Bowral Public School
Annual School Report 2013
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Striving, Thinking, Learning
School context
Bowral Public School is at the centre of its community and continues to grow as families move into this sought after suburb in the beautiful Southern Highlands. The families of the school are most supportive and enthusiastic and take pride in and ownership of the school and its expansive grounds. The school is well resourced and appreciative of the significant funds raised by the P&C and contributed to the school each year. Bowral Public is fortunate to be able to access Bradman Oval for sporting endeavours and Corbett Gardens, the home of the Tulip Festival.

The 544 students at Bowral Public School are friendly, energetic and cooperative. They are engaged in, and appreciative of, the teaching and learning programs developed for them by staff and parents. The older students support the younger students and the Kindergarten and Year 6 buddy program is mutually beneficial. A proactive student welfare program supports high expectations of student behaviour.

Principal’s message
A few years ago I made a speech at the Sydney Opera House where I proclaimed that Bowral Public School was the jewel of the Southern Highlands. I would add to that now and say it is a sparkling jewel, a diamond which shines brightly amidst its surrounds.

I know, by the feedback and responses that we have had this year that our school community approve of the changes that have been made to the school grounds. Our playground looks superb and our children reap the benefits of the lovely play environment every day. We have more improvements in the pipeline and 2014 will see an even brighter and exciting playground for our students. These changes were made thanks to our P&C, to our hard working parents who are always prepared to lend a hand and also thanks to those parents who pay their voluntary contributions willingly. Our school IS the outstanding place that it is because of the professional, committed staff and because of the support they receive from our parent body.

This year our students’ results in NAPLAN testing were above regional and state average in every area. Academically, our staff continues to offer rich learning opportunities and strive for excellence. However, Bowral Public School offers so much more than a strong education in Literacy and numeracy.....our students are offered a wealth of extracurricular experiences, facilitated by our dedicated teachers.

As we offer these many extracurricular opportunities we are always conscious that our role as educators is to educate the whole child and I am confident that our Bowral students are given this advantage.

Nelson Mandela said: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world". I confidently lead Bowral Public School, knowing that our students are being given the best education possible.

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.

Wendy Buckley
School Principal
P & C and School Council message
Both parent organisations are committed to supporting our school principal and teaching staff in providing quality education and striving for continual improved outcomes in all learning areas for our children. The school community works closely with the common goal of supporting the children’s educational/learning needs and enhancing their learning environment. The P&C and School Council relationship with our school is a valued partnership. Two committees oversee the running of the Bee Hive (our school canteen) and our uniform shop. These committees rely heavily on dedicated parent volunteers to help run and maintain these essential services for our children. Thank you for your wonderful support this year. The ongoing use of class email contact lists has helped develop and enhance this co-operation.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the parent community for their endless commitment and dedication in supporting our school this year. In working together we achieved our objectives and along the way had many laughs!

Bowral Public School has a wonderful parent community who support the teachers and children in the classroom environment and who roll up their sleeves unselfishly when the call goes out on fundraising ventures. With the varied P&C activities during the year, the children become part of the working team. This year our activities have included:

- **hoedown with fantastic music supplied by our parents and friends ‘Hoe Down Band’**
- Mother’s Day Stall
- bulb fundraiser (many of the bulbs purchased were donated and have been planted around the school)
- Trivia Night (a monstrously, marvellous and definitely memorable meeting of the minds)
- ‘Flying and Falling’ our inaugural balloon debate, had everyone in fits of laughter as five people, in a hypothetical sinking balloon, had to justify just why they should be saved, with the audience being asked to ‘throw someone out’
- Father’s Day Stall
- a fun (and free) outdoor movie night with our front lawn transformed into a giant lounge room.

All P&C funds raised are directed back to the school in order to directly support the school with the purchase of classroom resources, library resources, general school resources and funding for improvements of the school grounds in general. P&C funds combined with parent donations to the school’s Building Fund were used to build the much needed and appreciated Covered Outdoor Learning Area (COLA) in the K-2 playground. The adventure play area was extended with the building of the balance beams and rockery. A dedicated team of parents spread the donated
mulch in this area so as to make it ready for the students to use and enjoy. Further funds were spent on the purchase of interactive whiteboards in the demountables, reading boxes and also on the painting and carpeting upgrade to the residence.

We also voted, as a school community, on the option to change the material of the girls’ winter skirt with the decision being a change to a grey/blue plaid skirt to be introduced in the winter of 2014.

To the staff, thank you for your support in all our endeavours this year. The partnership that we share is highly valued! This has been a wonderful year for both parent bodies of Bowral Public School. We have achieved some great things for our school, most importantly for our students, of which we are immensely proud.

Kay Paviour and Nicole Smith
P&C President and School Council President

Student representative’s message
2013 has been the best year yet at Bowral Primary! This school offers us many amazing opportunities including Leadership Days, School Camp, Canberra Excursion, Jamberoo Excursion, ANZAC Marches, ICAS tests and many more. The teachers at this school are fantastic and when it comes time for Year 6 they definitely know how to prepare us for high school. It has been a privilege to represent Bowral Public School as Student Leaders and to be at this amazing school. We have learnt that no matter how slow we move the microphone, even if it’s 1mm per hour, it will make a crackling noise in the speaker at the hall!

On behalf of Year Six 2013 we would like to thank Mrs Buckley, Mr Morris and Mr Cowie for all the support they have given us all throughout Primary School. I am sure many of us are ready to move on to high school which is a good sign. We wish everyone good luck for next year.

Ben Canute and Jade Gillis
School Captains 2013

Charlie Pinczi and Lucie Drysdale
School Vice-Captains 2013

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

In 2013 Bowral Public School had a student enrolment of 544 students as at the first term census date. Students were initially organised into 21 classes, however, in Term 3, with increasing enrolments, a 22nd class was formed. Whilst enrolment numbers continued to fluctuate during the year it is expected that the school will retain our current class numbers in 2014. Approximately 10% of our students live in a home where a
language other than English is spoken. According to the latest figures, based on the Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA), 9% of our students fall in the bottom quarter with 43% in the top quarter, indicating our school caters for the needs of students with quite disparate backgrounds.

**Student enrolment profile**
In 2013 we began the year with an anticipated enrolment of 527 students and as at 18 December we conclude the year with 546 students. We had 39 students leave Bowral Public School and 58 students enrol during the year resulting in a 22nd class being formed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student attendance profile
In 2013 our overall attendance was the same as 2012 levels and has remained consistent over the preceding 5 years. It is slightly higher than region and state attendance rates of 94.3% and 94.7% respectively. In December 2013 all parents were provided with specific attendance data for their child with a focus on the importance of regular school attendance and the positive impact this has on learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>95.3</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>95.3</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>95.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>95.0</td>
<td>95.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>95.1</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>95.3</td>
<td>93.2</td>
<td>94.6</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>94.6</td>
<td>95.6</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>95.1</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>94.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Management of non-attendance
Student attendance at Bowral Public School is high. All parents in the school are advised through regular communication, the importance of school attendance. Rolls are monitored on a weekly basis by class teachers and the Deputy Principal. For students who are identified as having an unusual pattern of attendance, excessive days off school, repeated partial attendance or absences without explanation, measures are put in place that include:-

- contacting parents by phone or letter to resolve continuing attendance issues and offer support;
- discussion at Learning Support Team meetings as part of our school welfare policy;
- negotiating strategies to support student attendance, including the development of attendance plans in conjunction with parents; and, if required
- formal referral to the Home School Liaison Officer.

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

At Bowral Public School we are fortunate to have a dynamic and committed teaching staff with a wide range of experience, skills, talents, interests and expertise. They work collaboratively to ensure the school offers a range of engaging curricular and co-curricular programs, to ensure that students are engaged and that educational targets are met. In 2013, Mr Jack Tonkin retired after an extended period of leave and Miss
Emily Montanari was appointed to our school. Two executive members of staff were on extended leave and their positions were filled, most ably, on a long term temporary basis by Mr Greg Thompson and Mrs Virginia Pridham. We had a Reading Recovery teacher, Mrs Maggie Galloway, appointed through the school staffing system to replace Mr Shannon Egan who was successful in gaining a promotion. A further teaching vacancy was filled by Mrs Melanie Bowden. Highly experienced as an L3 trainer, Mrs Bowden worked on a job share basis with her class this year as she was seconded as the regional L3 trainer for schools in our area for one day a week. We were fortunate to have Mrs Karen Bell as an exchange teacher from Scotland on class 5B for the year. Mr Brian Lowe, our General Assistant for 27 years is on leave and this position has been filled on a casual basis in 2013.

**Workforce composition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principals</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>19.908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor (part share)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>3.962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>33.67</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Australian Education Regulation, 2013 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce. No indigenous staff are currently employed at Bowral Public School.

**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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Institute of Teachers</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Financial summary

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
<th>30/11/2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>396942.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>280352.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>158421.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>338252.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>12861.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>20940.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>1207771.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expenditure**            |            |
| Teaching & learning        |            |
| Key learning areas         | 67398.99   |
| Excursions                 | 109036.26  |
| Extracurricular dissections| 131359.71  |
| Library                    | 10050.35   |
| Training & development     | 7776.97    |
| Tied funds                 | 159500.95  |
| Casual relief teachers     | 82812.24   |
| Administration & office    | 67441.45   |
| School-operated canteen    | 0.00       |
| Utilities                  | 43277.22   |
| Maintenance                | 47455.18   |
| Trust accounts             | 16113.29   |
| Capital programs           | 128786.42  |
| **Total expenditure**      | 871009.03  |
| **Balance carried forward**| 336762.21  |

A full copy of the school's 2013 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and the P&C. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.
School performance 2013
Bowral Public School challenges all students to excel across sporting, cultural and academic areas. It is important that students are provided with a diverse range of experiences and opportunities to ensure all students have the opportunity to participate in activities that engage, challenge and develop their individual talents to their fullest potential. In 2013 Bowral Public School provided students with an array of options which produced outstanding achievements in both educational and extracurricular activities.

Academic achievements

NAPLAN
Bowral Public School students performed above state averages for Years 3 and 5 in most aspects of Literacy and Numeracy, Year 5 performance in the area of Data, Measurement, Space and Geometry being the exception. Additionally students performed consistently at or above our ‘like school group’ averages within the Goulburn Highlands. Significant achievements include the improved performance of Year 5 boys in the test aspect of Grammar and Punctuation and the exceptionally good performance of Year 3 girls in the test aspect of Reading where they scored 56 scale score points above the state average. Within these results there is room for continued improvement within our Year 3 writing achievements and Year 5 girl performance in Grammar and Punctuation. These are a continuing focus for our school. We are proud of our students’ achievements which are testament to the outstanding quality of teaching and learning provided by all of our teachers from Kindergarten to Year 6.

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

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

Year 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)
Year 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)

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 and enter the school name in the Find a school and select GO to access the school data.

While this data is informative, comprehensive data is available to teachers enabling them to tailor teaching programs to address specific learning needs for individuals and groups of students. Schools use this more detailed information to plan targets for the following year. In addition, parents receive data which details their child’s strengths and weaknesses. All parents receive comprehensive written reports on their child’s progress and areas to be developed at the end of each semester.
NAPLAN Year 3 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)

In 2013 67 Year 3 students sat for NAPLAN. The results in literacy were particularly pleasing with overall improvements from 2012 in bands 5 and 6.

Reading
1% in Band 1, 9% in Band 2, 13% in Band 3, 9% in Band 4, 19.4% of the children in Band 5 and 47% of the students were in Band 6. This was an increase in Bands 5 and 6 of 14 % from 2012 and saw the school sit 20% above the state average in the same bands. Strengths include interpreting information in a range of text types, making inferences as to what the author intended a quote to mean and sequencing directly and indirectly stated events.

Writing
1% of the students were in Band 1, 4% in Band 2, 6% in Band 3, 20% in Band 4, 38% in Band 5 and 28% were in Band 6. This was an increase in Bands 5 and 6 of 10% from 2012 and saw the school sit 12% above the state average in the same bands.

Spelling
4% of the students were in Band 1, 1% in Band 2, 11% in Band 3, 20% in Band 4, 17% in Band 5 and 43% in Band 6. This was an increase in Band 6 of 10% from 2012 and saw the school sit 12% above the state average. Strengths were in identifying errors and then correctly spelling words in a sentence or passage.

Grammar and Punctuation
3% of the students were in Band 1, 9% in Band 2, 7% in Band 3, 19% in Band 4, 22% in Band 5 and 38% in Band 6. This saw the school sit 13% above the state average in Band 6. Students were particularly good at correcting the tense of verbs.
NAPLAN Year 3 - Numeracy
In 2013 67 Year 3 students sat for NAPLAN. They were assessed on their maths skills in the area of numeracy, number patterns and algebra and in data, measurement, space and geometry.

Numeracy
4% of the students were in Band 1, 1% in Band 2, 22% in Band 3, 16% in Band 4, 35% in Band 5 and 19% were in Band 6. This was an increase in Bands 5 and 6 by 11% from 2012 and saw the school sit 16% above the state average in Bands 5 and 6.

Number, Patterns and Algebra
4% of the students were in Band 1, 9% in Band 2, 6% in Band 3, 35% in Band 4, 19% in Band 5 and 25% in Band 6. This was an increase in Bands 5 and 6 by 9% from 2012 and saw the school sit 12% above the state average in these bands. Particular strengths were understanding word problems and applying the correct operation of either multiplication or division, the language of ‘more’ and ‘fewer’ and working with money. Areas to be addressed include the strategy of working backward, understanding the correct operation when the question is phrased, for example, ‘subtract 29 from 43’.

Data, Measurement, Space and Geometry
3% of the students were in Band 1, 4% in Band 2, 22% in Band 3, 19% in Band 4, 35% in Band 5 and 14% in Band 6. This saw the school sit 8% above the state average in Bands 5 and 6. Strengths include recognising 3D models and the properties of some prisms. An area to be addressed is looking at irregular shapes and identifying their properties.
NAPLAN Year 5 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)

In 2013 70 Year 5 students sat for NAPLAN. The results in literacy were very good as we continue to move our students upwards, especially those in the lower bands, with an increasing number also moving from the ‘middle to the top’.

Reading

75% of our students placed in Bands 6, 7 and 8, an increase of 10% on our average scores from 2009-13. These results are also above the state average – in the same bands. Strengths include interpreting the meaning of words and idiomatic language, locating detail and identifying the reasons behind character actions and behaviours. The ability to make inferences based on information in texts is an area to be addressed.

Writing

Our students average score of 487 was 11 points higher than the state average and with 56% of our students being placed in Bands 6, 7 and 8, these results were also above the state average.

Spelling

72% of our students were placed in Bands 6, 7 and 8 as more students have moved from the middle to the top - our average scores in these bands from 2009-13 being 62%.

Grammar and Punctuation

Our average score of 522 was 21 points higher than the state average and with 75% of students scoring in Bands 6, 7 and 8, compared with 60% in the state our results were particularly pleasing. Students demonstrated skills in the correct use of connectives eg. ‘and’ ‘but’ etc, subject/verb agreement and tense.

Average growth between Year 3 and Year 5 in literacy

67 students were matched to data with 60% making greater than or equal to expected growth, our average growth being 82 points.
In 2013 70 Year 5 students sat for NAPLAN. They were assessed on their maths skills in the area of numeracy, number patterns and algebra and in data, measurement, space and geometry.

**Numeracy**

61% of the students were in Bands 6, 7 and 8 compared with 49% of the state.

