out by the P&C Environment Committee.

The P&C Performing and Visual Arts Committee has been active in supporting the Music, Drama, Dance and Visual Arts faculties as well as the Technical Company. This support has included improving costuming storage facilities, recarpeting of the Studio Theatre foyer, purchase and installation of a Studio Theatre
sign, and overseeing the major Studio Theatre refurbishments.

The P&C continued to provide a Front-of-House refreshment café at Showcase performances, as well as on audition and orientation days. Monthly P&C meetings are held as well as regular meetings between the P&C Executive and the School Executive. The NHSPA P&C looks forward to another active and successful year in 2010.

Darren Mitchell,
P&C President

Student representative's message

In the past year, Newtown’s SRC has continued to work productively to represent the student body and to diligently implement projects within the School Community.

Successful endeavours included running a second mufti day and another Gelato Day to raise money for disadvantaged children through UNICEF’s Global parent program, and organising a Valentine’s Day fundraiser to aid those disadvantaged by the Victorian bushfires in early 2009. Additionally, the Student Representative Council purchased a second bike rack to pursue “green transport initiatives”, and ran a candy-cane drive for the Oak-Tree Foundation in order to support development projects in the third world.

The SRC is again planning to be involved in World Earth Festival to be held in March, and seek to contribute further to the well-being of this fantastic school in 2010.

Jack Mitchell
SRC President

School context

Student information

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

Student enrolment profile

The school has a total enrolment of 905. Each year auditions take place for Years 7 and 11 resulting in enrolments from across the state.

The school also enrolls students from the designated local area.

Student attendance profile

A concentrated effort on improving student engagement as well as targeted attendance policies has maintained recent outstanding improvements in attendances rates across all years of the school.

Management of non-attendance

The school holds weekly welfare meetings where Year Advisers and the Home School Liaison Officer discuss student non-attendance and develop intervention plans.

Retention to Year 12

The retention rate from Year 10 to Year 12 continues to be well above that of the state and Sydney region and has shown pleasing improvement from 2008.
Post-school destinations

The 2009 HSC featured 166 students with units attempted ranging from 2 to 13 units.

Survey results revealed that 115 eligible students applied for UAC places in 2009, with 97 students receiving offers (84% success rate).

The most popular post school destinations were University, TAFE and Private Provider courses in a diversity of areas which reflect the variety of aspirations within a performing arts high school cohort.

The most popular areas of study included Arts, Business and Commerce, Dramatic Art/Theatre and Media, Visual Arts (including design, screen and sound), Dance, Education, International Studies, Music and Sciences.

Students chose to study at a variety of tertiary institutions including ANU, UNSW, The University of Sydney, Macquarie University, UNE, ADFA, National Art School, VCA, UWS, Wollongong University, NIDA, CSU Bathurst, Australian Catholic University, Australian College of Theatre and Television, Uni of Newcastle, UTS, TAFENSW, AFTRS, COFA, SAW, Raffles and Whitehouse Design.

Popular TAFE/Private College courses included Music industry Business, Design, Fashion, Hospitality, Carpentry, Pastry cooking and Information technology.

Approximately 20% of the surveyed cohort indicated they were pursuing full or part-time employment, often with an option of overseas travel, including Dance Performances on cruise ships and Administration Assistants at the recent Winter Olympics in Vancouver.

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

In 2009 5% of Year 12 students were enrolled in vocational or trade training.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification

All Year 12 students successfully completed the HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification in 2009.

Staff information

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

Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>48.5</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff (SASS)</td>
<td>9.3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>72.7</td>
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</table>

Teacher qualifications

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>20</td>
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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>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>830,306.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>28,902.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>115,137.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,262,744.76</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Expenditure**

- **Teaching & learning**
  - Key learning areas: 316,355.76
  - Excursions: 159,804.44
  - Extracurricular dissections: 203,981.62
- **Library**: 20,810.53
- **Training & development**: 293.09
- **Casual relief teachers**: 82,513.44
- **Administration & office**: 268,533.37
- **School-operated canteen**: 0.00
- **Utilities**: 107,622.38
- **Maintenance**: 62,234.62
- **Trust accounts**: 113,389.56
- **Capital programs**: 49,202.06

**Total expenditure**: 1,703,935.33

**Balance carried forward**: 558,809.43

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### School performance 2009

#### Achievements

**Arts**

A major feature again in 2009 was the school's two showcase seasons. These were highly successful; companies and ensemble groups performed at the school and at the Seymour Centre. These performances incorporated the skills, expertise and collaboration of students, community members and staff.

#### Achievements in Drama

Over 165 students in twenty drama companies performed as part of the year's two showcase seasons with performances from plays by Shakespeare, Aristophanes, Ionesco, William Wycherley and Oscar Wilde.

Student showcase directors in 2009 were Tristan Black, Alexia Chimarrides, Jackson Eather, Ruby Everett, Gideon Heller-Wagner, Charley Huggart, Helana Sawires and Sophia Stratton.

NHSPA graduate Jordan Shanks-Markovina also took on the role of writer/director for a showcase season. This continues a long and continuing tradition of ex-students returning to direct work - a testimony to the strong ties that endure between these members of the community and the school.

Costuming of all these successful showcase productions was again professionally accomplished by faculty member Judith Hoddinott and her design company who managed to costume over 200 characters for the stage as well as contribute to other design visions. The costume store and wardrobe facility is one of the faculty's greatest (non-human) assets.

The Theatresports team won the School Theatresports Cup with the Final at the Enmore Theatre - their second win in three years. The team members were Jackson Eather, Isabelle Comber, Max Allen, Georgina Adamson and Gideon Heller-Wagner.

Newtown Drama students made up a third of the NSW Public School State Drama Company. They were Paul Whiddon, Tamara Saffir, Britnie Johnston and Natascha Flowers.

A record twenty students were nominated for ONstage in 2009. Notably, six of these were nominated for both their group and individual performances. They were Charlie Falkner, Emily Burke, Olivia Crowl, Laura Hespe, Tamara Saffir and Natascha Flowers. The other nominees for Onstage were Elise Wood, Morgan Ferguson, Maya Darby, Rhian Saunders, Minna Tockuss, Tessa Kerans, Rachel Howell, Lillian Silk, Henry Moss, Alex Thew, Danielle Stamoulos, Kate Kazokas, Britnie Johnston and Paul Whiddon. This outstanding achievement by the 2009 Year 12 cohort reflects the exemplary HSC results last year.
Achievements in Dance

Mikaela Carr, Sophie Holloway, and Dahna Shaxson performed at the Sydney Region Official Opening of the School Year at the City Recital Hall.

Over fifty dance students participated in the 2009 Schools Spectacular in various segments including the Schools Spectacular Classical Ballet Company.

Three Dance companies, three Classical Ballet companies and five Dance ensembles represented the school at the Sydney Region Dance Festival, as well as the State Dance Festival.

Dance students participated in the Showcase performances in both semesters. Every Dance and Classical Ballet class performed in the 2009 Class-work Showcase concert.

"Off Broadway" and the end of year "Dance Showcase" were performed at the Everest Theatre, Seymour Centre.

The Intermediate Classical Ballet Company performed for Presentation Day at the York Theatre, Seymour Centre.

Twenty-one Year 12 students were nominated by markers as presenting exemplary works in the HSC Dance examination. Many of these students were nominated in more than one syllabus component and 7 were nominated in all three components.

The Technical Company was involved in all Showcase Concerts, Presentation Day, auditions, Formal Assemblies, Expanding Horizons concert, HSC Drama, Newtown Public School’s Presentation Day, Elysium Concert, NSW Public Schools’ Dance Company performance and the Sydney Region Opening of the School Year. The venues they worked in were Studio Theatre, St Georges Hall, the Everest and York Theatres at the Seymour Centre, the Sydney Opera House and the City Recital Hall, Angel Place.

Achievements in Music

The choir, string ensemble, vocal soloists Mariam Sawires and Gabe Grieve, and dancers featured in a special item, "Across the Universe" for the Official Opening of the School Year at Angel Place.

The Symphonic Wind Ensemble gained 3rd place in the National Band Championships Junior division held at the Seymour Centre.

HSC concerts in the Studio Theatre and St Georges Hall featured the outstanding performance work of Year 12 students.

Many students supported our first World Earth Day by initiating and preparing musical items performed on the stage in the amphitheatre.

Our special evenings of jazz/popular music- In The Swing- and classical/popular music-The Spring Prom- were a great success.

The Year 10 Jazz Trio- Bart Haddock, Marc Valpiani, and Marcus Catsaris played at the Museum of Contemporary Art for the SMH Young Writers Awards.

The Sydney Region Festival at the Opera House featured the Orchestra and String Ensemble.

The State Performing Arts Festivals held at the Opera House featured the Stage Band, Symphonic Wind Ensemble, Senior Choirs, Junior Jazz Ensemble, Junior Vocal Ensemble, String Ensemble and soloists Dion Condack and Sarah Wang.

HSC Encore nominations were awarded to Sam Millsom and Lauren Cairns for Performance and Mariam Sawires for Composition.

The Expanding Horizons Concert was held in August at the Sydney Opera House. This concert featured the Orchestra accompanying the massed choir and then performing in a special combined item with a touring orchestra from Zhengzhou in China. This concert also included drama and dance performances.

The Talent Development Project accepted three students: Rhian Saunders, Natasha Hoebriggs and Susan Luu.

Meriana Gyory graduated from the Talent Development Project in a special concert at the Entertainment Centre which also featured our Stage Band rhythm section of Tim Sampson, Abraham Rounds and Paul Mason as well as a number of former students.
Raffaela Nesci was selected into the Taikoz Workshops for Schools Spectacular.

James Flanagan, Rhian Saunders, Natasha Hoebriggs, Susan Luu, Kelsi Boyden and Olivia Panetta were successful in the Schools Spectacular featured artist auditions.

The Orleans Marching Band stirred up the atmosphere at the Year 12 Graduation Day.

The second semester Showcase program featured the combined choir and orchestra in an outstanding performance of Adiemus by Karl Jenkins.

The Symphonic Wind Ensemble opened the mixed Showcase at the Seymour Centre. Later in the evening, the combined choir and soloists Dion Condack and Chiara Morvillo accompanied three dancers in “Grace”, an arrangement of extracts from the film "As It Is In Heaven”.

The Elysium Concert in St Georges Hall, the final concert for the year, showcased the solo performances of students from Years 10 and 11 and in particular students undertaking HSC Music Extension in 2010.

**Achievements in Visual Arts**

The artmaking (Body of Work) components by HSC candidates, Ruth Arnold, Charlotte Lund, Finn Marchant, and Ellen Virgona, were nominated for the HSC Art Express exhibition.

Finn’s photograph series and Charlotte’s sculpture were part of the inaugural ‘Rocks’ exhibition space. Hazelhurst Regional Gallery and Arts Centre exhibited Ellen’s photographs and Ruth’s drawings were shown at the Armory Gallery, Sydney Olympic Park. Finn’s work was also exhibited as part of the on-going NSW Regional Tour.

Jacinda Fermandis, Lottie Sebes and Mali Strachan-Brown successfully completed the National Art School Intensive Studio Practice Course with outstanding results. This 60-hour program is designed to enhance and extend students’ technical and conceptual knowledge and skills of students through intensive studio practice. Their final artmaking was exhibited at the National Art School.

Artworks from Michela Castagnone and William Sandstrom were selected to represent the City of Sydney as part of the Nagoya Art Exchange. Their works were exhibited at the Nagoya City Museum with student artworks from Los Angeles, Mexico City, Nanjing, Torino and Nagoya.

Sarah Judd of year 10 was selected as a finalist in the Moran Contemporary Photographic Prize in the Secondary School Section.

Jordan-Rhys Jeans was a finalist for best Senior Fiction in the Robin Anderson Film Awards screened at the Dendy, Circular Quay.

**Sport**

Student achievements in sport for 2009 continued to improve. A large number of student representatives competed at Bligh Zone, Sydney East and NSW championships where many of our athletes achieved exceptional results.

