Springwood High School
Annual School Report 2013
School context

Springwood High School is a comprehensive high school, catering for students with diverse interests, needs and post-school aspirations. The school is committed to academic and personal excellence, and the fostering of creativity and personal responsibility.

Principal’s message

Springwood High School is a vibrant school focussed on excellence, creativity and success.

We have a proud history of excellence in public education, and we take great pride in the outstanding academic outcomes achieved by students of all abilities. Our students have also achieved excellence in a large number of other areas. These include student leadership, the creative and performing arts, cultural and sporting activities, and contributions made as members of the local community. We are privileged to have experienced, caring and talented staff members who have produced excellent student outcomes. They are the enthusiastic force behind the provision of the formative opportunities and experiences that enable students to enhance their educational achievements.

Our school provides quality educational opportunities for students of all abilities. We strive to develop students who are innovative thinkers and confident learners, and who possess strong ethical values. These qualities are developed through our teaching and welfare programs and a wide range of co-curricular activities. The achievements highlighted within this report are examples of the high standards reached and they demonstrate the commitment to achieving one’s personal best that we promote and value across all school areas.

2013 saw the establishment of Springwood High School support unit which is situated at Glenbrook. The unit is a regional resource and has been established to support the learning needs of students who suffer from anxiety and depression. The unit consist of three classes supported by specialist teachers, working in conjunction with the Sydney Distance Education High School.

2013 was a very successful year for our school and I congratulate our students for their personal and team successes, and our excellent staff for their hard work and devotion to our school and students. The HSC results in particular were excellent. Our school community came together in support of each other during the bushfires which had a significant impact on our HSC students. We said farewell to Mr Burnitt, Mrs Walters, Mr Appleton, Mr Dunsmore and Mr Austin. We thank them for their respective contributions to students throughout their careers and wish them well in their new endeavours. I thank our hard-working P&C Association for their continued support for the education of all our children.

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.

Robyn Asboth
Principal

P&C

This has been an active year for both the school and the P&C.

The P&C’s fundraisers in 2013 have included the Springwood Annual Art Show, Celebrating Design, and a barbeque on the day of the Federal Election.

The Springwood Annual Art Show this year was the 37th such event hosted by the P&C at our school, making it the longest-established show of its type in the Blue Mountains.

I appreciate the support of all who participated in so many ways - from planning and organising the event, to setting up the hall, displaying the artworks, organising the kitchen and the cafe, and generally running the Art Show.

Particular thanks are due to the co-conveners of the Art Show and Celebrating Design - Melindy Bellotti and Rhyan Andrews, for their tireless effort in organising both events. Thanks are also due to our Secretary, Gretchen Aman, our Treasurer, Alexandro Lombardi, and Committee Member Rod Murray.

As a result of our fundraising, the P&C was able to donate $23,000 to the school for the upgrade of the student learning centre, new tables and chairs for the senior study area, as well as $2,000 for student prizes.
The P&C also intends to make a donation to the Faulconbridge Rural Fire Service, who did an outstanding job in defending the school and this community during the October bushfire emergency.

Whilst our fundraisers have taken up a lot of our time, we have also devoted time to other matters affecting Springwood High. The P&C is very pleased that both Federal and State governments have adopted the recommendations of the Gonski School Funding Review, which is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reform the way that schools are funded, and an important investment in Australia’s future.

Sir Henry Parkes named Faulconbridge. It was a young Henry Parkes who, as a Member of Parliament, drafted the first Public Schools bill. It passed into law in NSW in 1867. The idea of public education was new, and fired the infant country’s imagination. Australia would be the first continent on earth with a legal right to free schooling. From those early days until now, public education has remained the only educational guarantee that the children of Australia have. Public education has a special resonance within this community.

As we move into the future, the P&C will continue to do all that we can to continue to support the ethos of public education, and promote and protect the interests of students at our school.

John Van der Have
P&C President

Student representative’s message

Many successes were achieved by the SRC, contributing to diverse aspects of the school. The SRC has continued to be a positive, highly cohesive and well-knit group. The following outlines the 2013 highlights.

On Harmony Day we held a concert to showcase our talented Springwood High students. The teachers also ran food stalls with country themes to express the multicultural nature of Australia, for example the American stall sold hot dogs and the Mexican stall sold nachos. To symbolize harmony day, each student was asked to wear a piece of orange to show acceptance and acknowledgment of a growing multicultural Australia.

School Spirit Week aimed to raise the school’s spirit and bring everyone together through a range of activities. These raised money for a selected charity. On Monday, the Wacky Olympic Games took place. This involved a range of sports with a twist, including sack racing with hurdles, egg and spoon races, three-legged races and ball sports. Tuesday was Superhero Day. We asked for a gold coin donation and students dressed as their favourite superhero for the day. A food auction was held on Thursday, in which plates of food were donated and put up for auction. Each food item was unknown to the bidders. There were some interesting results: a banana went for $20 and a cake went for $2. Crazy Hair Day on Friday involved everyone coming to school with the wackiest hairstyles they could think of. School Spirit Week was an absolutely fantastic way of bringing the school community together. We hope in future years the tradition is carried on.

Shave for a Cure was an SRC organised fundraiser for the Leukemia Foundation. Six students willingly had their hair shaved off or coloured to support a very worthy cause.

The String Movement was an anti-bullying initiative. Year 12 SRC students scripted and ran an anti-bullying assembly for the whole school. This raised awareness of the prevalence of bullying in our society. During this event, each student received red string
to symbolise their commitment to ending bullying of any form.

On ANZAC day many Springwood High School students, including SRC members, joined the march through Springwood before the laying of a wreath on the school’s behalf. We also held a ceremony at school, enabling all students to reflect on the meaning of ANZAC Day.

On Foundation Day, the school captains acted as comperes on the main stage. All of the SRC were involved in representing the school in the parade. This annual event was promoted around the school by the SRC to increase the school’s involvement in the community.

The Bicentennial Crossing of Mt York marked a significant moment in the history of this state and this nation. The Captains and Vice-Captains attended a ceremony at Mt York, alongside many significant people within the community. This ceremony was to acknowledge and help us learn more about the feats of Wentworth, Lawson and Blaxland some 200 years ago.

The Macquarie Youth Leadership Forum, supported by Louise Markus MP, took the form of a camp attended by all Year 12 members of the SRC. We joined groups from other schools to participate in team building and other activities designed to develop our leadership skills. We also heard from many interesting speakers on the topic of leadership.

The school captains this year went to Parliament House in Sydney to attend a leadership development program. We heard from many significant members of parliament before meeting the Governor of NSW, Marie Bashir. Her Excellency spoke with grace and was happy to answer any questions from the audience. She took the time to individually greet each participant. Her words on leadership and courage were inspiring and very enlightening.

Overall, the SRC has been a highly cohesive group that was constantly busy and worked together to achieve great success within the school. On behalf of the Yr 12 SRC for 2013, we wish to thank our fellow SRC members, students and teachers, for their constant support and help when organizing and planning various events.

Thank you for a fantastic year and we wish to say good luck to all SRC members in future years.

Jake Gilliland and Jai Johns
School Captains

Student information

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

Student enrolment profile
Student attendance profile

Management of non-attendance

Student attendance is closely monitored. Contact is made with parents when a student is absent for an extended period without explanation or a student has not provided a note explaining the reason for their absences. Students who know ahead of time that they will be absent for an extended period of time may apply for an attendance exemption.

Post-school destinations

Year 12 school leavers totaled 76. Of the total number of Year 12 students, 45 (59%) were offered places at university, two of these students were offered places in university preparatory diploma courses. One student is studying at university overseas and 5 students are studying at private tertiary institutions.

Eight students stated that they would defer their studies to work and travel. Twenty three (30%) students left school for employment, a number combining work with training. Two students have been placed with a network employment agency.

The majority of university offers were made by the University of Western Sydney. However, students were also offered places at the University of Sydney, the University of NSW, Macquarie University, Charles Sturt University, the University of Wollongong and the University of Technology, Sydney.

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

Year 12 students who undertook vocational or trade training as part of their HSC totaled twenty three. This number included students studying courses delivered at school and TAFE, and also 1 student who undertook a school-based part-time apprenticeship.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent Vocational educational qualification

All Year 12 students attained the HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification.

Workforce information

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
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<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>58.6</strong></td>
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The Australian Education Regulation, 2013 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce.

The school has one indigenous member of staff.

Springwood High School’s teaching staff has continued to remain very stable. We said farewell to Mr Burnitt, Mrs Walter, Mr Appleton, Mr Dunsmore and Mr Austin. We thank them for their contribution to students throughout their careers and wish them well in their new endeavours.

Teacher qualifications

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

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>87%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>13%</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation</td>
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Financial summary
This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

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<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>1708762.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expenditure**            |            |
| Teaching & learning        |            |
| Key learning areas         | 110771.21  |
| Excursions                 | 70450.26   |
| Extracurricular dissections| 105712.72  |
| Library                    | 5532.83    |
| Training & development     | 1687.29    |
| Tied funds                 | 248206.38  |
| Casual relief teachers     | 67981.81   |
| Administration & office    | 167132.37  |
| School-operated canteen    | Nil        |
| Utilities                  | 139251.93  |
| Maintenance                | 45009.13   |
| Trust accounts             | 30142.82   |
| Capital programs           | 23806.37   |
| **Total expenditure**      | 1015685.12 |
| **Balance carried forward**| 693077.87  |

A full copy of the school’s 2013 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meeting of the P&C. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2013
Achievements

Alec Anderson was the highest achieving Aboriginal student in NSW in the 2013 Higher School Certificate. His achievement will be recognised in April, 2014, at the NSW Schools Nanga Mai Awards ceremony.

Year 12 drama student Matilda Teernstra’s individual performance was nominated for inclusion in ON-STAGE, which is the prestigious showcase of excellence from each year’s HSC Drama Practical Performance Exam. Matilda achieved a remarkable score of 99/100 in drama, placing 2nd in the state. Kalani Gacon was 7th in the state in studies of religion and 9th in the state in ancient history.

Alec Anderson, Samuel Hirt and Ainsley Lazarus all received outstanding VET student certificates at the Regional Schools Industry Partnerships Awards.

Lauren Boothroyd, Emma Hennessy, Megan Phillips, Rhiannon Travers, Sophie Wright, Brett Hartnett, Ashleigh Hall, Ella Rynehart and Rachael Witherow all successfully auditioned to be a part of the Youth Olympics Opening Ceremony held in January, 2013.

Five teams from years 7 to 9 were entered in the Blue Mountains Debating Competition, a round-robin competition for local schools, including Winmalee High School, Blue Mountains Grammar and St Colombas High School. Our Year 10 team of Nathan Harvey, Anelille Desille, Miles Burchell and Georgia Northam were highly successful in the early rounds and were runners-up in the final. Year 9 student Jack Maidment supported the Year 7 teams as coach for the early rounds.

Australian Mathematics competition saw SHS students achieving higher results this year than in previous years. Participation in this competition is increasing steadily each year.

Science students were involved in the Longneck Lagoon junior enrichment program.

The school library underwent a major refurbishment with the installation of comfortable soft seating, movable bookshelves, computer tables, and an impressive displays and information wall. In addition, our librarian, Ms Mason, has begun to establish an extensive online digital resource collection to complement the library’s print collection. The print collection has also been updated. The final result is a school library that is a flexible and inviting space for students. The library’s technology resources were expanded to include iPads donated by the P&C, which, together with iPads purchased by the English Department, make an invaluable 21st century learning tool set.
Eden Conway, Jack Maidment and Amy McArthur competed as a team in the Tournament of Minds competition, and were the regional winners in the Mathematics and Engineering Challenge.

The junior boys’ down-hill mountain bike team, comprising Hamish Nielsen, Eaden Lynch, Luke Simson and Scott Sharp, won a gold medal at the NSW Championships.

Year 11 drama students were awarded the prize for Storytelling after participating in Flannofest, the annual senior drama festival run by the Q-Theatre in Penrith.

Hospitality students were provided the opportunity to complete the St John’s Ambulance First Aid Certificate. This certificate enables students to gather the necessary qualifications for work placement and employment. Ninety percent of the class elected to participate with a 100% success rate being achieved at the conclusion of the day.

In August, eighty Year 10 students were able to see a production of Tough Beauty at the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre. This drama was developed in conjunction with young people, being based on first-hand experiences of the consequences of youth violence on individuals, schools and society. Our students found the production very thought provoking.

Students from a range of years engaged in a range of Duke of Edinburgh events throughout the year.

Students represented the school at the Schools Spectacular event this year. Ashley Hall, Amelia Sheil and Mayah Nathan participated in the dance ensemble. Peta Coffa and Zoe Maguire were members of the Millennium Band.

A formal barista course was offered to students in 2013. The course was conducted with the assistance of the Sydney Coffee School. Students also achieved an additional qualification in coffee art.

Senior student Jaidan Johns directed Springwood Public School students in their well-received performance of Second Childhood.

Hospitality students had the opportunity to run a cafe style establishment in the alfresco area of the kitchen development. They have continued to cater for a number of school events and functions.

The Year 9 child studies students developed books and designed games for children. They were able to share these products with the children of Faulconbridge Public School and the attached Childcare centre.

The Year 9 and Year 10 information and software technology classes were deeply involved in the building and programming of LEGO robots.

Year 10 students participated in the ‘B Street Smart’ road safety program, providing students with an insight into both the risks
and decision making associated with road safety.

Students from Year 7 to Year 12 were involved in fundraising for the 40 Hour Famine. In our 6th year of involvement, we raised $2500.

Arts

Students and staff are to be congratulated on the outstanding ‘On Broadway’ performances. Over 100 students were involved in a range of music, dance, drama and technical roles within the production.

The school jazz band went from strength to strength in 2013. Starting in small numbers, the band quickly grew, developing a new and exciting repertoire. The jazz band performed at Foundation Day, and formed the backbone of the musical accompaniment for ‘On Broadway’.

The annual Acoustic Evening was an opportunity for our singer-songwriters to shine on the public stage, with students from Year 7 to Year 12 demonstrating their passionate connection to music and performance.

The Q-Theatre performance of Dance Hall Days was hosted at Springwood High School, with students attending the matinee performance along with members of the Blue Mountains community. This was also a great opportunity for students in the school’s Technical Team to watch professionals at work, transforming the body of the hall into a performance space.

The Year 12 showcase this year provided Year 12 students with a final opportunity to perform their drama, dance and musical performances, surrounded by a very exciting exhibition of the Year 12 Visual Art Bodies of Work. The exhibition this year showcased the full range of expressive forms: painting, drawing, design, sculpture, film and installation.

Springwood High’s commitment to Indigenous Art Workshops continued this year, allowing students from Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9 to learn from local indigenous artists. The artwork of Year 8 was exhibited for the community.

Students have begun work on the 2014 school musical ‘13’. A contemporary, high-energy story, ‘13’ focuses on twelve year old Evan Goldman as he transitions to a new school, new friends, and new life, on his way to becoming a teenager. In addition to the strong positive messages in the story, ‘13’ features a large number of students in the cast, band and technical team. It promises to be a highlight of 2014.

Ashleigh Hall of Year 10 was selected for the State Dance Ensemble, performing in Pulse, Sydney West Dance Festival, State Dance Festival and Schools Spectacular. Amelia Sheil and Mayah Nathan were selected for the Western Sydney Region Dance Ensemble. All three students have performed at various festivals this year and will also be participating in the 2014 Schools Spectacular, performing at the Sydney Entertainment centre. Ashleigh Hall will also be a featured dancer in the Ballet section of the Schools Spectacular.

One of the dance highlights of the year was the participation of Ashleigh Hall, Jade Anderson, Amelia Sheil, Lauren Boothroyd, Emma Hennessy and Rhiannon Travers in the senior dance camp, ‘Dance Off’. The dance camp went over three days and students took part in workshops ranging from ballet to hip hop and other contemporary styles. The students also had the opportunity to be mentored by Kelly Abbey, who is an Australian dance icon.

This year was the start of a new venture for dance with the development of a School Dance Company, comprised of the Junior Dance Ensemble and the Senior Dance Ensemble. The ensembles are extracurricular programs, requiring students to rehearse in the mornings before school starts. Students audition to secure a place and are given a wide of variety of performance opportunities throughout the year, including various dance festivals such as the City of Arts festival, the Blue Mountains and Nepean
Dance Festival, and the Sydney West Dance Festival.

A significant highlight for year 12 dance was Sophie Wright’s successful audition for Dance Factory, a renowned dance training institution in Melbourne. Sophie will complete a Certificate Four in Dance Teaching and Management. Due to the institution being interstate, we submitted as part of her application an audition tape of Sophie performing her impressive HSC dance work.

Sports

Springwood High School students were very successful in 2013. The school was well represented at all levels of sport including the Nepean Zone grade sport competition, the NSW CHS knock-out competition and various tiers of competition in athletics, cross-country and swimming.

Knock Out sport teams competed in a wide range of competitions. The boys’ hockey and boys’ cricket teams were particularly successful, both proceeding to the 4th round.

The boys’ tennis team made it through to the Regional semi-finals. Jake Gilliland was selected to represent the Sydney West Tennis team.

Mason Lewis represented Sydney West in Lawn Bowls at the state carnival.

The school participated strongly in the Nepean Zone Swimming, Cross-Country and Athletics carnivals, with many students then proceeding to the Regional level.

In Cross Country, 50 students represented SHS at the Nepean Zone Carnival. Ten students subsequently competed in the Sydney West carnival. Jackson Sharp and Luke Simson placed first in their respective races and then represented Sydney West at the State carnival.

Alex Bonner and Ella Warwick-Day represented Sydney West in Athletics at the state carnival.

Matthew Taper and Sacha Elms represented Sydney West in Swimming at the state carnival.

The Wanderers Cup for soccer took place in 2013 for the first time. The boys’ team made it to the final; the girls’ team to the semifinal.

In 2013, SHS teams competed in the NSW Schools Triathlon for a third time. Each of our three teams finished in the top 20.

The Open Girls’ Rugby League team made it to the Grand Final of their competition. This was our third year of participation.

Academic achievements

NAPLAN

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.

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

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

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing (NAPLAN).

Click on the link [http://www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au) and enter the school name in the Find a school and select GO to access the school data.
Higher School Certificate (HSC)

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

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

Springwood High School students experienced considerable success in the HSC. The HSC class of 2013 achieved 42 band 6 results (i.e. an HSC mark of 90/100) across 19 subjects. Outstanding university entry scores were achieved: 2 students scoring above 99, another 2 students scoring above 95, and a further 2 students scoring above 93.

In 16/20 subjects offered (80%), the mean HSC examination score exceeded that of similar schools and/or all NSW DEC schools, an increase of 17% on 2012. In 10/20 of these subjects (50%) the mean score was greater than the Springwood High School average for 2009-2013. This trend was most evident in society and culture, mathematics and biology. The following subjects increased the percentage of students finishing in HSC Performance Band 6 in comparison to the 2012 HSC: English advanced (7% increase); English extension 2 (25% increase); mathematics (9% increase); biology (3% increase); chemistry (5% increase); business studies (18% increase); drama (50% increase); information processes & technology (13% increase); hospitality examination (4% increase); modern history (5% increase); studies of religion (15% increase); music 1 (7% increase); visual arts (7% increase); personal development, health & physical education (3% increase).

There were some particularly noteworthy results in individual subjects. In society & culture, 90% of students finished in Band 6 or Band 5. In drama, 83% of students finished in Band 6 or Band 5. In music 1, 56% of students finished in Band 6 or Band 5. In visual arts, 48% of students finished in Band 6 or Band 5. In English advanced, 45% of students finished in Band 6 or Band 5. In ancient history, 41% of students finished in Band 6 or Band 5. In business studies, 42% of students finished in Band 6 or Band 5. No students finished below Band 4 in French beginners, drama and dance. In the creative arts examinations (dance, drama, music 1, visual arts), boys increased their
Significant programs and initiatives

Careers

A range of strategies programs and initiatives have been implemented at Springwood High School in the careers area to support student learning and to provide enhanced opportunities for students to participate in the life of the school. These have included Year 10 Work Experience, a School to Work program for students at risk of not completing secondary education, careers markets for students in Year 10 to Year 12, pre-commencement of senior school interviews for students in Year 10, and post-school destination surveys for HSC students.

Future Directions include:

• establishing the careers office in the Martin Block senior precinct to enhance the provision and accessibility of support to students through the creation of a senior learning hub.

Highlights have included the highly successful implementation of:

• visiting speakers and presentations by industry professionals, e.g. defence force talks and police talks.

Literacy and Numeracy strategies reflect:

• students developing skills in producing high quality resumes and job application letters

• students increasing their capacity to participate effectively in work experience and Work Placement programs.

Faculty use of ICT features:

• use of computers and relevant software to produce resumes, tertiary applications and complete TAFE requirements.

Aboriginal education

At Springwood High School, we had the benefit of access to a number of initiatives available to our Aboriginal students through universities and community groups. We began the year with art workshops through the “Aboriginal artists in schools” program managed by Mountains Outreach Community Service. Year 8 students were guided to create artworks with the help of a local Aboriginal artist. These works were then included in the Reconciliation Australia Art Project.
With the support of Gary Rule, President of the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Ryan Barrett coordinated the initial meeting of students interested in establishing a Junior Aboriginal Education Consultative Group in the mid-mountains area.

Students from Year 8 through to Year 12 continue to participate in the University of Western Sydney engagement program, Pathways to Dreaming. In senior years, the support takes the form of practical academic support. In the junior years, it involves participation in a number of social and cultural days on the UWS campuses, as well as membership access to yourtutor, an online homework help program.

Murrandah Hampton and Yarran Hampton continue to participate in the University of Technology’s How Big are Your Dreams program. This involves participation in a variety of cultural and sporting activities throughout the year. The activities are run by prominent Aboriginal people. Yarran Hampton impressed the organisers of the program, and he was invited to work backstage at the Message Sticks and Deadly Awards events.

Ryan and Blake Barratt participated in the University of New South Wales Nuri Gili Winter School, a residential program open to students from all parts of Australia. Students spend a week on campus at the UNSW in a faculty of interest. Both young men were invited to participate in a pre-entry program, which resulted in highly sought after early offers into the University for 2014.

Winmalee High School and Springwood High School combined to organise an Aboriginal girls’ camp, held at the end of 2013. Brittany Saunders had the opportunity to participate in a dance workshop run by internationally acclaimed dancer Jo Clancy, and an art workshop by Karen Maber.

Multicultural education

Students identified with a language background other than English comprised 7.8% of our student population. Multicultural perspectives are embedded into the curriculum. The values of tolerance and acceptance of diversity are part of the culture of the school and are reinforced through the personal best program, and supporting events such as those organised for Harmony Day.

Ms Helen Blanche, the school’s anti-racism coordinator, frequently addressed the student community on issues of anti-racism and cultural tolerance.

Harmony Day was celebrated at the school on March 21st with a formal assembly followed by an international food festival organised by staff and the Student Representative Council. Proceeds from the event were donated to an international children’s charity. Year 7 visual arts students also designed Harmony Day posters that were both displayed and entered in the Harmony Day Poster Competition.

School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

School evaluation processes

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used include:

- analysis of quantitative and qualitative data relating to students’ academic performance
- analysis of quantitative and qualitative data relating to student wellbeing
- quantitative and qualitative analysis of key school programs by team leaders and members.

School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013

School priority 1

Leadership and Management.

Outcomes from 2012—2014

Increase the visibility of the SRC within the school and the leadership capabilities of its members.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- regular meetings of the SRC with the senior executive
• increased leadership opportunities for students in specific junior school programs such as peer support, peer mediation and tutoring
• successful implementation of School Spirit Week with daily activities coordinated by SRC year groups

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014
• scope and sequence for leadership development for SRC members
• targeted leadership development for Indigenous students and continued connection with university programs
• SRC members from Year 7 to Year 12 to lead significant events in the school calendar.

School priority 2
Engagement and Attainment

Outcomes from 2012–2014
Promote and enhance student engagement and attainment in order to increase retention to Year 12 from 61.3% to 64%.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:
• percentage goal for Year 12 retention was exceeded: 74% retention achieved
• Year 12 students reported high levels of engagement and connectedness to the school in the 2013 ‘Tell From Me’ survey, in which over 75,000 secondary school students in New South Wales participated: 74% of Year 12 students reported a high sense of belonging (the NSW norm was 63%) and 95% reported having positive relationships that support them in making positive choices (the NSW norm was 77%)
• Year 12 students reported high levels of interest and motivation in the 2013 ‘Tell From Me’ survey: 50% of Year 12 students reported being intellectually engaged (the NSW norm was 46%) and 34% described themselves as being interested in their studies and motivated (the NSW norm was 25%).

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:
• promote student engagement and motivation through the broad curriculum offerings made possible in a vertical curriculum structure: the Combined Senior Curriculum (CSC)
• oversight of Year 10, Senior Year 1 and Senior Year 2 by a Deputy Principal, in conjunction with the school teams responsible for welfare and learning support, to ensure continuity and scope in the academic and well-being support of students in the senior school
• implementation of a targeted program for Year 10 students, supporting them in the academic and study skills needed to transition to HSC studies, and in providing timely advice to support the subject selection process for the Preliminary HSC and HSC courses.

School priority 3
Literacy and Numeracy

Outcomes from 2012–2014
Improve overall literacy and numeracy by 3% as shown by NAPLAN data in 2012.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:
• implementation of the Quicksmart numeracy program, designed by UNE to increase working memory through a formative assessment process. In 2013, 12 students completed this program. All students showed significant increase in speed and correct recall. Addition accuracy increased
by an average of 17%. Speed of addition increased by an average of 42%.

implementation of the Quicksmart literacy program. In 2013, 8 students completed this program. All students showed a significant increase in speed of word recognition but also showed an increase in attempting multi-syllabic words. The average recognition speed increased from 1.965 seconds to 1.27 seconds. Accuracy in vocabulary increased from an average of 67% to 95.6%.

**Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:**

- the program will have 16 students completing the numeracy component and a further 8 students in the Literacy program
- components of the program will be used to assist a further thirty students who access the Learning Centre
- students will have completed a full range of baseline testing to obtain specific data supporting interventions in key areas such as vocabulary words and multiplication strategies
- the Quicksmart co-ordinator will develop individual and engaging resources for the Literacy Program that are underpinned by the Quicksmart approach.

**Professional learning**

The key components of professional learning expenditure in 2014 related to the introduction of the Australian Curriculum and the continued transition to the Combined Senior Curriculum (CSC) structure at Springwood High School.

New K-10 syllabuses, incorporating the Australian Curriculum content, have been developed by the Board of Studies (BOS). The first phase subjects are English, mathematics, history, and science and technology. The timeline for implementation of the new syllabuses for these subjects is varied, taking place in 2014 and 2015.

Significant release time was made available to teachers of the phase one subjects to enable familiarisation with the new syllabuses, to undertake program evaluation and development, and to attend professional learning. This enabled the development of the necessary collective understanding of the new curriculum, collegial program development and a smooth beginning to the process of implementation.

Faculties and individual teachers also had time and support made available to them to develop senior program and assessment regimes in support of the CSC. A particular focus in this regard was the development of processes for the alignment of assessment items and results across the CSC cohort of students and the Year 12 cohort still studying for the Higher School Certificate under the traditional structure. The year was one of transition in this regard. Key BOS personnel visited the school on a number of occasions in 2013 to provide advice and support during this process, reporting most favourably on the rigour and fairness with which the process of alignment was undertaken.

Professional learning in the area of supporting student resilience was also a major focus in 2013. Staff participated with colleagues from the Blue Mountains educational community, including staff from our feeder primary schools and local government high schools, in a stimulating professional learning day led by Andrew Fuller, a renowned clinical psychologist, author and academic. Andrew’s presentation complemented and extended the focus on positive psychology being developed in this area by schools, working in conjunction with Blue Mountains Council. Executive staff and year advisers attended planning meetings and related professional learning to support the development of this important initiative.

Teachers were also supported in furthering their subject and pedagogical knowledge in other areas, particularly in relation to HSC
courses, the use of Information Communication Technologies in the classroom, and welfare training.

**Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction**

In 2013, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. A particular focus was the ‘Tell Them from Me’ survey, in which all Springwood High School students were asked to participate. They were amongst the 75,000 students across NSW who participated in this major survey, supported by the Department of Education and Communities, in 2013. The survey evaluated social-emotional outcomes for students, their academic outcomes and certain key drivers of academic outcomes.

Key findings of the survey included the fact that students feel challenged in their English, mathematics and science classes, and feel confident of their skills in these subjects at levels in line with the NSW norm:

- 38% of students in the school had scores that placed them in the desirable quadrant with high skills and high challenge. The NSW pilot norm for these years was 37%
- 9% of students were confident of their skills but did not find classes challenging. The NSW pilot norm for these years was 10%.
- 44% of students were not confident of their skills and found English, Maths or science challenging. The NSW pilot norm for this category was 44%
- 9% of students lacked confidence in their skills and did not feel they were challenged. The NSW pilot norm for this category was 9%

Students also reported having positive relationships at school at level commensurate with the state norm:

- 77% of students reporting having positive relationships; the NSW norm for these years was 77%
- 76% of the girls and 78% of the boys in this school have positive relationships. The NSW norm for girls was 78% and for boys 76%.

A noteworthy trend in the survey data was for Year 7 students and senior students (i.e. Year 10 to Year 12) to report higher levels of satisfaction, engagement and outcomes than those reported by students in Year 8 and Year 9. A future direction for the school will be for the executive, learning support and welfare teams to develop programs and interventions to more effectively support and engage students in Year 8 and Year 9.

**Program evaluations**

**Study Skills**

**Background**

Study skills need to be taught explicitly so that students are provided with direction, support and structure in and for their learning. The 2016 HSC cohort will have benefitted from study skills experiences over the last three years. Initially the program focused on assisting students in their transition from primary to high school in Year 7 and Year 8, including such things such as:

- note taking
- scaffolding strategies such as mind mapping and mnemonics
- examination preparation techniques
- planning and personal organisation.

In Year 9, the focus shifted to:

- goal setting
- self-motivation
- choices
- developing, defining and refining student self-perception as a learner.
Findings and conclusions

To create independent, confident and critical learners, structured and regular instruction in study skills is vital. Students are expected to process and memorise large quantities of information at school, and are exposed to a range of examination formats across a diverse range of learning areas. Therefore, it is vital to show students how to memorise, retain, process and reproduce information confidently and expertly. Small installments over the three years have contributed to the formation of some good study habits; however, to adequately prepare the students for senior school and beyond, an extensive and holistic approach is required.

Future directions

Now the students are in Year 10, the intensity and frequency of the study skills program is being increased, as independent study is an integral part of senior schooling. Over the course of the year, students will be regularly instructed on skills that will promote independent learning, critical thinking, consistent review of subject content and strategies to memorise and recall information. This will be done through guest speakers, workshops conducted by experienced teachers within the school, workshops conducted by experts from outside the school and year assemblies to promote study tips.

Some of the areas that will be addressed are:

- essay writing (across subject areas)
- responding to short answer and extended response questions (across subject areas)
- working independently on projects
- fitness, food and relaxation for academic success
- other study tips.

In order to continue to prepare students for academic success, the program developed over the past four years will be shared with year advisers of cohorts moving into and through the junior school.

About this report

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

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Mr Van der Have, P&C President
Jai Johns, SRC Representative
Jake Gilliland, SRC Representative
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Mrs Jodie Hume, Rel. Deputy Principal
Ms Dean, Head Teacher English/Drama
Ms Fisher, Head Teacher PDHPE/Dance
Ms Noorbergen, Head Teacher HSIE/LOTE
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Parents can find more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the report and have the opportunity to provide feedback about the report at: https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/high-performance/annual-school-reports