

# 2010 Annual School Report Sylvania High School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way



## Our school at a glance

### Students

Our school boasts a diverse range of students who are both focused on their learning and abide by our values of rights, respect and responsibility. These key factors are reflected in the overwhelmingly positive learning culture of the school and the productive relationships that staff form with students and parents.

### Staff

The staff at Sylvania High School provide an enviable foundation for student learning. The complement of staff display a range of experience, but they are professional in their teaching practice and understand the importance of the ongoing development of their professional learning to ensure that our students are supported in their learning. To this end, the staff is committed to pursuing quality teaching and learning practices that use technology to underpin learning. All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

### Significant programs and initiatives

Mrs Henderson continued to facilitate the Premier's Volunteering Challenge in 2010 and the popularity of the program blossomed. After some 28 students were part of the program in the previous year, the scheme attracted around 90 students in 2010 with P. Marciano and B. Pultar winning the highest level of award. Both students worked at Sylvania Heights Veterinary Clinic on a Friday afternoon for nearly 18 months.

Mrs Vince continues her important work by integrating environmental education into the school's curriculum. Mrs Vince has used numerous grants, that she has successfully been awarded, to continue the *Ecorangers* program and has now established a school garden in which vegetables and fruit were grown in 2010. She was ably supported by SLOS, Mrs Mechelle Brunton. The school continues its recent tradition of Project Based Learning (PBL) and currently enjoys the

positive outcomes of 2010 projects in a variety of KLAs.

### Student achievement in 2010

K. Marhsall in Y12 Senior Science received 2<sup>nd</sup> place in Open High School while Laura Howell in Y12 received the \$4000 UNSW Academic Achievement Award.

M. Logan had her major work nominated for TEXSTYLES, a prestigious exhibition for outstanding HSC work in Textiles and Design.

In HSC Dance, C. Keene and N. Sheridan achieved Callback for their HSC Dance performances while E. Byrne achieved the school's highest ATAR with a result of 94.75

### Messages

#### Principal's message

Sylvania High School is a dynamic place for students to learn. The school is founded on the values of rights, respect and responsibility and it is these very values that underpin the overwhelming positive relationships that exist between, students, staff and parents.

In 2010, the school entered a phase in which the emphasis on project based learning increased and the overall tone within the school was reflected by exceptionally good student behaviour that contributed to the positive learning culture within the school. This year's work by our learning community has set an excellent platform for targets set by staff for 2011.

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.

**Mr Craig Brown Principal (rel)**

#### P & C and/or School Council message

In another busy year, the P&C continued hosting guests at many of our regular meetings. These were well attended and gave the parents of students an opportunity to hear in detail about a number of DET initiatives.

2010 saw the opening and operation of our P&C Uniform Shop. This shop allows parents to visit the school with their children before or after school on set days, as well as ordering on-line. A percentage of the sales from this shop come back to the P&C and are then available for major items we fund through the school. This year the income has paid for the purchase of athletics singlets for the School Representative Team, the fitting of carpet and fans in the shop and will next year provide the Blazers for the School Leadership Team.

The changes introduced last year by our parent-managed Canteen Committee saw more emphasis placed on a healthy eating program. This initiative was achieved through the employment of a canteen assistant to help prepare more food on site, rather than purchasing pre-prepared goods. In 2010 this gave us the opportunity to increase the range of food offered, as well as prepare healthier options. This program has in its early stages proved to lower wastage and return constant sales of student popular menu options. Canteen still relies on the parent volunteers who help out every day of the school year. P&C acknowledge this enormous effort and thank these volunteers for their contribution to the school.

P&C operates the School Watch team of registered volunteers who, if they observe potential misbehaviour on the school grounds after hours, ring a security number to have prompt attention. The volunteers for this program include some neighbours, local residents as well as staff and parents.

Transport issues, principally bus routes, parking at the front of the school, and other safety issues are regularly addressed through School Council, the bus companies and Police by P&C Transport sub-committee. In 2010 we looked at introducing a bus route from the Brighton - Sans Souci area and with strong growth from these areas in 2011 this may be achieved.

The Building Fund continues to grow. Parents are able to make a tax-deductible donation to this fund which is then used to improve building facilities in the school. This year these funds provided refurbishment of a staff room to facilitate the creation of the HSIIE faculty allowing the staff members to be located in one central location. The funds also allowed the infrastructure to be installed for a smart board in the English block.

Lobbying has always been one of the activities of the P&C. Finally at the end of 2010 the lobby efforts for improved school security through a new perimeter fence were rewarded and construction commenced in December. In 2010 we also continued to lobby for improvements to the Science labs and toilet blocks. A petition by our students was supported by the P&C and the whole school community and was presented to Mr Collier and tabled in Parliament late in 2010.

The School Council is the body which has allowed the prioritisation of the funds available for major school improvements from the Australian Government. This year, the canteen was also successful in receiving funds for refurbishment of the canteen through a NSW government initiative.

**Ron Kutcher President School Council**

## **Student representative's message**

New life was brought to the Student Representative Council (SRC) in 2010, under the supervision of Mrs Henderson. This year the SRC took a more student-led approach with students mainly from Year 11 taking on executive positions. The SRC also had its own Roll Call class to allow better communication between members. The SRC has been very busy over the year by being involved in both the school and wider community. There was a strong contingency of SRC members present at the ANZAC Dawn Service at Miranda. The SRC has also moved from strength to strength by having a

member participate in the NSW SRC Camp that was held in August.

The charities that the SRC supported during 2010 included Jeans for Genes, CanTeen – Kids with Cancer and Toys and Tucker. The SRC also took a very active role in the organisation and collation of the petition for new toilets and Science labs.

Students in the SRC have been actively involved in external activities such as ZONTA – Young Women in Public Affairs, Elevate – Youth Leaders Forum, Impact, Sydney Region SRC, Halogen – Building Young Leaders, Cyber Racism Summit, Oasis Youth Care Network and Youth Speak Sutherland Shire.

The SRC has had its most active participation that the school has seen in many years and is taking a more prominent role in the school community. The Captaincy Team has exciting new plans for next year's SRC and can't wait to develop the leadership within the school.

**Vanessa Kutcher SRC President 2010**

## School context

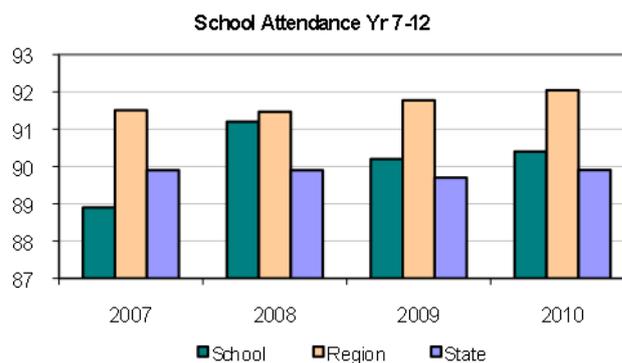
### Student information

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

### Student enrolment profile

While enrolments have been stable in recent years, there has been a gradual decline in the school's overall enrolment since 2007. This is principally an issue of a falling local demographic reflected in the enrolments of other like schools in the area.

## Student attendance profile



### Management of non-attendance

Our attendance rate is higher than state average in Years 7, 8 and 9. For Years 10, 11 and 12 attendance is still marginally below the state average. Overall, attendance is above state average for 2010.

Non-attendance is being addressed through improved procedures to monitor attendance and the introduction of regular checking of chronic absenteeism by student advisors who now work with the Deputy Principals and SAG to counsel students on the long term impact of absenteeism. Punitive measures have also been put in place where necessary.

### Structure of classes

In Years 7 and 8 there are usually between four to five classes. In 2010 an enrichment class was continued for gifted and talented students identified through testing, individual nomination, portfolio and teacher recommendation for years 7 and 8.

Of the remaining year 7 and 8 classes the top academic achievers were identified from primary school data and streamed to provide more challenging work for above average students. The remaining three classes are mixed ability.

In Years 9 and 10 class sizes are kept as small as possible, especially in practical classes and where specialist facilities are needed. For 2010, there were four core classes in Year 9 and five core classes in year 10

In Years 11 and 12 classes vary in size depending on demand for the course. Classes in languages, performing arts and some VET subjects often have less than twelve students.

## Retention to Year 12

### Post-school destinations

Of the 124 students who sat for the HSC in 2010:

- 53 have been offered places at university
- 26 have been accepted into TAFE courses
- 5 are studying at Private Colleges
- 13 have gained apprenticeships and traineeships
- 12 students are in full time employment while another 8 are in casual employment
- 5 students have been unable to be contacted

Of the 9 students who left school in Yr 11 last year:

- 1 is studying full time at TAFE
- 2 have apprenticeships
- 1 moved to another area
- 1 moved overseas
- 3 have full time jobs
- 1 has not been able to be contacted

Of the 17 students that left Y10 last year:

- 4 are studying at TAFE
- 3 have apprenticeships
- 1 has a traineeship
- 3 moved house and enrolled at new schools
- 4 changed schools
- 2 have gone overseas

### Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

Vocational and trade training courses were again popular at the school in 2010. There were some 34 students studying either within the school or off site that represented 28% of Year 12.

### Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification

Of the 120 candidates that presented for the HSC or an equivalent vocational qualification. 99% attained the credential. The 1% not gaining the credential was a first year HSC pathways student.

## Staff information

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

Sylvania High School has a qualified and committed staff. Our teachers are generally extremely experienced and have high levels of expertise in their subject area. Teaching staff are supported by eight clerical staff, a senior administration manager and specialist support in library, laboratories and kitchen areas.

### Staff establishment

Position	Number
Principal	1.0
Deputy Principal(s)	2.0
Assistant Principal(s)	0
Head Teachers	8.0
Classroom Teachers	38.0
Teacher of Emotional Disabilities	0
Teacher of Mild Intellectual Disabilities	0
Teacher of Reading Recovery	0
Support Teacher Learning Assistance	0.4
Teacher Librarian	1.0
Teacher of ESL	0.6
Counsellor	1.0
School Administrative & Support Staff	9.682
<b>Total</b>	<b>61.682</b>

At this time there is insufficient data to report on the indigenous composition of our school workforce

### Staff retention

In 2010 the school had one classroom teacher promoted to head teacher level at another school, one head teacher retired and one classroom teacher retired. There was one service transfer in 2010 and one classroom teacher was nominated for transfer as a result of a decrease in the school's staffing allocation.

### Teacher qualifications

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

Qualifications	% of staff
Degree or Diploma	75
Postgraduate	25

## 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
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$</b>
Balance brought forward	0.00
Global funds	0.00
Tied funds	0.00
School & community sources	0.00
Interest	0.00
Trust receipts	0.00
Canteen	0.00
<b>Total income</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	0.00
Excursions	0.00
Extracurricular dissections	0.00
Library	0.00
Training & development	0.00
Tied funds	0.00
Casual relief teachers	0.00
Administration & office	0.00
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	0.00
Maintenance	0.00
Trust accounts	0.00
Capital programs	0.00
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>0.00</b>

A full copy of the school's 2010 financial statement has been tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

## School performance 2010

The school demonstrated excellence in a range of curricular and extra-curricular areas. This excellence is now beginning to form a positive tradition within the culture of the school.

## Achievements

### Arts

Major Artworks for S. Pavlides and M. Logan were accepted into an exhibition at Hazelhurst Gallery of the best art works from the Sutherland Shire in 2010.

### Drama

J. Lundie in Year 12 was selected to the State Senior Drama Company, S. Christie in Year 8 to the State Junior Drama Ensemble. S. Barkman of Year 9 and B. Pultar of Year 10 were successful in auditioning for the Fresh Ink Writers Ensemble, a program for gifted and talented writers in Year 9 to 11. They worked with professional writers to develop their own plays that were then performed at The Australia Theatre for Young People.

Year 9 Drama attended a workshop at NIDA and developed their own clowning and comedy scripts which they performed to local primary schools as a part of the tour program. Our Intermediate theatre Sports Team participated in the Interschools Theatre Sports Competition.

Year 10 toured the Blue Mountains region with the band performing a show for primary schools. They also put on a full length production to family and friends undertaking directing, designing and backstage roles as well as performing.

Year 12 students attended NIDA workshops to help with the development of the Individual Project for the HSC.

### Sport

We had a number of students excel in a range of sporting pursuits and at a variety of levels. K. Riley continued to excel in 2010 at CHS waterpolo, while A. Ridges of Year 10 was successful in a place at state high jump. Soccer was particularly strong in 2010 with C. Howell

spending two terms in South America playing soccer, B. Hooper went to Italy to trial with Italian Club Roma and H. Morton represented Australia in the U17 soccer team.

Numerous students also trialled and were placed in representative sides including J. Brunton who represented in zone swimming, cross country and athletics, while the Open Boys Touch football finished in the final 16 of the State competition and the Boys Oz-Tag won the St George area competition.

### Academic

In 2010 students from Sylvania High School participated in the Australian Mathematics Competition and gained very impressive results. 8% of students achieved a Distinction and 36% of students achieved a Credit. For the past few years the result for Credits have been significantly above the national distribution. When results are broken into three sections, Senior, Intermediate and Junior the results are equally as impressive. In seniors, 6% gained a Distinction while 56% achieved a Credit. Intermediate candidates had 16% gain a Distinction and 37% gained a Credit. 8% of juniors were awarded a Distinction and 31% achieved a Credit. When broken down to each year group the results were equally impressive

Year 7 - 8% Distinction 20% Credit

Year 8 - 3% Distinction 34% Credit

Year 9 - 10% Distinction 22% Credit

Year 10 - 20% Distinction 50% Credit

Year 11 - 7% Distinction 47% Credit

Year 12 - 100% Credit

Congratulations to all students who participated in the competition and a special congratulation to T. Hamam who received the Prudence Award. This award is given to the student who correctly answered the most number of consecutive questions.

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.

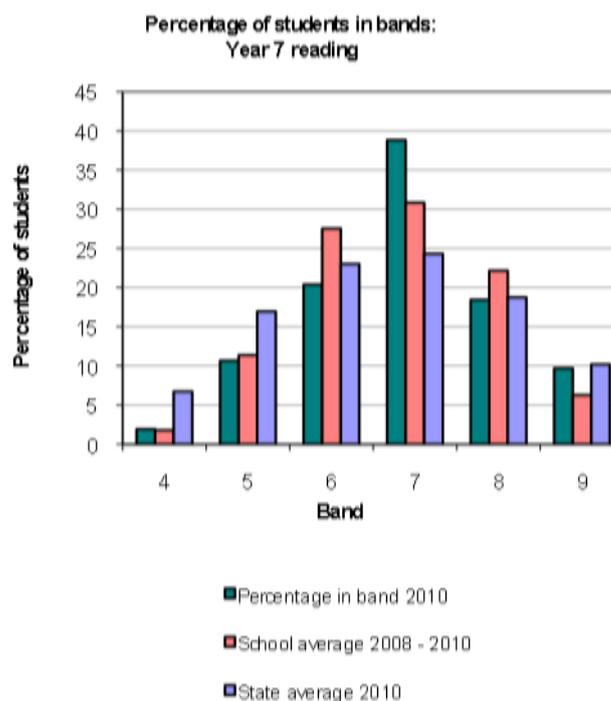
Yr 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)

Yr 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

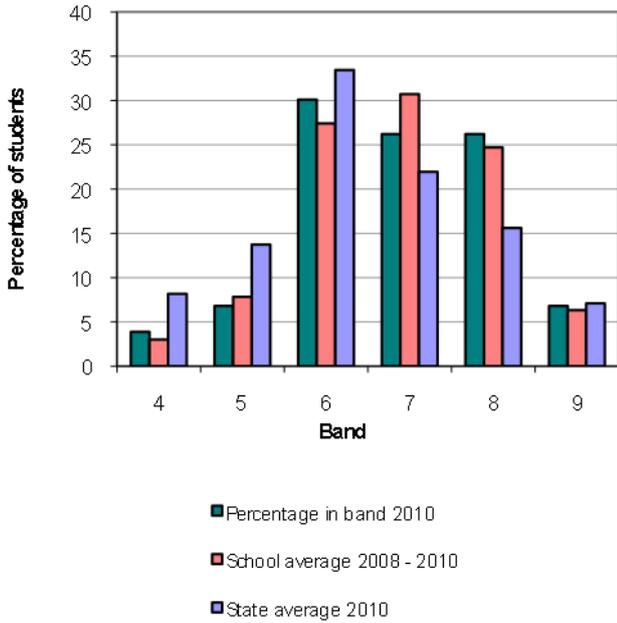
In the School Certificate the performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from Performance Band 1 (lowest) to Performance Band 6 (highest).

### Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7

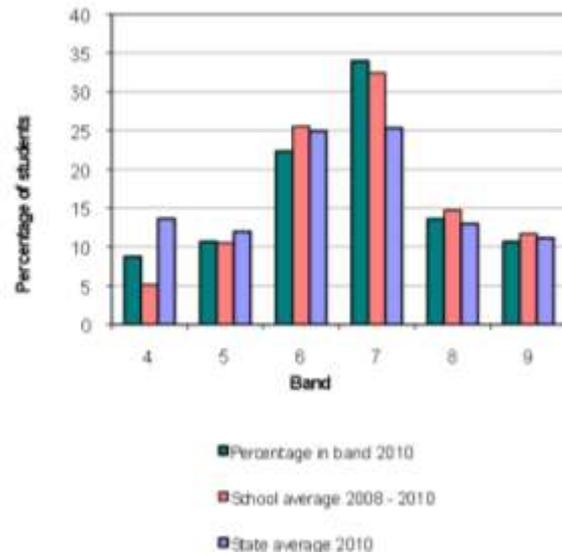
In aspects of literacy, including reading, writing, spelling and punctuation, the school achieved very good results in the higher bands. The school was generally above or near to state average in bands 7, 8 and 9



Percentage of students in bands:  
Year 7 writing



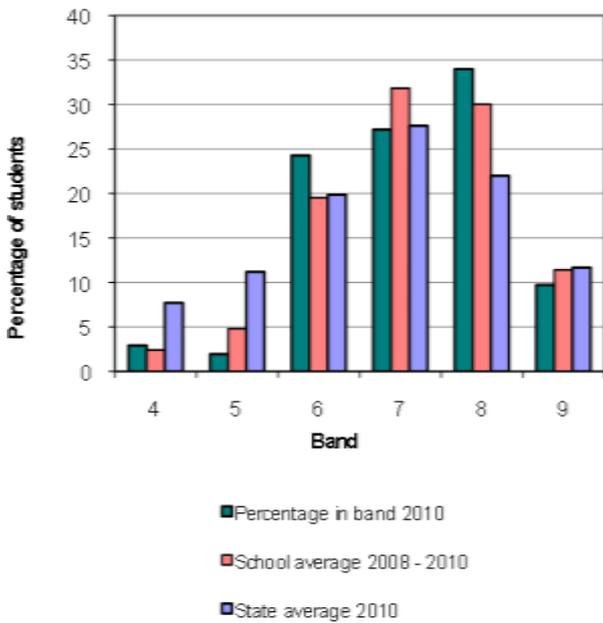
Percentage of students in bands:  
Year 7 grammar and punctuation



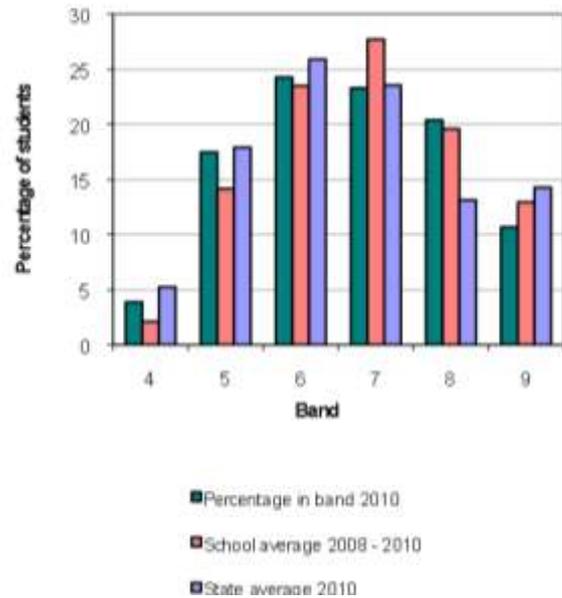
### Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7

In numeracy the pattern of results were similar to literacy. Once again, the school was generally higher or near to state average for bands 7, 8 and 9 with a corresponding lower level compared to state average in bands 4, 5 and 6.

Percentage of students in bands:  
Year 7 spelling

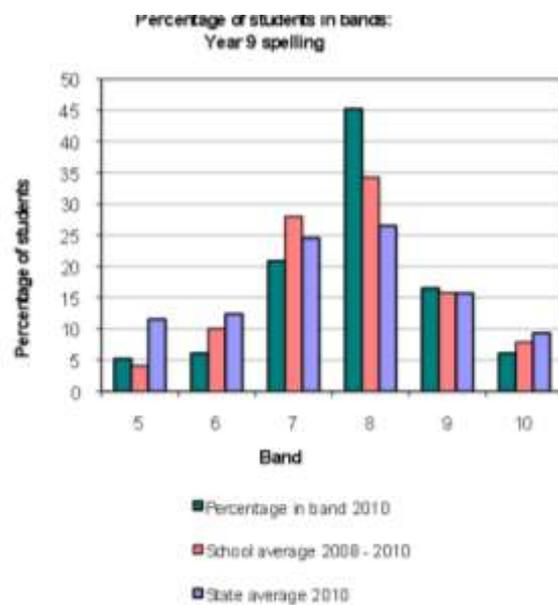
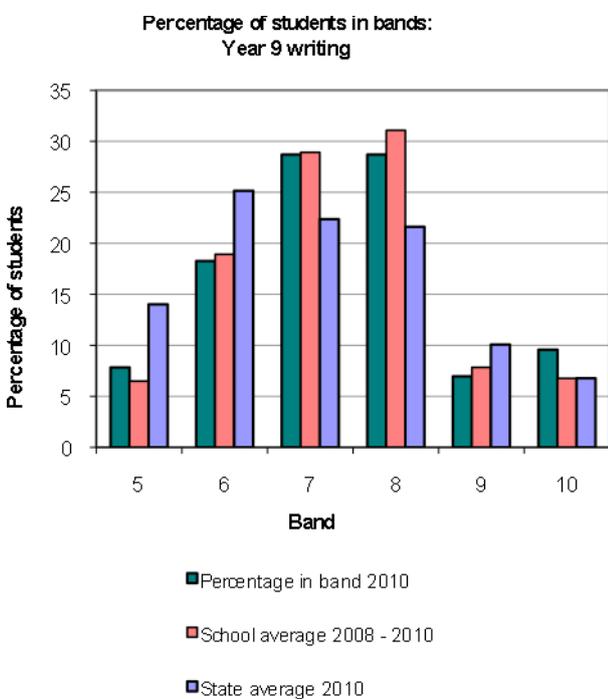
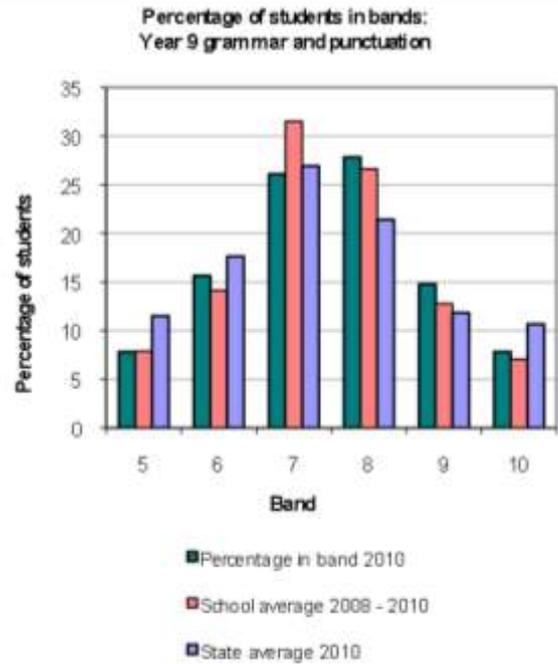
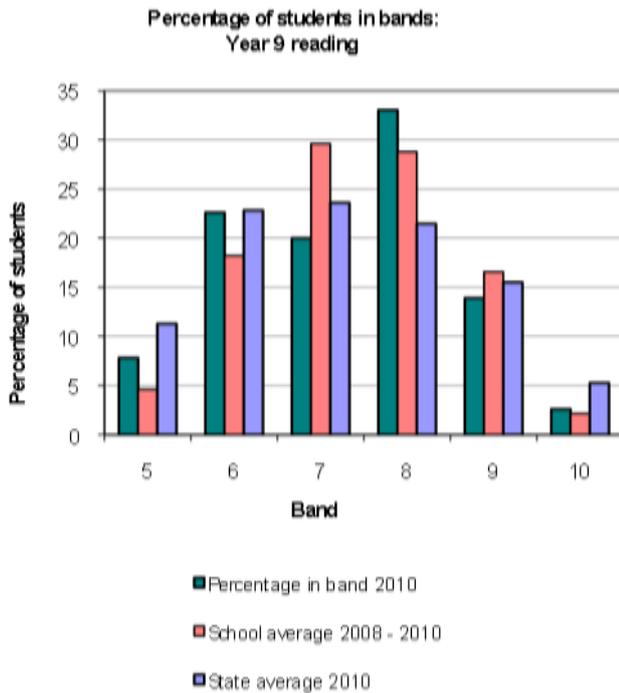


Percentage of students in bands:  
Year 7 numeracy



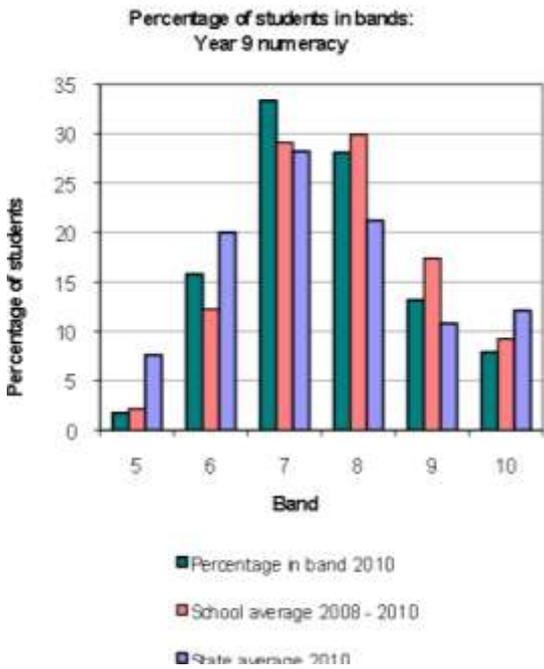
## Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9

The achievement of students in Year 9 literacy showed a similar trend to that in Year 7. Again, in all aspects of literacy the school was higher or near the state average in the higher bands and typically of lesser value in the lower bands.



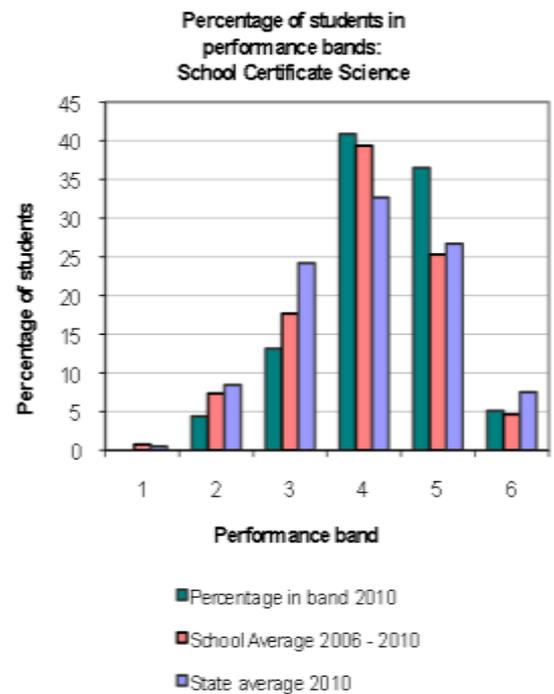
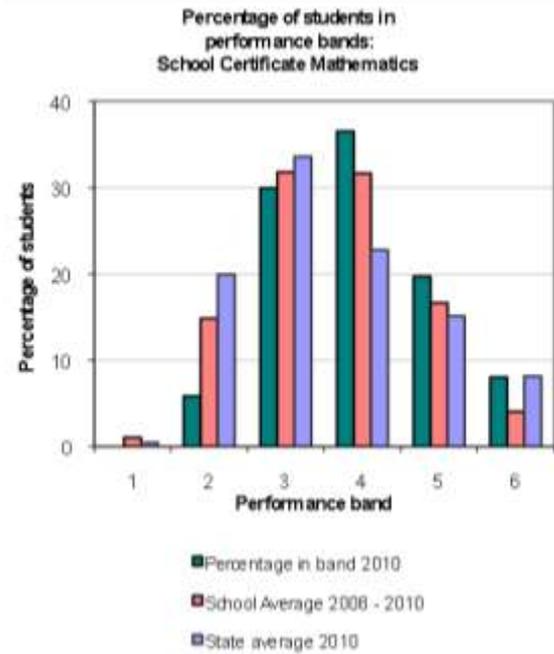
## Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9

In numeracy in Year 9 students again achieved either well above or near state average in the higher bands with the highest band being typically the lowest of the top band performance.

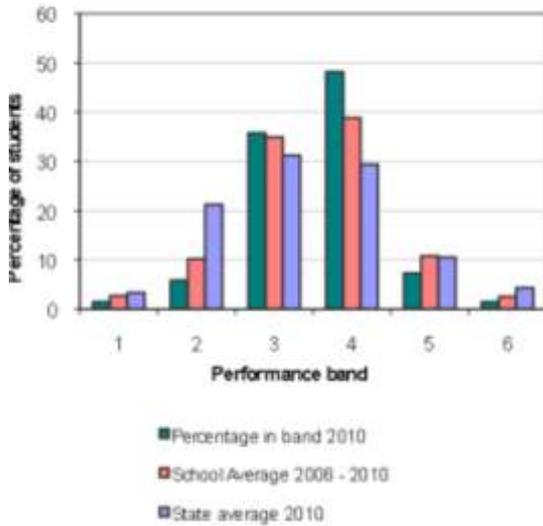


## School Certificate

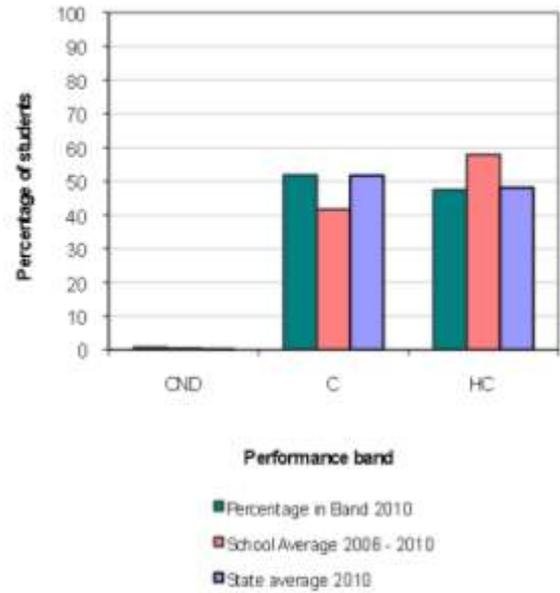
In the School Certificate the school performed very well. The pattern of the overall results tended to mirror those of the individual subjects of Science, Mathematics, English and Australian Geography/History Civics and Citizenship. In particular, the school out performed the state in bands 4 and 5 with the number of band 6 results being near or below that of the state,



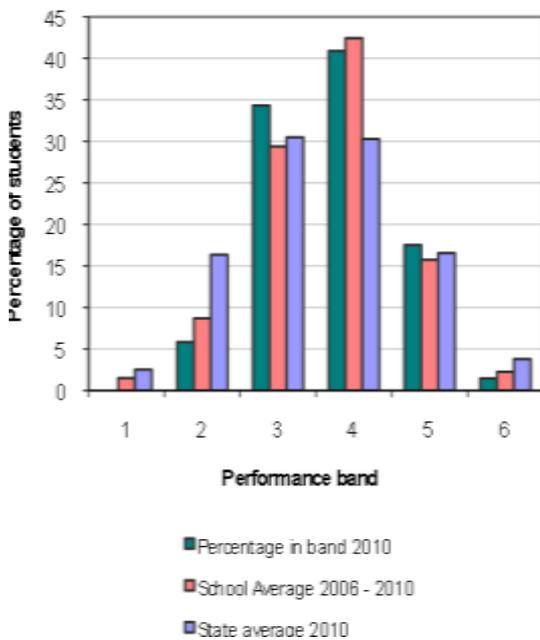
Percentage of students in performance bands: Australian History, Civics and Citizenship



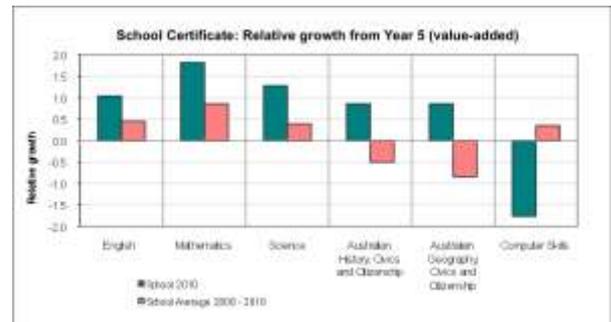
Percentage of students in performance band: Computer Skills



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

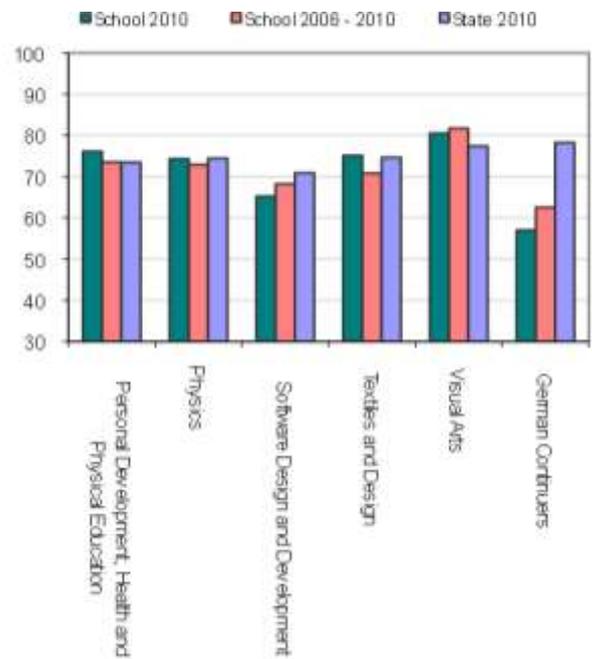
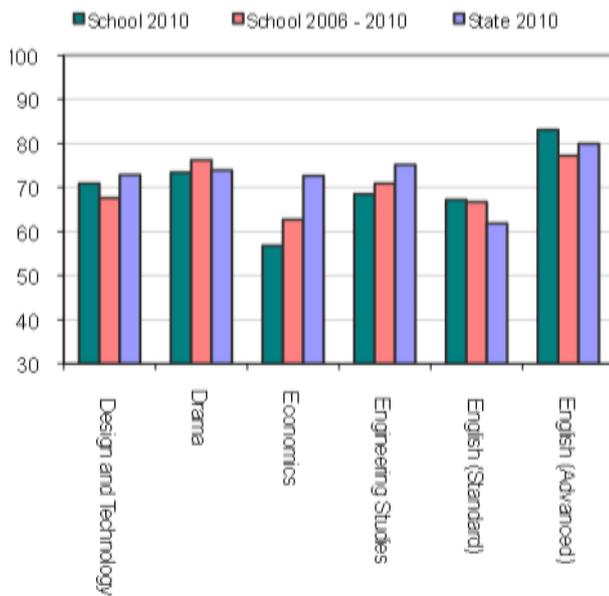
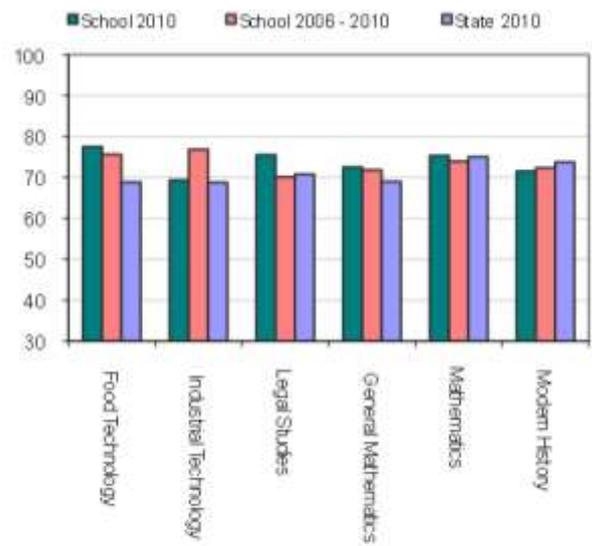
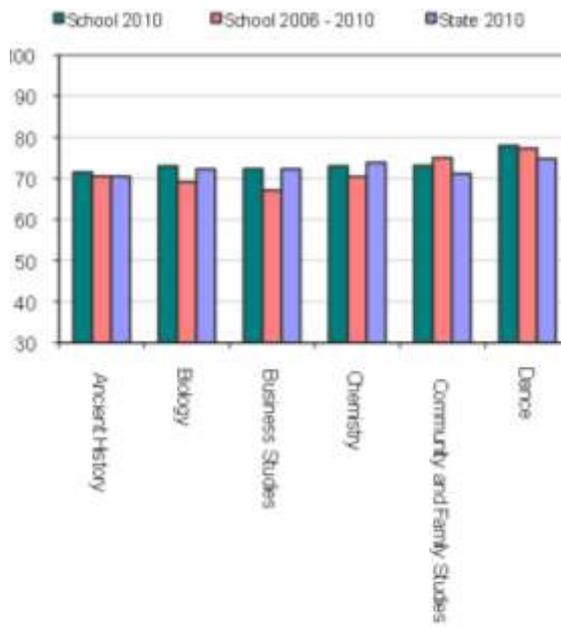


### School Certificate relative performance comparison to Year 5 (value-adding)



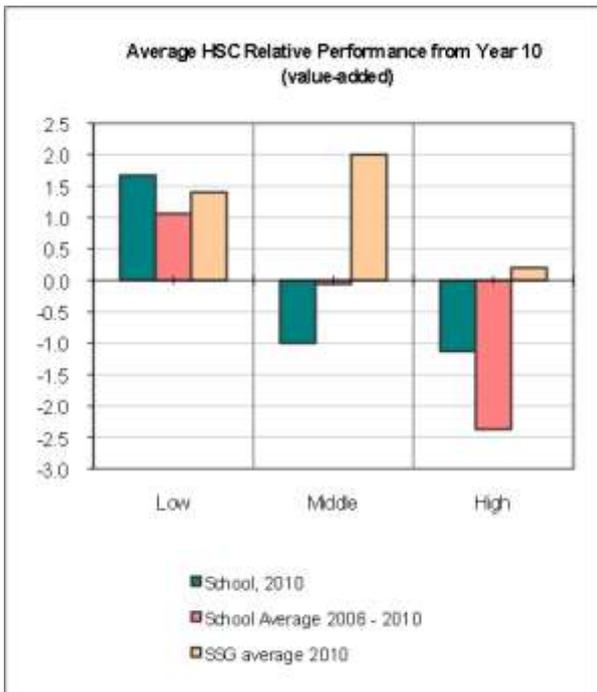
### Higher School Certificate

Higher School Certificate results were generally very good in 2010. With the exception of only three subjects, school results compared to the state were near or well above state averages.



### Higher School Certificate relative performance comparison to School Certificate (value-adding)

In terms of value added, the school showed a positive result for the lower performing students and slightly negative values for middle and higher performing students. The latter two areas will need further investigation for the future.



### 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*

#### Minimum Standard Information

Percentage of Year 7 students achieving at or above minimum standard	
Reading	98.1
Writing	96.1
Spelling	97.1
Punctuation and grammar	91.3
Numeracy	96.1

### *Percentage of Year 9 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2010*

Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at or above minimum standard	
Reading	92.2
Writing	92.2
Spelling	94.8
Punctuation and grammar	92.2
Numeracy	98.3

### Significant programs and initiatives

#### Aboriginal education

The school has an extremely small percentage of indigenous students but nevertheless caters for the needs of this group by encouraging participation not only in the full range of school programs but also the many Sydney Region and statewide initiatives that are advertised from time to time. The school also ensures that non-indigenous students have an understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal culture by complying with the integration of Aboriginal Education in all KLA programs.

#### Multicultural education

At Sylvania High School 32% of students come from cultural backgrounds where English is not the first language. The ethos of the school is that all students are respected and valued and the school community promotes tolerance and understanding for each other.

In 2010, the school's celebration of diversity was through *Harmony Day* enjoyed with much enthusiasm by staff and students. A sense of unity was promoted as the school dressed in orange and enjoyed speeches; harmony messages; costume parade; special guest

performers; food stalls and cultural acts portraying the message of harmony.

### **Respect and responsibility**

Apart from the extensive work done by staff and students in the Premier's Volunteering Program, the school continues to support charities and disaster appeals via the SRC such as the Queensland Flood appeal and the support of residents at various local retirement villages.

### **Connected learning**

The school continues to develop technology to underpin learning. 2010 saw the Technology Committee take a whole school approach to connected learning. An audit was instigated to establish the current infrastructure available to support learning across all KLAs. The P&C released \$20,000 to establish and finalise a number of ceiling mounted data projectors across the school. Three IWBs are now in the school and the staff continues to develop their skills in using DER laptops as the second phase of this project occurred. The school will continue to develop technology across the school in 2011 with a further release of funds for a range of digital technologies. Most notably in 2010, connected learning met transition and retention as the school piloted an initiative use video conferencing to hook up with our local primary feeder schools which was met with considerable praise.

### **Other programs**

#### **The Macquarie ICT Innovations Centre Virtual Worlds Project**

In 2010, 7S was involved in a project with MacICT (The Macquarie ICT Innovations Centre) at Macquarie University creating a cafe in a Virtual World. MacICT is a collaborative agreement between the NSW Department of Education and Macquarie University which provides the opportunity for NSW DET schools access to the use of innovative technologies in teaching and learning.

Sylvania High School was one of two high schools in the State to be participating in projects with MacICT in 2010. The aim of the project for 7S was to design and create a cafe suitable to be used in conjunction with the new Trade Training Centre which is due to begin construction in 2011. The cafe was created in a virtual world- a 3D computer environment in which users are represented onscreen as themselves or as made up characters and can interact in real time with other users. These representations are called **avatars** and the world is called *Trinity*. Students learnt about flexible learning spaces, the Hospitality industry, sustainability of resources, the design process and developed creative thinking and problem solving skills.

The project required several visits by our students to Macquarie University for training days as well as Mac ICT staff visiting Sylvania High School to support the new and emerging technologies. The students showcased their avatars at the opening of the new Auditorium. Added to this, four students were chosen to participate in an international conference in Melbourne to highlight the collaboration between Sylvania High School and Mac ICT on this project. An expert from the U.K. in the field of learning spaces, Professor Stephen Heppell, was present and was impressed with the work students in 7S had produced and their capacity to embrace and master innovative technologies.

### **Volunteering**

This year saw the Volunteering Program go from strength to strength. There are approximately 90 students from Years 7-10 volunteering at three venues across four days of the week. Students are also strongly encouraged to volunteer their time within the school at events such as Open Night, Orientation Day, Harmony Day and assemblies.

Years 9 and 10 students participated in the NSW Premier's Student Volunteering Awards Program and this resulted in five students receiving

awards. Two students received Diamond Awards, which is the highest level of award, and this recognises 80 hours of volunteering across the two Years in 9 and 10. It should be noted that time devoted to volunteering outside of school also can accumulated as hours towards these awards.

There is a strong base of volunteers in Years 7 and 8 and it is expected that these students will participate in the NSW Premier's Student Volunteering Awards Program next year and the following year to further strengthen the program within the school.

We are looking to expand the volunteer program in 2011 to include new venues, times and opportunities for students to participate.

A special thank you to our host venues in 2010:

- Frank Vickery Village
- Time 4 Kindy
- Sylvania Heights Primary School
- Sylvania High School

Students enjoyed a wide range of activities at the venues including Peer Reading at the primary school, morning activities and exercises with the elderly residents, outside play with the toddlers and assisting the technical crew here at Sylvania High School.

The program has received very positive feedback both from the students and their hosts and all host venues will continue their commitment to the program in 2011.

### **Eco Rangers**

'Serve, learn and change the world', Eco Rangers motto, has continued to inspire us in 2010 and enabled us to continue our worthwhile service learning while developing a wide range of life and leadership skills.

Early in the year we responded to the Haiti disaster by raising over \$300 with an ice cream stall at school which we donated through School Aid Trust to school children in Haiti.

We continued our three year community partnership with Our Lady of the Way Retirement Court, the bonds growing even stronger with the help of the \$50,000 grant awarded last year to Eco Rangers through NAB's Schools First Project. As award recipients in its inaugural year, the funds have enabled Eco Rangers to purchase equipment to enhance students' leadership skills. However, the biggest benefit by far has been the ability to employ Mrs Brunton in a part time capacity to work with the class teacher and assist in organising visits and liaise closely with the Retirement Court residents. Her enthusiasm and boundless energy have been contagious and greatly benefited our special community partnership. We have continued to assist in the retirement court garden, helped residents with individual needs and hosted the residents at school for a celebratory afternoon tea. The benefits of this partnership continue to be numerous and reciprocal for the students and residents alike and we look forward to continuing our partnership for years to come. The remainder of the Schools First funding will be put to good use again next year to further enhance our special community partnership.

A large but enjoyable task in 2010 has been the establishment of our school garden in the grounds adjacent to the back oval with the grant we received from the NSW Environmental Trust as part of Eco Rangers Wipe Out Waste (WOW)

initiative. We have enjoyed the hard work to set up the garden, worm farm and mulching. The project became a joint effort with Mr King and his construction class erecting a security fence around the area. We are growing herbs for use in the kitchen and canteen as well as strawberries, tomatoes, beans and sunflowers.

Eco Rangers' students took part in the Federal Round Table conference on Business-School Connections to advise the Prime Minister on school community partnerships. Past and present Eco Rangers made valuable, insightful and informative suggestions to the Foundation for

Young Australians facilitators who took their ideas back to Canberra to provide suggestions for other schools to develop community partnerships.

Eco rangers have also continued recycling in the school this year and hope to improve the school's sustainability initiatives even further next year. After winning the Beyond Earth Hour challenge in 2009, our \$1000 prize has purchased light switch timers to help reduce our carbon footprint.

After learning of a very worthwhile organisation, Nepcam Trust, from a guest speaker who visited our class, Mrs Curtis from DET, we are now sponsoring poor communities in Cambodia and Nepal. Our Cadbury Chocolate drive has enabled us to send around \$500 to Nepcam's children's education fund. We intend to continue to support this very worthwhile, not for profit organisation next year as well and plan a trip to Cambodia to meet the orphans we are sponsoring and help build houses for their communities in the future. 2010 was another very productive year for Eco Rangers who have lived up to our motto well!

#### **Dianne Vince Eco Rangers Coordinator**

#### **Progress on 2010 targets**

The targets for 2010 were the second year of the three year plan 2009 – 2011

#### **Target 1.**

**Increase the number of staff who undertake professional learning to create an engaging learning environment.**

Our achievements included:

- 138 days attendance by staff at professional development.

• These days focused on a range of professional learning directly connected to school targets. Highlights included:

- Ongoing upgrading and retraining of staff in Hospitality and VET network meetings;
- Design and Technology and Industrial Technology Syllabus Support workshops;
- Retraining for staff in Engineering Studies;
- Resuscitation and first aid certificate training;
- The Mac ICT Virtual World project;
- Volunteering training;
- Accidental Counsellor training;
- Welfare training;
- Subject Specific Conferences in History, Business Studies, Society and Culture; and
- Moodle inservice and ICT, Captivate.

Staff reported back about the usefulness of inservices and developed other staff on teaching and learning strategies and other skills.

#### **Target 2**

▪ **Identify areas where value added data for literacy, numeracy and the School Certificate needs to be increased.**

▪ Our achievements included:

- A focus at all staff development days on practical ways in which staff can improve identified elements of both literacy and numeracy in light of NAPLAN and School Certificate data;
- Staff working on specific areas of subject based programs to integrate key aspects of literacy and numeracy;
- Key staff attending specific courses in literacy to develop skills for school based staff development; and

- Executive staff collaborating to learn the functioning of SMART 2 as a tool to inservice their own staff to distribute the necessary analytical skills within their faculty to improve literacy and numeracy.
- **Target 3:**
- **Implement the Cyber Bullying pilot program to promote safe use of technology by all staff and students**
- Our achievements included:
  - Implementing a whole school approach to cyber safety through the implementation of specific strategies within targeted faculty areas including English's Year 7 Anti-Bullying unit and Drama workshops targeting the effects of cyber bullying;
  - Students across all years participated in a 2 period cyber safety workshop entitled, 'Let's fight it together'. Students explored the risks associated with cyber bullying;
  - Selected welfare staff participated in cyber safety training and development led by ACMA;
  - Utilisation of our Anti-bullying brochure which includes cyber bullying;
  - A cyber smart guide has been included in student diaries which outlines the necessary steps to follow if a student is cyber bullied;
  - Parent workshops implemented for Year 6-7 parents during Orientation day on cyber safety;
  - • Year 7-8 students participated in a theatre workshop entitled, 'Cyber Shorts' where they explored the consequences of on-line actions;
  - SRC students participated in a one-day cyber safety leadership workshop where we investigated the implementation of e-smart program to encourage the smart, safe and responsible use of technology; and
- • Head Teacher Welfare and Computing Head Teacher updating school website to include cyber safety information for parents/caregivers.
- **Target 4:**
- **Expand new technologies into specialist areas to support the Digital Education revolution DER**
- Our achievements included:
  - The Virtual world project for 7S and the relationship established with Mac ICT;
  - Establishment and training of staff in Moodle;
  - Completion of wireless networking in school to include auditorium and administration block;
  - Networking of TAS staff room;
  - Development of Y9 digital research skills;
  - Installation of an additional 2 IWBs;
  - Completion, repair and establishment of 7 ceiling mount projectors, screens, speakers and patch panels;
  - Training of staff in the use of One Note and Ketchup;
  - Establishment of a new website and staff training in Joomla and eNews;
  - Training of executive staff in Edval timetabling software;
  - Training of all staff in Edval Whereis for calendar and all room booking; and
  - Establishment of Windows Terminal Server and training of staff for at home access of school network.
- **Target 5:**
- **Complete projects to implement sustainable use of school resources**
- Our achievements included:

- Construction students building a school garden. The school garden includes worm farm, mulching, recycling, and a vegetable garden;
- Use of school garden herb produce in the TAS faculty;
- Sydney Water challenge participation;
- Reduced paper use by use of DER laptops;
- Installation of Water tanks for toilets and watering;
- Installation of Solar panels to feed electricity back into the grid;
- Production of School Environmental Management Plan;
- Wipe Out Waste participation; and
- Renovation of HSIE Staffroom and administration block Included recycling of bricks, plants, rock, water feature, bridge and doors.

### ▪ **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 2010 our school carried out evaluations of whole school assessment for learning and the Performing Arts faculty

### **Educational and management practice**

The school undertook a number of surveys of staff and students with regard to assessment for learning.

#### **Background**

Assessment has many purposes but a key aspect is assessment that will contribute to improved learning outcomes for students.

### **Findings and conclusions**

A comprehensive sample of students and staff were surveyed using online technologies and data was then analysed by the senior executive. For students it revealed that they generally understand the concept of assessment for learning. Students commented specifically on their understanding of how school staff have specifically developed literacy skills but also that the use of assessment tasks to improve their own learning was explicit and integrated into lessons and especially the feedback provided both in writing and orally when assessment tasks were returned. Similarly, teachers reported that assessment for learning was key to their assessment practices especially when feedback was provided in summative assessment.

### **Future directions**

The school needs to continue the currently identified good practices in this area but further thought must be given to the nature and type of formative assessment and how assessment for learning may play a role in this area. The Senior Executive need to continue their collaboration with other executive staff in the development of both best practice in assessment task design but also in how teachers best provide constructive feedback to improve learning in their specific subject areas. To this end it may be prudent to consider extending the current composition of the assessment team beyond those staff who are executive teachers and provide ongoing training to classroom teachers in best practice for assessment.

### **Curriculum**

In 2010 the Performing Arts faculty was evaluated as part of the schools' self evaluation cycle. The cycle has been operating for four years and is part of ongoing monitoring and supervision practices.

### **Background**

Faculty evaluation is a process which weighs up data from a variety of sources and provides feedback on the teaching and learning within a faculty.

Performing Arts was identified as a faculty with good results, a committed staff and good student relationships.

The faculty negotiated with Senior Executive to determine which aspects of the faculty needed reviewing and worked with the senior executive to establish the terms of reference.

The terms of reference focused on three areas: organisation, resources and teaching practice.

### **Findings and conclusions**

These were broken into the three strands of the Performing Arts Faculty; namely Dance, Drama and Music.

#### **Teaching Practice -Dance**

- Students appear clear on assessment requirements.
- Students have the opportunity to direct their learning within the assessment structure.
- Behaviour expectations are clear.
- Students are able to participate in theory and practical work.
- Students have an excellent knowledge base.
- Evidence of the Quality Teaching Framework is explicit in lessons i.e. Metalanguage, Connectedness, Substantive communication, Engagement, Background knowledge and Explicit quality criteria.
- Both teachers use a variety of techniques to engage class from demonstration to repetition.
- Both teachers are most able practitioners.
- Technology evident in assessment task used by teacher and students.

#### **Organisation –Dance**

- Communication between the two Dance teachers was effective using email, text and telephone despite the position being shared as a 0.6/04 split.

There has been an increase in the availability of performance resources with the new auditorium

however there is scope for specific resourcing as described in the recommendations.

#### **Teaching Practice -Music**

- All parents interviewed were very positive regarding the music course. All found that confidence in playing and or practicing was improved due to school input and believed skills were worthwhile.
- Parents generally felt that teacher direction was clear and the tasks must be ones that the students are either capable of or are interested in.
- Parents were very happy with music in general. The parents of music students were very pleased with all aspects of the faculty and course while those parents with non-musical students were happy that they were being exposed to this skill and felt that it was shown to them in a positive way.
- It was nearly unanimous that practical was by far the best aspect of music classes. This is strongly reinforced by student survey data. Performing for themselves or in front of their peers to assisting others in a variety of musical tasks.
- Most replied that all homework and tasks were communicated by the teacher.
- The practical aspect dominated. To learn different song(s) and pieces of music was the most unique aspect with the added enjoyment of challenging yourself with being able to learn at your own pace and that you can teach yourself to a certain degree.
- A variety of answers came through on the question of what aspects of learning in music that students were proud. Learning a new song, playing a new instrument, playing in front of peers, gaining a fantastic result of 99% in a theory test, leaving with more musical knowledge

then before. Confidence in playing and understanding was also noted.

- Year 7 and 8 Music students talked about how much they enjoyed the practical classes, that it was a relaxed environment to learn and that there was “no right or wrong “. Students were able to discuss the teaching styles of their different teachers and how each benefitted them.
- Parents all said how much their children “loved “ and were “passionate“ about the subject. They all felt that the programs, the teaching and the extra experiences that students received supported their child. They all reported seeing a development in skills and confidence. All wanted their child to be challenged.
- They felt that the use of tutors had been worthwhile and that they had enjoyed seeing students in various performance situations.
- Both parents and students were happy and prepared to do things outside of school hours.

#### **Organisation –Music**

- Parents were aware of the out of hours that the staff put in when it comes to band and performances. Some were very impressed at the amount of information and demonstration of their craft at events like Orientation and Open days.
- Year 7 students generally felt that the lessons were well organised.
- Students specifically described benefit from:
  - The practical nature and authentic learning in music
  - Music’s close association with personal identity.
  - One-on-one feedback;
  - The unique nature of the learning environment and the contrast of learning styles with other subjects;
  - Activities that are not permissible in other subjects, e.g. listening to music, individual freedoms;

- Music teachers who care about their learning and ensure classes are well managed.

#### **Resources - Music**

- Students specifically described benefit from:
  - Excellent infrastructure and facilities.
  - Resources such as the keyboards and acoustic guitars (see also maintenance comments below);
- **Teaching Programs - Drama**
- The lessons observed involved all students in active and student centred learning. The learning outcomes were communicated clearly at the beginning of each class and the expectations of students were given in written and spoken instructions. The use of the metalanguage of Drama was present and students had a good knowledge of the terms relevant to the task.
- The students of Drama all felt that they knew what was expected of them in the classroom. The established routine of entering, changing or shoes off and starting warm-ups allowed them to feel ready to work. The students talked about “ looking forward to their classes “ and “ that the time went so quickly”
- This was reinforced in all interviews with the students with comments such as “ I really like the glossary that we do because I feel as though I now something special about Drama and can use the right words”.
- In class feedback was given at a number of points in the lesson, as a way of guiding students in the work they were about to do as well as to comment on the work just presented to the class. In interviews, the students also talked about how much they enjoyed the variety

of evaluation techniques used – video, self-assessment and peer assessment as well as teacher feedback.

- Students were all proud of the work they did in the Performing Arts. The work that they most valued was that which they had developed themselves. The students and parents did comment on how they felt that their experience in the Performing Arts had impacted on other subjects positively and helped them with group work and presentations.
- Students and parents felt that lessons and assessment tasks were well organised and that the teachers were clear on what they wanted to achieve each lesson. Both students and parents felt that assessment tasks were clear and relevant and that students knew what was expected of them and how they could improve for the next assessment.
- Students of Drama talked about how much they enjoyed the practical nature of the subjects and how this allowed for “so much self expression” and was “never boring” because “everyone gets to do things. Year 7 & 8 Music students talked about how much they enjoyed the practical classes, that it was a relaxed environment to learn and that there was “no right or wrong “. Students were able to discuss the teaching styles of their different teachers and how each benefitted them
- The students discussed the use of laptops and how they could be difficult to use and how easily they were distracted by other things on the laptop. They saw some value for them in recording and for theory work but not for other aspects of their work.

#### • **Organisation – Drama**

- Teaching programs showed a clear understanding of the syllabus.
- Faculty minutes were kept and meetings were held.
- Roles and responsibilities were outlined in Faculty documents.

#### • **Resources - Drama**

- The students liked the teaching environment and regarded it as a safe and comfortable place to learn. They particularly liked the flexibility of the learning space. The classrooms had interesting and relevant displays to reinforce curriculum content. The air conditioning, mirrors, lighting and sound equipment made delivery of support materials effective and were used effectively in lessons.
- Budgets were seen as satisfactory although there was recognition that more funds were needed for development in technology

#### **Future directions**

The following are recommendations arising from the review:

#### **Teaching Programs – Drama**

- Staff be inserviced on possible uses of laptops in their classroom.

#### **Organisation – Drama**

- The issue of the small number of boys in Drama be a focus and strategies for developing that be considered.
- Students suggested longer periods so that more effective group work and practical work could be achieved.

## Communication

### Staff to staff

- Regular Faculty meetings that all staff can attend.
- Development of a common Performing Arts Faculty goal.
- Time for feed back to other staff on Professional Development.
- Planning Days to develop such things as a performance calendar and an ensembles calendar to avoid clashes.
- Development of a coordinated plan to identify prospective students from primary and Year 8 and Year 10

### Executive to Staff

- Regular communication with PA staff to look at prioritising school performances.
- A development of a school plan for performances both in and out of school.
- A plan to focus on the next stage of development of the Performing arts – New courses e.g. video courses and new directions – e.g. Boys involvement /ICT
- Development of an equitable plan for distribution of allowances and responsibilities in the faculty.

### Faculty to School Community

- Students suggested that there be a student representative from each subject – or at least one from PA overall to promote and see possibilities.
- A plan to involve Year 7 and 8 students in Drama programs as Yr 7 and 8 students who were interviewed felt that they didn't have enough knowledge to make a decision about Drama as an elective.
- The students thought that more promotion within the school would benefit the subject through school assemblies and to other classes.
- Identifying effective forms of communication – school notice board, newsletters, information nights.

### Parents:

- Wanted more performances in school.
- Recognition for the extra work performing arts students do.
- More exposure to the work of other students in other schools.
- More information about the benefits of the Performing Arts for the HSC.
- 

### Resources – Drama

- Students discussed then need for clothing e.g. – shorts / drama uniform/ tights – to allow for the more active nature of drama.
- The improvement of security in the Drama rooms.
- The improvement and inservicing of computer programs and associated technology
- Consideration of sound control in Drama rooms to reduce strain on teacher and student voices.

### Parents:

- Like to hear more – not necessarily quantity but quality and variety.
- Technology needs development – computers, recording, and editing.
- Use parents as a resource.

### Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2010 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented below.

*“Sylvania High School is small enough to cater for the needs of each child and yet large enough to provide a variety of educational programs, specialist teachers and facilities.”*

*“Working in partnership with the local primary schools, parents and local community, Sylvania High School is a provider of quality teaching and learning for all.”*

*“Sylvania High School provides many opportunities for primary school children to come to the school and be a part of it. My younger son is in year five at Sylvania public school and has*

*thoroughly enjoyed his visits to the high school and is looking forward to going there in 2013."*

*"We have always found the teaching staff / administration staff to be very skilled and caring towards all the children."*

*"It has been a pleasure to be involved with the P and C and get to meet some of the other fantastic parents from the school."*

*"There is a good feel about the school."*

*"I find the culture of SHS to be one of a harmonious nature. It instills in all students the need to respect each other and to work together as a whole community."*

*I find the educational standard to be very high. The support that the teaching faculty has for each other and the students is one of excellence. The faculties at SHS are of a very high standard. The teaching staff's goal is to show each student that their potential is there for the taking and that anything can be achieved. The support that the teachers show to those students whose needs are greater is also one which SHS can be proud of. No matter the learning ability of our students, the teaching staff is willing at all times to support and nurture them to their potential and sometimes beyond.*

*"Our students' willingness to participate in whole school functions whether it be sport, dancing/music or "Open Night" programs is one that SHS can be proud of. The support that the students show to those who visit our school on Open Night demonstrates that this is a great school to attend and that it has many opportunities to offer our students."*

*"The staff at SHS is of a high quality. The staff frequently give of their spare time to assist and participate in extra curricula activities. This demonstrates their willingness to be a part of the broader community within which Sylvania High School is located."*

*"I have been impressed by seeing opportunities for:*

- \* Inter school debating and mock trials*
- \* Overseas trips for language students*

*\* Drama, band and dance activities outside school*

*\* Subjects like Eco Rangers which takes learning outside both the classroom and the school grounds*

*Encouraging students to take on leadership opportunities, or to enter competitions outside the school which stimulate learning (eg energy saving) .*

### **Professional learning**

In 2010 the school allocated funds to a number of professional learning initiatives.

### **School development 2009 – 2011**

The school developed 3 targets for the final phase of the 2009-2011 plan.

#### **Targets for 2011**

##### **Target 1**

**Increase Year 7 student enrolments for Year 7 2012 by 10% and retain Year 11 students over 95%.**

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Consultation within the CoSAW to further identify curriculum and welfare links across the schools for increased joint leaning initiatives.
- Planning and implementation of a KLA links days where Stage 3 students from CoSAW and out of area feeder schools can experience life at Sylvania High School
- Information dissemination to non-feeder primary schools who traditionally have enrolments at the school.
- Promotion of the school as the destination for Stage 6 studies in Y10 cohort via formal and informal meetings.
- • Exploration of strategies and pathways to assist in the retention of Y10 students into Y11, including a review of protocols to guide students into TAFE, Distance Education, Open High and Saturday School.
- Each Year 12 student, and any students leaving school before completing Year 12,

will have an individual careers interviews and develop a written exit plan.

- Stage 6 girls to be mentored on an individual program basis with professional female mentors.

Our success will be measured by:

- Implementation of NALSSP, Golden Pi, Reading /volunteering programs and other key KLA based learning activities;
- Teacher exchange in all 3 feeder school is established circa November 2011;
- Non local feeder primary schools continue or increase their enrolment pattern with the school and attend immersion days;
- Y11 students are retained from Y10 in greater numbers; and
- Increase in Y10 students transiting to Y11.

### **Target 2**

**Increase the top 3 reading and numeracy bands for Y9 from 47% to 52% and from 20% to 25% respectively.**

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Train key staff in the use of SMART 2 for presentation of NAPLAN data to all staff;
- Provide ongoing opportunities for both formal and informal dialogue between staff to develop strategies for addressing identified numeracy issues using SMART 2;
- Provide opportunities for staff to specifically address aspects of numeracy in teaching and learning programs; and
- Establish a school wide literacy team with a non-executive chairperson.

Our success will be measured by:

- Identified staff attending SMART 2 training and present to colleagues;
- Staff engaging in discussion regarding literacy and numeracy at Staff Development Days;
- A team is formed to specifically focus on numeracy;
- School wide programs have numeracy embedded into scope and sequence;

- A school wide literacy team exists with cross faculty membership; and
- An increase in the quantity of material on Moodle and the frequency of use by staff and students.

### **Target 3**

**Develop the use of digital technologies across KLAs to support student learning from an average use of 50% to 60% during 2011.**

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Students and staff begin to integrate Moodle into teaching and learning experiences;
- Key staff to be trained in the maintenance and ongoing development of the new website and eNews;
- Opportunities are provided for teacher professional development funds to be used to promote the use of ICT and DER in classrooms to underpin the Quality Teaching Framework;
- Explore and increase the use of peripheral digital devices in KLAs;
- Establish a second and third classroom with an IWB;
- Explore the use of virtual reality software including Quest Atlantis to support student learning; and
- Develop the school's digital technology infrastructure by providing more digital devices to underpin learning.

Our success will be measured by:

- An increase in the quantity of material on Moodle and the frequency of use by staff and students;
- Key staff trained in Joomla, eNews and website remains up to date;
- Staff continue to expend all funds tied to ICT TPL and DER to attend related courses;
- Peripheral devices including digital camera, videos, music hubs and other devices are assessed and incorporated into programs;
- IWB classrooms established and in use for teaching and learning;
- Students use Virtual World technologies in identified KLAs; and

- Digital devices are increased in number across the school.

### **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.

*Craig Brown – (R) Principal*

*Brad Flegg - Deputy Principal*

*Lisa Jamieson (R) Deputy Principal*

*Andrew Taylor – Head Teacher Maths*

*Vanessa Turansky - Head Teacher Welfare*

*Lynn James - Careers Advisor*

*Mike Sheedy - P&C President*

*Ron Kutcher – School Council President*

*Vanessa Kutcher– Senior Leader*

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

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