Muswellbrook Public School Annual School Report

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
Our School at a glance

Students
Enrolments have decreased from 611 (October 2007) to 582 (2008). There were 328 boys and 254 girls attending school at the end of year. There has been a loss of 29 enrolments during 2008 as a result of business closures, employment transfers and mining personnel not residing in the area. Students were placed across 23 classes with an average class size across K-2 of 21 students and 30 students across Grades 3-6.

Staff
The school executive consisted of the principal, deputy principal and four assistant principals. They were supported by 19 classroom teachers, four casual staff employed to undertake release from face to face teaching (RFF) and computer technology development. Additionally, there is one full time librarian and one full time support teacher learning assistance (STLA) during 2008. Learning continues to be supported by casual staff willing to work in our school at short notice.

There have been a total of 126 days of teacher absence in 2008 compared to 162 days (2007) and 135 (2006).

All teaching staff has met the professional requirements for teaching in New South Wales public schools.

Student achievement in 2007

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3
Across Grade 3, two students did not attain National Benchmark standards in Reading (2008) compared to 10 in 2007. Three students did not achieve these standards in Writing compared to eight in 2007.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5
Across Grade 5, 11 students did not attain National Benchmark standards in Reading (2008) compared to 12 in 2007. The same number of students did not achieve these standards in Writing as in 2007.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3
In Grade 3, five students did not attain National Benchmark standards in Numeracy (2008) compared to two in 2007.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5
In Grade 5, four students did not attain National Benchmark standards in Numeracy (2008) compared to 12 in 2007.

Messages

Principal's message
Students and staff of Muswellbrook Public School have greatly appreciated the continued support of our parent body and local community. Our major focus throughout 2008 was to improve student benchmark reading levels. Results reflect that through the use of the Accelerated Literacy Program (AL) not only have the average class benchmark levels increased but also there has been significant individual growth between students that undertook the AL Program compared to those students who did not.

We have established an expectation for improvement in our school for both students and teachers. Throughout 2008 our staff has been upgrading their skills in the areas of Accelerated Literacy and Go Maths. We recognise that we must establish high expectations for both students and teachers if we are to achieve high results.

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.

John Fibbins

P&C and/or School Council message
On behalf of the P&C I would like to thank the members of the parent community for the ongoing support they have provided to the school over the past twelve months. This year the P&C have overseen the disbursement of $207,500 towards the school - $16500 for school numeracy and literacy projects including the Accelerated Literacy Program and Go Maths Program as well as supplying school sunscreen for students.

We have also completed payments on the Wildnet play equipment to the value of $4000 from the previous year’s budget. It is anticipated at the time of writing that most of the remainder of P&C funds will be directed toward the purchase of a computer interactive whiteboard, subject to meeting approval, with any residual monies being carried forward to 2009.

Thanks are also extended to the P&C executive, attending parents and especially the auxiliary without whose support many of our fundraising activities would not have been possible.

Darren Adnum
Student representative's message

The Student Representative Council has been a method by which the students of our school have a say in what takes place. In 2008, shade cloth for the Grade 6 areas was constructed as well as the installation of a new bubbler to the oval area being added.

Fundraising activities through a Crazy Hair Day and Out of uniform Days raised much needed funds for deserving charities. A Spider Stall was held recently where over $1000 was raised and forwarded to Stewart House for our annual donation. Earlier in the year our captains and vice captains attended the Black Cup Coal Day where a donation of $600 was made to the Westpac Rescue Helicopter service.

Ideas to beautify our playground are continually offered by students who have identified areas that require fixing in our school. In this meeting we are able to directly ask our principal, Mr Fibbins questions and he gives us direct answers. It is a great way to make changes in our school that the students believe are necessary.

Georgia Douglas and Jemima Pascoe

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

Student enrolment is now at 582 which have reduced from 611 in 2007. This decline is the result of business closures and families moving away from the area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Enrolment</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most children are of Caucasian background. Three students accessed English as a Second Language (ESL) services in 2008. There are 36 students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background in our school. This is a reduction from the 2007 figures of 41. This represents approximately 6% of the total school enrolment.

The gender balance between students is approximately 57% male compared to 43% female. This reflects a loss of approximately 3% of female students with a gain of 3% male.

Student mobility is increasing in terms of students leaving the school. At the time of writing this report, 33 students had enrolled after the academic year had commenced and 66 students have left the school.

Student attendance profile

The average student absence in 2008 was 10.4 days compared to 4.35 days (2007), 3.0 days (2006) and 2.9 days (2005). The average number of days for boys in 2008 was 10.7 compared to 5.6 days (2007) and 3 days (2006). The average days absence for girls was 10 days compared to 5.7 (2007) and 3.1 days (2006).

Student Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>91.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>93.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Class sizes

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

The following table shows our class sizes as at the Annual Class Size Audit held on 28 March 2008.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll Class</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total per Year</th>
<th>Total in Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1L</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12C</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2P</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2D</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3G</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3T</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34S</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34S</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4PT</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4R</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45H</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45H</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5K</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5P</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56W</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56WP</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6C</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6M</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6N</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K1R</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K1R</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KK</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KM</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KP</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KT</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Structure of classes

Classes are structured depending upon the number of students within each grade while maintaining the recommended maximum number of students within each class. Students are placed within the classes across any grade according to explicit criteria that reflect student academic ability, social competence and work habits. Parents are provided with the opportunity to discuss issues of concern that may exist in respect to their child and class placement in the following year. This opportunity does not however, allow for parents to request a specific teacher.

Staff information

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

There is one full-time permanent School Administration Manager, one full-time School Administration Officer and one part-time School Administration Officer. We are fortunate to have experienced casual teachers and casual personnel who relieve as teacher’s aides and in the front office.

Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-teaching Deputy Principal (DP)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching DP &amp; Assistant Principal</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Emotional Disabilities</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Mild Intellectual Disabilities</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Relief from Face-to-Face</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff retention

Our staff continue to be a blend of experience and youth. Most staff, when appointed to our school, generally remain for an extended period. One staff member has received a transfer from our school through merit selection.

Staff attendance

Staff has access to leave entitlements such as sick leave. There were a total of 126 days absence in 2008 compared to 162 days (2007) and 135 (2006). Daily staff attendance in 2008 was 98% compared to 95.7% (2007) and 97% (2006).

Teacher qualifications

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

Of the 33 staff who regularly teach at Muswellbrook Public School, approximately 9% possess Master qualifications, 27% hold Degree qualifications, 21% hold Post-graduate qualifications, 40% possess Diplomas and 3% are Certificate trained.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diploma or equivalent</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Financial summary

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary:</th>
<th>30/11/2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>350887.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>234268.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>225926.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>155192.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>23770.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>9003.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>999048.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expenditure

Teaching & learning
- Key learning areas: 35,674.97
- Excursions: 8,651.94
- Extracurricular dissections: 80,640.30
- Library: 6,845.54
- Training & development: 0.00
- Tied funds: 345,710.52
- Casual relief teachers: 86,194.35
- Administration & office: 89,468.61
- School-operated canteen: 0.00

Utilities: 49,804.36
Maintenance: 14,031.31
Trust accounts: 9,363.00
Capital programs: 8,819.32
Total expenditure: 735,204.22
Balance carried forward: 263,844.16

A full copy of the school’s 2008 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.
School performance 2008

Achievements

Arts

Public Speaking is a vital aspect of the English K-6 curriculum. In our school every child presents a prepared speech to their class and two children are selected from each class to give their speech to the grade.

Impromptu Speaking is also taught to every student. Children are presented with the stages of impromptu delivery and build up to presenting an impromptu speech to an audience. The MPS Impromptu Speaking Evening was initiated by Mrs Christie and is proving to be extremely successful being widely attended by students, parents and staff.

Our school continues to participate in many local and regional competitions such as the Upper Hunter Eisteddfod (May) which realised over 100 individual student entries, Hunter/Central Coast Regional Primary Schools Competition (July) and the Apex Public Speaking Competition (October). In 2008, one student from our school won the school, local and zone competitions and placed highly at the regional final.

Drama Club is a free after school activity offered by a trained staff member to students of all ages in our school. It is a holistic approach to integrated co-operative learning. There is an emphasis in building upon skills the children have already learnt in school drama. The club atmosphere is informal and focuses on shared learning and fun.

Each term students work towards a performance. Drama Club looks at a diversity of theatre performance styles and engages all ages. Two successful presentations in 2008 were a reader’s Theatre piece based on the book, “The Red Tree” by Shaun Tan. The second presentation had students studying Street Theatre techniques. This culminated in a work titled “A Living Statue Museum”.

Drama Club has been operating four years at our school.

The Dance Program involved 60 students in 2008 with four staff members preparing three dance groups. All groups performed exceptionally well. The senior girls groups were invited to audition at the State Dance Festival. The success of this program relies upon the dedication of staff involved as many hours of practice both in-school and after school is required before the groups are ready for performance. My continued thanks to all involved.

Sport

The Intensive Swimming Program has recently been held for 2008. The success of this program has been evident in the remarkable growth of water confidence, skill and knowledge across the student body.

Our have continued our successful participation in swimming, cross country and athletics carnivals with being awarded second in zone. Many of our children continue to progress to region and state levels. One student is currently in the U9 State Athletics Champion in the 100M.

PSSA representation continues to be successful with most teams participating in most sports. Our cricket, soccer and touch teams competed at a very high level with the boys hockey progressing to the state quarter finals for the third consecutive year.

The school rugby league program grows from strength to strength. In 2008 our school was the champion school at the Group 21 Scone carnival held in March. The U10 and U11 teams won their respective divisions at the Peel carnival with both teams competing admirably at the NSW All School carnival held in Sydney. Our thanks to parents and local business for their support in assisting in offsetting costs.

Professional groups have conducted skills sessions for students in the areas of rugby league, soccer, AFL and hockey. The number of children attending the After School Activity program continues to grow dramatically. This enables children to benefit from organised games and PE lessons which promote activity, health and fitness.

In 2008 we have replaced many of our team jerseys. Now touch, rugby league, soccer and very soon netball have received these new strips. We have purchased two new marquees as part of our Sunsafe policy and just recently we purchased new banners for each sporting house to promote identity and unity within the student body. New basketball rings, handball courts and chess pieces were purchased after requests from the Student representative Council. The cricket nest were repaired and renovated for use in Term 4.

Other

Welfare continues to be an integral aspect of our school’s culture. Our target in 2008 was to continue the reduction in the number of red cards issued to students for deliberate misbehaviour. This did not occur as 58 were issues in 2008 compared to 33 (2007) and 48 (2006). The number of Yellow and Orange cards given to students reduced from 273 (2006) and 244
(2007) to 182 in 2008. This realised a further reduction of 25.4% compared to the previous reduction of 10.6%. Underpinning our system is natural justice. All students believe they are given opportunities to present their point of view.

Students are supported with positive rewards designed to encourage achievement. These range from our merit card system to sponsored prizes provided by businesses in our local school community. Each week teachers select a student who they believe is the best worker in their class. Students who achieve recognition in sporting and cultural pursuits are also recognised in a similar manner.

**Academic**

The Basic Skills Test was replaced by the NAPLAN Assessment. The performance of students is reported in skill bands ranging from Skill Band 1 (lowest) to Skill Band 6 (highest for Year 3) or Skill Band 3 (lowest) to Skill Band 8 (highest for Year 5).

**Literacy – BST Year 3**

In Grade 3 there were 82 students and all students sat the NAPLAN Assessment in literacy. Of these students, six were of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island descent. There were no students having a non English speaking background.

The students’ mean performance of 403.4 was 3.6 points below the Region mean of 407 and 16.1 points below State mean. There are six ATSI students in Grade 3. The mean of these students was 10 points below that of the State.

72% of Grade 3 students were in the top three skill bands compared to 75% (2007), 72% (2006) and 73% (2005). Four of our six ATSI students were in the top three skill bands.

In Grade 3, two students were identified as not meeting the Literacy National Benchmark standards.

**Literacy – BST Year 5**

In Grade 5, 89 of the 91 students sat the NAPLAN Assessment in literacy. Seventy seven percent of all students were placed in skill bands 3-5 compared to 80% (2006) and 84% (2005). All of the ATSI students in Grade 3 were above the State average for ATSI students with three students being above the State average for all students.

Six of our seven ATSI students were placed in skill band 3 or higher with four of these six being boys.

**Progress in literacy**

Yearly assessment of student’s reading levels has been maintained using benchmarks. Although individual improvements were made results remained below regional benchmark targets. The following table indicates specific grade results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Regional Target</th>
<th>% Attaining Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thirty seven percent of Aboriginal students attained Regional Benchmark levels compared to 43% (2007). Literacy remains a focus for continued development in 2009.

**Numeracy – BST Year 3**

The same number of Grade 3 students sat the NAPLAN Assessment numeracy as literacy. Seventy seven percent of all students were placed in skill bands 3-5 compared to 80% (2006) and 84% (2005). All of the ATSI students in Grade 3 were above the State average for ATSI students with three students being above the State average for all students. Six of our seven ATSI students were placed in skill band 3 or higher with four of these six being boys.

**Numeracy – BST Year 5**

The same number of Grade 5 students sat the BST numeracy assessment as literacy. The boys’ mean average was 1.3 percentage points below the State mean average for boys compared to 0.9 (2006). The girls’ mean average was 0.8 percentage points below the State mean average for girls compared to 2.6 (2006).

Results of ATSI students were 5.7 percentage points above the State mean average for ATSI students compared to 4.1 (2006). Two of the nine ATSI students were above the State average for all students. Five of our nine students were above the State average for ATSI students.

**BST progress in numeracy**

Numeracy results reversed the trend that had been occurring. 63% of students achieved a...
growth of one skill band or more from Grade 3 to grade 5 compared to 35.7% (2006) and 49.3% (2005).

Benchmark results place our students at working beyond those students in ACT and Tasmania

National benchmarks

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum desirable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages. These are referred to as national benchmarks.

The performance of the students in our school in the Year 3 and the Year 5 Basic Skills Test (BST) is compared to these benchmarks. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these benchmarks are reported below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 3 students meeting national benchmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* National benchmarks were not available at the time of printing this report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 5 students meeting national benchmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* National benchmarks were not available at the time of printing this report

Significant programs and initiatives

Literacy:

1. Initiated the Accelerated Literacy Program which resulted in improved reading levels for those students undertaking this program.
2. A Reading Program that directly supported those students whose benchmark levels were slightly below Regional target benchmark levels. As students attained these targets they exited the program.
3. Enabled the STLA to work independently in the areas of Literacy targeting those students who, it was believed, would achieve targeted benchmark levels with a short and intensive program.
5. Established a Writing rubric that has enabled consistency in teacher judgement across K-6 when assessing student achievement.
6. Maintained an effective Literacy Committee whose responsibility is to set directions that will ensure student success in Literacy.

Numeracy:

1. Introduced Go Maths Program which is designed to support the development of mental computation strategies of students.
2. Continued to implement Count Me In Too Program and SENA (Scheduled Early Number Assessment).
3. Maintained a Numeracy Committee whose responsibility is to set directions that will ensure student success in Numeracy.

Social:

1. A successfully introduced Values Education Program that demonstrates acceptable values as prescribed by the Department of Education has been maintained. Staff has developed a set of classroom based activities that are used to support and reinforce the Values Education Program.
2. A Welfare Officer has been employed to assist families to have their children attend school regularly. This continues to be successful at a cost to the school of approximately $12000 annually.

Multicultural Education

Anti-racism strategies have been absorbed into our school culture. There is little evidence of racist behaviour and/or comment at our school. This is the result of the principle of a fair go and natural justice for all. We continue to maintain a weekly focus on values that incorporate respect, trust, co-operation and manners.

Respect and Responsibility

A Values Education Program continues to be implemented across our school. Students are presented with scenarios that enable them to reflect and implement appropriate strategies that emphasize an accepted societal value. The values are identified and communicated to parents in the weekly newsletter. Each week students are required to read and/or discuss the identified value with their parents. Reports indicate this program is receiving favourable
acceptance from the parents. Teachers reinforce their weekly focus during class.

**Progress on 2008 targets**

The school has set the following targets through establishing curriculum committees whose responsibility is to provide ongoing reviews, set direction and to evaluate the success of each target.

**Target 1**

Reading benchmark levels set and attained for all students.

Our targets and progress included:
- To increase the percentage of students reaching grade reading benchmark levels across K-2 from 40% in 2007 to 55% in 2008.
- 90% of Grade 3 students will meet National Benchmark standards for Literacy.
- 90% of Grade 5 students will meet National Benchmark standards for Literacy.
- 75% of students in Grade 3 will achieve bands 3, 4 and 5 for literacy.
- 43% (16/37) ATSI students achieved Regional benchmark levels.

Further progress has included:
1. The target established was not reached. Improvement was gained, however this was minimal. The target will remain for 2009.
2. 98% of Grade 3 students attained National Benchmark standards.
3. 92% of Grade 5 students attained National benchmark standards.
4. 85% of Grade 3 students achieved bands 3, 4 and 5 for literacy.

**Target 2**

Text types across grades will reflect syllabus expectations.

Our targets and progress included:
- An explicit marking scale (rubric) has been established for Writing that clearly identifies expectations to measure student achievement.
- 65% of students achieved anticipated outcomes based on school developed rubrics.
- 90% of students in Grade 3 achieved National Benchmark standards in Writing.
- 90% of students in Grade 5 achieved National Benchmark standards in Writing.
- 75% of Grade 3 students will achieve bands 3, 4 and 5 for Writing.
- 80% of Grade 5 students will achieve bands 5, 6 and 7 for Writing.

**Target 3**

Mental computation benchmark levels set for and attained by all students.

Our targets and progress included:
- Benchmark levels have been maintained for all students.
- Three students in Grade 3 were placed in skill band 1 of the 2008 NAPLAN Assessment compared to 4 the previous.
- Four students in Grade 5 however were placed in skill band 3 compared to zero in 2007.
- Six students in Grade 3 scored in skill band 2 range compared to 15 in 2007.
- Continued improvements were realised in skill bands 4 and 5.
- Similar trends were not realised in Grade 5.
- In Grade 3, 96% of students achieved National Benchmark standards for Numeracy compared to 98% (2007) and 97% (2006).
- In Grade 5, 96% of students met the Numeracy Benchmark standards compared to 87% in 2007.

**Target 4**

Physical education benchmark levels set for and attained by all students.

Our targets included:
• Achieving the benchmark levels set for each grade in endurance as well as catching and throwing.
• Over the four years of the program the average student performance levels has increased from 15.9 seconds in endurance to 21 seconds in Grade 6. Similar trends are evident in throwing and catching with an improvements average of 25.2 claps in 2005 to 36.3 claps (2008).
• All grades with the exception of Grade 5 and Grade 3 improved. These grades did not as less time was spent in the practice of the skills in preference to NAPLAN assessment practice of literacy and numeracy.
• There continues to be an improved attitude from students toward physical activity reflected in their responses to surveys conducted through PE lessons.

Key evaluations
In 2008 our school carried out evaluations in the area of Leadership reflecting parent views of school, P&C and School Council effectiveness.

Educational and management practice
Planning
Background
An evaluation of leadership was attempted in 2008. Results were inconclusive as very few surveys were returned.

Findings and conclusions
There were 480 surveys distributed to parents who were requested to complete and return their responses within a two week period. This time frame was selected to expedite the process and to maintain focus rather than extend, which may have led to omission through forgetfulness.

15 surveys were returned by the deadline established. This represents 3%. No accurate conclusions can be drawn from such a limited response.

The following can be mentioned. One parent response indicated they rarely felt the school looked for ways to improve what it does whilst another four believed the school leaders only rarely or sometimes discussed ways to improve their child’s learning.

Overall, parents seemed from their responses, to be satisfied with the leadership demonstrated at our school.

The following indicates some areas where considerations should be made. Are our school leaders getting the best from staff and students? (3 responses) Are our more capable students being catered for so that their abilities and aptitudes are being extended? Similarly, are there sufficient opportunities to discuss ways to improve student learning with parents? (3 responses) These topics will be brought to the attention of executive staff during regular meeting times held weekly.

Parents were also asked to comment on whether they believed leadership at P&C and School Council level was effective.

All responses indicated satisfaction with leadership at the P&C level. Several suggestions were offered to make this group more effective. These included formalising the request for parents to represent their child’s class at the monthly meetings. Parents would then be able to raise issues of concern with their representative who would table at the next P&C meeting. One comment indicated they had not known who their class representative was. Responses could then be communicated through the weekly newsletter to the school community.

One response indicated the school council leadership was ineffective as they received little to no information about this group. Once again, communication via the website or newsletter would overcome this issue.

Several comments were offered by way of praise. One from a family newly enrolled. They “have found everyone to be helpful, friendly and willing to take the time to help in any way possible”. Another offered “issues concerning children are already being dealt with quickly, fairly and any changes have been implemented following consultation. So keep listening, consulting, informing and revising”.

My thanks to all parents who took the time to respond to this survey.

Future directions
Regular opportunities for review of current practice will be made to ensure all staff is presented with the opportunity to state their opinions, identify issues, offer solutions and set directions for our future.

Curriculum
Background
In support of continuous improvement, through reflection of teacher practice, staff has reviewed the presentation of set text types, trialled a mathematics resource based on Mental Computation strategies as well as trialling an Accelerated Literacy program in 2008.
Findings and conclusions
The explicit and sequential teaching of writing skills for students in Kindergarten, Grade 1 and Grade 2 will focus on the joint construction of text types as set out in the English syllabus as well as individual responses to the writing of required text types. Go Maths and Accelerated Literacy will be introduced across the school in 2009.

Future direction
It is anticipated all students will develop a level of language and numeracy that will lead to improvements in the NAPLAN assessments. Reviews will be undertaken by the Literacy and Numeracy Committees to ensure student improvement levels are being maintained.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction
Further training has been undertaken in 2008 in the area of student mental health through the program MindMatters. This has followed the survey in 2007 where the opinions of parents, students and teachers were sought about the school.

Results indicated that parents and staff were very like minded in most areas identified in the study. A communication meeting is being planned for early in 2009. There was one area where students were of entirely opposite viewpoint to staff and parents. This area lay in the dimension of organisation, ethos and environment.

Many students believed their belongings were not safe at school. Some 50% of students who responded indicated they had been physically intimidated or hurt at this school. This is a concern and further surveys have been started to gain whether this information is recent or did it occur some time ago as well as to what types of bullying are the students referring.

Parents will be advised when the information has been gathered and analysed.

Their responses are presented below.
Issues that caused concern last year were in the area of communication. Changes were made and although some difficulties were experienced in the change over of the school’s computer system, on the whole, there appears to be currently little issue.

Other issues that were identified as a concern was the Taronga Park Zoo excursion for Kindergarten due to time, distance and related costs involved. This has now been removed for the list of activities undertaken by Kindergarten.

Professional learning
All professional learning that was approved to be undertaken either followed the school targets or has been linked to the development of beginning teachers and career progression.

Average expenditure per staff member was $715 from TPL funding compared to $744 (2007). Average number of days per staff was 2.25days compared to 2days (2007).

School development 2009 – 2011
The Muswellbrook Public School Strategic Plan is to ensure that quality teaching and learning is presented to students. Parents or community members wishing to view this plan together with the related Management Plan, may access upon request to the principal.

All targets for 2009 are directly related to the three year plan. Specific targets have been identified through the review process that has taken place as a result of systemic requirements as well as to seek improvements in teaching and learning strategies. Data has been collated from surveys, discussions, observations as well as school-based and state-based tests.

Targets for 2009
Targets for 2009 are based on data that has been collated as a result of testing and observations.

School targets will continue to focus on literacy and numeracy with the development of science and technologies being added. Underpinning these areas will be Welfare.

Target 1 – To significantly improve the reading levels of students.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Personalised learning plans in place for all students with reading support needs.
- Personalised learning plans will be developed for all Aboriginal students as well as those Grade 3 students placed in skill band 1 in the NAPLAN 2008 as well as Grade 5 students placed in Skill Band 3.
- Student’s benchmark levels will continue to be assessed in term 3 annually and compared to previous years to measure success of our programs.
- A Reading Recovery program will be introduced to support reading achievement in Grade 1.
- Training of staff in the administration of benchmarking procedures will continue to be offered through focus week meetings where appropriate, to ensure accuracy and consistency in teacher judgement when assessing student’s abilities.
- Ensure accurate computer tracking of student benchmark results is maintained.

Our success will be measured by:
- 55% of students will achieve appropriate grade benchmark levels as stated by region.
- No students will be placed in Skill Band I in the 2009 NAPLAN assessment.
- 90% of Grade 3 students will meet National Benchmark standards for Literacy.
90% of Grade 5 students will meet National Benchmark standards for Literacy.

75% of students in Grade 3 will achieve greater than band 3 for literacy.

80% of students in Grade 5 will achieve greater than band 5 for literacy.

55% ATSI students will achieve Regional benchmark targets in their respective grades.

Target 2 – Improve student results in Writing.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

• Continue to develop consistency in teacher judgement when assessing student achievements using the Writing rubric.

• Rubric is maintained for pre and post assessment and to inform the teaching learning cycle.

• Grade 3 NAPLAN analysis used to inform our whole school reading focus to develop student understanding in interpreting text, connecting ideas and locating information specifically from a caption.

• Grade 3 NAPLAN analysis used to inform our whole school writing focus to develop student understanding in understanding the spelling of simple and common words, correct punctuation, the use of simple and common sentences, use of paragraphs as well as developing sentences that contain developed and elaborate ideas.

• Grade 3 NAPLAN analysis used to inform our whole school Spelling focus to develop student understanding in understanding diagraphs – ou, ow, ea, ie, etc.; use of silent letters and in the use of stressed and unstressed syllables.

• Grade 5 NAPLAN analysis used to inform our reading focus will include activities that:
  a. Synthesise ideas to interpret a character’s misconception and to identify key information.
  b. Inferences between what motivates characters.
  c. Connecting ideas in a short bibliography.
  d. Interpreting the purpose of a character’s behaviour.
  e. Connecting implied ideas.

• Grade 5 NAPLAN analysis used to inform our writing focus to develop understandings of text structure that contains an orientation, a complication and a resolution; ideas that use of cohesive devices to support the reader, correct use of paragraphs and the correct spelling of simple and common words.

• Grade 5 NAPLAN analysis used to inform our spelling focus to develop understandings to correctly spell two syllable words and identify an error in two and three syllable words. Additionally, emphasis will also be given to the correct use of personal pronouns, capital letters and speech marks as well as in the use of commas and parentheses in a sentence.

Our success will be measured by:

• 65% of students achieving expected syllabus outcomes based on our rubric assessment.

• No students will be included in skill band 1 of the NAPLAN writing assessment in 2009.

• No student will be included in skill band 3 of the NAPLAN writing assessment in 2009.

• A 30% reduction in the number of students placed in Skill Bands 3 and 4 in Grade 5 NAPLAN writing assessment in 2009.

• 50% more students will achieve results in skill bands 5 and 6 of the Grade 3 NAPLAN writing assessment in 2009.

• 50% more students will achieve in skill bands 7 and 8 of the Grade 5 NAPLAN writing assessment in 2009.

Target 3 – To significantly improve the numeracy results of students.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

• Analysis and review of individual, group and grade benchmark levels recorded in 2007 when compared to 2006 data to inform teaching.

• Implementation of Go Maths Mathematics Program that reflects quality teaching/learning programs, including homework, to improve student outcomes.

• Assessment and computer tracking of student outcomes following number facts assessments.

• Updating the training of staff in Count Me In Too processes.

• Engage in consistent teacher judgement, through agreed formal assessment practices K-6, when reporting student achievement.

Our success will be measured student improvement through:

• Grade 3 NAPLAN analysis used to inform numeracy improvement in the areas of:
  a. Identifying 2D shapes in repetitive patterns.
  b. Comparing data and drawing conclusions to describe information in different types of graphs.
  c. Recognise the term “quarter” and be able to solve mathematical problems.
  d. Identify 3D shapes.
  e. Interpret and solve practical problems involving + and – of money.

• Grade 5 NAPLAN analysis used to inform numeracy improvement in the areas of:
  a. The identification of regular and irregular 2D/3D shapes.
  b. Use a number line to correctly locate a decimal number.
  c. Recognise the expanded form of a number written in two decimal places.
d. Matching digital to analog time.
e. Interpreting data from different types of graphs.
f. Completion of number sentences involving $+$ of whole numbers.

- Nil students in Grade 3 will be placed in skill band 1 of 2009 NAPLAN Numeracy assessment.
- Nil students in Grade 5 will be placed in skill band 3 of 2009 NAPLAN.
- All students in Grade 3 will meet National Benchmark standards in numeracy in 2009.
- All students in Grade 5 will meet National Benchmark standards in numeracy in 2009.
- A 30% reduction in the number of students placed in skill bands 2 and 3 in Grade 3 NAPLAN numeracy assessment in 2009.
- A 30% reduction in the number of students placed in Skill Bands 3 and 4 in Grade 5 NAPLAN numeracy assessment in 2009.
- A 30% increase in the number of students placed in skill bands 5 and 6 in Grade 3 NAPLAN numeracy assessment in 2009.
- A 30% increase in the number of students placed in Skill Bands 7 and 8 in Grade 5 NAPLAN numeracy assessment in 2009.

Target 4 – Successfully introduce interactive technologies across the school.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Introduction of Science & Technology syllabus when developed.
- Utilise QT model to maximise the learning of all students including ATSI students.
- Develop and implement a student tracking assessment schedule to inform teaching practice.
- Implement learning activities that will cater for individual learning styles.
- Professional development for staff to gain understanding of current interactive technologies.

Our success will be measured by:
- The number of classes implementing interactive technology in their learning environment
- Full implementation of ICT Plan across K-6.
- 75% of all students reaching identified targets as reflect in the ICT Plan for each grade.
- Improved teacher attitude toward technology as a teaching tool.

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.