Some of our standout achievements were:

**Bligh Zone Age Champions:**

- Athletics: Bree Masters (14yrs), Holly Doyle (15yrs), Oskar Wesley-Smith (12yrs), Leon Curtis (14yrs), Adrian Murray (15yrs), Marcus McCarthy (16yrs)
- Cross Country: Zoe Gawecki (13 yrs), Leon Curtis (14yrs), Bree Masters (14yrs), Rikki St Clair (18yrs)
- Swimming: Eleni Knapp (12 Yrs), Amy Johnson (13 yrs), Rory Hocknell (12 yrs), Kaelan Mann (14 yrs)

**NSW CHS Blue Award for Outstanding contribution to school sport:**

- Triathlon: Elliot Brown
- Cross Country: Elliot Brown

**School Placing at Bligh Zone Carnivals:**

- Athletics: 1st place
- Cross Country: 3rd Place
- Swimming: 1st place (Senior Boys Team)

It is also important to highlight that Rory Hocknell, Bree Masters and Eleni Knapp...
together with the Open Boys Relay Team broke all the Bligh Zone Swimming records.

We look forward to continuing the success of our athletes in 2010.

Other

Student engagement was enriched with the running of annual events including Year 7 Ancient History Day, Year 8 Medieval Day and the Year 10 Geography fieldtrip to Cronulla to study coastal management.

In June 2009, a record number of Year 12 students travelled to New York and Washington DC to attend the annual Young Global Achievers Conference working with the United Nations. These students had the opportunity to participate in the UN General Assembly, working with and representing different national embassies.

Our Year 11 Legal Studies students participated in the state-wide Mock Trial competition, gaining valuable experience in preparing for and representing legal cases. The team performed very well, making it through to the knockout stage of the competition.

Year 9 and 10 students gained valuable practice in geographical skills work as all classes participated in the National Geographic Channel Australian Geography Competition. Similarly our students had the opportunity to partake in the National History Challenge.

In 2009 students across all years again demonstrated their passion for both debating and public speaking and the school entered teams and individuals into many competitions.

The school entered teams in the Premier’s Debating Challenge from Years 7/8, 10 and 11.

All teams competed with great distinction and continued this school’s proud tradition in debating.

Individual students also participated in the Legacy Junior Public Speaking Competition and the Plain English Speaking Award.

In 2009, Newtown High School of the Performing Arts introduced Mathletics, an online learning resource containing games, activities and tutorials. Steven Chen, Deirdre Hanrahan-Tan, Emma Gibson, Gemma Pearce and Jack Stromland were recognised as our top Concept Masters and between them have mastered over 400 concepts with an 85% success rate.

A total of 67 students participated in the highly regarded ICAS Mathematics Competition. 4 students received a High Distinction, 14 students gained a Distinction and 34 students were awarded a Credit.

Ninety students participated in the Australasian Problem Solving Mathematical Olympiads. These Olympiads involve students in Years 7 and 8 solving challenging mathematics problems over five rounds in teams of 30.

Students had great success in the international UNSW ICAS Science quiz including: 1 High Distinction, 14 Distinctions and 78 Credits.

The Gifted and Talented program expanded in 2009 and students participated in a range of competitions such as the mind marathon where Year 7 and 8 boys participated in a day of activities involving Construction, Design, Art, Science, English, PE and Maths.

Selected students attended a gifted and talented conference at Ascham School, discussing topics such as the origin of the universe, learning about philosophy through art, Nanotechnology, who should run a county, abortion and the status of the embryo.

Our GAT students were the regional junior champions in the Secondary Chess Competition as well as the regional champions of the Tournament of Minds Competition in the Maths/Engineering challenge. This group of students also obtained second place in the Language/Literature challenge of the tournament.

Academic

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

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

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

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7**

Students achieved overall results well above state average in all aspects of literacy tested.

**Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7**

Students again achieved overall numeracy results above state average.
Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9
Students achieved outstanding overall results in all areas tested. While, the graphs below indicate that the school’s literacy results are significantly above state averages, it is apparent from both Year 9 and Year 7 data that a more targeted approach to spelling may be required.
School Certificate

English Literacy

Results in 2009 improved upon the strong performance of recent years with 65% of students achieving in the top two bands compared to 60% in 2008 and 34% state-wide.

Mathematics

The upward trend identified in 2007 and 2008 accelerated in 2009 with an increasing percentage of students in the top two bands. The number of students in the top band was more than double that of the school average in recent years.
Science

Outstanding improvement continued in 2009 with 57% of students achieving in the top two bands compared to 41.2% in 2008 and 31% state-wide.

Australian Geography, History, Civics and Citizenship

The number of students achieving at the highest level was again well above that of the state.

Computer Skills

Students achieved pleasing results with 79% placed in the highly competent category compared to 56% state-wide.
School Certificate relative performance comparison to Year 5 (value-adding)

In value added terms our students' performance, while improving in Mathematics and Computer Skills, was lower in English, Geography and History than in recent years.

![Graph showing relative growth in School Certificate from Year 5 (value-added)]

Higher School Certificate

In 2009 Newtown High School of the Performing Arts was again highlighted as one of the highest achieving schools in the state. Our achievements included:

- Students of Ancient History achieved 4 marks greater than the state mean
- 95% of students in Business Studies achieved 70 or more, compared to 60% state-wide.
- 100% of Chemistry students achieved 70 or more, up from 50% in 2008.
- In Dance, our students achieved results 10 marks above state average, 31% received 90 plus (band 6) and 85% in the top 2 bands (up from 71% in 2008, and 35% state-wide)
- with an average score of 87 (9 over the NSW mean), 43% of Drama students achieved marks over 90 (3.5 times the state rate) and 85% gained marks in the top 2 bands up from 83% in 2008 and 63% in 2007.

- 57% of our Economics students gained marks in the top 2 bands (80+) compared to 46% state-wide.
- English Advanced results were also up with 98% achieving results of 70 or more, and 54% over 80 marks compared with 41% in 2008 and 30% in 2007.
- With an average mark of 44/50 (up 5 from 2008) our Extension 1 English results were exceptional with all students receiving marks in the top 2 bands and 67% in the top band compared to 22% state-wide.
- Extension 2 English results were equally impressive with 41% of students in the top band (up from 13% in 2008), compared to 28% state-wide.
- 50% of our Geography students gained marks of 80 or more compared to 39% of the state.
- with an average mark almost 5 above the state, 66% of Legal Studies students achieved 80+ marks compared to 42% of the state.
- General Maths showed great improvement in 2009 with 7% achieving 90+ (over the state average and up from 0 in 2008) and a more than two fold increase in the percentage of students in the top 2 bands, 27% (compared to 24% of the state).
- 2 unit Maths we saw a three-fold increase in band 6 and 84% of students received marks of over 70 compared to 70% state-wide. To further highlight our improving Maths results, this year 40% of students were placed in the top 2 bands, up from 25% in 2008 and 14% in 2007.
- Extension 1 Maths again saw a three-fold increase in the percentage of students in the top band as well as having 64% of students in the top 2 bands (up from 37% last year).
• 67% of our Extension 2 Maths students achieved marks in the top 2 bands, compared to 25% in 2008.
• with an average score of 80, 56% of Modern History students received results in the top 2 bands compared to 40% of the state and up from 46% in 2008.
• 80% of History Extension students received marks in the top 2 bands, up from 50% in 2008.
• with an average score of 83, 70% of our Music 1 students gained marks over 80 compared to 55% state-wide and 57% in 2008.
• 95% of our Music 2 students achieved marks in the top 2 bands, up from 86% in 2008 and compared to 80% of the state. Their average score was 85.
• Music Extension results were again outstanding with an average of 44/50 and 72% in the top band compared to 52% of the state.
• our Physics results were considerably up on previous years with 19% of students achieving 90 or more. This compares to 11% state-wide.
• with an average of 83.5, 75% of our Visual Arts students gained marks in the top 2 bands compared to 54% state-wide.

So, it can be argued that our 2009 Year 12 achieved our greatest ever HSC results. This is further evidence by the following successes:

• Jennifer Andrews was placed 2nd in NSW for Dance
• Mischa Vickas was placed 18th in Biology
• 4 students (the highest number in our history) will receive a Premier’s Award for gaining marks of 90+ in over 10 units. These outstanding students were Tai Mitsuiji, Kate Ridgway, Mischa Vickas and Elise Wood.

• 63 students (up from 55 in 2008 and representing 38% of the cohort) were placed on the NSW Distinguished Achievers list for receiving 90+ in at least one course.
• 37 students achieved marks of 80 or more in 10 or more units. This represents 23% of the cohort and compares to 20% in 2008 and 9% in 2007.

The graphs below highlight these achievements.
Higher School Certificate relative performance comparison to School Certificate (value-adding)

The graph below indicates outstanding improvement in performance across all ability groups. It should be noted that value added state-wide, by definition is zero, and that the school’s improvement is above that achieved by the like school group in all categories. Of particular note is the exceptional performance in the high performance band with the school achieving four times the growth of the like school group and further improvement compared to the school’s average 2005-2009.
Minimum standards

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

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

**Percentage of Year 7 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2009**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 7 students achieving at and above minimum standard</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Percentage of Year 9 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2009**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at and above minimum standard</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
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<td>Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
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</table>

Significant programs and initiatives

**Aboriginal education**

An Aboriginal perspective is taught in an integrated way across KLAs. This enables staff and students to develop knowledge and understanding of and respect for Aboriginal Australia as highlighted in the Aboriginal education policy.

Aboriginal awareness is celebrated at major school events by acknowledging the land and at assemblies organised and conducted by the school’s student body.

At our annual Graduation and Presentation Day ceremonies, the “welcome to country” was presented and performed by our Aboriginal students. The Aboriginal Dance group was invited to officially open and perform at the 2009 Schools Spectacular.

This year the school undertook an Aboriginal project called Bemel-Gardoo (where salt water meets the land). This project aims to embed Aboriginal cultural knowledge in a substantial way across the school curriculum. The project was also designed to catalogue the history of the Warragal people and the Eora nation. The students involved were given opportunities to meet Elders who explained the extensive use of natural resources for bush tucker, medicine, making instruments and utensils. The students engaged with this project constructed a didgeridoo, clapping sticks and a message stick.

Our Aboriginal students were invited to participate in the AIME project. AIME uses a unique style of structured education-based mentoring to link university students in a one-on-one relationship with Indigenous high school students. Our Aboriginal students have developed positive relationships through this mentoring program and it is hoped that the schools association with AIME will continue in 2010.

**Multicultural education**

Multicultural perspectives are a compulsory component of all teaching programs. This is evidenced in many curricula and co-curricula programs including the choice of repertoire for all performing and creative arts faculties and texts set for study in English.

In 2009, our inaugural “World Earth Festival” was held. This whole school event was designed, in part, to celebrate multiculturalism in Australia.

**Respect and responsibility**

As a public school respect and responsibility are embedded in all we do. In 2009 this was evident through programs such as:

- Students, staff and parents continued the development of our Environmental Committee and promoted recycling, the greening of the school and the concept of global citizenship.
Year 9 students were trained in Peer Support, from this training 30 students were selected to become Peer Support leaders working with Year 7 2010.

The school provides opportunities for students to become members of over 40 performing arts ensembles and companies. Each of which promote the values of teamwork, tolerance and cooperation.

Environmental Awareness
Our first 'World Earth Festival' - an environmental and multicultural day was held in term 1. The event, involving the whole school community, promoted sustainability, performing arts and multiculturalism. This event was featured in the 'Sydney Morning Herald' and the 'Inner West Courier'.

'Ultra Eco Tours' - our environmental committee and school hosted the Sydney Region environmental school tours organised by Observatory Hill and Botany Bay Environmental Education Centres. 56 environmental committee students from 21 schools came to our school to learn about various initiatives we have conducted in order to make our school more sustainable. As a result of this initiative we were featured in a parliamentary press release as one of the leading schools in terms of sustainability.

The school, through its P&C was successful in submissions for NSW Government's 'Public Facilities Grant ($76,000) and the Federal government's 'National Solar Schools Program' Grant ($50,000). As a result the school has installed rainwater harvesting system, solar panels and a solar hot water system. We also installed online electricity and water monitoring systems that can be used to enhance and contextualise learning across various KLA’s.

The combined saving of all water tanks/water saving measures is estimated to be approximately 3,000,000 Litres (3 mega-litres) per year at current water cost ($1.61/kLitre, the estimated saving will be over $5,000 per year.

Progress on 2009 targets

Target 1

NHSPA value added data will be at or above "Like School Group" in all measures and groupings for 2008-09

Our achievements include:

- The target was met in all achievement groups in the 2008 HSC. This was repeated in 2009 with considerable growth and improvement in all areas

- While meeting the target in some School Certificate courses the school recognised the need for additional programs and resources such as:
  - The establishment of a Gifted and talented and Literacy and Numeracy Teams to develop strategies across all KLA’s to be incorporated into all teaching programs
  - Targeted professional learning opportunities were provided to staff including a School Development Day dedicated to numeracy
  - The implementation of the Year 7 Mathematics Enrichment program

Target 2

Increase numbers of students involved in extra/ co-curricular Performing Arts programs by 5%

Our achievements include:

- The number of students involved in our co-curricula program increased by 14.5% in 2009
- Showcase electives for Year 9 were implemented as part of 2010 subject selections with 10 courses operating covering 7 faculty areas
- The musical "Bugs" has been written, auditioned and rehearsed for its 2010 premiere
- An additional Year 11 Dance ensemble and Year 7 Drama company were formed
The Expanding Horizons concert and sister school program was initiated resulting in collaboration between all performing arts faculties. A cross faculty tour is planned to China for 2010.

**Target 3**

**Improve the accessibility of technology for all members of the school community.**

Our achievements include:

- Targeted professional learning days were run with a focus on ICT. All staff members had the opportunity to attend workshops providing training in smart boards, One Note, IT in the classroom, survey monkey and moodle.
- A faculty audit was carried out to ensure that ICT outcomes and strategies were explicitly evident in all Stage 4 teaching programs across all KLAs.
- The wireless school network infrastructure was installed across the school to ensure that all teaching and learning spaces are internet ready and support the Digital Education (DER).
- The rollout of laptops was successfully carried out to all Year 9 students and 25 members of staff. All staff allocated a laptop in phase 1 were also enrolled in DER professional learning courses to support the use of the laptops in the curriculum and classroom.

**Target 4**

**Evaluate current literacy and numeracy teaching practice and results, and develop programs and initiatives for implementation in 2010-11**

Our achievements include:

- A Literacy and Numeracy Team (LANT) was formed with membership across all the KLAs to discuss and develop strategies that were explicitly incorporated into all teaching programs.
- A school development day was held in Term 2 dedicated to Numeracy, where the regional mathematics consultant was invited to address the staff. Evaluations from staff after this school development day recognised the importance of the explicit teaching of literacy and numeracy.
- The Year 9 Gifted and Talented class undertook a task which explicitly focused on writing. As a result the growth in writing between Year 7 to 9 for this class was over twice that of the state and one and a half times that of the year group.

**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 2009 our school carried out evaluations of the student behaviour management policy and student engagement.

**Educational and management practice**

**Background**

The 2009-11 school plan identified the need to review the current behaviour management policy. In 2009 a cross faculty team was established to conduct this review and make recommendations for change based on the examination of theoretical practice and the input from staff, students and parents.

**Findings and conclusions**

Staff, students and parents were surveyed and asked to comment on what aspects of the current behaviour management policy worked effectively and what recommendations or suggestions could be made to improve the policy. The results from the survey were collated, analysed and presented to the community. It was apparent that the Restorative Practice theoretical framework was to underpin any future behaviour management policy. Terry O’Connell was invited to address the staff, students and parents about the restorative approach at various events throughout Term 2 and 3, including a
targeted school development day. The Behaviour management policy team then drafted the new policy, embracing the restorative framework and incorporating the recommendations for change made by the community. The policy was then published and distributed to all members of the community ready for implementation in 2010.

Future directions

- The new behaviour management policy will be implemented throughout 2010 and reviewed in Term 4 2010 to evaluate its effectiveness.
- The number of students on class teacher, head teacher and deputy principal contracts issued in 2010 will be audited to identify if the restorative conversations held over the year have assisted students modify their behaviour.
- A database has been created to monitor the number of students placed on the restitution afternoon for uniform, truancy or unexplained lateness. The database will be audited to identify if the restitution afternoon has supported students to modify their behaviour.

Curriculum

Background

One of the key priorities and targets identified in the 2009-11 school plan was to enhance student engagement across all areas of the school. A range of strategies were developed in consultation with the community aimed to improve student engagement.

Findings and conclusions

The Principal and a core group of teachers were enrolled in the Sydney Region “Getting Engaged” action learning project. As a part of this project “the quality of school life” student survey was conducted to identify the overall level of engagement by the students. The survey revealed that disengagement from school becomes more evident amongst Year 9 students. To address this, new semester showcase elective courses were devised and written. These courses were then incorporated into the Year 9 2010 curriculum elective choices.

Future directions

- The showcase elective courses will be evaluated to determine if they have improved the overall levels of student engagement in Year 9.
- A student engagement cross faculty team will be established in 2010 to continue to investigate the levels of student engagement across the school and suggest additional strategies to be implemented.
- A school development day and executive conference will be held in 2010 which will examine the latest research and techniques designed to promote and improve student engagement.

Other evaluations

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2009 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. This occurred through the surveys distributed for the behaviour management policy review process and the quality of school life survey distributed to students.

Overall, parents, teachers and students were very satisfied and supportive of the school seeking to review their behaviour management policy. The recommendations for change generated from the community were very constructive and many of the recommendations were incorporated into the new policy.

The quality of school life survey results also revealed that students were very satisfied with the school. At the same time areas for growth and improvement were identified and strategies to address these areas will be developed by the student engagement team.

Professional learning

In 2009 teacher professional learning continued to be a major focus of the school.
Staff surveys and School Development Day evaluations indicated priorities for professional learning activities and these priorities were then addressed.

In 2009:

- A range of opportunities were offered to all staff in relation to professional learning workshops and activities throughout the year. The targeted priority areas were Literacy and Numeracy, Laptops for Learning and Quality Teaching.
- The Professional Learning team continued to organise School Development Days and TPL staff meetings. Topic areas covered were Restorative Practice, Literacy and Numeracy, The Digital Revolution- laptops for Learning and the school planning process.
- The staff induction program again included a performing arts orientation day. All new scheme teachers attended regular meetings and successfully completed their accreditation portfolios.
- The Welfare Conference was held and the pastoral care program was refined, the drug consultant was invited to present recent trends in drug use and misuse by adolescents and the behaviour management teacher, student and parent survey results were presented and analysed by the welfare team.

School development 2009 – 2011

Targets for 2010

Target 1

To Decrease the level of partial truancy by 4%

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Implement the restitution period and incorporate partial truancy as a reason for students to be placed on restitution.
- Implement the Year 9 showcase elective courses to enhance engagement and connectedness to the school.
- Establish a student engagement team with cross faculty representation to investigate and recommend strategies to enhance student engagement across the school.

Our success will be measured by:

- An analysis and examination of the numbers of students attending restitution for partial truancy.
- A review of the Year 9 Showcase elective courses.
- The implementation of strategies devised by the student engagement team across the school.

Target 2

To improve value added relative growth from Year 5 in all School Certificate tests

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Utilise professional learning resources to enrol teachers in courses that focus on quality teaching and student engagement across the stage 5 curriculum.
- Maintain the Gifted and Talented Team and audit stage 5 teaching and learning programs to ensure that enrichment, quality teaching and GAT strategies are explicitly included.
- Conduct a school development day with a focus on the latest research and strategies designed to enhance student engagement across the school and implement some of these strategies across all teaching and learning programs.

Our success will be measured by:

- An analysis of the SMART data for 2010.
A review of Stage 5 teaching and learning programs to ensure that explicit GAT strategies are incorporated.

Target 3

To increase retention (across stages) in performing arts curricula and co-curricula programs

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Establish a biannual musical production that is based on collaboration between Music, Dance, Drama and Visual Arts.
- Participate in the Expanding Horizons China Tour. This will be offered to the orchestra, junior and senior choirs, Percussion ensemble and a Drama group.
- Implement the Year 9 showcase elective to support, compliment and contribute to the two showcase seasons.

Our success will be measured by:

- The success of Bugs - The Musical in terms of student and community participation and support.
- The numbers of students attending the Expanding Horizons China tour and its overall success.
- The range of initiatives that each showcase elective course devises to compliment and support the showcase season and the numbers of students that are involved to support each initiative will be examined.

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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