Our school at a glance

Blakehurst High School, a coeducational comprehensive school of 1130 students was awarded the title of Specialist Languages High School in the Outstanding Schools Program 2000. Our guiding principles have been developed by a collaborative process involving all in our community from an initial values development process in 1997. These values are revisited biannually to ensure relevance and coherence in a rapidly changing educational environment.

SCHOOL VALUES

We value a Learning Environment which:

1. ensures quality learning with the skills and attitudes of lifelong learning for all students;
2. encourages students to take responsibility for their learning and behaviour;
3. supports a valued, professional staff committed to continuing learning;
4. encourages active and informed parent and community involvement in all areas of their school.

Messages

Principal’s message

2010 was a year of considerable change at Blakehurst High School, but also a year when the school cemented its reputation as one of the leading comprehensive high schools in the Sydney Region.

Mrs Judy Thompson retired early in 2010 after thirteen years as the Principal of Blakehurst High School. It is widely acknowledged throughout the community that the growth in Blakehurst High’s popularity and performance in the academic, welfare and sporting arenas was directly attributable to her leadership, hard work and commitment to quality teaching.

Ms Mary Leslie relieved as Principal for most of 2010, and worked tirelessly to continue improvements in teaching and learning in order to achieve the best outcomes for the students of Blakehurst High School. Ms Leslie announced her retirement at the end of 2010. She will be a big loss to the school. The whole school community wishes both her and Judy all the best.

I was appointed as Principal, taking up my position in late November, 2010.

In 2010, as in previous years, Blakehurst High School once again performed very strongly in the NSW Higher School Certificate making it one of the top public comprehensive high schools in the Sydney Region. This achievement was symbolic of the many successes of our school community throughout the year. Blakehurst High is widely recognized as a lighthouse school in student welfare, that is it leads the way – many schools have adapted the successful welfare programs developed and implemented by our staff.

As in previous years, Blakehurst High School’s commitment was to continuous improvement in student learning outcomes, and all school planning and actions reflected this commitment. Achieving quality learning underpinned all school programs and was the basis for all evaluative work by the school’s executive team. Enhancing ICT in the classroom and effective middle schooling were the driving priorities.

Throughout 2010, teachers worked together to analyse practice, share their learning and improve teaching with the ultimate aim of improving student learning outcomes. Teachers worked collaboratively on improving their Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills. This was mostly organized through a well planned professional learning program.

Staff understand the crucial role that they play in student success and realise that it is teacher professional learning which makes the difference to student learning. We believe that it is the ongoing commitment to our own learning that distinguishes the staff at Blakehurst High School.
and which accounts for the improvement to results in external assessments achieved over recent years. We are fortunate to have such dedicated and capable staff who are recognised as leaders in their field. Many teachers are called upon by the NSW Board of Studies to assist on curriculum teams, exam committees and as School Certificate and HSC markers.

During 2010, work on the Gymnasium was completed. The official opening of the gym took place on the 17th of June by Ms Cherie Burton MP (Member for Kogarah). Ms Burton was an important advocate in the gym finally being constructed. Also during 2010, work was completed on upgrading the Science labs as well as the main boys’ and girls’ toilets. Much more work is required to improve the facilities, both for students and staff, and I will be negotiating with the Department of Education to achieve this in 2011 and beyond.

2010 also marked Blakehurst High School’s 50th Anniversary. A number of events were conducted throughout the year to celebrate this milestone culminating in a cocktail party for past students as well as past and present, staff and parents.

This report outlines the school’s activities and achievements throughout 2010 and has been collaboratively developed by the leaders of the school community. We are justifiably proud of our co-educational, comprehensive specialist languages high school which caters for the needs of students of diverse abilities and backgrounds.

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.

Brad Lester - Principal

P & C message

The P&C has had a busy, but productive year in 2010. The P&C focused its efforts in bridging the communication gap between the school, the parents and the community. We developed a valuable resource, a P&C page on the school website which includes relevant and important information for parents and caregivers. The website contains background information about the P&C, information regarding meetings, including minutes of all meetings, media releases from the NSW P&C Federation and tips to help families support their children to be successful learners at Blakehurst High School. The P&C are committed to this form of communication and will continue to add current and relevant information to the website on an ongoing basis. A number of parents have been involved in Merit Selection Panels to employ new staff members at the school. A key new member employed in 2010 at Blakehurst was Mr Brad Lester, in the position of Principal. On that note, I would like to thank Ms Mary Leslie, acting Principal throughout 2010, for all her tireless effort in running the school and keeping the P&C up to date with information and also Mr Peter Sheehy, Deputy Principal, for his commitment to the parents and families at the school. It would be unfair not to mention and thank all the staff at the school for the work they put in beyond the classrooms, which is why Blakehurst is such a reputable and successful school. The P&C is primarily financed by the P&C Enhancement Fee. This allows us to focus attention on programs and resources for the school. In 2010, the P&C funded the acquisition of a Coffee Cart to support the new Café Course for the Hospitality students. The coffee cart was put to good use when we hosted a Christmas in July dinner. The dinner is an annual event at Blakehurst. It is catered for by the Year 11 and Year 12 hospitality students and their skillful teachers. This sit-down event is always a delight to attend. It is part of the history of the school and P&C, and has always been well patronised and enjoyed. The unfortunate news is that the 2010 dinner was the last in its form. Due to financial restriction to upgrade the kitchens, the Hospitality Food and Beverage course is no longer being offered. In place of this course is a barista/café style course. The P&C has already started planning a cake and coffee evening to be held in 2011. This is a perfect opportunity to showcase the talents of the students in the school. We were also able to contribute to the cost of purchasing and installing the electronic score boards for the new gymnasium. In addition to this, the P&C contributed a third of the cost of the new school sign and money for the purchase of a new video camera for the library. We, as a group, have discussed and agreed upon a new and easy way for KLA faculties to be able to request funds for programs and resources to enrich the learning that takes place in the school. In an effort to raise the profile of the school and the P&C, we opted to
host a Bunnings Hardware Community BBQ at Rockdale. The commitment from parents was quite pleasing and the day ran very smoothly. It’s amazing how sharing the load can make the day run so well. Thanks to all involved and all who supported the event. We happened to have had the BBQ on the Federal Election Day and although there must have been hundreds of other BBQs to compete with, we made a small profit but more importantly, connected with the community and promoted the name of Blakehurst HS. We have committed to host two BBQs each year. Hope to see you at the next one. The P&C hold monthly meetings. These meetings are an opportunity to listen to guest speakers and discuss information relating directly to the education and welfare of students in the school. All dates and times are available on the school’s website. Finally, I would like to express how proud I am being P&C President at Blakehurst High School. I have had the opportunity to work alongside a wonderful group of parents and teachers throughout the year and thank them for all the support they have given me and the school. The P&C at Blakehurst is fit and healthy and ready to better any achievement in the years to come.

Mr. Leo Andreone, P&C President

Student representative’s message

The Student Representative Council is one of the main leadership bodies of Blakehurst High School – it tries to encourage students to be community minded in their approach to life. In 2010, the Student Representative Council decided on one goal to be accomplished; to change the stereotypical view that the Student Representative Council is only about fundraising and charity. With this in mind, the Student Representative Council’s work around the school and its community in 2010 included a ‘Nerd Themed’ mufti day for the St. George Foundation, a school trivia night for members of staff, parents and ex – students, a World Vision Basketball Gala Day using the school’s new gymnasium, a Krispy Kreme Donut Day and re-vamping the school canteen via an in-school Canteen Design Competition 2010. Meanwhile, with all these major events and projects happening around the school, the Student Representative Council was also able to donate a mosaic of the school emblem, completed by members of the Student Representative Council, to the school as a gift for Blakehurst High School’s celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Quality Teaching and Learning. The Blakehurst High School Student Representative Council in 2011 remains committed to student participation in decision making levels within the school, supporting and defending appropriate student activities and the furthering of student education through all avenues, but primarily through active participation in the relevant field.

Lik Wong Yu – 2010 SRC President.

School context

Student information

Total enrolment for 2010 was 1130 students. Seventy percent of students had a non-English speaking background (NESB) with 51 language backgrounds represented. Chinese families are the largest NESB group and represent twenty-five percent of our school population. Students with a Greek background is our next largest group with ten percent of NESB families. The majority of these families are second and third generation. Our enrolment profile is 30% Anglo-Celtic, 25% Chinese and 45% all other language backgrounds. The school is at full capacity with an increasing demand for places.

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.
Enrolments at Blakehurst High School showed a very slight increase in 2010, and appear to have reached capacity with waiting lists existing for most year groups.

**Student attendance profile**

Attendance rates are still above the average for schools within the Sydney Region and well above the State average. The fall between 2009 and 2010 may be the result of a number of long absences by individual students for overseas holidays and welfare issues.

**Management of non-attendance**

A supportive quality learning environment has once again resulted in an attendance rate which is above Regional and State attendance rates. Our attendance rate has been consistently above 92% since 2007. A small number of students with significant welfare issues have been responsible for the slight drop since 2009. An emphasis on quality learning and attendance monitoring of all classes supports our excellent attendance record.

Blakehurst High School’s retention rate between Year 10, and Year 12, improved dramatically over the last twelve months. Retention rates are now considerably higher than both the State and Sydney region. This would be partly due to the rise in the leaving age to 17, but also to the wide range of educational programs Blakehurst High is able to offer students in the senior years.

**Post-school destinations**

Students who left Blakehurst High School in Years 10 and 11 in 2010, did so mainly to take up employment, mostly apprenticeships or traineeships or to attend TAFE fulltime.

A post school destination survey, conducted in February 2011, showed that of the Year 12 students who could be contacted, 47% were going to University; 33% to TAFE; 6% had secured apprenticeships; 5% were in employment (involving no formal training) and 2% were undertaking training with a private provider or college.
Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

In 2010, 27 students (14%) completed TVET courses at TAFE. The total enrolment in the Vocational Education (VET) Courses offered at school was 75 students, with 58 students (31%) studying one or more VET Courses. One student completed Industry Based Learning and two students completed School-Based Apprenticeships in Automotive.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification

In 2010, 188 students completed Year 12. 91% of these students attained a HSC or equivalent vocational education qualification. One student completed her HSC after following a pathways program over three years.

Staff information

Once again the many successes of our school community can be attributed to the depth of talent, shared leadership and commitment of both teaching and non-teaching staff at Blakehurst High School. Our Support and Administrative staff of 13 fulltime and several part-time members contribute enormously to the ongoing, collaborative quality teaching and learning culture that is a feature of the school. The combined experience, energy, enthusiasm, initiative and dedication of staff to quality, is certainly a large contributor to the school’s success and as such, must be acknowledged in this report. The school employed a number of extra part time staff to work in specialist areas such as Support with Learning and ESL support.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>89.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff establishment

The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on Indigenous composition of their workforce.

At Blakehurst High School one teacher has identified themselves as indigenous.

Staff retention

Historically the staff roster at Blakehurst High School has been quite stable, with many teachers being at the school for more than thirty years. This trend however, has started to change with the ageing of the teacher population. Due mainly to staff retirements, there was a ten percent changeover in personnel at Blakehurst High school between 2009 and 2010 – this included teaching and ancillary staff. This percentage will be at least matched if not exceeded in 2011, with the entire senior executive and many experienced staff reaching retirement age.

Teacher qualifications

All teachers at Blakehurst High School are university graduates with at least four years training and all 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>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>20</td>
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</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.

Date of financial summary: 30/11/2010

Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>397 288.31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>705 569.16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>330 368.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>601 764.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>22 366.55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>75 944.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
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</table>

Total income: 2 133 301.51

Expenditure

Teaching & learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>168 867.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>252 237.85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>218 383.76</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>12 952.72</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>37 494.58</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>278 677.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>135 368.34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>258 143.88</td>
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<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>84 185.58</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>51 144.49</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>62 981.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>213 076.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total expenditure: 1 773 513.11

Balance carried forward: 359 788.40

The balance carried forward allows the school to start the new year in a strong financial position and allows for future demands and the continued improvement of school facilities. A number of excursions, including overseas trips, contributed to the large total under ‘School and Community sources’. As a result, the bulk of this money was not income for the school, nor was it available for school use.

A full copy of the school’s 2010 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the P&G. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2010

Achievements

Arts

Blakehurst High School has a thriving Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) faculty, with teachers committed to the arts in its various forms.

Performances

Over 100 students performed for an appreciative audience at our annual Music Night in September. At this performance many individual and group performers displayed the depth of talent in our school community. This, and other music functions, were organised by a student led team supported by Ms Judy Jacobsen, Mr Kipi Fifita and the CAPA team.

On the occasion of Blakehurst High School’s 50th Anniversary Celebrations in August, over 20 senior students, together with our former school captain Steven Teng, provided an outstanding program of entertainment for invited guests.

Several students performed at the Sydney Region Opening of the School Year in February, the Performing Arts Annual Festival of Instrumental Music at The Sydney Opera House in June and again at the Schools Spectacular at The Sydney Entertainment Centre in November.

String Ensemble

The string ensemble continued to flourish with four of our students being selected to perform as part of the Sydney Region String Ensemble, culminating in a combined performance in The Sydney Region Festival of Music at the Sydney Opera House in June.

The ensemble also performed with distinction at several other functions, including celebrations for Education Week at Hurstville Westfield, the Concert Tour to local primary schools, Music Night and Presentation Night.
Concert Band
The Blakehurst High School Concert Band played at a number of venues with one of its members – Tara Aftanas being selected for the Sydney Region Wind Symphony.
We employed a new Band Director, Ms Lauren Moule to tutor and direct the band. Lauren also tutors a number of local primary school bands and we hope to maintain continuity of the band program with the transition of primary school students to high school.
The Concert Band took part in the Concert Tour to local primary schools and performed with students in the Blakehurst Primary School Concert Band for an appreciative Blakehurst Primary School student and teacher audience.

Choir
The Blakehurst High School Choir continued to rehearse under the direction of Mr Kipi Fifita. The choir performed with distinction on numerous occasions and developed their expertise and repertoire as the year progressed. Members of the choir successfully auditioned for the Regional Choir, which performed at the Sydney Region Schools Opening Ceremony and celebrations for Education Week.
Mr Fifita was selected to be an assistant conductor for the Sydney Region Choir and travelled to China for the reciprocal Expanding Horizons visit with the choir in September, establishing positive links within the region and with our sister school and other schools in China.

Drama
Year 12 Drama students once again performed with distinction in their HSC Practical and Written Exams, bringing credit to their teacher, Ms Helen Elakis and to the Blakehurst Learning Community.

Visual Arts
Nver McCauley was selected to participate in the National Art School Course held in the Term 2 school holidays, to further develop her expertise and skills.
The Visual Arts teachers, Ms Sherryl Strudwick, Ms Kerrie Golding and Ms Tanya Bourtsouklis selected a variety of student works from all years to display for functions such as Education Week, P&C Annual Dinner and the BHS 50th Anniversary celebrations.

Sport
Congratulations are extended to each student who has represented our school with distinction in the many sporting endeavours in which Blakehurst High School participated in 2010. During the 2010 grade sport seasons, BHS was able to enter 60 summer teams and 57 winter teams, the most of any school in the St George Zone. In 2010, BHS secured 24 premierships and the school was crowned champion girls sporting school in the St George area for the third consecutive year. Whilst there were many outstanding sporting achievements for our students throughout 2010, special mention must go to Luke Noblett. Luke was an integral member of the U18 Australian Hockey side that won the Gold Medal at the Youth Olympics. 2010 saw impressive results achieved by numerous athletes of Blakehurst High School at zone, regional, state and national level. Andrew Baker of Year 12 was named Blakehurst High School Boys athlete of the year whilst Helen Orr of Year 11 took out that honour for the girls. A great all round effort saw Julia Glavincevski named age champion of the zone in swimming and she went on to represent our school and region with distinction at the NSWCHS swimming, athletics and cross country carnivals. Brooke Anderson and Shawn Fowler both secured selection in the Australian U17 Oz Tag sides that toured New Zealand, Mika Zammit toured the United States...
with the NSW U15 Baseball side, Rebecca Luhur secured sixth place at the National Gymnastic titles, Andrew Baker smashed the Sydney East U17 Boys discus record at the NSW All Schools Championships and Luke Jamieson finished 3rd at the Australian Rock Climbing titles. 2010 also saw our students continue to dominate at zone and state levels in the team sport categories. Our U19 Futsal team took out the NSW Championship in an impressive display while the inexperienced Boys’ Table Tennis team secured the Regional Championship and finished fifth at the state titles. Overall, 2010 was an extremely successful year for our young athletes with impressive results achieved at every level of competition. Whilst Blakehurst had to farewell many talented sports people at the end of 2010, 2011 sees an enthusiastic group of students eager to display their abilities in an array of sporting competitions.

Other

**Australian Business Week**

2010 saw the 12th Australian Business Week program run at Blakehurst High school. In all, 185 Year 11 students participated in this week of intensive learning in October. This program engages all students in teams running a simulated business for one week. We are fortunate to have the services of business mentors from Kogarah Rotary Club who assist us to conduct the program and to mentor students so successfully each year. Students gain skills in decision making, problem solving, teamwork, cooperation, and leadership which we believe transfers positively to all their learning as they move into their HSC year. Blakehurst High School is recognised nationally as one of the best schools in this prestigious program. Our sustained success is due to the enthusiasm and commitment of the program’s coordinators, Mrs Raquel Spratt and Ms Venny Wiryakusuma, both Business Services teachers, the support from Head Teacher, Peter Slater, as well as the ongoing support from all school staff, parents and Kogarah Rotary Club.

**Geography Competition**

75 students from Years 9 and 10 entered the Geography Competition conducted by the National Geographic Channel. 25 of these students received awards with 10 High Distinctions, 3 Distinctions and 12 Credits being awarded.

**U Turn the Wheel**

In February 2010, the U Turn the Wheel program for all year 11 students was run in order to prepare students for driving on the road. The program is organised through Kogarah Rotary and involves students attending six different workshops presented by;

- St George Highway Patrol
- Trent Driving school
- Paramedics from the NSW Ambulance Service
- Youthsafe
- NSW Community Health
- NRMA Motoring and services.

These presentations have proven highly informative for students and cover topics such as driving lessons and purchasing a car, through to the consequences of poor or reckless driving.

**Year 10 Community Service Program**

2010 saw Blakehurst High join the NSW Premier’s Student Volunteering Awards Program which culminated in two of our students receiving Diamond Awards for the completion of 80+ hours of volunteering.

In December 2009, all Year 9 students were introduced to the concept of Community Service at a Community Involvement Expo held at the school. Representatives of six volunteer organizations, as well as Year 10 students, spoke of the many opportunities available for community service.

70% of Year 10 participated in some form of volunteering, with 25% completing 40 hours or more, receiving either Bronze, Silver or Gold Awards.

Blakehurst students took part in volunteering with their local sports clubs, preschools, Sydney Half Marathon, Streamwatch, tutoring at the school’s Homework centre, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Clean up Australia campaign, packing and selling Bandanas and at Randwick Children’s Hospital.
Premier’s Reading Challenge 2011

All students in years 7, 8 and 9 participated in the 2010 Premier’s Reading Challenge (PRC) as part of their normal English course work and their ongoing daily homework reading. Forty four students completed the PRC and received certificates. The PRC provided a structure and opportunities for students to extend their reading skills and enrich their writing. Time was set aside every fortnight for students to borrow and read PRC books in the library. This time was highly valued by the majority of students and, regardless of their varying abilities, they were genuinely engaged in their reading. Students have been encouraged to select and read books that are challenging. The annotations of books and the extensive reading lists have been a source of motivation for student reading.

Homework and Tutorial Centre

This school-funded initiative continues to be well supported. Students attend at no cost and are supervised by two teachers and a number of volunteering Year 10 student mentors and tutors two afternoons per week. Snacks were provided by the school for all students at each session. The average number of students attending was 35 per session.

International Students

International students’ HSC results at Blakehurst High School were once again outstanding in 2010. Of the total 19 international students who sat for the HSC examinations, 11 of them appeared on the HSC Honour Roll for a total of 17 subjects - mainly in Mathematics, Chemistry and Chinese. Phunthita Vimolpatranon, from Thailand achieved Band 6 in 3 subjects and was placed second in the State in Chinese for Beginners. Melody Yuting Wang, from China, was nominated for the International Student Award for Community Services and has been short listed as one of the four finalists for the NSW Premier and Cabinet Award for International Students in 2010. Despite global financial difficulties, the enrolment of international students at Blakehurst High School remains steady this year. Currently there are 64 international students from Year 7 to Year 12 in our school.

Outstanding Teacher Achievement

At the 2010 Presentation evening, Mrs Kristen Blair, Relieving Mathematics Head Teacher, was awarded the Judy Thompson Award for Educational Achievement. This award was in recognition of her being a dynamic early career teacher who has shown initiative, innovation and risk taking in her teaching practice as well as commitment to personal professional learning and the learning of colleagues.

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 these assessments.
Yr 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)
Yr 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

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

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7**

In May 2010, all students in Year 7 were tested on the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). From the following graphs it is evident that students entering Blakehurst High School are above the state average in Bands 7 and 8 in reading and spelling and Bands 6 and 7 in writing as well as grammar and punctuation. The percentages in Band 9 are below state average particularly in reading. Areas of weakness in reading, writing, grammar and punctuation will be addressed with strategies implemented across KLAs in 2011 and beyond.
In numeracy, Year 7 students performed quite well in 2010, with students well above the state average in both of the top bands.

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9**

All students in Year 9 were tested in the National testing program in May 2010. As the graphs below attest, students at Blakehurst High School were at or above state average in bands 6 and 7. An area for improvement is to increase the percentage of students achieving at or above minimum level in writing as well as to improve the percentage of students achieving Bands 8 and 9 in both reading and writing. This will be an area of focus of all KLAs in 2011 and beyond.

Of particular note were the very good results achieved by Year 9 students in spelling, where the percentage of BHS students in the top three bands was well above state average.

**Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7**
Percentage of students in bands:
Year 9 reading

Year 9 writing

Year 9 spelling

Year 9 grammar and punctuation
Students in Year 9 performed quite well in the numeracy NAPLAN exam, with percentages in both Bands 8 and 9 well above state average. The percentage of students in Band 10 was just below the state average. KLAS will continue to include strategies to improve numeracy skills within their programs in 2011.

Progress in literacy

The 2010 NAPLAN data shows that in particular, Year 9 results in a number of the Literacy areas have improved when compared to the School average data between 2008 and 2010. This is particularly so in reading and spelling. This evidence is reinforced when the School Certificate data is analysed. In the area of English – literacy, there have been marked increases in the percentage of students performing in the top three Bands with a corresponding decline in the bottom three Bands. All areas of Year 7 Literacy need to addressed with this cohort over the coming years as their results were below the school average results for 2008-10. This will be targeted by literacy strategies implemented by all the Key Learning Areas (KLAs) during 2011 and beyond.

Progress in numeracy

Student performance in the area of numeracy continues to be the strength of students at Blakehurst High. This is evident when the data from all external examinations i.e. NAPLAN, the School Certificate and the Higher School Certificate are analysed.

School Certificate

The 2010 School Certificate results, including both external and internal assessments, indicate that students achieved at or above the state averages in the top 3 Bands in all areas with particularly pleasing results in Mathematics, English, Science, Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship, Australian History, Civics and Citizenship, and Computer Skills.

The School Certificate results in 2010 were generally better than the average results of the school over the previous four years. This indicates success of improved literacy and numeracy strategies implemented by KLAS.
Percentage of students in performance bands:
School Certificate Mathematics

Percentage of students in performance bands:
School Certificate Science

Percentage of students in performance bands:
Australian History, Civics and Citizenship

Percentage of students in performance bands:
Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship
School Certificate relative performance comparison to Year 5 (value-adding)

As indicated in the following graph, the School Certificate relative performance to Year 5 (value adding) data for 2010 is significantly above the Blakehurst High School average for 2005-2010 for all subjects except Science.

Of particular note was the improvement in Australian History, Civics and Citizenship and Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship in the 2010 School Certificate.

Higher School Certificate

In the 2010 Higher School Certificate (HSC) examinations of the 25 subjects where numbers were large enough to make valid school/state comparisons, 16 were at or above state average.
Higher School Certificate relative performance comparison to School Certificate (value-adding)

The 2010 HSC value added data shows improvement in the performance of particularly middle students. Figures here were well above other schools statistically similar to Blakehurst
High (SSG). The lower value adding shown in 2010 of higher achieving students compared to the average for the school over the last four years will be an area to be investigated and addressed by KLA strategies in 2011.

 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 7 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 7 students achieving at or above minimum standard</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>92.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>94.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>97.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>89.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>96.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

 Significant programs and initiatives

Environmental education program

In 2010, the Blakehurst High School Environmental Team continued to raise awareness among students through a variety of projects. Mrs Raquel Spratt led an energetic group of students from all year groups who undertook the following projects:

- Arranged the installation of a chilled water fountain outside the gymnasium with funds from the Environment Team to encourage students to refill their water bottles;
- Continued ‘Flick Off Friday’ to encourage staff to turn off all electrical equipment at the power points over the weekend and at the end of term to reduce energy use;
- Organised Green Day which raised $750 for future environmental projects;
- Participated in the Shout out for Climate Change awareness campaign with a ‘highly commended’ one minute film created by Jodie Huang and the rest of the team
Future projects for the team in 2011 under the new mentorship of Ms Jane Camilleri include the introduction of Blakehurst High School reusable drink bottles in order to help eliminate disposable water bottles. The team will also work towards the installation of another chilled water fountain to encourage the reuse of drink bottles. The school will participate in ‘Schools Clean up Australia Day’ on 4th March 2011 to encourage students to care for our immediate environment as well as support Earth Hour. Green Day will be implemented again to raise further funds for projects.

Aboriginal education

Aboriginal education at Blakehurst High School has been integrated into many programs across the school. Whilst the recognition of the traditional owners at meetings and assemblies is common practice, it is in the teaching of Aboriginal history and issues in classrooms that the most significant learning occurs. In Stage 5 History for example, students examine issues such as land rights, reconciliation and the stolen generation. The aboriginality of our students and indigenous peoples was also celebrated during NAIDOC Week. In 2010, one of our year 12 Aboriginal students achieved early entry into Macquarie University with the support of staff.

Multicultural education

Mosaic Fusion Forum 2010

A group of Year 10 Blakehurst High School students participated in the Mosaic Fusion Forum in 2010 with eight other schools from the Sydney Region. The Mosaic Fusion Forum is a program organised by the Sydney Region of the NSW Department of Education and Training in partnership with Arc, the University of NSW Student Group.

The purpose of the Forum was to allow the culturally diverse young people in the Sydney Region to share their thoughts and feelings on issues such as multiculturalism, cultural identity, freedom and global conflicts, racism, leadership and role models.

The students attended the university for a day and mentors from the ARC Student Group led them through various activities and discussions on the above issues. Individually or in groups they used their talents and skills to compose texts that expressed their thoughts and feelings. These texts varied from prose texts to artwork and multimedia.

Through this participation in Mosaic, the students gained valuable skills in the areas of teamwork, communication, meeting deadlines, publishing work for the wider community and associating with various members of the public.

The students displayed their compositions and received certificates at a presentation night at the University of NSW. The Regional Director, Dr Phil Lambert, launched E-Mosaic Online on the Sydney Region website.

Respect and responsibility

Respect and Responsibility remains the cornerstone of school values and consequent student services programs. The school’s Student Services Network is integral to the success of these programs. This network operates through the Junior and Senior Welfare Teams and the Learning Support Team. In 2010, the teams consisted of the Deputy Principal Learning/Welfare, two Head Teachers (Teaching & Learning), Support Teacher Learning Assistance (STLA), Year Advisers, Senior School Support Program (SSSP) Co-ordinator, Transition Co-ordinator, Careers Adviser, ESL teachers, Mentors and the Junior Welfare Co-ordinator. The latter role was established in 2008 to address the needs of students in the years 7 to 9. Responsibilities in this role include liaising with the junior Year
Advisers to develop specific pastoral care programs, managing sick students and working with the Student Leadership Team to train and supervise Peer Support Leaders, Peer Mediators and Junior Prefects. The success of this initiative led to the decision to create the position of Senior Welfare co-ordinator in 2010, to perform a similar role to meet specific needs of the students in the senior years.

The Welfare and Learning Support Teams met fortnightly and used school data and referral data to target student needs.

A selection of the many targeted programs follows:

- Peer Support and Mediation
- Jump Start for girls and boys
- Boys’ and Girls’ programs run through St George PCYC.
- Social Skills program for Year 7 boys run in conjunction with St George Reconnect.
- Wilderness Challenge programs for junior girls and boys
- Learning upwords is an intensive and proactive Literacy, Numeracy and Learning skills program conducted in term 4 for year 7 students identified from analysis of the NAPLAN data. Results from the NAPLAN data are assessed by the Learning Support Team and students with the greatest learning needs are selected to undergo the intensive program. Evaluation of the 2010 program has resulted in the program being divided into 2 sessions for 2011. A two week session to be conducted with 2010 students as follow-up at the end of term 1 2011 and a two week program to be run during term 4 2011 for those students identified by the NAPLAN results for year 7 2011. This change was needed to reduce overlap with the PALS program (transition to high school from primary for special needs students).

- A Social Skills Intervention program was introduced to target Year 8 boys who were disengaged from their learning and exhibiting poor social skills with other students and teachers. The program was conducted by Mr. Ben Yelavich, a PDHPE teacher who addressed issues of decision making, goal setting and anger management using physical activities to build confidence and promote social interaction. This program was hugely successful and resulted in development of positive attitudes to learning and reduced conflict in both the classroom and the playground. Evaluation of this program will be conducted in term 1 2011 for re-introduction later in the year to target Year 8 boys in 2011.

All teachers new to Blakehurst High School participate in Choice Theory and Reality Therapy training which is based on the work of William Glasser and which underpins our Respect and Responsibility programs. In addition, the school’s regular professional learning program included workshops on Choice Theory and Restorative Practices.

Our respect and responsibility programs assist in producing the well-disciplined, secure and harmonious learning environment which is a feature Blakehurst High School. Our very low suspension rates attest to the effectiveness of our student services team and programs. Other indicators include attendance rates well above state averages and a reduction in RISC referrals for unsatisfactory behaviour, particularly for students in Years 7 to 9.
Languages Study Tours and Activities Program

In 2010, students of French were again able to undertake a study tour to France in the October holidays. This was a joint venture with Heathcote High School and both groups of students were able to experience the culture of France and practise their speaking skills. They were accompanied by Mrs. Mangraviti and Mrs. Baker.

In 2010, Blakehurst High School was given a grant by the Asia Literate Foundation to introduce an Asian Language into three of our feeder primary schools: Carlton South, Connells Point and Blakehurst Public Schools. The focus of this project has been to teach and promote Japanese and Chinese with the idea of providing continuity between primary and secondary school, thus allowing students the opportunity of studying a language continuously for 12 years. The positive response from the primary schools was so overwhelming that Blakehurst High has continued to teach Japanese at Carlton South and Connells Point Public Schools in 2011. Unfortunately, due to cessation of funding, this program has been scaled down. The project has not only enthused our young learners who were keen to continue their study, it has also allowed both primary and secondary school teachers and students to work cooperatively, and to learn from one another about best classroom practices.

All Year 7 Language students were involved in languages Day. They participated in a variety of cultural activities such as Calcio, Sumo Wrestling, French Waiters Race, Table Tennis and Greek Dancing. They also experienced a variety of foods from the various countries. The Year 9 language students enjoyed an overnight linguistic immersion camp at the Tops Conference Centre. Here they were given the opportunity to practice their linguistic skills in an authentic environment.

Classroom activities and excursions for all years have connected students with the culture of their language study. Students visited the Forum, Italian Migration Exhibition, La Perouse, Macquarie University Language Day, The Tanken Centre, Japanese Film Festival, The Japan Foundation as well as participate in restaurant and film excursions.

Once again the language students who participated in the ACER Language Exams had outstanding results with the majority of the students scoring High Distinctions and Distinctions.

Progress on 2010 targets

Target 1

Continue to develop an excellent performance and development culture

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Targeted Executive Professional Learning program focusing on developing leadership capacity.
- Formal program of peer observation and coding of lessons within faculty and quality teaching teams.
- Continued focus on providing quality feedback to teachers and students.
- Whole school professional learning program co-ordinated by expanded Professional Learning Team.

Our achievements include:

- Professional learning sessions are included in most Executive meetings.
- Quality teaching strategies are embedded in Teaching and Learning throughout the school.
- Quality feedback given to teachers through the coding of lessons.
- Emphasis is placed on giving students quality feedback on assessments.
- A co-ordinated professional learning program was implemented.

Target 2

Continue improvements in ICT in the classroom

Strategies to achieve this target include:
• Continuing staff professional learning program in ICT – school designed and implemented, using staff expertise;

• Continued sharing of expertise and resources to enhance the use of laptops in Years 9 and 10;

• Expansion of the use of MOODLE operating system for interactive learning;

• Provision of relief time for teachers to work collaboratively and share expertise in their classrooms.

Our achievements include:

• The value added data in the 2010 Computer Skills School Certificate showed an improvement.

• Moodle is more extensively used by various KLASs.

• A large proportion of the school’s professional learning budget is spent on developing the ICT skills of staff.

**Target 3**

**Continue to develop excellent transition programs**

Strategies to achieve this target include:

• Enhance the roles of Junior and Senior Welfare coordinators.

• Expansion of joint programs with feeder primary schools.

• Creating a program of visits and lesson observations between Blakehurst High School and feeder primary schools.

• Continued development of the Primary Links and PALs programs.

• Develop the role of Transition coordinator to support students in their progress from the middle school to senior school.

• Development of the Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP), an alternative non HSC program for students in Years 11 and 12.

Our achievements include:

• The profile of the junior and senior welfare co-ordinator has been raised – they are now seen as part of the school executive.

• The links with the feeder primary schools have been strengthened e.g. Primary links, Year 6-7 sports day; the Asia literate program and the PALs program.

• Ms Janelle Lyons was appointed as the schools Transition adviser in 2010, to assist student’s transition to employment and/or training.

• The STEP program was implemented in 2010, however, evaluation has shown it requires revision in 2011.

**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.

**Educational and management: Review of the Welfare Team**

**Background**

The Welfare Team is comprised of the Deputy Principal Learning and Welfare, the Head Teacher for Teaching and Learning, the Year Advisers and Junior and Senior Welfare coordinators. The teams, junior and senior, meet separately every fortnight to discuss attendance issues and concerns about individual students referred to or identified by Year Advisers, Welfare coordinators or other teachers. The focus on attendance is critical as poor attendance is a key early indicator of a student at risk.

The Year Advisers are responsible for student wellbeing. They are usually the first point of contact for parents who have concerns or queries about their child’s progress or welfare. For each year there is a Year Adviser and an assistant Year Adviser. The Junior Welfare coordinator works closely with Year Advisers to identify students at risk and to develop programs to support individual students and address the social and welfare needs of junior students.

**Findings and conclusions**

A review of the team was held at the end of 2010. Roles of team members were reassessed. It was acknowledged that the role of Year Advisers has an increased importance and needs greater resourcing. Specific duties for 2011, for each cohort, were determined. Pastoral and welfare activities and timings for 2011 were decided upon.

**Future directions**
In 2011, the following changes will occur.

- Year Advisers and their Assistants will have equal status. There will be a pair of Year Advisers for each year. It will be up to the two individuals to determine how their duties are split, but the roles are equal.
- Major planned pastoral and welfare activities will not occur during year meetings as it doesn’t allow sufficient time. Junior and Senior Welfare coordinators will work with Year Advisers to plan appropriate programs.
- All students will be provided with diaries.
- One well-planned pastoral care activity will occur during DEAR time each term.

Curriculum

Student Engagement: Senior Transition to Employment Program (STEP)

Background

The legislated change of the leaving age to seventeen has provided all schools with the challenge to make the curriculum relevant to young people who would prefer to leave school but who are unable to find full time work or training. While most students can be provided for by the existing, more traditional curriculum, this program was designed for the small number of students who were not suited to existing curriculum choices. Thirteen students began the STEP program which was designed to make them more work-ready and to provide them with opportunities to gain employment and training.

Evaluation of the program took place during 2010. The data was collected through a focus group of teachers, students and parents.

Findings and Conclusions

Eleven of the original thirteen students had, by the start of 2011, gained permanent employment or training. By that measure, the program could be said to be successful. The school’s commitment to quality teaching and learning was reflected in the approach to the provision of these courses. Students reported that they enjoyed their learning experiences.

Most students however reported, from a very early stage of the program, that they did not like being separated from their peers, and that a proportion of the student body had a negative perception of the program.

Some students and their parents asked to be removed from the program.

Future Directions

To address the negative connotations of the program, at the same time providing assistance for similar types of students, the following strategies have been initiated in 2011;

- All students make their subject choices from the regular school curriculum,
- The school has broadened its curriculum base to cater for the needs of these students. These include English Studies; Sports Lifestyle and Recreation (SLR); and Visual Design. These content endorsed courses aim to engage students at a level more suited to their abilities.
- The Transition Adviser and Careers Adviser will continue to work closely with the students to enable them to find appropriate career paths.
- Introduction of the Learning Coach initiative. The aim of this program is to link students who are at risk of not achieving their potential in the senior school to a teacher (or Learning Coach) who they choose. The Learning Coach works closely with the student to develop study skills and create a close working relationship with the student, enhancing the students’ chances of success.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2010, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school’s performance. This was achieved by surveying each group using Schoolmap. There were 141 parent responses; 253 student responses and 69 staff responses.

Generally, all of the group’s responses painted a favourable picture of the teaching and learning which takes place at Blakehurst High School.

Some examples of responses to various questions/statements about the school included;
1. Expectations of individuals are understood and promote excellence

2. Students work independently and collaboratively in a range of learning activities.

3. Learning opportunities are provided within a stimulating and secure environment.

Professional learning

The professional learning undertaken by teachers in 2010 was in line with priorities outlined in the School Management Plan 2009 - 2012. The three main areas were Quality Teaching, ICT in the classroom, Respectful Relationships and Leadership. Activities conducted during the 2010 Staff development Days included training in CPR and first aid, NAPLAN and HSC analysis and ICT skills development etc. In addition to the School Development Days, the school’s professional learning program consisted of a series of fortnightly workshops presented by members of staff on range of topics which reflected school priorities and identified staff needs. All members of staff attend and participate in these workshops. A group of teacher leaders and an executive group participated in action learning projects. The total Teacher Professional Learning budget in 2010 was $37494. The average expenditure per teacher was $493.

There were nine new scheme teachers working towards accreditation in 2010. There were fourteen new scheme teachers maintaining accreditation at professional competence during 2010.

As a result of the number of new scheme teachers at Blakehurst High School, a teacher mentor (Rebecca Turnbull) has been appointed for two years, beginning in 2011. The teacher mentor’s role is to work with new scheme and early career teachers (the first three years of their career) to develop and enhance their teaching skills.

School development 2009 – 2011

Our School Management Plan 2009 – 2012 developed collaboratively in consultation with our school community is aligned with our school values. The ongoing commitment is to achieving excellence in student outcomes. This is to be achieved through quality teaching, ongoing professional development of staff particularly in the area of ICT in the classroom and by building on links with our community and our feeder primary schools.

Targets for 2011

Target 1

Continue to develop an excellent performance and development culture

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- A restructure of the Professional Learning program to enable more in-depth learning activities to take place at the school level.
- The inclusion of professional reading in the weekly SIN.
- Identify and upskill emerging young leaders on the staff – provide professional learning opportunities where appropriate.
- Development of a numeracy committee to develop strategies to improve the numeracy skills of the students.
• Address literacy and numeracy strategies in EARs meetings.
• Professional learning activities developed for the Executive in areas of identified need eg Board of Studies procedures; leadership etc.

Our success will be measured by:
• Staff survey showing satisfaction with the new Professional Learning program.
• The embedding of literacy and numeracy strategies into teaching programs.
• Continued development of leadership skills within the executive; increased leadership density.
• Succession plans in place; an increase in the number of teachers applying for promotional positions.

Target 2
Continue improvements in ICT in the classroom
Strategies to achieve this target include:
• Devote the staff development day in Term 2, 2011 to ICT skill building – particularly DER.
• Targeted professional learning on Moodles and DER.

Our success will be measured by:
• Increased use of the laptops in the teaching and learning of all students in Years 9 to 11 in 2011.
• Increased use of the Moodle by all KLAs.

Target 3
Continue to develop excellent transition programs
Strategies to achieve this target include:
• Refine the roles of the senior and junior welfare co-ordinators now the positions have been created. This will include emphasis on attendance monitoring.
• Refine the role of the Transition adviser now that the position has been created.
• Revise the Year 6 to 7 transition program including Primary Links. Year 7 student advisers to be appointed early in 2011 to enable effective transition of students to Year 7, 2012.
• Broaden school curriculum offerings in the senior school for students staying on until the new leaving age of 17.

Our success will be measured by:
• Year 7 settling into secondary school more quickly and seamlessly.
• The successful transition of identified students to employment and/or training.
• A range of welfare programs successfully delivered eg SLAM, Study skills, anti-bullying etc.
• Improvement in overall attendance.
• A rise in the percentage of students who gain the HSC or equivalent.

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.

Mr Brad Lester – Principal.
Mrs Lynette Paton – Deputy Principal (Relieving).
Mr Tony Yelavich – Deputy Principal (Relieving).
Ms Sandra Horley – Head Teacher Teaching & Learning.
Ms Sylvia Sklavounos – Head Teacher Teaching and Learning.
Ms Linda O’Brien – Head Teacher Science.
Ms Kim Morris – School Administration Manager (relieving).
Mr Leo Andreone – President P&C Association.
Mr Lik Wong Yu – Student Representative President SRC.

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Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at: