Our school at a glance

Rouse Hill High School is a coeducational comprehensive secondary school located in the rapidly growing northwest area of Sydney. The school opened in 2009 with Years 7 and 8. We currently have students in Years 7, 8 and 9. Our first Year 12 cohort will commence in 2013.

The school was built as part of the public private partnership program whereby the school must be maintained at its current standard for the next 30 years.

Messages

Principal’s message

2010 was the second year of operation for Rouse Hill High School. During 2010 our staff, students and parent community built upon the foundations set in 2009.

At Rouse Hill High School, we encourage our learners to live up to the ‘daRe’ motto: Students at Rouse Hill are dynamic, accountable, resilient and engaged learners. We support students to excel both within and outside the classroom. As you read through this report you will be able to see the still developing range of opportunities available for students to be active in school life.

The Annual School Report (ASR) provides a major source of information for our school community to learn more about the wonderful achievements of our students.

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.

Kim Chapman

P&C message

The Rouse Hill High School P&C continues to be well supported by dedicated parents, grandparents and carers within our school community. These parents have worked together throughout the year to organise fundraising activities and contribute to the direction of the school via their ongoing discussions with Kim Chapman (Principal) and Michelle Yates (Deputy Principal).

This year the P&C Committee invited all Rouse Hill High School parents to attend a Cyber Bullying Seminar, a presentation on how the NAPLAN testing system works, and a presentation on the MySchool website. We look forward to seeing more parents attend future presentations, to connect with other parents and carers, gain additional skills and knowledge to be a parent of a teenage child, and hear from educational professionals.

Our Traffic sub-committee, headed by Sigrid Kirk has made great progress in the past year. Working closely with our neighbouring primary schools, Sigrid has successfully negotiated with Westbus and has had several bus routes altered to allow nearby students to get to and from school via public transport.

Our Fundraising sub-committee, headed by Louise Riddell organised some fabulous events for the students and Lyn Poncini arranged a very successful shopping bus tour which has already been re-booked for next year due to the great feedback received. I would like to make special mention of Joanne and Paul Stedman, Nicole and Tony Theissen and their families for doing such a great job organising and facilitating the hugely successful Trivia Night. This event alone raised over $5,000 for the P&C and a fabulous night was had by all who attended.

During the year the executive committee developed a vision for the P&C. This vision has been adopted by the P&C committee and will form the basis for all the activities, events and decisions made by the committee in the coming years.

The P & C vision is; ‘A structured, healthy and cohesive environment for all members of the school community to be involved in their children’s education.’ I encourage our parent community to embrace the school motto – ‘daRe’ – and be a dynamic, accountable, resilient and engaged community. Together, our community can help to build the profile of our school, increase the opportunities available for our children to learn in a technologically advanced, cohesive and caring school environment and of course, provide valuable input, feedback and suggestions to the teaching staff as our school continues to grow.
In 2011, the P&C will focus on the following objectives:

1. Increasing parent and carer involvement in the RHHS P&C.
2. Creating an effective communication strategy to convey P&C information to parents, students and teachers.
3. Raising funds to contribute towards much needed school equipment as indicated by the principal.

In closing, I would like to thank the parents and carers that have given their time to the P&C over the past year and I look forward to working with you again in 2011. I would also like to extend an open invitation to all parents to be involved in your child’s education by joining the P&C in 2011.

Terri Henry

Student representative’s message

In 2010 the Year 7, 8 and 9 leadership teams have been very busy. Leadership students have been involved in many activities throughout the year. These included:

- Blue Mufti Day to raise funds and awareness for Beyond Blue
- Black and White Mufti Day to raise funds for goal posts
- hat surveys
- Jelly Bean Guessing Competition for the RSPCA
- hosting assemblies
- Year 6 transition and orientation days
- bullying campaign
- new dare motto
- surveying students regarding fundraising
- assisting in the Subject Selection Evening
- School tours.

The Leadership team enjoyed being involved in all of these activities and welcomes anyone who would like to develop their leadership skills to put their hand up to join us next year to continue to develop this wonderful school.

Brie Bayfield – Year 8

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Student attendance profile

Student attendance at Rouse Hill High School continues to be above both state and regional averages.

Management of non-attendance

Student non-attendance is managed by parent contact via telephone calls and letters for unexplained absences or lateness. Letters are sent on a regular basis, facilitating ongoing communication between staff, parents and students.

Staff information

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

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

In 2010, Rouse Hill High School did not have any teachers with an indigenous background.
Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>32.5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff retention

During 2010, Rouse Hill High School had one teacher achieve promotion to Head Teacher level, two teachers on maternity leave, and two teachers on leave. The school employed a replacement Head Teacher Mathematics and an additional seven teachers across a variety of Key Learning Areas. Two additional members of the School Administrative Staff were employed in a full-time and part-time capacity.

Teacher qualifications

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>30</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.

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

Date of financial summary: 30/11/2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>$</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>190015.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>116596.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>204522.71</td>
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<td>Interest</td>
<td>10261.45</td>
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<td>Trust receipts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td><strong>704237.51</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching &amp; learning</th>
<th>$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>67729.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>68527.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>31461.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>20549.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>1383.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>95005.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>27591.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>83773.43</td>
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<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>11368.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>3643.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>4627.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>42862.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
<td><strong>458525.59</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Balance carried forward: 245711.92

School performance 2010

Achievements

Ensemble Program

The Rouse Hill High School Ensemble program continued in 2010 expanding to include a stage band. The guitar ensemble, vocal ensemble, training band and stage band rehearsed weekly from 7.30am. The ensembles comprised of very dedicated students, some who continued their positions in the bands from 2009 and other new members from Year 7.

Members of the guitar ensemble joined the stage band and also performed as part of a rock ensemble at MAD2010.

Miss Mitchell became the vocal coach and musical director of the vocal ensemble. This group flourished in 2010, performing at school formal assemblies, the Rouse Hill Town Centre and was also a featured item in MAD2010.
The training band has undergone significant growth in both ability and size and includes students from Ironbark Ridge Public School. The band is playing at a much higher standard due largely to the experience the students gained in collaborating with the Cumberland High School concert band in the performance of the MAD2010 repertoire.

The first Rouse Hill High School music camp was held on the 3-6 June at Galston Gorge recreation centre. The camp consisted of four days of intense musical training, performing repertoire from a variety of artists as divergent as KISS and Mozart. Combining with students from Cumberland High School, the students formed groups such as an orchestra, woodwind ensemble, rock bands, jazz ensemble, drum line and musical chorus. This experience received outstanding positive feedback from the students involved.

The exposure of the Rouse Hill High School ensembles to challenging repertoire and increased performance opportunities was a target for 2010. The students of the ensembles have excelled and emerged from the challenges set, better and more engaged musicians. With the creation of the ‘capashowcase’ blog, the students have become more accountable for their development and the part they play in strengthening each of the ensembles.

**Sport**

Students competed for their houses throughout the year at the annual Swimming, Athletics, and Cross Country carnivals. The winning house for 2010 was Irwin with only a narrow victory over last year’s winner Walton. The Irwin house captains accepted the House trophy at the end of year Celebration Evening. Year 8 and 9 students played grade sport during Wednesday sport afternoons and achieved some great results. Grade sport involved playing other schools in the newly formed Macquarie Zone. Students played in the junior competition and they are looking forward to playing in the senior competition in 2011.

**Other**

**Visual Arts**

In Visual Arts, students participated in a variety of creative experiences showcasing their talents and furthering their exposure to the art world. Year 9 and selected Year 8 gifted and talented Visual Arts students went on an excursion to ‘ArtExpress’ at the Armory to view selected Higher School Certificate work from 2009. This experience inspired students to be more experimental with their own art-making.

Three students were entered into Operation Art with Talisha Jones’ artwork gaining selection for display in Bear Cottage. Only ten artworks are displayed at this venue out of the hundreds of entries.

Rouse Hill High School was selected to participate in the ‘Archibull Prize’ competition. Two fibreglass bulls were provided to the school to artistically alter in order to depict art and the environment. The students had to design both bulls, produce a project diary and create a PowerPoint presentation to communicate the importance and relevance of sustainability. This project involved all Visual Arts students who contributed by researching the local area, sketching designs, selecting a 2D design for a 3D artwork, working on the fibreglass bulls, creating a scrapbook, and a PowerPoint presentation. The ‘Archibull Prize’ competition has highlighted the many talented artists within our school.

**Academic**

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10. The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

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

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

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7**

Students performed above state average in all areas of literacy. Analysis of the data indicates a need to focus on moving students from the middle bands to the upper bands.
Average mark  | School  | State  
---|---|---
Reading  | 551.4  | 537.7  
Writing  | 531.8  | 522.4  
Spelling  | 559.4  | 547.0  
Grammar & punctuation  | 545.2  | 529.2  

- Reading – top 2 bands 3.9% above state average. 2.7% of students were in the bottom band as compared to 6.7% statewide.
- Writing – top two bands 2.8% above state average. 4% of students were in the bottom band as compared to 8.2% statewide.
- Spelling – top two bands 3.9% above state average. 4% of students were in the bottom band as compared to 7.7% statewide.
- Grammar and punctuation – top two bands 2.8% above state average. 10.7% in bottom band as compared to 13.6% statewide.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7
Students performed above state average in numeracy. Analysis of the data indicates a need to focus on moving students from the middle bands to the upper bands.

Average mark  | School  | State  
---|---|---
Numeracy  | 548.7  | 542.2  

- Numeracy – 1.9% above state average for the top two bands. 0.7% in the bottom band as compared to 5.2% statewide.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9
Results indicate that in many areas students were very close to state average.

Average mark  | School  | State  
---|---|---
Reading  | 556.9  | 555.3  
Writing  | 526.1  | 551.9  
Spelling  | 565.0  | 565.5  
Grammar & Punctuation  | 562.2  | 557.1  

- Reading - 56.5% of students achieved greater than or equal to their expected growth.
- Writing – 41% of students achieved greater than or equal to expected growth. This area showed a significant dip in results and has been targeted for action in 2011.
- Spelling – 54.1% of students achieved greater than or equal to expected growth.
- Grammar & punctuation – 62.3% of students achieved greater than or equal to expected growth.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9
Growth in Year 9 showed that 56.7% of students achieved greater or equal to the expected growth. Results indicate students are over
represented in bands 7 and 8. Moving students to the next two bands is a priority.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average mark</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>567.0</td>
<td>570.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 & 9 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2010.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum Standard Information</th>
<th>Percentage of Year 7 students achieving at or above minimum standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>97.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>96.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>96.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>89.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>99.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at or above minimum standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

In 2010, the tradition of acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land, the Dharug people, at every Formal Assembly was continued. All curriculum areas include appropriate Aboriginal perspectives in teaching and learning programs. In particular, Year 7 and 8 students studied the mandatory Aboriginal education program as part of their HSIE subject. Rouse Hill High School is a member of the national ‘Dare to Lead’ Coalition.

Multicultural education

Rouse Hill High School has a diverse multicultural student body. Through the integration of multicultural perspectives within faculty programs, students acquire the knowledge, skills and positive attitudes required for a culturally diverse society.

Seminar classes, which are held on Wednesday mornings, provide an avenue for multicultural issues to be investigated. During Term 4 2010, Year 7 have been studying and discussing topics like ‘People, Identity and Culture’ which aims at promoting awareness of cultural difference. Within this topic students consider identity and culture, the changing face of Australia and the future. This unit also promotes awareness of Australian identity.

Respect and responsibility

Rouse Hill High School core values platform was developed through a comprehensive consultation process involving staff, students and parents. Our school ‘Rights and Responsibilities’ is based upon the school motto of DARE – developing dynamic, accountable, resilient and engaged learners. The motto developed by the students for 2010 was ‘Dare to be You’.

Weekly timetabled seminar sessions delivered to small groups of students are focused on these core values which are constantly reinforced throughout the school. These values have been further enhanced by speakers at year assemblies, school camps and activities.

These values also form the basis of our merit system for recognising and celebrating student achievement. Students require merits in all four core areas to progress through the levels. Many students have achieved white, burgundy, charcoal and citrus certificates throughout the year with presentations occurring at each formal assembly. A rewards day for all merit achievers was held to celebrate their achievements throughout the year.
**Connected learning**

**Digital Education Revolution (DER)**

2010 was the first year of DER laptops for Rouse Hill High School and the Year 9 students and their parents were excited. An information evening was held with support material distributed to parents. Specialised cases were purchased and procedures put in place to support the care of laptops. Quality support has been provided by the Technology Support Officer, Anastasia Hansen, who instigated a wide range of support structures for both students and teachers. Staff and students have reported an increasing use of the laptops across all subject areas, with some subjects replacing exercise books completely. Further research to investigate best practice in laptop use is underway. This includes visits to other high schools with structured laptop peer support programs.

**Other programs**

**Debating**

The Debating program began early this year with students being invited to express their interest in Term One. Students, both experienced and inexperienced, were then given an opportunity to participate in a whole-day training workshop, which covered everything from debating basics through to impromptu mini-debates. Students demonstrated strong debating skills with well structured and convincing arguments.

Students were selected for mixed Year 7 and 8 teams. These teams represented our school at the Western Sydney Debating Competition, for which Rouse Hill High School were proud hosts. The students won several rounds in the competition but did not gain enough points to progress through to the finals.

Next year we will be able to offer debating to junior students (Year 7 and 8) and senior students (Year 9 and 10). This gives the students from Rouse Hill High School opportunities to participate in a wider range of competitions and draw on the experience gained this year.

**Chinese Links**

In 2010, Rouse Hill High students entered the second year of our Western Sydney Regional Chinese Links Program. Chinese volunteers have provided team teaching opportunities in the language classroom. This has significantly added to the learning outcomes of our students in the implementation of the Stage 4 Mandarin program. These volunteers enhance the development of the school’s relationships with Chinese speaking communities at an international level.

2010 has seen the development of a relationship between Rouse Hill High School and its sister school in Ningbo City, Zhejiang Province. A further strengthening of the languages program with our partner primary schools within the Rouse Hill Learning Community is also underway.

**Environmental Education**

This year Rouse Hill High School was able to participate in National Tree Day, the purpose of which was to plant native trees and shrubs across the country and encourage a greater spread of native bush. The aim for Rouse Hill High School was both to add beauty to the existing gardens around the school and attract more native bird life. The Baulkham Hills Shire Council donated 100 native shrubs to plant. On Friday the 30 August, a number of students from Year 7 and 8, helped plant the shrubs. These trees and shrubs have made a difference to the environment around the school.

With a view to sustainable resource use, a water tank has already been installed in the school, and other forms of renewable energy are being looked at for next year, possibly through using solar or wind energy to supplement the school’s energy use.

**Food Technology Initiatives**

In 2010, Year 9 Food Technology students were offered the unique opportunity to participate in community based food competitions.

The first of these was the selection of Tomato Jams made by the students being entered into the Castle Hill Show. Our students were competing against other schools entered in the same category. Rouse Hill High School Year 9 Food Technology students were awarded the First Place Ribbon, Champion Ribbon, Grand Champion Ribbon, and the Best Schools Entry Trophy. A clean sweep!
The second competition was run by the Hills Shire Council Library Service. The competition involved turning a book into an edible creation. The students accepted the challenge with great enthusiasm. They chose a book and then combined their cooking skills with their imaginations to design and create an edible interpretation of that book.

All creations were showcased at the Vinegar Hill Memorial Library on Thursday 2 September and Friday 3 September. Many Rouse Hill High students and their families visited the showcase, as did many local community members.

This was a truly worthwhile learning experience for the students who all agree that the day was a success and every student was pleased with their accomplishments.

MAD

MAD2010 was a music, art and drama concert series held on the 8 - 9 of September at the Roxy Theatre, Parramatta. Planning for MAD2010 began late in 2009 in collaboration with Cumberland High School. The repertoire for MAD included over fifty minutes of choral pieces including four movements from Mozart’s Requiem. Students of Years 7 and 8 rehearsed in class, learning about vocal and ensemble techniques while developing skills in accountability and resilience. In addition to class rehearsals, students of the ensemble program rehearsed as a combined choir and orchestra during a four day music camp. Cumberland High School also combined with Rouse Hill High School for three rehearsals leading up to the opening performance.

MAD2010 was an integral part of the musical development of the students of Rouse Hill High School. It was embedded into the Stage 4 Music programs and formally assessed through rehearsals, performances and listening tasks.

Administrative and teaching staff from Rouse Hill High School played an important role in MAD2010 helping with various jobs from liaising with the media to supervision. Staff even undertook a vocal workshop to experience a student perspective of the process.

The highlights of the opening and VIP night were the performance of Mozart’s Lacrymosa and Dies Irae. Performances by the stage band, training band and vocal ensemble received rapturous applause. However, it was the duet of Pokerface by Cassandra Alvarado and Danielle Noll that received the most accolades.

Transition Programs

On Monday 15 – Wednesday 17 February, the 2010 Year 7 Orientation Camp was held at Morisset. This was a wonderful opportunity for students to get to know their peers and their teachers in a fun, friendly environment.

The camp is one part of our orientation program to help students successfully transition from primary to high school.

The camp program provided students the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities that encourage responsibility and teamwork while developing individual skills and personal qualities. Some of the activities included trust building exercises, problem-solving initiative activities, canoeing, archery, flying-fox, giant pendulum swing, high ropes and lots of other team building challenges.
In 2010 the primary to high school transition programs were a big success for students who will be attending Rouse Hill High School in Year 7 2011. Two separate transition days were offered to students from Rouse Hill Public School, Ironbark Ridge Public School and Beaumont Hills Public School.

The Literacy and Numeracy Trivia Day was held on Tuesday 27 July. The students from the three schools were mixed up in teams of 6 and completed rounds of trivia and physical challenges. Points were accumulated throughout the day and the winning teams were awarded certificates.

On Tuesday 19 October another 60 students came to Rouse Hill High School to participate in a Sports Gala Transition Day. Year 6 students were formed into mixed teams from our partner primary schools. Teams competed against each other throughout the day in a variety of different sports. Points were collected and certificates awarded to the winning teams at the end of the day. Certificates were also awarded for participation and sportsmanship.

Each day provided the opportunity for Year 6 students from these three schools to become familiar with Rouse Hill High School and to make new friends.

Boys Education

In Semester 2 2010, Rouse Hill High School introduced a boys’ enrichment class in Year 8, to assist students that had been identified as benefiting from a gender based curriculum. Students and parents were surveyed as to the specific interests of the boys, along with an identification of their particular learning styles.

Staff catered for the learning needs of the students with an individual learning plan developed for each student, based on parent, teacher and student input. All relevant and accessible data, such as NAPLAN results, was used to develop the curriculum plan. Parents had the opportunity to discuss the plan and provide feedback. The teaching staff received professional learning relating to the learning needs of each student. Teachers modified teaching programs to specifically cater for the interests and learning styles of each student, while still achieving course outcomes.

Evaluation of the program has shown that the boys achieved improved learning outcomes and were significantly more engaged in classroom activities. Feedback from parents, students and teachers has also been positive with the gender specific learning needs, social skills and the use of active learning strategies identified as enhancing the ability of each student.

LIBRARY INITIATIVES

The Book Cafe was established in 2010 with members meeting Thursday at lunchtime in the library.

The Book Cafe aims to:
- provide an enrichment activity that is different from those offered in the classroom
- provide a meaningful lunch time activity
- provide students with the opportunity to read a variety of novels from varied genre types
- improve communication skills through participation in small group discussions
- practice active listening skills and
- build strong reader/text relationships.

Each term students undertake a prescribed reading which may consist of:
- Term 1 - a novel chosen from the classics
- Term 2 - a contemporary novel
- Term 3 - a short story and
- Term 4 - readers’ choice.

The objective for 2011 is to visit the Sydney Writers Festival.

The Rouse Hill High School Short Story Competition was available to all students and provided them with the opportunity to compose and publish a creative writing piece. In 2010 the competition was divided into two categories. Each category was provided with a signature word or phrase which was loosely linked to the genre novel studies being undertaken in English.

Categories in 2010 included for Stage 4, use of the signature word ‘ghostly’ and in Stage 5, use of the signature word ‘bones’.

The aim of the competition was to develop a love of reading and creative writing amongst students.
It also provided an opportunity for students to write competitively and with restrictions such as word limit and theme. The winning entries received a prize and were published in both the school newsletter and on the school webpage.

Chess is a popular activity during recess and lunch in the library. Regular competitions were held throughout the year, culminating in an end of year Round-Robin Competition.

The objective for 2011 is to build a strong team of students who will compete in local inter-school competitions.

**WRITER’S DAY**

In May, 120 students from Stage 4 were given the opportunity to participate in the inaugural Writer’s Day, featuring the guest Australian author, Scot Gardner. Students were involved in a two hour workshop in which Mr Gardner exposed aspects of his writing style, the journey he took to become an acclaimed author and the process of creative development that enhances good teenage fiction.

Students were entertained by his vibrant and humorous approach, whilst also being given an opportunity to play with language and descriptive devices to enhance their own writing. Anecdotal feedback from this session indicated that students were thoroughly engaged in the workshop, with several taking the time to write their own pieces of literature after the event.

**COMPETITIONS**

Representing Rouse Hill High School in the University of NSW International Competition and Assessment Schedule, were two students from Year 9, twelve students from Year 8 and twenty students from Year 7. These students participated in a range of assessments including Writing, English, Spelling, Science and Mathematics; all provide extensive independent evaluations of student skills, knowledge and understandings in the core learning areas. We achieved very pleasing results with a total of 3 High Distinctions, 5 Distinctions and 25 Credits.

**Mathematics Competition**

There were 42 students who sat for the Australian Mathematics Competition in 2010. Students used their problem-solving skills to solve a range of mathematical problems. The results included two High Distinctions, one Distinction and eight Credits.

**YEAR 9 CAREER’S DAY**

On Tuesday 26 October Year 9 participated in a Careers Day event. The girls attended an ‘Enlighten Education’ program and the boys attended an ‘Oxygen Factory’ workshop within the school. Our visitors, Danielle Miller (Enlighten Education) and Glen Gerreyn (Oxygen Factory) were impressed by the positive attitude and the willingness to participate shown by students.

The girls participated in a number of activities which allowed them to use positive thinking and other strategies to enhance their sense of self. The girls completed the day with skills and strategies to assist them in writing a resume.

The boys program was motivational and the boys were focused on their dreams for the future. The boys studied topics such as dreams, life goals, visions, beliefs and they looked at timelines from the last 50 years to show them that the impossible can sometimes be possible. One of the favourite quotes of the day was ‘you should have more dreams than memories’.

**SCIENCE**

On the 15 September 2010 Year 7 and 8 students from Rouse Hill High School enjoyed the Science Show, consisting of demonstrations and hands-on experiments designed to improve student understanding and appreciation of science, presented by Fizzics Education. Scientific principles were presented in a novel manner, integrating syllabus outcomes into a captivating performance. Students were given the opportunity to volunteer and actively participate in many of the experiments and demonstrations. The presentation spanned across Stage 4 outcomes, illustrating the application of these principles in everyday life, helping students to appreciate science.
Progress on 2010 targets

Target 1
To maintain and improve literacy and numeracy outcomes

One of the key targets identified for Rouse Hill High School in 2009 was ‘to maintain and improve literacy and numeracy outcomes’ for all students.

Our achievements include:

- The implementation of a structured process for supporting and monitoring staff efficiency through Teacher Assessment Review and Executive Assessment Review processes. This resulted in all classroom and executive teachers reflecting upon their teaching practice and using the methods of observation and team teaching to enhance the development of the elements of quality teaching in the classroom. Staff were given opportunities to share lesson planning processes and resources, improving their professional networks and experiences.
- Staff reported positively that they believed professional learning was valid and helpful, with all staff reporting that they had benefited from the sharing of literacy and numeracy strategies at each staff meeting. Staff also reported that the continued focus on literacy and numeracy strategies were enabling them to target specific skills in their teaching programs.
- All staff reported that they frequently use Information Communication Technology (ICT) resources within their teaching and learning plans. Bookings for computer labs have increased and all staff utilise laptops and data projectors within their classrooms. The opportunity to incorporate the use of interactive whiteboards in their teaching has increased with 10 staff trained in the connected classrooms project.
- Literacy plans were created at a whole school, faculty and teacher level during 2010. Staff were required to include specific literacy and numeracy strategies within their teaching programs, with the majority of staff reporting that this helped them to focus on specific skill development. Work on this process will continue in 2011.

Target 2
To establish effective student wellbeing programs with a particular emphasis on student engagement.

Monitoring and evaluation of the progress towards this target has taken place throughout the year. The strategies and indicators of their success covered six areas which are outlined below.

- Providing a relevant and challenging curriculum, to meet the needs of students.

In October 2010 students were asked to complete a survey on student engagement. Results show a fairly strong correlation between viewpoints held by the extension classes and mainstream classes, as well as between Year 7 and Year 8.

Over 90% of students agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements:

- I feel confident to ask questions in class
- I believe my teachers want me to succeed as a learner
- the learning experiences I am involved in are challenging yet achievable
- I have a clear understanding of what I need to achieve in order to succeed
- I try my best at school
- I am getting better at writing
- I know the school’s expectation of student behaviour.
Students report being engaged with classroom activities. Survey responses indicated that an area for focus would be to increase engagement in school activities outside class hours.

- Providing a broad student leadership structure encouraging student voice in school programs and directions.

The Rouse Hill High School Leadership Constitution has been developed and outlines the purpose, aim and expectations of student leadership within the school. It also contains the criteria for election and membership to the student leadership body, role descriptions and responsibilities, and procedures for meetings. Students are able to self nominate as class and sport house leaders or be nominated by their peers; school leaders are nominated by their teachers. Leadership meetings occur weekly to discuss aspects of school culture and provide a forum for discussion of progress towards goals.

Students have set directions for fundraising and community activities, proposed focus areas for student development and developed a concept for a new school cap. Student voice is active in school programs and directions.

- Further developing systems for monitoring and follow-up of student attendance and lateness to school.

In addition to the procedures already in place at the commencement of 2009, additional processes were put in place to monitor and reduce unexplained lateness in 2010. These included meetings between late students and the Deputy Principal and more regular communication between staff and parents.

Unexplained lateness has reduced from a peak during June through to the end of Term 3. Total absences and unexplained absences, however, have not shown the same decline. Further monitoring and support of students who are regularly late and away, will assist the successful achievement of this target next year. Success depends on an ongoing cooperation between the school, students and parents.

- Acknowledging excellent student achievement and attendance via the school merit system.

The merit system is established with four levels of achievement available to students. Merits are awarded by teachers and coordinators and recorded in the student diary. Students are presented with awards at assemblies when they reach these achievement levels.

Students are actively participating in the merit system with over 50% of students eligible for the Awards Day to celebrate merit achievement levels at the end of the year. Students have been accountable in keeping records, while staff are actively involved in promoting the process and rewarding and celebrating student achievement.

- Establishing effective programs to support the middle school.

The middle school team meets fortnightly to ensure that the proposal, coordination, promotion and evaluation of programs that are designed to support and enhance student engagement are facilitated. The middle school focus areas of belonging, ethics, awareness, competence, responsibility, appropriate risk taking, relevance and engagement are based on academic research of effective middle school programs.

The middle school team has developed transition programs to support students and parents, moving through different stages of their school life. Leadership structures have been developed that are active, effective and accessible to students. Resilience programs are delivered through workshops, seminar lessons and presentations by staff and external agencies. Student wellbeing is promoted through goal setting activities, and special events such as the Beyond Blue Day.

A program for seminars is established which lead students through a variety of areas designed to engage students with school life. These programs contain defined objectives and student evaluation processes.

- Established learning support team procedures.

The learning support team meets fortnightly to ensure students are being supported while at school. Procedures have been established and followed for monitoring the progress of students at risk or causing concern, monitoring students
with poor attendance, developing curriculum plans for students and providing student mentoring.

Progress through programs and processes are regularly monitored and regular contact occurs between the learning support team members, staff, students and parents.

All staff have received professional development in the mentoring program and are willing and equipped to deal with student concerns. Students who have taken advantage of the mentoring program have shown pleasing progress and are appreciative of having a staff member who is there for support.

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 classroom practice and Stage 5 Mathematics structure.

Educational and management practice

Classroom Practice

Background

As a new school, the Rouse Hill High School community is keen to ensure that policies and practices are established from its early years that form good habits that can relate, not only to good classroom management, but to good learning routines for students. As part of the practice we seek to establish, it was identified that the first five to ten minutes of every lesson was pivotal in establishing student and teacher expectations for the lesson and making meaningful engagement for the lesson. Also, it was noted that the feedback students received for submitted assessments and class work needs to be timely and meaningful for students to best gauge their progress in their subjects.

To this end Rouse Hill High School has established a range of across-the-school practices that seek to both improve student engagement at the commencement of lessons and provide regular, structured feedback to all students in all subjects using a common method.

In Term Four of 2010 the students and staff were surveyed to gauge their compliance with procedures and participation in lessons.

Findings and conclusions

85% of students reported that they regularly received structured feedback on their class work. The remaining 15% reported that they received feedback but on a more ad-hoc basis. 61% of students reported that they would like to receive feedback more often. Overall, 96% of students reported that they have a good idea of their progress in class in all subjects.

80% of students reported that they arrive to class on time and over 95% said they mostly arrived within three minutes of the bell. Over half of students surveyed believed that there would be consequences for lateness to class that would be immediate i.e. detention on that day of lateness.

Over 95% of students reported that, in the first 10 minutes of the lesson, they were clear on the objective of the lesson (known as the ‘today-we-will’) and 85% regularly wrote this in their book. The other 15% reported that the reason that the today-we-will was not recorded was either due to a practical lesson or use of laptop computers. 74% of students reported that the ‘today-we-will’ helped them remain focused on the lesson objective, particularly when the teacher referred to it regularly throughout the lesson. Approximately 75% of students said that this method helped them to know what was expected of them in each lesson.

Future directions

Whilst these findings are encouraging, on-going review of procedures is necessary. New, relieving and support teachers were not always aware of these procedures. A review is to occur in 2011 to increase observance of procedures by both students and staff alike.

Curriculum

Stage 5 Mathematics Structure

Background

Mathematics is a mandatory course in Years 7-10. The essential content for Mathematics in Years 7-10 is structured using one process strand: Working Mathematically and five content strands: Number, Patterns & Algebra, Data,
Measurement and Space & Geometry. Classes in Year 7 and 8 follow the same course work, with extension work offered to the more mathematically able students. By the end of Year 8, students are at various stages in the development of their mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills. In Stage 5 (Years 9 and 10) the Mathematics syllabus caters for a wide range of learning needs by having three different pathways for students to follow. These are 5.1 (least difficult), 5.2 and 5.3 (most difficult). Stage 5.3 includes the knowledge and skills from Stage 5.2, and Stage 5.2 includes the knowledge and skills from Stage 5.1.

Findings and conclusions

Students were placed into classes, primarily on their achievement, at the end of Year 8. The Year 9 cohort for 2010 had approximately 70 students placed into three classes; 9D, 9A and 9R. Each class followed one of the three pathways based on the needs and abilities of those students. Class 9D followed the 5.3 pathway, 9A the 5.2 pathway and 9R followed the 5.1 pathway. When planning and delivering the content for students in Year 9, teachers needed to consider future pathways that students planned to follow beyond Year 10 and into Stage 6. With such a small cohort and the need to offer all three courses, it was difficult for some students to achieve the levels of understanding and skills for their relevant pathway.

Separate assessment tasks were completed by individual classes based on their designated course, producing a range of results. Staff indicated that some students could have achieved higher results if they had been given access to the higher level course.

Future directions

An increased number of classes will allow for a more accurate placement of students in particular courses. In 2011 there will be two classes of Year 9 following the 5.3 pathway and one class each following 5.2 and 5.1 pathways. Classes will be re-assessed at the end of 2011.

Assessment tasks will extend across two or three pathways to allow students the opportunity to attempt questions that they normally wouldn’t. For example, a student studying the 5.1 course can try questions that would normally be given to 5.2 students.

With the Digital Education Revolution (DER) students will have more access to resources via their laptops and more time will be spent developing their mathematical knowledge and understanding through the use of technology.

Other evaluations

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2010 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school uniform. Students were asked for their opinion and surveys were then mailed to parents.

There was a high correlation between staff, student and parent responses to most parts of the survey, particularly in supporting the school’s implementation of a uniform policy that was seen as being consistent and of a high standard.

All parents (100%) surveyed believed that it was important for students to wear school uniform, while 80% of students thought it was important. Over 80% of students, staff and parents believed that the students were dressed in school uniform every day of the week. The most important reason for the wearing of school uniform for students and parents (60 – 85%) was that it identified the student as being a member of Rouse Hill High School. Teachers (80%) however believed that pride in the school was the most important reason that students wore school uniform.

Over 65% of teachers and students were positive about the school’s ongoing efforts to encourage students to wear full school uniform each day. Interestingly, 70% of students believed that the most positive aspect of the uniform policy was that students could wear their PE uniform to school on sport day.

An area for future development is for ongoing communication between parents, students and teachers about the school’s uniform policy and procedures related to its implementation.

Professional learning

During 2010, professional learning was a key component in developing professional and accountable staff. Having established high
expectations, there was a demand to provide professional learning to staff that targeted classroom processes and structures, as well as the delivery of quality teaching and learning opportunities for all students. Professional learning structures targeted the areas of quality teaching, literacy and numeracy, the digital education revolution, differentiating the curriculum and student well-being.

School Development Days, staff meetings and faculty meetings were viewed as valuable opportunities to deliver quality professional learning. Guest speakers were used to train staff in current trends and responses to bullying; detailed analysis of NAPLAN results guided a structured whole school approach to literacy and numeracy teaching; the latest innovations in the use of DER laptops and connected classrooms were offered to all staff. Staff also received professional development in the areas of implementing learning plans; boys’ education strategies; assessment and reporting practices; as well as the mandatory learning about fire safety, child protection, duty-of-care procedures and other DET policies.

Each staff member identified a targeted area for professional learning that was reflected in the TARS process. Staff also had the opportunity to differentiate their own learning through the use of an individual selection of modules to be completed within the Classroom Teacher Program.

All staff at Rouse Hill High School participated in professional learning throughout the year, maintaining our dynamic learning community that is focused on professional growth.

- whole school priority areas in literacy and numeracy identified
- an increase of three correct responses per student.

Our success will be measured by:
- an increase of 20% in the top two bands
- teachers explicitly teaching specified literacy and numeracy skills.

**Target 2**

*Develop a flexible Stage 6 curriculum plan that addresses student retention and engagement.*

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- researching various Stage 6 curriculum models
- consulting with parents, students and teachers
- developing a plan for implementation
- providing exemplars of best practice.

Our success will be measured by:
- development and implementation of a curriculum model that addresses the needs of students
- retention data of students transitioning from Year 10 into Stage 6
- support for the curriculum model by parents
- teachers developing required teaching programs in preparation for 2012.

### Targets for 2011

**Target 1**

*To maintain and improve literacy and numeracy outcomes.*

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- use of SMART by teachers to explicitly plan for literacy and numeracy activities within their classes and class programs
- the provision of professional learning in identified literacy and numeracy areas

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About this report

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

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M Yates             Deputy Principal
T Henry             P&C President
C Anderson          Head Teacher
S Kelly             Head Teacher
B Quayle            Head Teacher
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Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at: