

MERRYLANDS HIGH SCHOOL

Annual School Report 2013



School context

Merrylands High School is the largest comprehensive high school in the area. The school is comprised of 762 students from 52 cultural backgrounds. 82% of our students are from non-English speaking backgrounds with males comprising 61% of enrolment and females 39%. This includes 12 Aboriginal students (1.6%) and 77 refugee students (10.1%). Arabic, Turkish, Afghani, Hindi and Pacific Islander (Maori, Tongan and Samoan) are the most common languages other than English. This school is a community that is enriched by its ethnic diversity and social harmony.

The esteem and confidence in which the school is held in the wider community is high; the school is consistently recognised at state, national and international levels as a result of strong school partnerships (with parent and community groups, as well as our partner schools), high profile state programs, an emphasis on leadership, supportive student welfare initiatives and quality teaching and learning.

The school offers a range of academic, vocational, sporting, cultural, and leadership opportunities. These are aimed at extending student abilities and developing safe respectful learners. The school offers gifted and talented programs for students from our local primary schools. There is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, with enrichment programs in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10. A selective class has been established in each year group and across each Key Learning Area (KLA) which demonstrates a commitment to offering challenging learning experiences to all students. There is a great emphasis on technology-based teaching and learning in all subjects and programs.

Principal's message

2013 was another highly successful year for Merrylands High School which was highlighted by outstanding academic results; the development of an impressive school culture and participation in a range of innovative technology-driven programs and activities. Again, the school and a number of staff received regional, state, national and international recognition for their achievements.

We continued our participation in National Partnerships and Equity program funding to

support our school community. Of particular note were the exemplary Higher School Certificate and University entrance results which included an unprecedented number of students achieving results in the top bands across all KLAs.

Strong school partnerships with parent and community groups, our partner schools, as well as participation in high profile state and national programs, strategically underpin our targets. Our continued focus on quality teaching and learning, leadership, wellbeing and Safe Respectful Learner programs serve to increase the esteem with which the school is held in the wider community, from a regional to national level and create a foundation from which to launch further individual and school achievements and growth.

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.

Lila Mularczyk, Principal

Belinda Giudice & Amika Prasad, Co-Principals



P & C

In August 2013, a group of enthusiastic parents affiliated our P&C. We have meetings twice a term and have already been active in seeking grants, scholarships and representative opportunities for our school community. This includes the P&C initiating "Speak Up Speak Out" workshops to develop parents' skills.

We hope to find many more opportunities for our school and parents. We encourage all parents and caregivers to be actively involved in the education of their children and welcome discussion regarding your concerns and opinions.

P & C Executive

Student representative's message

The Merrylands High School Student Representative Council has had a productive year in leadership. We have participated in many and varied leadership opportunities and have built a community of awareness through our fundraising efforts.

The SRC is comprised of members from years 7-12, including our captains, vice and prefects. The SRC has been active in initiating, implementing and participating in a variety of programs including SRC inter-school group regional meetings, the Positive Behaviour Intervention and Support (PBIS) program, the continued program of DER (whereby some of us are part of a laptop team assisting teachers and students in their computer skills), team building programs at our annual Leadership Camp and fundraising for a number of charitable organisations and causes. Some of these charities include the World's Greatest Shave for Leukaemia Research, PINK October for Breast Cancer Research and R U OK? Day. Many of us have presented at various State, regional and school-based events involving DEC personnel, international guests from China and the UK, community members, political representatives, parents, students and staff.

SRC members also participated in many conferences throughout the year including the Holroyd City Council Local Government Schools Forum, the 2013 Youth Leaders Day (which our school regional Ambassador, Vignesh Livingstone, attended) and the State and Regional SRC conferences. The theme for the year was mental illness and anti-bullying and many of the leadership activities and initiatives were driven by the passion of all SRC (not only from MHS but across our state) to combat bullying and mental illness in our schools. We have maintained our outstanding work towards the Safe Respectful Learner program, not only within the school but also beyond our own borders. We are looking forward to extending our achievements in 2014.

We would like to thank Ms Mularczyk, Ms Di Gesu, Mrs Jenny Perry and all other staff and parents for their support in 2013.

Rahul Ali and Nadia Berjaoui (SRC members)



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

In 2013, Merrylands High School was comprised of 762 students from 52 cultural backgrounds. A total of 82% of students are Language Backgrounds Others than English (LBOTE) with 12 Aboriginal students (1.6%) and 77 refugee students (10.1%). Arabic, Turkish, Afghani, Hindi and Pacific Islander (Maori, Tongan and Samoan) are the most common languages other than English.

Student attendance profile

Improving student attendance continued to be a priority in 2013. The average 7-12 attendance was 86.5%. This includes 91% for Year 7, 89% for Year 8, 85% for Year 9, 81% for Year 10, 88% for Year 11 and 84% for Year 12.

Management of non-attendance

Non-attendance was managed through a range of measures and strategies. The primary approach was through effective and engaging teaching and learning practices and the P.B.I.S model to create a school environment that promoted student engagement and valued attendance.

The continued strengthening of the Senior Engagement team and the support provided by our Attendance Team contributed significantly to this culture. Other strategies included the use of

attendance awards and recognition for students with outstanding attendance; SMS messaging of students not present in roll-call; lateness and attendance monitoring for students causing concern; a range of proactive student interviews, parent phone calls and interviews; punctuality and attendance seminars for students persistently partially absent; Year advisor and Deputy Principal monitoring for all students; involvement of the Community Liaison Officer and the close cooperation of the Home School Liaison Officer .

Post-school success

Students were supported in seeking post-school training and employment by a range of staff including the Careers Advisor, the VET coordinator and the Transition Officer. In preparing our Year 11 VET students for work placement, Merrylands High School once again conducted a “Workready” conference in March. Students were presented with seminars on “How to get recruited”, the nature of VET, competency based assessment, Workplace Health and Safety and the expectations of employers in each industry. Student evaluations collected on the day were unanimously positive in their assessment of the event. Feedback from the participants was also exceptionally positive in regards to the mock job interview conducted on the day. The interview and resume check proved to be a real eye opener for many students.

The 2013 Year 12 cohort were surveyed to discover the post school pathways taken by our students. 51% of respondents went on to full-time study, 26% in University and 31% at TAFE. 40% progressed into the workforce. 15% entered into part time work, 15% entered full-time work while 10% accepted apprenticeships.



Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

Over 57% of Year 12 studied at least one school delivered VET subject. The frameworks offered at school were Metal and Engineering, Business Services, Construction and Hospitality -Multi-skilling.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent Vocational educational qualification



59% of Year 12 VET students in 2013 received the nationally recognised credential of a Certificate I or II as well as completing two weeks industry work placement. A special commendation to Christine Hooper who received a Regional VET award and to Andrew Williams who competed in the Regional World-Skills

competition. His success in this competition will see him compete in the National Competition in 2014.

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

Position	Number
Principal	1.0
Deputy Principal(s)	2.0
Head Teachers	9.0
Classroom Teacher(s)	44.1
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	2.6
Teacher Librarian	1.0
Teacher of ESL	1.6
School Counsellor	1.0
School Administrative & Support Staff	10.082
Total	72.382

The Australian Education Regulation, 2013 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce. Indigenous composition of the school workforce is nil.

Teacher qualifications

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

Qualifications	% of staff
Degree or Diploma	100
Postgraduate	24
NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation	38

Financial summary

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance. A full copy of the school's 2013 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

Date of financial summary	30/11/2013
Income	\$
Balance brought forward	408785.71
Global funds	448565.00
Tied funds	551897.62
School & community sources	169463.65
Interest	14170.79
Trust receipts	96571.25
Canteen	0.00
Total income	1689454.02
Expenditure	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	81335.69
Excursions	43999.87
Extracurricular dissections	45253.64
Library	7962.32
Training & development	5894.68
Tied funds	598361.02
Casual relief teachers	127038.29
Administration & office	110329.81
School-operated canteen	-
Utilities	123763.48
Maintenance	49688.35
Trust accounts	97594.36
Capital programs	8669.00
Total expenditure	1299890.51
Balance carried forward	389563.51

School performance 2013

Academic achievements

NAPLAN

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

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

NAPLAN Year 7 - Literacy

115 students sat the exam. The area of greatest strength was writing, with grammar and punctuation identified as the greatest area of concern. Trend data results in average score, value-added growth and skill band distribution were as follows:

Year 7 READING	2011	2012	2013			
Average score, MHS	488.1	502.4	491.4			
Achieved value-added growth, Year 5-7 (%)	36%	50%	51%			
Skill Band Distribution						
Band	4	5	6	7	8	9
Percentage in Bands	7.0	34.8	39.1	12.2	6.1	0.9
School Average 2009-2013	9.2	32.2	343.1	16.2	7.6	1.6

NAPLAN Year 7 – Numeracy

114 students sat the exam. Results were below state average. Areas of strength continued to be Number, Patterns and Algebra. Slightly less than half of the students achieved value-added growth. More than half of the students achieved value-added growth. Trend data results as evident by average score, value-added growth and skill band distribution were as follows:

Year 7 NAPLAN NUMERACY	2011	2012	2013			
Average score, MHS	498.4	500.4	484.0			
Achieved value- added growth, Year 5-7 (%)	43%	55%	46%			
Skill Band Distribution						
Band	4	5	6	7	8	9
Percentage in Bands	7.0	41.2	37.7	12.3	1.8	0.0
School Average 2009-2013	8.6	32.5	34.1	17.0	5.5	2.2

Year 9 NAPLAN NUMERACY	2011	2012	2013			
Average score, MHS	534.2	531.3	542.1			
Achieved value- added growth, Year 5-7 (%)	45%	45%	55%			
Skill Band Distribution						
Band	5	6	7	8	9	10
Percentage in Bands	18.7	30.2	25.9	12.2	8.6	4.3
School Average 2009-2013	13.0	36.2	28.2	12.5	7.1	3.0

NAPLAN Year 9 - Literacy

142 students sat the exam. The area of greatest strength continued to be spelling with grammar and punctuation identified as the greatest area of concern. Trend data results in average score, value-added growth and skill band distribution were as follows:

Year 9 READING	2011		2012		2013	
Average score, MHS	536.0		536.0		539.9	
Achieved value-added growth, Year 5-7 (%)	58%		48%		55%	
Skill Band Distribution						
Band	5	6	7	8	9	10
Percentage in Bands	10.6	39.4	26.8	17.6	4.2	1.4
School Average 2009-2013	17.5	30.7	28.5	17.1	4.7	1.5

NAPLAN Year 9 – Numeracy

139 students sat the exam. Results were below state average; however, internally, they increased from 2012. Areas of strength were Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry, followed very closely by Number, Patterns and Algebra. More than half of the students achieved value-added growth. Trend data results as evident by average score, value-added growth and skill band distribution were as follows:

Higher School Certificate (HSC)

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

89 students made up the 2013 HSC cohort. 27 subjects were studied – including traditional HSC subjects, school delivered Vocational Education and Training (VET), VET courses delivered at TAFE (T-VET) and a range of languages studied at the Saturday School of Community Languages. Seven courses registered as positive in school vs. state: Business Services (6.12), English as a Second Language (8.70), English Standard (3.87), General Mathematics (1.43), Mathematics (10.41), Mathematics Extension 1 (6.94) and Metals and Engineering (0.10).

Most KLAS had positive value-added results compared to the 2012 HSC results.

Average results for the 2013 cohort include: Ancient History (66.77), Biology (70.83), Business Services (75.80), Business Studies (68.20), Chemistry (67.80), CAFS (64.15), Design and Technology (62.56), Economics (58.60), Engineering Studies (60.53), English Standard (69.35), ESL (79.04), Food Technology (59.75), General Mathematics (68.89), Industrial Technology (44.73), Legal Studies (71.53), Mathematics (87.80), Mathematics Extension 1 (87.40), Modern History (64.42), PDHPE (67.82), Physics (62.76), Retail Services (81.60), Senior Science (56.78), Visual Arts (74.16).

Record of School Achievement (RoSA)

Merrylands High School has put in place many engagement strategies to support the introduction of RoSA. 150 students were enrolled in Year 10 in 2013. 146 students have transitioned to Year 11 2014. Students who left school for trade, apprenticeship, work or further study were given the opportunity to complete the literacy and numeracy test and receive their RoSA.



Other achievements

The Arts

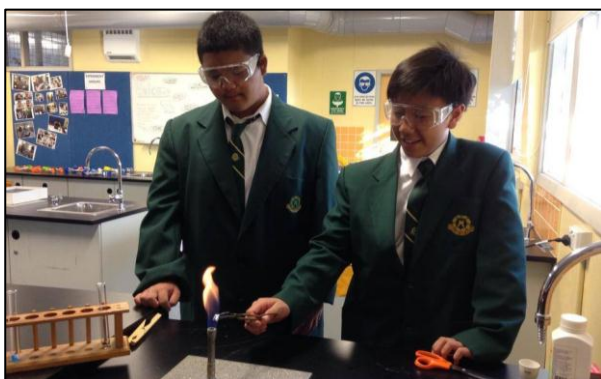
In 2013 the Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) Faculty at Merrylands High School conducted teaching and learning activities in Dance, Drama, Music and Visual Arts. The central focus of the CAPA Faculty at Merrylands High School is to provide each student with the opportunity to explore their creative, artistic and performance talents through a wide range of organised activities and programs within and outside the school. Significant achievements for the 2013 school year have included:

- Attendance by Merrylands High School students at the Seymour Centre performance "Callback 2012" and The Art Gallery of NSW.
- The display of quality student artworks in the Annual Art Exhibition in the school hall on Presentation Evening.
- Performances by the Year 11 band at events, for example Open Day and Transition day.

- Successful presentation of Harmony Day cultural performances in Term 1 with some new initiatives implemented by Mr Fifita in his first year as coordinator of the Harmony Day concert.
- Implementation of Stage 5 and Stage 6 Drama.
- The Year 11 Drama class participated in the ABCN Parramatta Now Theatre Workshop program during Term 3. Students worked collaboratively with a professional actor to devise a unique and innovative theatrical statement that was performed at Parramatta Riverside Theatre.
- School junior choir initiated by Mr Fifita.
- Exhibition of artworks in the Operation Art initiative for Westmead Hospital.
- Participation of the Aboriginal dance group in Our School Spectacular and the combined schools choir conducted by Mr Fifita at the Opera House in October.
- Musical performances by students at the Year 12 Graduation ceremony.
- Participation by students in the Design an Ad competition run by Fairfax community newspapers. Year 8 student, Yulia Kiflu, won 2nd place and Year 9 student, Krijan Prajapati, won 3rd place.
- Participation by Stages 4, 5 and 6 Dance and Music students in a highly successful Talent Quest during Term 3.
- School Senior Dance Ensemble initiated by Mrs Gentili. The Dance Ensemble showcased 10 students from Years 10-12, performing contemporary dance. They represented the school at the SWS Regional Dance Festival at the Sydney State Sports Centre, Homebush in Term 2 dancing the item "Tension Breaks".
- The Combined Dance Ensemble consisting of students in Yrs 8-12 performed at the Year 5/6 Open Day.
- Mrs Gentili worked with Merrylands PS and Merrylands East PS throughout 2013 on the area of Dance, devising dance works for the Stage 2 and Stage 3

students.

- Mrs Gentili devised a Community of Schools Dance item for the Merrylands High School Presentation Evening. Students from Hill Top PS, Merrylands PS and Merrylands HS in Stages 2/3 and 6 participated.
- Christmas Carols Performance with Year 8 Choir Members and Mrs Buchanan at ABCN in the city.
- Mrs Gentili worked with the SWS Regional Arts Unit on the Directors Choice Ceremony.
- Mrs Gentili was merit selected to partake in an overseas cultural exchange excursion to China in September with Western Sydney and South Western Sydney Dance and Music students.
- Mr Fifita coordinated the Sydney Region Choir at the School Spectacular.
- Visual Arts was successful in attaining an Artist in Residency (AIR) program with Cabramatta High School and Fairvale High School for 2014-2016.



Sport



2013 marked another great year in Sport.

- In Swimming, eight students competed at Region with Phoenix Docker and Brittany Ashford our most successful swimmers taking out 1st place in the Age Championship at Zone.
- In Cross Country this year, 25 students competed at Zone level from our school with 15 going on to represent at region. Memu Conteh and Mohammad Ebrahimi took out the Age Championship at Zone whilst Hassan Awick, Besharah Awad, Jemma Antonios, Kayla McCartney, Elizabeth Lim and Phoenix Docker also finished in the top three.
- In Athletics, 47 students finished 1st or 2nd place at Zone and advanced to region. At the Zone Carnival Catrina Anderson, Sheree Hiley and Jemma Antonios were awarded the Age Champion. Catrina Anderson went on to collect the Age Champion at the Sydney West Carnival. Catrina, Sheree and Jemma then went on to compete at Sydney Olympic Park at the CHS carnival.
- Merrylands finished in 2nd place from the nine schools in the zone. 80 students represented the Zone at Regional championships in a range of sports whilst 12 went on to represent the region at State level. Candis Tamaariki was selected in the CHS team for Rugby.

- In Grade competition, six teams were successful in winning the premiership.
- The Gifted and Talented Primary School Sporting Program continued for the 7th year in Netball, Soccer, Cricket, Baseball and Athletics.
- Many teachers took on the role of Zone and Regional conveners. These teachers included Mr Radisic, Mr Schmutter, Ms Gartshore, Mr Clarke and Mr Ford.
- The most successful knockout team for 2013 was our Boys 14's Rugby League team. They represented Sydney West in the final 16 series going down narrowly to Farrer HS in Tamworth.
- Some other major award winners in 2013 included Saimone Lasalo who collected the Ken Hurst Trophy for his efforts in the sport of Rugby League.
- Jemma Antonios was awarded the Most Promising Female Athlete for her achievements in Athletics
- Grant Taulafo was awarded the Sports organisers Shield for Leadership in Rugby League.
- The best relay team was the girls 13yrs 4x100m relay in athletics. The team of Sheree Hiley, Catrina Anderson, Jessica Willis and Shania McLean finished 1st at Zone and 3rd at Region.
- Mr Annis was awarded the Coach of the year for his work in Football.
- Phoenix Docker received the Sportsman of the Year for the 3rd successive year whilst Jemma Antonios won the Sportswoman of the Year.



Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

In accordance with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan, 2010 – 14, Merrylands High School has had a specific focus towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) engagement and connections, literacy and numeracy, and attendance.



Engagement and connection was significantly strengthened throughout 2013; with particular attention given to the involvement of ATSI students in culturally specific activities. Students participated in cultural activities, including cooking, sport, and lessons in traditional Aboriginal heritage. These days were facilitated by local Aboriginal elders, Aboriginal sporting personalities and Aboriginal artists. In addition to these activities, the Merrylands High School Aboriginal dancers ran dance workshops in order to expose numerous local ATSI students to tradition Aboriginal dance.

The Merrylands High School Aboriginal dance group continued its growth; extending its membership to include members from Sherwood Grange Primary School and Holroyd High School. There were numerous performances throughout 2013, which included dances at several Public schools and High schools, involvement in NAIDOC week and Harmony day events, as well as being invited back to open the 'Our Spectacular' concert at the Opera House.

2013 NAPLAN results reflected a need to continue developing our junior students literacy and numeracy. Senior work samples indicated a significant improvement in literacy and numeracy. 100% of ATSI students have Individual Education Plans created for them, with specific attention paid to addressing the literacy and

numeracy needs of those students in year 7 through to 10.

Attendance rates for senior Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at Merrylands High School were 1.22% higher than the regional average and 2% higher than the state average in 2013.

Of particular note in 2013, was the recognition of the achievements Merrylands High School Year 12 ATSI Student Dillon Eldridge. Dillon was awarded the NSW Public Schools Nanga Mia Award for Performing Arts and the NSW Department of Education and Training Kari 'All Rounder' Award for services to the local ATSI community.



Multicultural education

In 2013, 82% of students were identified as having a language background other than English and 12% of the population were identified as refugees. There were three International students. The following achievements occurred in 2013:

- ESL staff completed an individual education plan for every ESL student. The IEP included engagement and personal learning strategies to support classroom teachers in differentiating the curriculum as well as educational goals set by the students.
- ESL support was provided for Stage 6 Preliminary and HSC ESL English students who had been in Australia less than 5 years and had not been instructed in English in their country of birth.
- ESL staff working with Learning and Support Teachers established a parallel

ESL class for English, Science, PD/H/PE, History & Geography whereby students received additional support and teachers were provided with additional professional learning on ESL pedagogy.

- The Refugee Action Support program (RAS) continued to provide focused literacy and numeracy support through the provision of individual tuition by students from Sydney University to identified refugee students.
- Muslim Girls were once again provided with an alternative Swim School program.
- Community partnerships were enhanced. This included: Harmony Day, TAFE and university visits, excursions, workshops, morning teas, information sessions and transition.
- Parents and teachers shared their migration stories with year 10 History classes.



Transitional Equity Funding

In our fifth year of Equity funding, Merrylands High School continued to see significant school improvements across teaching and learning, academic achievement, attendance and engagement in learning, School Certificate to HSC retention and school culture and organisation.

With our Transitional Equity funding, we continued the role of an additional Deputy Principal (1.0), our Community Liaison Officer (1.0) and our Attendance Officer (1.0) who

continued to work successfully with staff, students and their families to improve attendance and success in school. School achievements were improved by:

- the continuation of an explicit literacy and numeracy focus during Term 1 Enrichment lessons.
- the continuation of additional classes to support the differentiation of curriculum to enhance literacy and numeracy skills.
- the purchasing of software and hardware to support student achievement and engagement such as the installation of additional interactive whiteboards and the continuation of electronic roll marking and SMS communication with parents/caregivers.
- the continuation of weekly literacy and numeracy classes for Year 7 students.
- continuing to provide a Senior Study engagement program for Stage 6 students (including the expansion of the HSC revision wiki)
- the implementation of engagement initiatives focused on improving students' attendance and participation in learning, in addition to specific Boys and Girls Education and Transition programs.
- continuing to run initiatives involving parents/caregivers and out local community which were facilitated by our Community Liaison Officer. This included continuation of English, computer and cooking classes for parents.
- the implementation of the FICT (Families in Cultural Transition) program.



National partnerships and significant Commonwealth initiatives

In 2013, Merrylands High School participated in the second year of the Low SES National Partnerships program. Additional staffing roles included Engagement Team (2.6), Transition Advisor (0.4), Business Manager (0.6), Executive Coach (0.4) and an additional Integrated Curriculum teacher (1.0).

We continued to provide a comprehensive teacher professional learning program focusing on improving classroom pedagogy through explicit and systematic literacy and numeracy practices and enhanced engagement through technology pedagogy and infrastructure. This included faculties participating in an additional two professional learning days each term.

The Engagement Team and Transition Advisor were responsible for improving Stage 6 engagement and home-school partnerships. They achieved this through the expansion of the Senior Revision Wiki, implementing HSC tutorials and a Stage 6 Study Skills and Crossroads program and providing 1:1 support to 100% of students. The Engagement Team provided proactive support in Year 7 to 12 Attendance initiatives including bi-termly HSLO blitzes.

The Integrated Curriculum program to support Year 7 transition continued. The extra class created by additional funding further assisted targeted support students in improving their basic literacy and numeracy skills.

The Executive participated in a comprehensive Coaching For Success program that occurred throughout the calendar year. The program increased Head Teachers responsibility to lead and manage their faculty.

The Business Manager enabled the Senior Executive Leadership team to more effectively lead and manage the school.

Safe Respectful Learner Program

The core values of being a “Safe Respectful Learner” continued to be an integral component of all the programs and initiatives implemented at MHS in 2013. The program is a proactive model that focuses on developing desirable social skills through modelling and integration into the curriculum. This positive approach resulted in an increase in the acknowledgement and recognition of student achievements in both classroom and non-classroom settings. The school celebrated students’ successes by rewarding students at merit assemblies, gold award excursions and at academic presentations.

- Social skills continued to be explicitly taught through positive reinforcement of the L.E.A.R.N expectations (Listen, Equipment, Active Participation, Respect, Negotiate and Cooperate.)
- Focus lessons within Enrichment classes were utilised to develop awareness on issues such as bullying, cyber-safety and student wellbeing.
- Students created murals that promoted the safe respectful learner ethos.
- Merrylands High School ran an “R U OK?” event at school in Term 3. The SRC and PBIS Team made yellow ribbons and students showcased their support of the day by wearing them and promoting the message “R U OK?”.



School evaluation processes

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. In 2013, our school carried out evaluations of technology and the Integrated Curriculum program.

Evaluation 1 – Technology



Background

A focus for Merrylands High School has been to continue to improve the use of innovative technologies to further enhance teaching and learning in Stages 4, 5 and 6. The programs and strategies implemented included the continuation of the student technology leadership team (Laptop LeaDERs), continued professional learning for staff, the purchase and installation of technology in more learning spaces, and the trial of a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy.

Findings and conclusions:

- The Digital Education Revolution continued and the student-laptop ratio continued to be 1:1 for students in Years 10 to 12.
- 24 laptops were purchased for the library for student use.
- 80 laptops were purchased for English, Science, PDHPE, Technology and Social Science faculties.
- 25 students from Years 9 to 10 were trained to be Laptop LeaDERs. The team led professional learning of staff in relation to using technology to enhance

teaching, learning and classroom practice. They did this on both a school and regional level. Laptop LeaDERs delivered laptop induction lessons for Year 9 students and created a school technology magazine in collaboration with Adobe. The team also worked with the Student Wellbeing team to develop lessons and resources for digital citizenship.

- Installation of interactive whiteboards occurred in more learning spaces.
- Teaching staff continued the use of mobile tablets to increase productivity and to enhance classroom practices.
- Social media platforms, including Edmodo, were used to create online learning communities where students shared their learning, completed homework and assignments and sought help from teachers and fellow students. Facebook, Twitter and YouTube were used to communicate with students, teachers, staff, parents and the wider school community.
- Adobe Connect was used by staff to participate in online professional learning and to run additional classes outside of traditional teaching hours.
- A BYOD trial was conducted for selected Years 7 and 8 students. 100% of teachers involved in the trial indicated that BYOD should be continued and expanded. 94% of students wanted BYOD continued and 82% of students wanted BYOD expanded to other students.

Future directions:

- The Laptop LeaDERs, a student-led technology team, will continue to provide professional learning to students, staff and the wider community. The name of the team will change to Digital Leaders in 2014.

- Continuation of the student-led digital citizenship programs to focus on being safe online.
- Continued use of Edmodo as an online learning platform.
- Continued use of social media, including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube to communicate with the school community.
- Increase the use of Adobe Connect and Connected Classrooms to deliver professional learning.
- Continue student and staff surveys on the integration of technology in classroom practices.

Evaluation 2 – Year 7 Integrated Curriculum



Background

Merrylands High School significantly invested in the middle-years strategy to continue an Integrated Curriculum model for all Year 7 students in 2013. A team of 5 teachers, led by the Head Teachers of Teaching and Learning, developed English, Maths, Science, History and Geography curriculum to meet the learning needs of all students. Two gifted and talented classes, a mixed ability class, a support class and a targeted ESL class were offered. The team received significant professional learning throughout 2013 and National Partnerships funding allowed for time to be built into the timetable for the Integrated Curriculum team to meet on a weekly basis and discuss student learning and curriculum design. Teachers developed Individual Education

Plans for their classes and communicated these plans to non-Integrated Curriculum teachers.

Findings and conclusions:

- NAPLAN data indicated a decrease in the percentage of students in the bottom band for both literacy (writing) and numeracy compared to 2012 data.
- Student work samples and assessment tasks showed significant gains in literacy and numeracy.
- A significant reduction in behaviour referrals from Integrated Curriculum classes compared to other subjects.
- Online learning design increased through teacher collaboration and innovative curriculum design.

Future directions:

- Continue Integrated Curriculum in 2014
- Provide teacher professional learning to new Integrated Curriculum staff in 2014
- Continue targeted classes – GAT, ESL, support and mixed ability as a targeted strategy to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes



School planning 2012—2014:

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

Priority 1 – Increased levels of overall literacy (reading) and numeracy achievement for every student.

2013 targets to achieve this outcome included:

- Increasing the number of students achieving at or above minimum standard in reading and numeracy by at least 1%.
- Increasing student performance in the top 2 bands in NAPLAN by at least 1%
- Increasing the expected value-added growth in students by at least 1% in NAPLAN

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- More than 87% of Year 7 students achieved above minimum benchmark in all aspects of literacy and numeracy. 2013 saw the continuation of an Integrated Curriculum across English, Maths, Science, History and Geography.
- All Year 7, 8 and 9 ATSI students participated in the NorteNorte program.
- All KLAS were involved in an additional eight days of professional learning led by their faculty Head Teachers. During these sessions, they focused on programming and unit implementation and evaluation aligned to school literacy and numeracy priorities.
- Basic skills classes for year 8 students focusing on explicit literacy and numeracy skills.
- A whole school focus on writing with the successful implementation of explicit and consistent writing tasks in every class.
- Continuation of the Engagement program for Stage 6 students.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Year 9 implementation and Year 10 planning of phase one Australian Curriculum in English, Maths, Science and Australian History.
- Continuation of the Integrated Curriculum program as a middle-schooling model of pedagogy.

- Expansion of the Engagement Team to support Stage 6 and ATSI learners
- Extensive professional learning framework implementation

Priority 2 - Improved HSC results, evident by an increase in high (Band 5 & 6) and middle (Band 4) results and a decrease in low (Band 1, 2 & 3) results.

2013 targets to achieve this outcome included:

- Continuing Stage 6 support via the Engagement Team
- Providing support to Stage 6 students by the Gifted and Talented coordinator with a focus on HSC writing
- Participating in university bridging programs

Evidence of progress towards these outcomes in 2013:

- The HSC value-added growth improved in all bands in 2013. In the high performance bands, value-added growth improved by 2.8% in 2013 from the 2009-13 average.
- The VET participation in Certificate II in 2013 was 54 students and attainment was 32 students. This is an improvement on 2012 by 5%.
- In 2013, 11 students in Year 11 were involved in the UTS summer school program encouraging students to go to university.
- The Engagement team continued to provide a structured study period for all Stage 6 students and support students in order to maximize their achievements.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- VET or T-VET participation by over 45% of Stage 6 students.
- Continued use of the Engagement Team to support the achievement of educational outcomes.

Priority 3 - To develop, implement and evaluate strategies and programs to enhance student engagement across Stages 4, 5 and 6 to prepare for future education and employment and success in school life.

2013 targets to achieve this outcome included:

- Increasing student attendance from 85% in 2012 to at least 86% in 2013
- Increasing student participation in co-curricular engagement programs by at least 5%.

Evidence of progress towards these outcomes in 2013:

- 43% of Stage 6 students studied at least one VET subject.
- There was a 1.2% improvement in whole school attendance compared with 2012.
- 67% of Year 12 students studying an ATAR pathway received university offers in 2013.
- Co-curricular programs expanded to include student participation in WoW (World Of Work) and the ABCN Focus program.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Continued participation and expansion of engagement programs – community, school, and work.
- HSC Tutorial Program for further assistance in small groups to improve student engagement and retention. This program would focus on success for the HSC and assist in developing Personalised Learning Programs (PLPs) for each senior student.
- Sustained focus on improving whole day and partial attendance.
- Increase the awareness of mental health and wellbeing for school community members by embedding the Mind Matters program. The program will be incorporated into all facets of school life.

Professional learning

All staff members participated in professional learning activities in 2013 including Compliance training, Staff Development Days, voluntary workshops, eight days of faculty professional learning and professional learning days for literacy, numeracy, ESL pedagogy, student wellbeing, technology and quality teaching.

The focus of mandatory Staff Development Days in 2013 included: Literacy and Numeracy strategies aligned to the 2012-14 School Plan; Individual Education Plans and Every Student, Every School; Student Wellbeing (P BIS) initiatives and Technology.

The average expenditure per teacher on teacher professional learning (TPL) was \$2983. The total expenditure for professional learning in 2013 was approximately \$172,000. This includes \$35,100 from TPL funds and \$137,000 from Equity and National Partnership Low SES funds. Each staff member received an additional eight days of TPL to work collaboratively with their faculty in 2013.

The school had eight new scheme teachers working towards accreditation with the NSW Institute of Teachers. There were 19 new scheme teachers maintaining accreditation at Professional Competence.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2013, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. The responses received indicate that the stakeholders were:

- impressed with the quality of teaching and learning, uniform expectations, PBIS program and student leadership opportunities.
- impressed with the SMS text messages informing parents/caregivers of student absences.

- impressed with the range of extra-curricular engagement opportunities offered.
- enjoyed and were impressed with the school's BYOD trial.
- experiencing increased confidence in the school as evidenced by more parents attending information sessions, school presentation nights and P&C meetings.

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.

Lila Mularczyk (Principal); Belinda Giudice & Amika Prasad (Co-Principals); Stephen Wark (Relieving Deputy Principal); Alice Leung, Mario Radisic, Maree Gentili, Michelle Rushton, Ben Jones, Moheb Salama, Rai Stubis (Head Teachers) and Joel MacRae; Michelle Robson and Santina DiGesù (Relieving Head Teachers); Paul Clarke and Jonathon Connal (Teachers), Sue Stead (Community Liaison Officer); David Ghattas (P&C representative) and Rahul Ali and Nadia Berjaoui (Student Leaders).

School contact information

Merrylands High School

Bristol Street

Phone: (02) 9632 9401

Fax: (02) 9892 2704

Email: merrylands-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au

Web: www.merrylandh.school.nsw.edu.au

Facebook: www.facebook.com/merrylandshs

Twitter: @merrylandshs

School Code: 8227

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:

<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/asr>