**Number, Patterns and Algebra**

Our average score of 504 points was 10 points above the state average. Particular strengths were in the addition and subtraction of mixed numerals (ie. fractions) and 2 digit numbers. An area that will continue to be addressed will be multiplication and division.

**Data, Measurement, Space and Geometry**

57% of the students were in Bands 6, 7 and 8 which is on a par with the state statistics and an increase of 3% on our 2012 results. Strengths include interpreting picture graphs and working with calendars. Areas to be addressed include comparing two or more data sets in column graphs and identifying the properties of a prism ie. 3D shapes.

**Average growth between Year 3 and Year 5 in numeracy**

67 students were matched to data with 52% making greater than or equal to expected growth, our average growth being 80 points compared to 88 for the state.
Other school based assessments

Best Start (Early Stage One)
At the beginning of the 2013 school year the Kindergarten teachers conducted the Best Start assessments. They had participated in Best Start professional learning in 2012 and were familiar with the procedures for administration of the test. Teachers were made aware of the importance of this NSW government initiative to ensure that the youngest students are on track in literacy and numeracy by Year 3. Kindergarten parents were informed well in advance of the arrangements made by the school for the administration of the assessment.

Students were invited to the school to meet the teacher and participate in the test on an individual basis. This was made possible by delaying the start of Kindergarten classes until Week 2 of the school year leaving three days in Week 1 for Best Start data collection. This process worked very well with teachers, students and parents enjoying the opportunity to meet and converse in a relaxed setting. Teachers were in a position to build a student profile to inform quality teaching and learning programs. Data was recorded and then submitted according to the recommended timeline. Student progress was monitored and progress recorded throughout the year.
**L3 – Language, Learning and Literacy (Early Stage One)**

In 2013 there were four Kindergarten classes and one K/1 class utilising the L3 - Language, Learning and Literacy approach. Four of these teachers were in their ongoing professional learning year of training and attended four half day training sessions with an L3 trainer from the region. One of the teachers was in their first year of training and completed her twelve half day training sessions with the same trainer.

At the end of Term 4 no child in Kindergarten was reading below Reading Recovery levels 1 and 2. During the same data collection period 7% of the cohort was reading at levels 3 to 5, 14% of the children were reading at levels 6-8, 17% of the group was reading at levels 9-11 and 62% of the group were reading at level 12 and above.

These results have exceeded the L3 State target of 50% of Kindergarten children reading at levels 9 and above. In 2013 Bowral Public school had 79% of the children reading at or above the State target of Level 9.
Overview 2013
All students and teachers had a very busy year with a wide range of additional opportunities being provided. Some of the year’s highlights were:

- Stage assemblies which showcased many of the talents of our students. Student efforts both in and out of the classroom were acknowledged through the handing out of merit certificates. Each class also had a chance to show some of their classwork.

- Enrichment days held each term. Harry Potter fans had the opportunity to write and create, budding Egyptologists got to discover some of the secrets of Ancient Egypt, future animators had some hands on experience at the digital animation day, and those with a passion for writing were able to spend some quality time with acclaimed author Mark Greenwood.

- Loopline Masterminds enabled students to put their creative ideas and public speaking skills to the test, whilst most importantly working as a team.

- Entry into various external competitions such as the University of New South Wales ICAS assessments, the Premier’s Spelling Bee, the Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition, the Board of Studies Write-on competition and a local chess competition against Mittagong Public School.

- Excursions to Nan Tien Buddhist Temple in Unanderra, to the Sydney Theatre Company’s production of ‘Storm Boy’ at the Wharf Theatre, the SHYAC performance of ‘Honk Jnr!’, Questacon, Parliament House, CSIRO, Black Beach and Narrabeen Sport and Recreation Centre.

- Visiting performances and programs included Opera Australia, Bullying Awareness, Life Education and Surf Awareness.

- The Stage Two Drama Group presented “The Curmudgeonly Rhinoceros” and the Dance Group performed to Rhianna’s “Diamonds”

- Percussion lessons featuring the djembe drums and tuned percussion instruments. Choral and recorder lessons paved the way for performances at the Sydney Town Hall and Opera House.

- The Stage Two Performance Evening featuring the Stage Two Choir, recorder groups and a range of individual and group musical performances.

- Sport programs in athletics, gymnastics, fitness, soccer, hockey, t ball, touch football, rugby league, dancing, cricket and swimming.

It has been a great year for all students, summed up by one of our Stage Two students in the quote: ‘Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you’ll land among the stars’
Sport

Sport has continued to thrive at Bowral Public School in 2013. A wide range of opportunities have been provided for all students, appropriate to their level of skill and development. Students were given the opportunity to gain selection in a wide range of representative sports in 2013 at school, district, zone, regional and state level.

Students from Year 5 and 6 were given the opportunity to trial for selection in Bowral Public School teams in netball, soccer, cricket and AFL. The netball, soccer and cricket teams participated in the New South Wales PSSA Knockout competition and the AFL teams in the Paul Kelly Cup. Two new competitions were also entered, The Schools Cup in netball and the T20 Blast Day in cricket. Our school teams participated with enthusiasm and found the experience very rewarding. The cricket team participated with great skill and was unlucky to be knocked out in the fifth round of the state competition, finishing as South Coast regional runners up. All students represented their school with pride and determination.

Stage 3 students also had the opportunity to trial for selection in Wingecarribee district teams. Bowral Public School was represented at district trials in cricket, soccer, tennis, AFL, hockey, rugby league, rugby union, touch football and netball. A large number of students went on to gain selection in the Tablelands Zone teams. Several students were selected in the possibles/probables squads at regional trials, in netball, cricket, tennis, soccer, rugby union, touch football and hockey. Six students went on to gain selection in South Coast teams for cricket, hockey, AFL and rugby union. These students had the fantastic experience of competing at the NSW State Titles. One student, Billy McGuiness went on to gain selection in the NSW State cricket team and was made captain of the team.

Stage 2 and Stage 3 students participated in gala days in soccer and league tag during the year. These days provided the opportunity for students to participate in a non-competitive, supportive environment. The focus of these days, organised by the Wingecarribee District PSSA, was to provide the opportunity for students to learn the rules, participate with enjoyment, co-operate as part of a team and mix with students from other schools. Stage Two students also participated in a cricket gala day at Bradman oval as the culmination of a series of clinics run by NSW cricket at school. Our school cricket team was lucky to have a training session with Australian and NSW cricketers at Bradman Oval.

All students from Year 2 to Year 6 were able to participate at the three major school carnivals in swimming, athletics and cross-country. There was a high level of participation in these three major events. Champions’ trophies were presented to successful students for swimming and athletics and the House Champion Shield presented to Jellore House for Swimming, Cross Country and Athletics.
Students who excelled at these carnivals represented the school at the Wingecarribee District Carnivals and acquitted themselves very well. Bowral Public School retained the District Champion trophy for cross country and athletics and finished third in the Swimming. At these carnivals three of the six individual champions’ trophies for athletics went to students from Bowral Public School. Seven students were runners up to the champions in these events. A large group of students ranging in age from eight to twelve went on to represent the school and the district at the South Coast Championships. Nine students earned the right to compete at the NSW State Championships in athletics and one student in cross country running.

Students from Kindergarten and Stage 1 also had the opportunity to participate in modified carnivals. The younger students were introduced to cross country running at Bradman Oval and participated in a Tabloid Sports Day. This involved a variety of activities focusing on skill development, taking turns, participating in a team, following rules and having fun, while being active. The house captains were actively involved in the implementation of this event.

The opportunity to experience a wide range of sports at a non-competitive level has been a feature of the sports’ program this year. During 2013 students have participated in programs in athletics, gymnastics, ballroom dancing, cricket, soccer, swimming, modified rugby league and AFL. A new initiative was a program provided by the Sports in Schools team, which focused on developing fundamental movement skills, co-ordination, agility and fitness. These programs ensured a high level of involvement for all and were run by highly energetic, enthusiastic and expert instructors from various sporting organisations. All students were also regularly engaged in class sport programs that aimed to develop strength, co-ordination, skills and an understanding of the importance of fair play. The students’ enthusiasm, determination and enjoyment of all these events were evident in their eagerness to participate.

Community involvement

Anzac
We commemorated Anzac Day at the town service and at school. 65 students represented our school at the town march, many proudly wearing the medals of those in their family who have served our country. Our school service was very moving, recognising the Department of Veterans’ Affairs themes of nurses, Aboriginal servicemen and women and also Sir Edward ‘Weary’ Dunlop and his leadership of prisoners of war on the Thai-Burma railway. Our special visitors, some of whom are WWII veterans, from the Bowral RSL sub branch, spoke very highly of our wonderful students and their respect for this national day.

Country Women’s Association (CWA)
We have a proud tradition of presenting and sharing our work with the CWA and appreciate their annual sponsorship of an academic achievement award at our annual presentation night. Year 6 students completed a country study on Morocco, creating projects in class booklets that were presented to members of the Bowral Country Women’s Association. The students were very knowledgeable about the country of study and could answer questions they were asked by the CWA members. This year, our class books were selected for special awards, one of which will be considered at the state final.
Jump Rope for Heart
This year we invited students to demonstrate skipping techniques for our students to learn, practice and to initiate excitement. All were inspired to practise new skills and tricks. Our Super Skippers worked hard and developed a fantastic routine set to music and on our ‘jump off’ day all classes joined with their buddies as they participated in a tabloid of fun activities. This event raised over $12,000 for the Heart Foundation – what a great achievement!

International Day of Peace
On September 21st a dedicated group of students proudly represented our school at the United Nations International Day of Peace 2013 concert held at the Civic Centre, Moss Vale. They joined students from other local schools to perform an indigenous dance under the guidance of Uncle Garry. The UN General Assembly has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples.

Stewart House
Stewart House, the charity sponsored by the Department of Education and Communities, offers students who need respite care a chance to spend some time at Dee Why. A number of students from Bowral Public School have had this wonderful opportunity and this year we generously contributed to the gold coin donation drive as well as the clothing appeal.

Harbison Homes
A committed and very enthusiastic group of Stage 3 students presented a wonderful end of year concert for the enjoyment of the residents of Harbision Care. They sang as individuals, in small groups and as a choral ensemble as well as enthraling the group with their instrumental solos.

Wingecarribee Family Support (Giving Tree)
Wingecarribee Family Support was presented with a hamper by our school leaders at our last K-6 assembly of the year. This hamper was a mere fraction of what was donated by the Bowral Public School community. The goods just about filled a small bus! This fantastic and very generous collection amazed all who saw the display in the library. We are a wonderful school when asked to think of others and have a proud tradition of supporting local families.
The Arts
This year Mr Greg Thompson, Mrs Lisa Oszuko and Dr Michael Cotter embarked on an amazing program involving all Bowral Public School students who again had the opportunity to participate and showcase their artistic, musical and dramatic talents across the school and the wider community.

Festival of Instrumental Music
Twenty of our Stage 3 students performed as part of a massed recorder group, in the concert hall of the Sydney Opera House. Another three students were members of the strings section.

Primary Proms
Thirty very excited Stage Two students performed at the Sydney Town Hall in the Coorong Concert of the Primary Proms. The students were exemplary representatives of our school and performed as members of the mass choir at this memorable event.

Boys’ Choir
Our boys’ choir goes from strength to strength and this year they performed at a number of school and community events, including St Judes’ Mothers Union service, Education Week – where they sang the national anthem ‘Kutju Australia’ in the Luritja language; Bradman family carols, twilight markets, presentation assemblies and the most prestigious event ‘Sing Southern Highlands’ where they gave an inspirational performance at this Special Olympics fundraising event.

Drama
After many hours spent rehearsing and practising in their own time, our drama students performed a series of plays for parents, friends and family to enjoy. This year, for the first time, we had three plays: Juniors — ‘The Curmudgeonly Rhinoceros’; Seniors — ‘Aesop and His Fables’; and a small group of seniors prepared a play of their own composition, entitled ‘Royal Camp’. The standard of the groups was exceptional and again, the gold coin donation for admittance was directed to UNICEF.
NSW Public Schools Symphonic Wind Orchestra
One of our year 6 students, Lucie Drysdale, was selected as a member of the NSW Public Schools Symphonic Wind Orchestra (SWO). She successfully auditioned for this elite ensemble and was involved in weekly rehearsals outside of school hours. Early in the year she flew to Perth to participate in the Australian National Band championships with the NSW Public Schools Symphonic Wind Orchestra – and was a member of the winning championship band.

Festival of Choral Music
Thirty Stage 3 singers performed in the Concert Hall of the Sydney Opera House at the ‘Australis’ Concert in the Festival of Choral Music. It is a state-level performance opportunity for our students in an internationally famous performance venue. Our students formed part of a massed choir of 800 students drawn from and selected through audition from schools throughout NSW. All students in Stage 3 at Bowral Public School learned the repertoire for this concert.

Kids on Show
The Berrima District Arts Society 15th Annual children’s art exhibition “Kids on Show” opened in November. The Society encourages and celebrates the work of young artists. Twenty one of our talented artists had their work exhibited this year as well as three classes, with a number of them being awarded prizes.

Bowral District Art Society
Two Stage 2 classes exhibited their tree mobiles at the opening of the Art Society’s Sculpture Garden early this year. They highlighted creativity and co-operative work completed by students under the direction of Mr Greg Thompson.

Aside from these specific programs, all students participated in a range of fantastic activities that included djembe drumming for Stage 2 students, weekly singing and movement to music sessions for Early Stage One, a comprehensive singing program for Stage One students, weekly recorder lessons for Stage Two and Three students, a Stage Two dance group and our lunchtime band and guitar group. We also hosted Oz Opera’s performance of ‘The Magic Flute’ in our school hall. Student artworks were also exhibited at the 86th annual Bowral Show held at Bong Bong race course and the Moss Vale show. In 2014 the school will again embark on an extensive creative arts program as this program enables all students to reach their maximum potential.
Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education
At Bowral Public School, Aboriginal perspectives are incorporated into teaching/learning programs. Whole school and stage planning focus on improving learning outcomes in the education of all students about Aboriginal culture and history. We ensure that we build an awareness, respect and cultural sensitivity for all students in regard to understanding Aboriginal culture, heritage and traditions.

The support of Uncle Garry Russell has assisted the school with incorporating aspects of Aboriginal Australia within our school programs. Working closely with school staff to collaboratively implement learning programs with the aim to develop a cultural awareness of Aboriginal perspectives, has enabled students and staff to build upon their understandings. This year:

- One of our Year 4 students, Emma Williams, received the prestigious 2013 NSW Schools Nanga Mai Award for her contribution to Aboriginal excellence in NSW Public Schools at a special presentation at Darling Harbour. She was one of only two primary school students in NSW to receive this award which recognises an outstanding contribution to the school.
  - Emma and her brother Thomas were honoured to receive Illawarra South East Region Aboriginal Achievement awards for their contribution to the school at a ceremony held at Batemans Bay in November.
  - All staff completed two modules of the ‘No Gap No Excuse’ professional learning package – the focus being ‘Our Kids, Our Classroom, Our Community’.
  - Our Aboriginal students presented at the ‘Recognise’ forum held in April. This was a community forum run by Gibbergunyah Aboriginal Association working with the Wingecarribee Reconciliation Group.
- Special assemblies were held for National Sorry Day in February and in celebration of NAIDOC Week. These were conducted by our Aboriginal students.
- Teachers have regularly attended the Southern Highlands Aboriginal Education Consultative Group meetings held each term to ensure they are aware of current issues that may impact on our students.
- Aboriginal students receive VIBE magazine, usually two per term, with one student entering the monthly competition and winning an e-reader for her writing on racism.
- Aboriginal students attended the Community of Schools NAIDOC games day held at Hill Top. A highlight was the smoking ceremony conducted by Uncle Garry welcoming all to this event.
- All students contributed to our fantastic wall of boomerangs creating designs that were both contemporary and traditional.
- All Aboriginal students have personalised learning plans, negotiated with their parents, to ensure success within their academic programs.
Multicultural education
Multicultural perspectives underpin all of our educational and social programs that run throughout Bowral Public School. It is of critical importance to us that we ensure we acknowledge and value the input of all cultural perspectives that make up our vibrant community. Our students come to our school from twenty two language backgrounds. To this end we incorporate the cultural perspectives, celebrations and special days of our students within the programs that we deliver, to ensure an acceptance and understanding of the uniqueness of multicultural Australia.

This year, one class was fortunate to have been taught Indonesian as a component of our Release from Face to Face Program and another class has enjoyed learning Italian with a parent helper. Harmony Day is always celebrated at Bowral Public School. This year our focus of ‘Many Stories, One Australia’ was celebrated in every classroom. Contrast the styles of 2013 students with their Year 6 counterparts in the early 1900’s as they celebrated ‘Japan Day’.

In 2014 we will continue to develop an awareness and appreciation for multicultural Australia and the role it plays in the fabric of our society. We will ensure that all cultural perspectives and sensibilities are integrated within our teaching and learning program throughout K-6.

Anti-bullying program
Bowral Public School runs a comprehensive anti-bullying program. It is incorporated into the PDHPE section of every class program and follows syllabus guidelines to ensure that our students are equipped to successfully deal with bullying and to understand the effect and consequences of bullying behaviour. All classes K-6 enjoyed the performance ‘Bully No More’ which highlighted the effects of bullying and presented possible strategies for dealing with bullying. Students were encouraged to identify bullying behaviours, explore possible causes of these behaviours and offer some courses of action.

Bullying Awareness sessions for individual Stage 2 and 3 classes followed in Term 2. Follow-up activities incorporated significant cyber-safety aspects. This year we also celebrated the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence with a Kindness Day when we encouraged students to perform a special act of kindness towards a fellow classmate or another student at our school. By working together, we are sending clear messages to young people that bullying and violence, in or outside of school, is not okay - at any time.
Archibull Project
This year classes 5B and 6C engaged in the Archibull Project where the students were asked to consider what it takes to sustainably feed and clothe their community for a day with the learning documented on a class blog. They explored the wool industry with the support of a Young Farming Champion. The following recount highlights the excursion taken by the classes to learn more about the wool industry.

On a very special Thursday in Term Three, 5B, 6C, Mrs Bell, Mr Cayzer and Mrs Buckley were lucky enough to go on an excursion to a sheep farm. We were able to access the farm because Mrs Buckley’s son, Tynan was currently employed there. The farm was just outside Goulburn and took about an hour by belted coach. When we arrived at the farm we ate our recess. It was rather hard trying to find a spot to sit where there was not sheep faeces!

After recess we met the cattle dogs who were very obedient and well behaved. Tynan then sent one of the dogs to herd in some ewes and lambs, the dog brought most of them into the yards. There were about three lambs and Tynan picked up a lamb and gave it to Mrs Buckley. We were allowed to pat it; it was very cute but very noisy!

Then the dogs singled out one very woolly sheep and she was herded into the shearing sheds. Tynan and Mrs Buckley took us to the shearing sheds and then we watched Tynan shear the sheep. Tynan started at the belly of the sheep and made his way up to the head and around the neck so that it came off in one piece. Then he threw the fleece onto a special table and we were able to feel the wool, it was very oily from the lanolin.

Once we had lunch we watched Tynan and the dogs herd in the Merino rams and we were also able to feel their wool and it was very different to the crossbred ewes. After this we had a photo and were lucky enough to take the fleece back to Bowral Public School. We all had a fabulous time!!! (Recount by Olivia Tumanow Class 5B)
Technology - ICT
During 2013 there have been some major changes to the school network with our server being upgraded to an eT4L server. The advantage of this system is we now have a stable network which provides the consistent access to online administration, teaching and learning environments that staff and students depend on. This project was well prepared for in advance and a regional team worked with our school ICT staff for two and a half days to implement the change. Our staff with ICT responsibility has had to learn how to manage the school network in its new form. Many procedures have been streamlined and are now accessed online. Bowral Public School is also part of a LAN (Local Area Network) upgrade being undertaken by DEC. Our network audit has been completed and we are awaiting notification of any work to be undertaken.

Throughout 2013 we have also expanded the school’s wireless network capabilities. There are now 10 wireless hubs located across the school campus which allow password protected wireless access across 90% of the site. With our wireless network expanding we can now focus on planning the acquisition of more wireless capable hardware such as laptops and/ or tablets for 2014 and beyond. In the meantime we have also added another 20 new desktop machines to our network in 2013 with a further rollout of DEC hardware expected early in 2014.

Our school hall has had its data projector and sound system upgraded and all classrooms apart from one demountable now have Interactive Whiteboards installed. Laptops have been provided for use with all new IWBs in demountable classrooms.

All staff and students have access to printing facilities across the school network. All printers have colour printing and two-sided copying options available. Bowral Public School has also joined the Close the Loop recycling program which collects and recycles all printer and copier ink cartridges and toners.

While 2013 has seen a building of our network capabilities the focus for 2014 will be on further development and expansion of access to technology hardware for students and the provision of ongoing Professional Development for our staff.

Debating
At the start of 2013 all students interested in either public speaking or debating were invited to meet once a week at lunchtime to develop the necessary skills. They participated in activities designed to enhance confidence, critical listening and oral presentation.

A team was entered in the Premier’s Debating Competition and won the local round of the competition. They proceeded to the semi-finals at the Illawarra and South East debating camp held at Batemans Bay. Members of this team were selected on a revolving basis with seven students enjoying the opportunity to compete at an elite level. Ten students attended this camp and three Year 5 students are in a very strong position to continue Bowral’s debating tradition in 2014. At this camp, two students were selected to train in the Illawarra and South East squad with a view to representing this region at State level.
Premier’s Multicultural Public Speaking Competition
Students in Stage 2 and 3 had the opportunity to participate in the Multicultural Public Speaking competition. There was a school contest to select two students from each stage to represent our school at the district level. All four students were successful. Bowral Public School fielded both the winner and runner-up in each section. One of the Stage 2 students, Ava Lambie, represented the Illawarra South East Region at the state final – a wonderful accomplishment.

Premier’s Spelling Bee
All Stage Two students participated in the Premier’s Spelling Bee this year. Each class completed a very difficult, thirty word spelling test comprised of words from each of the five levels of the Premier’s Spelling Bee from past years. Students were required to write twenty or more words correctly to qualify for the school final. Stage 3 classes conducted a ‘mini’ tournament prior to holding the Stage 3 event where two students from each class battled it out to determine our contestants. Bowral Public School hosted the regional final of this most prestigious event. Twenty five schools from our region were represented, with four of our students from Stage 2 and Stage 3 showcasing our school talent. One of our Stage 2 contestants, Ava Lambie, won through to the state final and performed most creditably at this very high level.

UNSW / ICAS Competitions
Bowral Public School takes great pride in the efforts and achievements of the many students who challenged themselves in the International Competitions and Assessment for Schools (ICAS) program in the areas of computer skills, science, writing, spelling, English and mathematics. A total of 329 tests were administered across Years 3-6 with some students attempting more than one curriculum area. The table below reflects the very high standard attained by our students. One student, Ava Lambie, performed exceptionally well and was the recipient of a gold medal for her efforts in writing – a significant achievement and a singular honour.

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Chess
Bowral Public School was proudly represented by Stage 2 students at the Highlands Chess Competition against Mittagong Public School in an inter-school competition during the year. Many team members who are ‘beginners’ have appreciated the support and guidance of Mr Adrian Rykers who has ensured our team has the skills and confidence to compete in these engaging challenges.
Stage One Science and Maths

Two classes submitted entries to the Bowral High School Science Fair this year following class based experiments with our Deputy Principal, Miss Jan Christie that focused on what a scientist does and use of the scientific process. A science day for Stage 1 students was held in Science Week where students conducted experiments, followed by a session with Bowral High science teacher, Mr Andrew Facer.

A selected group of Stage 1 students participated in a maths enrichment group session each week during Semester 2 with Miss Jan Christie. They studied and applied a range of problem solving strategies to challenges that encouraged them to draw diagrams, work backwards, use concrete materials and identify patterns. The group particularly enjoyed and gained a sound understanding of the need to estimate and also work cooperatively when presented with Fermi type problems.

Loopline Masterminds

Stage 2 and 3 presentations of Loopline Masterminds at Mittagong Public School showcased the innovative ideas and highlighted public speaking skills of selected students who embraced the challenge of the set tasks and confidently shared their work with others from our local Community of Schools. Our Stage 2 students developed and produced a big book ‘Clive the Clown’ that delighted and entertained an appreciative audience. Stage 3 students created an amazing puppet play that really was a delight to watch as they demonstrated how to use props and language very effectively to tell a story.

Student Representative Council (SRC)

Our student leaders attended a team building and leadership day at Wombaroo with other students from our Community of Schools as a fantastic start to their school year. The SRC continues to function as a student body focussed on helping others and funds were raised to continue the sponsorship of a student through World Vision. Following attendance at the National Young Leaders Day, the SRC were inspired by a young businessman who established the Club Kidpreneur Foundation. Working in teams, students developed and marketed their own products including candles, cards, key rings, jewellery and fresh fruit kebabs. They raised money to cover their costs and for every class to make a Christmas donation of a special gift through World Vision.

Author/Illustrator Visit - Library

Bowral Public School hosted visits from author Mark Greenwood and illustrator Donna Rawlins. Stage 2 and 3 students were enthralled by Mark’s storytelling and inspired by the characters and events that were the catalyst for his stories. Mark’s adventures while researching the stories amazed and entertained his audience. Mark was full of praise for the response of the children to his work. Stage 1 and Kindergarten children loved Donna Rawlins’ engaging manner and were amazed to see the original works that have now become pictures in books that they read. Donna allowed the children to walk around and get up close to many of her works. Opportunities like this don’t happen very often! Both visitors were delighted to sign books for the students.
Learning and Support Team
This year the allocation for the Learning and Support Teacher (L&ST) increased to a 1.1 allocation. Mrs Maggie Galloway has ably filled the additional 0.1 time working closely with the Learning and Support Team and Mrs Bev Hordern, the substantive L&ST. Mrs Galloway combines this with roles of Reading Recovery, ESL and RFF teacher. The Learning and Support Team (LST) requested she focus on some Stage 3 students with learning difficulties in an attempt to build their self-esteem prior to high school. This was done with great success and incorporated benefits for other, more able students through the Andy Griffith Book Club climaxing in attendance at a performance of ‘The 13th Storey Tree House’.

Bowral Public School participated in a trial of PLASST (Personalised Learning and Support Signposting Tool) and the subsequent Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with a Disability (NCCDSSD). All teachers undertook training on the Disability Discrimination Act and analysed the functional needs of their students with disabilities and learning difficulties. This trial will hopefully lead to the provision of better, targeted service delivery to these students who make up approximately 15% of our school population. Our school reported 87 students with cognitive, physical, social/emotional or sensory disabilities. The LST supports and assists classroom teachers in planning and implementing these adjustments.

The focus of the Support Program this year has been to provide intensive in-class support to Year 1, to support Stage 2 students with additional needs in literacy through the volunteer Reading Tutor Program known as CRISP (Community Reading Intensive Support Program) and more recently to provide some early intervention for fifteen Kindergarten students with early literacy, language and fine motor needs.

The LST manages the programs and support for students receiving funding support and we have four wonderful SLSOs (School Learning Support Officers) who work alongside teachers to achieve individual program goals. Another member of the team is our Youth Worker, initially filled in 2013 by Mr Glenn Turner. After securing another position, Glenn was replaced by Mrs Teresa Flynn, who supports students who might be struggling socially or need some help with friendship issues.

The team meets each fortnight and is made up of all executive, school counsellor and support staff. In 2013 over 35 referrals were made to the team with 150 students being monitored and discussed at meetings throughout the year. Close working relationships exist with professional service providers in the community such as speech pathologists, occupational therapists, pediatricians and psychologists.

Enrichment Days for Gifted and Talented students in the Southern Highlands
Bowral Public School has been the host of enrichment days involving 13 other primary schools in the Southern Highlands. Our School Counsellor, Mrs Swan, has coordinated a program which has included the following topics for 2013: Exploring Ancient Egypt, Visual Storytelling and Digital Animation, Maths and Problem Solving in Action, The Art of Debating, Visiting Hogwarts and Writing with Mark Greenwood. All presenters are passionate about their topics and have shared their expertise with the children through hands on activities.

The enrichment days are aimed at developing our gifted students while offering local opportunities to learn about areas outside of the traditional curriculum and to encourage their wider interests. They are a chance for children from different schools to meet like minds. Places were offered to students from Bowral Public School who were nominated by their class teachers to attend these days. The program for 2014 is still being developed but will include opportunities to visit productions of Pinocchio and A Christmas Carol.
Southern Highlands Academically Gifted Class

The AG class for 2013 was comprised of students from 9 different schools from the Southern Highlands. We had 13 Year 5 and 13 Year 6 students; with 10 boys and 16 girls. The class teacher Robyn Caltabiano has experience teaching gifted students in the Opportunity Class program in North Sydney region.

The literature program for 2013 based learning experiences on the novel War Horse by Michael Morpurgo and was enhanced by a trip to see War Horse: the amazing stage show using puppets at the Lyric Theatre. Students participated in a puppet workshop at the theatre and were enthralled by a World War One monologue especially written for Australian students by Morris Gleitzman and performed by one of the stars of the show.

Human rights were explored with students studying the novel Parvana; for many their first experience of life in a culture where girls are severely disadvantaged. Students worked with the town librarian, to develop research skills that will greatly benefit them in their high school years.

The AG class was enthralled with Ben Newsome from Fizzics Education who came to conduct a ‘Working Mathematically’ workshop and have had a day making a movie with digital animation software. Local artist Carlos Barrios held a workshop teaching techniques which really brought out the artist in each student, he took the class to an exhibition at the Berrima District Art Society gallery where the artist in residence gave the students an impromptu tour with an explanation of his work.

Student evaluations of the program express excitement about the different methods of learning they have experienced this year in the AG class, but they all acknowledged the best outcome is the friendships they have made as they met like-minded students from other schools who are as enthusiastic about learning.

The final presentation by the students ‘A Puppet ExtravAGanza’ was held on Tuesday 3rd September in St Judes Church Hall. Each member of the class presented a short puppet show, using puppets they constructed themselves adapting a known story or one they had written themselves.
School evaluation processes
NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used include:

- online surveys for parents, students and teachers in the areas of satisfaction, numeracy and planned implementation of the Australian curriculum in English;
- data collection from class teachers using standardised tests such as Dalwood spelling, as well as class based assessments; and
- anecdotal information from stage and committee teams.

School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013
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.

