Our school at a glance

Students

In 2008 Beechwood Public School began the year with 139 students which enabled the school to form six classes. Of the six classes, five were multi-grade.

On average, 91.8% of students attended school each school day. This is slightly lower than the daily attendance trends in 2007.

Staff

The teaching staff at Beechwood Public School is comprised of one teaching principal, one teaching assistant principal and five classroom teachers. There is a full-time School Administrative Manager (SAM), one part-time School Administrative Officer (SAO), two part-time School Learning Support Officers (SLSO) and one part-time General Assistant.

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

Significant programs and initiatives

Beechwood Public School provides a wide range of additional programs to support students’ academic, social and physical development.

These programs are outlined below.

- Student Parliament
- Child Protection
- Biennial Musical Performance
- Choir
- Dance groups
- Public speaking
- Maths Olympiad – (See photo below)
- Intensive swimming
- Drug Education
- University assessment competitions
- Beechwood Out of School Hours (BOOSH)
- Kindergarten Buddy System
- Girls Development Program
- Excursion Program
- Book Fair
- Book Week Celebrations

Messages

Principal's message

I am proud and feel privileged to be Principal of Beechwood Public School. Our school is a wonderful example of excellence made possible through a strong and effective partnership between school and community. It is a school where all stakeholders work harmoniously and collaboratively to achieve the best possible outcomes for every student.

The school enjoys a well-deserved reputation for academic, cultural, social and sporting achievements. We have teachers who sincerely and competently strive to provide the best educational opportunities for your children. All school staff work collaboratively to produce a positive school climate and a shared sense of achievement.

Mrs Tracey Bromfield received a World Teacher's Day Award for masterful teaching.

Our school continues to promote creative arts through its musicals and dance programs.

This year’s musical “Search for a Smile” saw every student from Years 3 to 6 perform to packed audiences at the local hall. Their performances included a range of drama, music and dance items. I would like to acknowledge the great efforts the staff continues to make in these types of programs for the students at our school.
This report proudly presents and acknowledges our school’s achievements in 2008. We invite your continued support in working together to meet the priorities for school improvement in 2009.

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.

Maurice Cook

P&C message

Late last year Beechwood P & C became incorporated in order to establish the much needed and much appreciated after school care program BOOSH (Beechwood Out Of School Hours) which has been running successfully throughout this year.

In 2008 we were fortunate to have a head start with a surplus of funds available from the previous years fundraising efforts. This surplus afforded us the time and materials for the Kindergarten renovation in term 2 as well as allowing us to continue with our regular contributions to the school for additional class resources. Many thanks to the tireless volunteers of family members and friends who donated not only their time and effort but also skills and materials. We could not have managed to achieve such a wonderful result for our little ones without your help.

During this year additional funds have been raised through the continual support of the canteen, an Easter raffle, Grandparents day raffle, a Cadbury chocolate drive, a Mother’s/Father’s Day stall, a trivia night, a garage sale, BOOSH and the current Christmas raffle.

Parents and friends also helped with the schools annual working bee early in the year, allowing us to clean up and make small improvements to the school grounds.

The balance of the funds raised this year have been allocated to obtaining new teaching resources for enhancing our children’s education and for some grounds projects scheduled for next year: We are planning a conversion of the tennis court into a more functional “multi-court”, allowing a variety of sports to be played on the school grounds and an upgrade of the cricket nets.

The P&C are very grateful to the Principal and staff, for their endless dedication and support to the parents and carers who participate in the school community and most importantly, to our children.

Lastly, we would like to encourage new parents and carers to become involved in the P & C and join in the rewarding activities that help to continue to enhance this wonderful school for our children.

Tanya Heywood – P&C President

Student representative’s message

Our School Parliament was elected late last year. Each candidate prepared a speech and gave it to the whole school excluding Year 6 children. After the speeches each student is given a slip of paper with all the candidates names on it. They are allowed to vote for two people. The candidates with the most votes make it into the Parliament. Those candidates for 2008 were:

Sharee Patrick Prime Minister; William Gardiner Leader of the Opposition; Jessi Flanagan Treasurer; Corey Flanagan Minister for Parks and Gardens; Holly Lewis Minister for Education and Functions; Madeline Sharp Minister for Personal Relations; Jade Poilly Minister for Health and Transport; Tyler Petherick Minister for Sport and Recreation.

We have had many Parliament meetings this year. Two children representing each class attend parliament meetings. They are allowed to ask questions of the Parliament members about the running of our school. Each Parliament member works towards solving each question and reports back to the whole school during class assemblies.

Parliament Assemblies are conducted by Parliament members once a term where one of our school values is promoted. Students nominate one person from their class who displays this value and they are acknowledged at these assemblies with a Values award. Parliament members also give out awards to children based on their particular portfolios.

This year our School Parliament has helped our community through fundraising. We have run a mini fete, infants and primary discos, an Olympic tabloid and have-a-go shows. Charities we have supported this year are Stewart House, Deaf Society with a Loud Shirt Day, Harmony Day and the NSW Cancer Council with Daffodil Day.

Every Friday Parliament members and parent helpers run a sausage sizzle. All money raised goes to the P & C to help us with the costs of bus travel on excursions.

This year our School Parliament has had a successful year. We have enjoyed the responsibility and cooperation of working with each other to make Beechwood Public School a great place.

Sharee Patrick – School Parliament Prime Minister and

William Gardiner – School Parliament Leader of the Opposition
School context

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

Student enrolment profile
There are 142 students enrolled at Beechwood Public School in 2008. Enrolment numbers have remained consistent in recent years. It is anticipated that Kindergarten enrolments for 2009 will be 21 students.

Of the 142 students presently enrolled, representing 95 families, 69 are girls and 73 are boys.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student attendance profile
Beechwood Public School has a good attendance rate and compares favourably with the region and the state. A factor that may influence attendance rates is the number of students who take annual family holidays within school term.

The Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) attended Kindergarten Orientation Day in Term 4 and discussed the social and learning implications of regular attendance.

Beechwood Public School is committed to support and encourage students to attend school regularly and to be on time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Region</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>92.8</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>91.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>93.2</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>92.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Class sizes
In March 2003 the Government announced its commitment to publish primary class sizes in annual school reports in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible.

The following table shows our class sizes as reported at the 2008 class size audit conducted on Tuesday 25 March 2008.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll Class</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total per Year</th>
<th>Total in Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YEAR 1-2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR 1-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR 2-3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR 2-3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR 3-4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR 3-4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR 4-5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR 4-5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR 5-6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR 5-6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR K</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structure of classes
Beechwood Public School has five multi-age (composite) classes and one single year class in 2008.

Multi-age classes are a necessary pattern of organisation within schools the size of Beechwood Public School. The selection of students to facilitate a successful multi-age class include, the number of students in a year cohort and the social ability requirements of students.

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

Staff establishment
The table below shows the number of teaching positions funded by the Department of Education and Training. There is a total of 7 full time teachers as well as a job share position.

The teaching staff is supported by a School Administrative Manager (SAM), a part-time School Administrative Officer (SAO), two part-time School Learning Support Officers (LSO), a part-time General Assistant and a full time cleaner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>4.552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7.052</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff retention
Staff retention at Beechwood Public School is high. Two new temporary teachers were
appointed to begin the 2008 school year, each bringing their special expertise to enrich our team.

Staff attendance
Staff have access to leave entitlements such as sick leave. In 2008 the average daily attendance rate for staff, as determined by the Department, was 97.8%. This reflects the amazing dedication and commitment of our staff.

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></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>30/11/2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Income
- Balance brought forward: 46,578.28
- Global funds: 72,949.37
- Tied funds: 36,660.94
- School & community sources: 42,972.49
- Interest: 3,352.82
- Trust receipts: 4,959.09
- Canteen: 0.00
- Total income: 207,472.99

Expenditure
- Teaching & learning:
  - Key learning areas: 17,189.58
  - Excursions: 21,028.63
  - Extracurricular dissections: 19,741.39
- Library: 3,596.36
- Training & development: 2,983.15
- Tied funds: 47,528.89
- Casual relief teachers: 7,429.55
- Administration & office: 26,005.06
- School-operated canteen: 0.00
- Utilities: 11,210.97
- Maintenance: 12,432.29
- Trust accounts: 4,959.09
- Capital programs: 0.00
- Total expenditure: 174,104.96
- Balance carried forward: 33,368.03

The school canteen is operated by the P&C and its income is reported in its financial statement.

Tied funds must be spent according to the criteria and conditions of the particular funding program and include grants from Teachers Professional Learning (TPL), state integration, Student Assistance Scheme (SAS) and computer coordinator. Some tied funds must be held over until the project is implemented at the school.

Funds carried forward are to cover commitments for unpaid salaries, ongoing costs of utilities and for ground, building and equipment maintenance.

The school management plan ensures sufficient funds are conserved for contingencies, as well as the replacement and acquisition of assets and resources to best meet the educational need of students.

A full copy of the school's 2008 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2008
Staff, parents and students all had a productive and successful year. Staff enjoyed and appreciated the professional development opportunities that came their way during the year and the subsequent enhanced and improved learning outcomes for students. Parents showed their support and commitment to the school's educational programs by offering their time and expertise in a number of areas. Students showed sound development of skills, confidence and self-esteem through involvement in a diverse and challenging range of academic, creative and sporting activities and demonstrated positive attitudes to learning.

Achievements

Arts
Beechwood Public School is committed to the involvement of all students in the arts and believe it is essential to the development of the whole child. Those students demonstrating particular gifts or talents are given opportunities to develop them further through the many specialised programs and activities that the school offers.

Some of the programs offered this year are outlined below.

- A school choir provided training and performance opportunities for students on many occasions, including school assemblies, Education Week activities and on ANZAC Day.
- A comprehensive program of visiting performances came to the school for students
to enjoy and appreciate. In particular, this year was the Questacon Science Show and the Good Values Show.

• The biennial school musical is a tradition established at Beechwood Public School over a number of years and is always eagerly anticipated. This year we surpassed all others with three magnificent performances of “Search for a Smile”. The musical showcases the talents of our senior students and this year they excelled. They were superbly supported by the wonderful singing and dancing of Years 3 and 4. Staff, students and parents worked tirelessly to ensure that all performances were exceptional and highly polished.

• 2008 has been a building year for the dance groups with 3 groups representing the school in the Port Macquarie Dance Festival. This year the groups performed a range of dance styles from Aboriginal to rap dancing.

• To further promote the performing arts, classes were rostered to perform at whole school assemblies. Presented at these assemblies were items including percussion, singing, drama, multi-media presentations, movement and recitals. This avenue provided the students with a consistent audience to appreciate skills acquired and perform before.

Sport
The schools sports program encourages students to engage in a variety of sporting activities, pursue personal goals, develop skills and sportsmanship and to lead an active lifestyle.

Our achievements this year include;
• participation of all students in the annual athletics carnival and cross country run;
• a five day excursion to Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation camp by students in Years 5 and 6;
• the boy’s under 10 rugby league team winning their section of the Port Macquarie Rugby League Gala Day;
• students representing the Lower North Coast area in cross country, athletics, rugby league, netball and soccer;
• students from K-6 continuing to support their school house teams in carnivals throughout the year. This year, Wongahgah was the winning house for swimming and Pitonga the winning house for athletics; and
• experiencing the wisdom of Para Olympian, Cameron Carr, who won a silver medal in the Wheelchair Rugby team final at the Beijing Games.

Other
School Initiatives
The School Parliament was involved in school activities and fundraisers. This enhanced leadership opportunities for senior students.

Funds were raised for various appeals and charities and to purchase sporting house flags for the school.

Other achievements this year included;
• the attendance of Year 6 to a Health Day promoting healthy lifestyles and social development;
• the student led ANZAC Day service and assemblies;
• the recognition of quality work habits and personal qualities through special awards, merit awards, gold awards and incentives;
• an Education Week open day with sessions promoting the Key Learning Areas (KLA’s); and
• the completion of the refurbishment of the Kindergarten classroom, completely undertaken by the parent body.

(Photo of Kindergarten class on next page).
Academic

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

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

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

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3

In 2008, 15 Year 3 students took part in the National Assessment Program for Literacy. Analysis of results indicated that;

• the schools performance was higher than the region but slightly below the state average;
• forty-two percent of our students were placed in the top 2 bands;
• in reading, 43% of our students were placed in the band compared to 20% of the state;
• results in writing, grammar and punctuation were significantly above state averages; and
• no students from our school were placed in the lowest band for literacy.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3
In 2008, 15 Year 3 students took part in the National Assessment Program for Numeracy. Analysis of results indicated that;

• forty-one percent of students scored in the top 3 band which was the state average;

• numeracy scores from our school were higher than those for other schools in our region; and

• no students from our school were placed in the lowest band for numeracy.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5
In 2008, 22 students took part in the National Assessment Program for Literacy. Analysis of results indicated that;

• forty-one percent of students from Beechwood Public School were placed in the top two bands compared to 32% of the state;

• in reading, 55% of our students were placed in the top 2 bands compared to thirty-three percent of the state;

• overall performance in literacy indicated Beechwood Public School students were well above regional and state averages; and

• thirty-six percent of our students were placed in the top band (Band 8) for grammar and punctuation compared to 19% of the state.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5

In 2008, 22 students took part in the National Assessment Program for Literacy. Analysis of results indicated that;
• of Year 5 students at Beechwood Public School, 80% were placed in the top 3 bands compared to 53% of the state;
• overall performance in numeracy indicated little or no difference between measurement, data, space and geometry, number and patterns and algebra;
• overall performance in numeracy indicated Beechwood Public School students were significantly above regional and state averages; and
• no students from our school were placed in the lowest band for numeracy.

Progress in literacy
• Sixteen Year 5 students sat for the Basic Skills Literacy test in Year 3 at Beechwood Public School in 2006. These students showed an average growth of 74.7 compared to 80.7 for the state. Growth for the boys was higher (87.1) than for girls (65.1).
• In reading, the average growth was 89.1 compared to 85.6 for the state. Once again the boys growth was significantly higher (114.5) compared to the girls (66.5).

Progress in numeracy
• Eighteen Year 5 students sat for the Basic Skills Numeracy tests in Year 3 at Beechwood School in 2006.
• These students showed an average growth of 47.7 compared to 79.7 for the state. Growth for girls (54.0) was higher than for boys (41.3).

• Five students showed minimal gain and their progress will be targeted during 2008.

Analysis of internal assessment data in numeracy, measured against expected outcomes for each year, is indicated in the following table of percentages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Working Towards</th>
<th>Achieving</th>
<th>Working Beyond</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>72.2</td>
<td>5.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>6.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>5.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Improving student performance in this subject area forms the basis of Target 2 for 2009.

Minimum standards
The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards for reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy for years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

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

| Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at and above minimum standard |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Reading                  | 86              |
| Writing                  | 100             |
| Spelling                 | 93              |
| Punctuation and grammar  | 100             |
| Numeracy                 | 100             |

| Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at and above minimum standard |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Reading                  | 100             |
| Writing                  | 95              |
| Spelling                 | 95              |
| Punctuation and grammar  | 100             |
| Numeracy                 | 100             |

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education
Aboriginal perspectives have been incorporated into the teaching and learning programs of all classes throughout 2007, particularly in the KLA’s of Human Society and It’s Environment (HSIE), English and Creative Arts.

For example:
• in HSIE, students in Stage 2 have explored the British colonisation of Australia and the impact that this had on the Aboriginal people;
• in English, students have read Aboriginal Dreaming stories as well as texts written by Aboriginal authors. This has initiated discussion and encouraged a deeper understanding of traditional Aboriginal culture;
• in Creative Arts, students across the school have been engaged in learning experiences that have involved the appreciation of Aboriginal music and artwork; and
• resources with an Indigenous focus have been purchased to support teaching and learning programs.

Multicultural education
In 2008, multicultural perspective has enriched the learning experiences of all students at Beechwood Public School.

For example;
• in Term 1, students celebrated Harmony Day by reading stories and poetry and making posters that promoted tolerance and inclusion;
a multicultural perspective was incorporated into the HSIE programs of all stages;

students were involved in learning experiences in the creative arts that promoted an appreciation of other culture; and

students enjoyed participating in organised multicultural days, listening to visitors speak about their experiences, cooking food originating in other countries and learning games and songs from other lands.

Respect and responsibility
As part of the school’s management plan process we have chosen, implemented and continued to focus on our Core Values. These values are displayed throughout the school and will become an integral part of our school’s Student Welfare Policy.

The five Beechwood Public School Values follow.

• Excellence to strive for one’s personal best;
• Respect for one another;
• Cooperation for individual difference and working together;
• Responsibility for a positive, safe and caring environment; and
• Participation in academic and extra-curricula activities.

Other programs
Drug Education
Drug Education is taught from Kindergarten to Year 6 and is implemented in conjunction with the Personal Health Choices module of the Personal Development, Health and Physical Education K-6 syllabus.

School initiatives in this area included:

• all students participating in lessons promoting safe and healthy choices;
• all students being involved in Life Education visit;
• the purchasing of resources to support teaching units;
• reviewing the school policy on the way medication is administered at school, first aid procedures and reporting to parents; and
• the review of scope and sequence learning experiences for K-6 Drug Education lessons.

Progress on 2008 targets

Target 1
Increase the number of students in the early Years (K-2) reaching syllabus outcomes in English from 76% to 80%.

Our achievements include:

• seventy-nine percent of students reaching stage outcomes or beyond;
• all Kindergarten students being assessed using the Best Start Kindergarten assessment program. The results of the comprehensive assessments were used to individualise the learning in Kindergarten according to student needs;
• the increase in student’s understanding of letter and sounds (phonics/spelling) due to the implementation of the Jolly Phonics program across Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2; and
• the achievement of stage outcomes in writing having improved in K-2 as a result of the enhanced teaching of writing skills such as sentence structure and the writing of various text types.

Target 2
An increase in the number of students in Year 3 placed in Bands 4 and 5 from 83% to 85% and in Year 5 placed in Bands 5 and 6 from 62% to 65% in numeracy.

Our achievements include:

• an increase in the percentage of students achieving at or above stage appropriate level in numeracy;
• an increase in the use of grouping strategies in class maths lessons, resulting in students’ individual needs being catered for; and

• an increase in the number of students reaching grade appropriate levels in school Fast Maths program.

(N.B. 2008 targets were written based on Basic Skills Test results. With the introduction of NAPLAN testing format, the results cannot be correlated between the two systems).

Target 3
To decrease the percentage of students placed in the lower two bands in Year 3 from 15% to 12% and in Year 5 from 17% to 15%.

Our achievements include:

• an analysis of all students’ individual learning needs being carried out, Personal Learning Plans and additional support provided;

• additional support being provided to target students through Support Teacher Learning Assistance (STLA), School Learning Support Officers (SLSO), parent/community volunteers and peer tutoring programs;

• evidence of progress of low achieving students against their placement on the Learning Framework in number; and

• target group of students demonstrating progression in Fast Maths.

(N.B. 2008 targets were written based on Basic Skills Test results. With the introduction of NAPLAN testing format, the results cannot be correlated between the two systems).

Key evaluations
It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2008 our school carried out evaluations of Leadership and Creative Arts.

Educational and management practice

Leadership

Background

Strong and effective leadership is recognised as an integral part of a high performing school.

The school has had the same executive team for three years. It was considered appropriate and timely for the school to evaluate the effectiveness of its leadership.

Students, parents and teachers were surveyed in Term 3, 2008 using School Map Leadership Surveys. The surveys utilised best practice statements to gather the school community’s perception of leadership at Beechwood Public School. Questionnaires were distributed to:

• each family, with 26% returned;

• each staff member, with 85% returned; and

• each child in Years 3 to 6 who completed the survey in class.

Finding and Conclusions

In the parents’ survey, 97% or more indicated that they strongly agreed or agreed with all of the twelve best practice statements.

Highlights include:

• the school executive improves the school through an understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses;

• the school executive ensures that all members of the school community are treated fairly;

• teachers inspire and motivate students, and

• the school executive demonstrates that they are committed to school improvement.

In the students’ survey 75% or more indicated that they strongly agreed and agreed with all of the twelve best practice statements.

Highlights included:

• the school executive is friendly and courteous (73%);

• the school executive treats everyone fairly (61%); and

• the school executive is interested in our learning (85%).

In the staff survey, 95% or more indicated that they strongly agreed or agreed with all of the twelve best practice statements.

Highlights included:

• the school executive builds relationships based on trust, collegiality and respect;

• the school executive works with staff to affect educational improvements;

• staff members being encouraged to update their skills and knowledge through teacher professional learning activities, and

• the school executive regularly self evaluate.

Future Directions

Parents, students and staff are extremely positive about school leadership. One area that the
executive need to explore is ways in which students are given opportunities to share their views on how their learning can be improved and discuss this with their parents.

Curriculum

Creative Arts

Background

The school conducted a review of Creative and Practical Arts as a part of the ongoing evaluation cycle. This review utilised parent, staff and student surveys and an analysis of events to determine areas of strengths and weakness.

Findings and Conclusions

On average 95% of all parents, staff and students responses indicated that creative arts activities play a major part in the key learning areas.

Parent responses indicated that the school has made excellent progress in the teaching of creative arts especially drama, dance and visual arts. More teaching and resources are needed to support music.

Staff responses indicated that their ability to teach music is not confident and that future staff development and more music resources would allow for increased access to music lessons.

All surveys indicated that skill development and interest in the areas of dance was very impressive.

Many opportunities exist for students to develop talent and hone skills in creative arts.

These opportunities include:

- school productions such as “Search for a Smile”;
- numerous dance groups, especially the boys dance group;
- various visual arts competitions and exhibitions such as The Wauchope Show and Education Week;
- infants singing and dance lessons on a weekly basis;
- class items in assemblies;
- school choir receiving specialist instruction from Mrs Pearce;
- the school choir performed at the Hastings Cooperative Department Store; and
- performances by visiting performers to enthuse and motivate students.

Future Directions

The findings and conclusions reveal a need to:

- maintain current enthusiasm with dance and drama;
- increase the amount of professional learning available to staff in music over 2009-2011.
- provide parents with information sessions on the syllabus content and outcomes for creative arts;
- increase the creative arts budget to allow for the replenishment of class items such as musical instruments; and
- provide opportunities for teachers to share ideas and expertise.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2008 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Twenty-one percent of parents responded to the annual survey, while individual feedback was obtained from all staff and all Stage 3 students via the Quality of School Life survey.

Their responses are presented below.

- The most prominent expression by parents was that they were greatly satisfied with the dedication, expertise and quality of the staff at Beechwood Public School as well as the diversity, quality and variety of programs offered.
- Parents also felt that the school was a friendly school that was tolerant and accepting of others.
- Parents and staff surveys indicated that we need to look at the supply, allocation and management of music resources within the school. By addressing this issue we would also address points raised regarding music programs for students. (See Target No 3 on Page 15).
- At formal feedback interviews staff indicated contentment with their workplace, culture and facilities, while the school’s spelling program was the singularly most identified aspect in need of review. (See Target No 1 on Page 15).
- Stage 3 students indicated high levels of satisfaction with their learning environment, social cohesion and staff/student relationships.

Professional learning

All professional learning undertaken by our staff in 2008 was aligned to our school management plan. The focus areas of professional development were literacy, numeracy,
Kindergarten Best Start and Drug Education as they related to the perceived needs of the school. All professional development focussed on teacher’s learning to improve student outcomes.

In total, $4,484.07 was spent on teachers’ training and development from the Teachers Professional Learning (TPL), a tied grant from the Department of Education and Training.

Additional training was supplied using $2,983.15 of school funds provided from the global grant (the annual funding grant supplied to schools).

The third method of the provision of the professional learning program was through school processes and timetabling and was completed outside of teaching hours by all staff.

All staff took part in compliance training as directed by the DET in the areas including Child Protection, Anaphylaxis, Animals in Schools, Emergency Care as examples.

School development 2009 – 2011

The purpose of the 2009-2011 school plan, influenced by responses to staff, student and parent survey and by DET priorities, gives clear direction to all school programs over this three year period.

School targets for 2009 are constructed within the context of the plan. They are formed as a direct result of evaluations and data gathered from a wide variety of sources including the Naplan tests and school based assessment.

A full copy of the 2009-2011 strategic plan is available from the school.

Targets for 2009

**Target 1**

*Consolidation and development of higher level results in literacy.*

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- introducing a curriculum based testing process for spelling, reading, writing, talking and listening in Years 1-6;
- implementing Best Start Kindergarten Assessment and using data to inform individual student learning needs; and
- the professional training and development of staff to implement high quality literacy sessions, with a focus on developing student achievement in spelling, reading, comprehension and writing.

Our success will be measured by:

- an increase in the percentage of students achieving above national minimum standard in NAPLAN literacy in Year 3 and Year 5;
- one hundred percent of students demonstrating growth on annual curriculum based literacy assessments; and
- an increase in the percentage of students achieving at or above Stage appropriate level in literacy.

**Target 2**

Enhance the quality teaching practices to improve levels of numeracy achievement for all students.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- the introduction of a curriculum based testing process in Mathematics for Years 1-6;
- implementing Best Start Kindergarten Assessment and using the data to inform individual student learning needs;
- implementing staff professional learning designed to enhance the quality of Maths sessions, with a particular focus on using grouping as a strategy to individualise learning needs;

Our success will be measured by:

- an increase in the number of students achieving above national minimum standard in NAPLAN numeracy in 2009;
- an increase in the number of students achieving in the highest two bands in NAPLAN numeracy in 2009; and
- an increase in the percentage of students achieving at or above a stage appropriate level in Maths.

**Target 3**

Review and enhance the current practice of the teaching and learning of Creative Arts.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- evaluating and refining the school learning plan for the implementation of the Creative and Practical Arts (CAPA) syllabus;
- enhancing teachers’ skills in the teaching of various creative arts areas (with an emphasis on music) by seeking out and participating in professional learning opportunities; and
- informing parents/caregivers on aspects of CAPA curriculum and teaching/learning units.
Our success will be measured by:

- a comprehensive school scope and sequence of CAPA units being developed and implemented;
- an increase in the number of CAPA units taught throughout the year; and
- parents/carers having an increased understanding of the CAPA curriculum and its implementation across the Stages of learning.

About this report

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school's practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school's future development.

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