Reading and Engagement Outcomes from 2012–2014
Develop a shared understanding of evidence based approaches to teaching reading amongst staff to improve literacy outcomes for all students, including Aboriginal students.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- NAPLAN targets achieved:
  - 73% of Year 3 boys achieving in Band 4 and above (target of 75%)
  - 76% of Year 3 students achieving in Band 4 and above (target of 80%)
  - 67% of Year 5 boys achieving in band 6 or above (target of 50%)
  - significant progress in moving the middle to the top (target: Year 5 students get 2 more questions correct than in 2012)
- Reading levels by end 2013 (Early Stage 1 and Stage 1):
  - 79% of Kindergarten students reading at or above level 9 (above state target of 50%)
  - 80% of Year 1 students reading at or above level 18 (target 90%)
  - 64% of Year 2 students reading at or above level 28 (target 90%)
- all classes complete home reading (note use of reading log in homework for some stages)
- Andy Griffith book club group established to promote engagement with Stage 2 and 3 students

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

- ongoing implementation of Best Start and Language, Learning and Literacy (L3) - including reading / teaching comprehension for Stage 1
- professional learning:
  - DEC ‘super six’ comprehension document, Best Start and NAPLAN teaching strategies
  - literacy continuum (PLAN software) with all students to be tracked at least once per term
  - analysis of student performance in NAPLAN, Best Start and L3 to identify trend and individual needs
- enhanced student engagement through effective use of IWB as a tool for learning
- Reading Eggs and Reading Express implemented K - 6
- increased emphasis on differentiation of the curriculum to cater for the wide range of abilities in each class
- strengthen understanding and use of personalised learning plans to improve literacy outcomes for all Aboriginal students.
Our success will be measured by:

- all students to be tracked on the literacy continuum at least once per term using PLAN software
- 75% of Year 3 students achieving results in Band 4 or above on NAPLAN results
- 60% of Year 3 students at proficiency level (Band 5 or 6) in NAPLAN results
- 67% of Year 5 boys achieving results in Band 6 or above on NAPLAN results
- Year 5 students to get 2 more questions correct than in 2013 – moving the middle to the top

Spelling

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Improvement in the assessment, teaching and programming of spelling K-6 as teacher confidence in the use of a wide range of strategies and resources is developed

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- all classes completed South Australian spelling test at beginning of year and Dalwood at end of year for Years K-4
  - 77% of Stage 2 students achieved results consistent with year group or above in Dalwood
- stage based assessment tasks completed each term for Stages 2 and 3
- Stage 2 classes implement multi-level spelling groups which are informed by weekly assessment tasks
- NAPLAN targets achieved:
  - 82% of Year 3 students achieving in Band 4 and above (target of 78%)
  - 73% of Year 5 students achieving in Band 6 and above (target of 62%)
- Stage 1 implementing LIPI (phonemic awareness program) in Terms 2 and 3
- Stage 1 classes adapting spelling lists to reflect student personal writing as well as structured stage program with a focus on sounds, diagraphs and rules
- Stage 1 classes beginning to be tracked on literacy continuum
  - 80% of Year 1 students working at or above the 7th cluster of the literacy continuum in phonics and the 6th cluster in phonemic awareness (target of 90%)
  - 70% of Year 2 students working at or above the 8th cluster of the literacy continuum in phonics and the 90% working at or above the 6th cluster in phonemic awareness (target of 90% for phonics and phonemic awareness)
- Early Stage 1 students tracked using Best Start and literacy continuum:
  - 66% at or above 5th cluster in phonics and 59% at or above 5th cluster in phonemic awareness (note these are mid-Year 1 markers)

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- ongoing use of consistent assessment strategies ie. Dalwood Spelling Test to inform classroom programs and meet specific student needs
- implement recommendations from ISER spelling review
- implement scope and sequence for rules and words groups in Stage 1
- effective use of class based assessment data to inform teaching, identify common error patterns and to monitor growth
ongoing professional learning in practical approaches to teach grammar, punctuation and spelling and the use of smartboards as a tool for learning
systematic use of LIPI and L3 in ES1 and S1 to ensure a consistent approach across grades, mastery of phonics and sight words
continued explicit teaching strategies aimed at developing student writing, spelling and grammar skills to move students from the middle to the top bands in spelling including use of activities from ‘Effectiveness of Spelling Learning Experiences’ for Stage 3.

Our success will be measured by:

• 80% of students achieving results consistent with their year group or above in Dalwood.
• 78% of Year 3 students achieving in Band 4 or above on NAPLAN results
• 45% of Year 3 students achieving in Band 6 on NAPLAN results
• 90% of Kindergarten students working at or above the 5th cluster of the literacy continuum in phonics and phonemic awareness
• 90% of Year 1 students working at or above the 7th cluster of the literacy continuum in phonics and the 6th cluster in phonemic awareness
• 90% of Year 2 students working at or above the 8th cluster of the literacy continuum in phonics and the 6th cluster in phonemic awareness
• all students K-6 tracked on the literacy continuum at least once each term using PLAN software

Numeracy and Engagement

Outcomes from 2012–2014
Build teacher knowledge and understanding in the implementation of the Quality Teaching Framework to improve numeracy outcomes for all students, including Aboriginal students.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

• 83% of Early Stage 1 students have achieved and are working beyond figurative level in terms of Early Arithmetical Strategies (target of 75%)
• NAPLAN targets achieved:
  • 52% of matched students achieved expected NAPLAN numeracy growth from Year 3 – 5 (target of 70%)
  • 67% of Year 3 boys achieving in Band 6 or above (target of 65%)
  • 66% of Year 5 boys achieving in Band 6 or above (target of 60%)
  • proportion of students at proficiency level will approximate the state:
    ▪ Year 3 – 70% school / 66% state
    ▪ Year 5 - 61% school / 53% state
• Stage 1 maths enrichment group for gifted students established in Semester 2
• professional learning on use of Newman’s Error Analysis
• stages have looked at new syllabus with a view to orientation in 2014
Striving, Thinking, Learning

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Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- school/class timetables designed to maximise instructional time for numeracy
- ongoing implementation of Mathletics
- enhance student engagement by embedding elements of the Quality Teaching Framework into lessons with a focus on differentiation – text books will not be used in 2014
- analysis of NAPLAN and school based assessment data to identify specific areas of need to guide teaching and learning
- professional learning:
  - curriculum differentiation in numeracy
  - TENS, Count Me In Too and Taking Off With Numeracy (TOWN)
  - NAPLAN item analysis focusing on areas for development in numeracy
- use of iPod Touches to facilitate group work in numeracy in K - 4
- use of interactive whiteboards (IWBs) with emphasis on interactivity

Our success will be measured by:

- the proportion of students at proficiency level in NAPLAN will approximate the state
- 70% of matched students will achieve expected NAPLAN numeracy growth from Year 3 to 5
- 75% of kindergarten students will have moved beyond the figurative level in applying early arithmetical strategies
- 63% of Year 5 boys achieving in Band 6 or above in numeracy on NAPLAN results
- 55% of Year 3 students at proficiency level (Band 5 or 6) in NAPLAN results
- 70% of Year 3 students achieving results in Band 4 or above on NAPLAN results
- 100% of teachers demonstrate evidence of catering for individual student needs through provision of a differentiated curriculum
- 100% of Stage 2 and 3 teachers implementing Newman’s prompts resources
- 100% of teachers to implement quality, relevant learning experiences that develop Working Mathematically skills across all strands of mathematics as evidenced in stage planning discussions and classroom programs

Leadership and Management

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Enhanced leadership capacity for school improvement and strengthened teacher capacity to improve student learning outcomes with an increased number of teachers accredited with the Institute of Teachers

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- all teaching programs supervised to ensure quality teaching elements addressed through TARS and EARS process (2013-15 booklet for all staff addressing Institute competencies introduced)
- all new scheme teachers working towards / maintaining accreditation – mentor process initiated
- Community of Schools meetings, relieving executive roles and opportunities for all teachers to take on roles that allows for succession planning
- strong collegial networking on a school level
- student leadership acknowledged and supported through Student Representative Council
Striving, Thinking, Learning

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- roles and responsibilities document reviewed annually to allow for all staff to take on curriculum and school initiatives eg. Sports Action Committee, technology team
- school executive and interested staff participate in professional learning for career development, capacity building and school development – including regular Community of Schools meetings to promote collegial sharing of expertise
- review and implement clear supervisory roles; TARS and EARS process refined with a focus on meeting individual and whole school needs, goals and targets – commitment to collegial growth

Professional learning
The Professional Learning program is recognised as providing vital training for improving teachers’ skills, competencies and knowledge and in turn improving learning outcomes for students. The program is informed by the school’s targets with reference to the strategic plans for both the Illawarra South East Region and the Department of Education and Communities. Funds expended in this area are for course fees and for providing relief for staff members from their regular duties in order that they can attend professional learning sessions. Below are some of the professional learning activities undertaken by staff during 2013:-

- compliance training for CPR, asthma, anaphylaxis, child protection and Code of Conduct;
- stage planning days to collaboratively develop term overviews as well as strategies and assessment tasks to improve student learning outcomes and consistency of teacher judgement in all key learning areas;
- Best Start and L3 training in the Literacy Continuum for ES1 staff;
- a further two modules of the Aboriginal cultural awareness program ‘No Gap, No Excuse’ were completed on school development days by teaching and administrative staff;
- school development day program on cybersafety and digital citizenship run by the Australian Communications and Media Authority;
- each stage worked with Community of Schools colleagues to further develop an understanding of the Australian curriculum in English, using Program Builder, a NSW Board of Studies program to write units of study that were trialled in the classroom; and
- executive attended regional sessions to learn about PLAN (Planning for Literacy and Numeracy) and how student learning can be informed through effective use of the Literacy and Numeracy Continua.

An initiative has been the introduction of a ‘Teach Meet’ session each term where teachers present on an area of interest or passion to the staff for about 10 minutes. These have been insightful and also a great deal of fun as we learnt to dance, to use different websites, to move in a dramatic manner and hear about the philosophy of the Dalai Lama, to list just a few of our sessions.

Our staff worked with students from the University of Wollongong (UOW), mentoring teachers in training as they begin their career. One teacher was seconded to UOW for a period of ten weeks (one day per week) to support first year student teachers based in local schools. We also hosted work experience students who have expressed an interest in teaching.
School planning 2012—2014
Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction
In 2013, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their responses are presented below. (Note there is a very high correlation of responses between the three stakeholders in the school for almost every question).

Bowral Public School is a good school:
A high level of satisfaction from students, staff and parents is clear with all stakeholders displaying a positive view of school life at Bowral Public School.

Parents indicated they are most appreciative of the commitment and dedication of the teachers at the school. They value the quality programs where their children have the opportunity to develop as individuals as well as educationally. High expectations are clearly communicated. Teacher willingness to offer a broad range of extracurricular activities is highly valued and contributes to high levels of student engagement. The school environment is recognised as welcoming and our home / school partnerships are valued by all members of the school community. These partnerships are enhanced by regular, informative and proactive communication. Students generally feel good about themselves and know the school provides a safe and supportive learning environment in which positive behaviours are encouraged and regularly recognised.

All acknowledge the school’s main concern is the students who are encouraged to learn in what many describe as ‘a great school’.
Program evaluations – English (Australian curriculum implementation)

Background
With the imminent implementation of the Australian curriculum our staff has undertaken significant professional learning at a school and Community of School level in English. They were surveyed to find out how well prepared they are to implement the English syllabus in 2014. Courses completed include:

- The learner and the new curriculum
- Teaching for the new curriculum
- Your school and the new syllabus – English
- Programming for quality teaching and assess
- A process for programming a unit of learning – English K-10

Findings and conclusions
- 100% indicate they have the skills to differentiate the curriculum to meet the literacy needs of students
- 100% are confident they can use the literacy continuum to track student’s learning progress
- 85% state they are ready to implement the new English curriculum in 2014
- 79% indicated the professional learning has been useful, effective and appropriate
- 69% have a sound understanding of how to access and use program builder to develop literacy units

Future directions
- we need to be aware of the differences of the new curriculum
- quite a bit of planning has been done – now begins the trialling and implementation of units and the syllabus
- ongoing sharing of units with Community of Schools
- ongoing professional learning as developed through the NSW Board of Studies and NSW DEC

Program evaluations - Numeracy

Background
With mathematics being an important area of the curriculum, numeracy being one of our 2012-2014 Management Plan priority areas and orientation to the new Australian curriculum commencing in 2014 it was decided that we would revisit the mathematics curriculum to keep in touch with educational best practice, community needs, concerns and understandings. This would aid the school in ensuring that the teaching and learning needs of the students were being catered for and that the community had their input into such an important area of school life.

Findings and conclusions

Parents
- 92% feel capable of providing help for their children with their maths homework and 77% understand the methods used by students to complete addition, subtraction, multiplication and division tasks
- 84% know their child’s strengths and 76% know what their child needs to continue to improve in maths
- 75% state their child likes maths
- 75% indicate teachers provide instructional activities that give students options for learning maths. eg. Mathletics, hands on maths tasks, written tasks at an appropriate level
- 54% are satisfied with how teachers communicate with them about their child’s progress in mathematics
Students
Students were generally very positive about their skills and abilities with 97% indicating they understood the importance of mathematics. Survey results indicate:
• 95% believe they have good number skills
• 97% believe they have good space and measurement skills
• 89% use the skills they learn in maths in other areas of the curriculum

In terms of how they learn:
• 95% state maths is interesting and teachers generally set challenging and interesting tasks
• 87% indicate work is based on their text book (note: not all classes use textbooks and in 2014 it has been decided that maths textbooks will not be used at Bowral Public School)

Assessment was also viewed positively by students who indicated:
• 95% knew what they needed to do to continue to improve;
• 92% knew what was being assessed as the teacher clearly explained tasks; and
• 87% knew what they did well

Teachers
• All teachers state the NSW K-6 mathematics syllabus informs their teaching program and 75% feel confident in implementing the syllabus
• All explain the connections between subject specific language and other contexts and regularly use discussion as an important learning strategy
• All classrooms are structured to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and support and 92% encourage students to take risks in their learning.
• 92% use a variety of multimedia resources to engage their students in the learning process
• 84% indicate assessment tasks require students to use higher order thinking skills. ie. working mathematically focus

Future directions

The use of Mathletics and CoolMaths (a regularly used website by students) held the most diversity of views and it is evident that it is this area of technology that better communication is required ie.
• 23% of parents indicate teachers set Mathletics tasks to be completed at home
• 93% of students state the Mathletics tasks that are set help them understand concepts covered in class
• 55% of students say their teachers explain the maths concepts addressed on the CoolMaths games site
• 83% of teachers explicitly set maths tasks to consolidate and reinforce concepts taught in the classroom
• only 10% of teachers explicitly teach the maths concepts required for CoolMaths to be used as a tool for learning

Given the extensive use of CoolMaths for both learning and ‘fun’ it would seem that time be devoted in regular class sessions to explain the concepts being addressed; further it would seem reasonable for teachers to better communicate the Mathletics tasks being set to parents (Note some teachers do not necessarily expect their students to complete these tasks as homework, allocating computer room time for this purpose).

In 2014 much of our professional learning funds will be directed towards the key learning area of mathematics with TENS (Targeting Early Numeracy Strategies) and TOWN (Taking Off With Numeracy) being specific programs to be implemented.
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.

Wendy Buckley, Principal
Kay Paviour, P&C President
Nicole Smith, School Council President
Linda Rice, School Administration Manager
Melanie Bowden, Class teacher
Jennifer Henderson, Teacher / Librarian
Beverley Hordern, Learning & Support Teacher
Samantha Swan, Counsellor
Jane Bell, Assistant Principal
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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: