2009 Annual School Report
Grafton High School

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

Students
There has been a small but steady decline in student enrolment in recent years. Planning for 2010 includes strategies to attract student enrolments and to increase retention rates. Revised procedures to follow up on student absences have led to a significant improvement in student attendance. Overall, attendance rates at Grafton High School are significantly higher than the North Coast Regional average but still below state average.

Staff
The school had an entitlement of 69.8 teaching positions in 2009. All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education
The Aboriginal Education Officer, together with additional funded support, focussed on Year 10, 11 and 12 students with an emphasis on both attendance and specific learning outcomes. A student survey found that 98% of students believed the additional support had significantly improved their level of achievement.

Four Aboriginal students completed Year 12 in 2009, two of whom have accepted university placements.

Respect and responsibility
The school gives explicit emphasis to the values underpinning public education in NSW. These values are taught, modelled and reinforced through special programs.

Following a survey of students that identified common bullying behaviours Welfare staff have implemented programs to address bullying behaviour and change the attitude of bullies.

Student achievement in 2009

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7
In the Year 7 NAPLAN Literacy results for 2009 our school had fewer than the Like School Group average in bands 4-5-6 and a more in band 7-8-9. The overall pattern of student achievement for our school is superior to the like school group and close to state average in reading, writing and spelling.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7
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Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9
In the Year 9 NAPLAN Literacy results for 2009 our school had fewer than the Like School Group average in bands 5-6 and a higher number in band 7-8-9-10 for reading, grammar and punctuation. In writing the school is over-represented in the lower bands. The overall pattern of student achievement for our school is similar to the like school group and near to state average, except in the highest band.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9
In the Year 9 NAPLAN Numeracy results for 2009 our school had fewer than the Like School Group average in bands 5-6-7 and a higher number in band 8-9-10. The overall pattern of student achievement for our school is superior to the like school group and close to state average in numeracy.

School Certificate
School Certificate achievement in 2009 continued the positive trend from the previous two years. The most pleasing results were achieved in History where overall performance was well above state and like school group averages. Overall results reflect the very positive impact of a whole school program implemented to improve each student’s performance at the School Certificate. It is a school aspiration to consistently achieve at state average across all areas tested.

Higher School Certificate
Results for 2009 generally compare favourably with school average for the past five years and state average results. In 2009 our students achieved results at or above state average in Aboriginal Studies, Business Studies, Extension 2 English, Food Technology, Industrial Technology, Modern History and Senior Science. Results in English (Extension 1, Advanced & Standard) and Legal Studies were somewhat below state average and below the school’s five year average. Initiatives will be put in place to improve 2010 Higher School Certificate results.
Messages

Principal's message
In 2009 there have been many outstanding achievements within the Grafton High School community. The focus of our efforts is always classroom learning. Our HSC results reflected this emphasis, with 16 students scoring at least 85% in one or more courses. Our 2009 School Certificate results also reflected very positively on staff and student commitment to improvement. Overall achievement was pleasing with results in History outstanding.

The Gold Standard Classes, an option for students in Years 7 to 10 who declare their commitment to a high standard of work, has developed further in 2009 with many students seeking placement in at least one Gold Standard class. Our Aboriginal students have received increased support in their studies through a mentor project and V-Tracks (a partnership project with TAFE). As a result the standard of achievement amongst our Aboriginal students reflects some very positive learning outcomes.

During 2009 four members of staff retired from teaching. Mr Bruce Tom, who provided inspirational leadership as Head Teacher TAS over 10 years, was also highly regarded as a classroom teacher and member of the school executive. Mrs Gayle Robinson, a member of the Science faculty, provided leadership in the area of student welfare programs. Mrs Helen Huxley, who began teaching at GHS in 1991, made significant contributions as a classroom teacher as well as providing wonderful leadership for the public speaking and debating programs at Grafton High School. Paul McLennan, who began teaching at Grafton High in 1977, initiated the teaching of Indonesian as a language and also pioneered the Work Studies program that continues as an important stepping stone to employment for many of our students.

This year Mrs Viv Nichols completed a study tour to North America on a NSW Premier’s Scholarship. As a follow up Mrs Nichols has begun implementing strategies that will help reduce the impact of road trauma on young people.

The PDHPE staff have successfully applied to be part of an internationally recognised project investigating strategies that will increase the involvement of girls in physical activity. Through this project students will be part of meaningful scientific research and will be introduced to a range of programs that will hopefully increase their enthusiasm to be physically active.

The highlight of some outstanding sporting achievements in 2009 was winning the NSW CHS Championship in women’s squash (Iritana Gray, Moana Gray, Tegan Morgan and Rebecca Gray). The number of Grafton High School students selected into regional and state representative teams is evidence of high levels of participation across many sports.

In 2009 professional learning for staff has focused on programs for Gifted & Talented students. This focus has been driven by the exciting prospect of our first Selective Class in 2010 but has the potential to be of huge benefit to all students.

2009 has been a year of exciting improvements in facilities at Grafton High. State of the art Science Laboratories, now all centrally located in A-block, were completed earlier this year. A complete upgrade of student toilet facilities has been a long overdue improvement. Brand new Textiles and Computer facilities as well as a new Art Workshop have been completed to further improve the learning environment. The installation of Interactive Whiteboards in every faculty have made big changes in the range of ways students are engaged in learning, including the opportunity to videoconference with students and teachers in other schools.

I applaud the staff of Grafton High School for their enthusiasm to embrace new technologies and take on the challenge of innovation to improve student learning outcomes. They provide a great model for students to strive for their best as we continue to build the great reputation of Grafton High.

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.

Colin Lang
Principal

P&C message
As yet another year draws to a close it is interesting to reflect on the progress and achievements throughout the school over the period.

The redevelopment of the A block laboratories and subsequent transformation of the D block laboratories to class rooms has been a massive project, the end result of which is an enhanced learning environment for our students.

The added security provided by the perimeter fence has benefitted the whole school community.
by reducing the risk of unlawful entry to the
grounds and associated vandalism and damage
and other costs to the school and also the
upgrading/remodelling of the toilet blocks has
been a great improvement for our students.

The hard work and effort of the Debutante Ball
committee must be acknowledged as they had to
work twice as hard to organise the event twice
due to the May flood. All 33 debutantes looked
gorgeous and their partners very smart throughout
the proceedings.

The Spring Fair provided an enjoyable day,
bringing the whole school community together
whilst raising funds for the various faculties to
enhance the educational facilities for our students.

I must thank the entire P & C Association for their
support throughout the year and especially the
executive for their dedication.

It is sad for the Association when families have
their last child finish schooling at GHS after being
heavily involved with the workings of the group
over many years. A special thank you must be
extended to both Narelle Lane and Julie Pearso
and their families who will no longer have students
at Grafton High School next year. We all owe
them a debt of thanks for the hard work and effort
which they have extended to the association and
the school community in general. They will be
sadly missed.

We look forward to further progress in the year
ahead and welcome new membership to our
association and to Grafton High School in general
in 2010.

Don Morgan

P&C President

Student representative's message

What a year! This year Grafton High School's
Student Representative Council has held many
functions. This has included four discos – the
proceeds from the first disco went to helping out
the Black Saturday Bushfire victims. From this
disco, a sausage sizzle and staff fundraising we
raised $3000. From our second disco, our funds
were used to refurbish the seating area in T block.
Our funds are also used to help students attend
programs such as State Dance Camps and
National Science Programs. The discos were a lot
of fun for all students.

We also supported many charities in the greater
community. We held Jeans for Genes Day,
Biggest Morning Tea, RSPCA Cupcake Day, Surf
Life Saving Boardies Day and a mufti day for
Beyond Blue. Grafton High also participated in
Relay for Life. We had the biggest team in the
whole area!!! The SRC also sponsors a child
Mpho Nchaklo from Africa. The SRC have been
sponsoring Mpho and her community since 1994.
From our combined fundraising efforts, the SRC
has been able to donate a combined total of
$5000 to worthwhile charities.

The SRC also actively participates in many
community events such as the ANZAC Day march
and Police Remembrance Day. We like
participating in these events as we like to help and
support the community. It also portrays a positive
image of Grafton High School in the community.

Another really exciting SRC initiative is the
captain's trip to Sydney to meet the Governor
General.

Claire Trimble and Riley Taylor

2009 Captains

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>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
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<td>555</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>457</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>452</td>
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</table>

There has been a steady decline in student
enrolment. Student numbers in our partner
primary schools indicate this pattern may continue
for the next few years. Planning for 2010 includes
strategies to increase student enrolments and
improve retention rates.
Student attendance profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2006</th>
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<td></td>
<td>92.0</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td></td>
<td>87.4</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td>89.0</td>
<td>88.1</td>
<td>87.2</td>
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<td>88.0</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>89.8</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>89.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The introduction of revised procedures to follow up on student absences has identified areas of attendance to be more closely monitored. Attendance rates at Grafton High School in 2009, for the first time, fell slightly below the North Coast Regional average.

Management of non-attendance

Systems have been put in place to routinely contact parents when students have unexplained absences. In 2009 student attendance has been linked to student welfare and in future will be managed more directly as a welfare issue. Letters are systematically and regularly sent to parents for all students with unexplained absences. Head Teachers (Student Welfare) follow up with individual students and provide appropriate support. The Home School Liaison Officer is also an important resource. In addition it is planned to use text messaging in 2010 as a means of giving parents more immediate advice on their child’s attendance.

Retention to Year 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SC03-HSC05</th>
<th>SC04-HSC06</th>
<th>SC05-HSC07</th>
<th>SC06-HSC08</th>
<th>SC07-HSC09</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>School</strong></td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>55.3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SEG</strong></td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>55.5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>State</strong></td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>61.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The increase in proportion of students staying on to complete the Higher School Certificate is directly related to successful programs to provide individual support to students in the senior school. The school has also worked to provide a broad range of relevant options for all students, including CareerLink and the highly successful pathways program. With declining local economic conditions students involved in school-based work placement programs have chosen to complete Year 12 because of limited full-time employment opportunities.

Post-school destinations

The majority of students completing Year 10 2009 continued their enrolment at Grafton High School with the intention of completing their Higher School Certificate. Of students who left the school from Year 10 2009 six sought enrolment at other local schools, five left the Clarence Valley and seventeen left to undertake employment or study at TAFE. Of 23 students who left school from Year 11 four left the Clarence Valley, twelve left to undertake employment and five left to study at TAFE. Three students opted to repeat Year 11 in 2010. From 95 Year 12 2009 students sixty seven were offered places in university courses within New South Wales. From a post-school destination survey 36% of the cohort accepted university positions (including those who have deferred for a year), 15% enrolled in TAFE courses (including trainees and apprentices) and 45% gained substantial employment. Two
students opted to complete their HSC over three years to seek better results.

**Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training**

In 2009 65 of 95 (%) Year 12 students studied at least one vocational course. Of these 12 studied a course at TAFE and 36 studied a vocational course delivered at Grafton High School

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

In 2009 65 of 95 (%) Year 12 students studied at least one vocational course. Of these 12 studied a course at TAFE and 36 studied a vocational course delivered at Grafton High School

Enter summary statement which must include the percentage of Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification in 2009.

**Staff information**

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

Enter text here

**Staff establishment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>51.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Mild Intellectual Disabilities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff (SASS)</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>86.7</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At Grafton High School a full time Aboriginal Education Officer provides additional support for our indigenous students. In 2009 the school participated in an affirmative action program to employ an Aboriginal person as part of the school’s full time administration team.

**Teacher qualifications**

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

During 2009 four members of staff successfully participated in professional learning activities that give credit towards a post graduate qualification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>

**Financial summary**

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

**Date of financial summary:** 30/11/2009

**Income**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>461,148.77</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>602,633.87</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>276,677.07</td>
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<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>344,679.73</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>19,985.37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>39,121.78</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>1,744,246.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Expenditure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
<td>99,042.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>107,053.45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>121,705.09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>14,732.52</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>286,336.49</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>240,772.59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>137,359.52</td>
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<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>115,172.66</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>36,752.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>40,541.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>44,114.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
<td>1,243,583.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance carried forward</strong></td>
<td>500,663.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Included in tied funds is a grant from the NSW government to be matched by funds raised within the school community to construct a gym facility for use by PDHPE and sport programs. Training & development is now accounted for under Teacher Professional Learning (included in Tied Funds).

A full copy of the school's 2009 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

**School performance 2009**

The school strives to challenge students to excel across a broad range of curriculum areas as well as through extra-curricular activities.
Achievements

Arts
Visual Arts students have had the opportunity to view examples of outstanding artistic work, including exhibitions at the Grafton Regional Gallery.

Community support for student excellence in the Arts is fostered through the annual Sheila Mears scholarship and through scholarship opportunities for students to attend Grafton Artsfest in both Autumn and Spring where highly qualified tutors share their knowledge and skills.

Sport
CHS Sport
Grafton High School has an exceptional record in North Coast sport and is arguably one of the strongest sporting schools in the State. The schools results in 2009 include:

State Champions - Girls Squash

North Coast Champions
- Boys Basketball
- BoysU15 Basketball
- Boys Hockey (3rd in State)
- Girls Hockey
- Girls Netball
- Boys Netball
- Open Rugby
- Boys U14 Rugby
- Girls Touch
- Girls Volleyball

North Coast Finals
- Girls Tennis
- Boys Tennis
- Boys under 14 Rugby League
- Boys U14 Cricket
- Girls U14 Cricket

These results do not include the outstanding performances of individual athletes in Swimming, Athletics, Cross Country and Rowing.

The reason for our success is twofold. First, the school has a strong sporting culture where students aspire to represent the school. Second, the dedication and qualification of the coaches at Grafton High is outstanding across a wide range of sports.

School Sport
Sport is a mandatory component of the School Certificate. It is not formally assessed, however, active participation is required. Grafton High School runs a scattered sport program. Each cohort is divided into two groups and each half of the year attends sport at different times during the week. This organisation makes best use of the teaching staff and the facilities. Each sport group has a specific sport program that takes into account student preferences, available facilities and the expertise of the staff.

Debating and Public Speaking
A talented group of students from Years 7 to 12 developed their public speaking skills with guidance and direction from Mrs Ashenden.

The senior team in the Premier’s Debating Competition, comprising Jack Beeby, Alice Lane, Rebecca Marsh and Alexandra Neill, reached the regional final of this competition.

Eliza Pearson and Tegan Morgan of Year 10 participated successfully in the Legacy Public Speaking Competition.

Junior and senior debating teams successfully contested inter-school debates with various schools across the North Coast.

Community Involvement
Led by the Student Representative Council the student body contributed substantially to several charitable collections during the year. Large numbers of students volunteered to collect donations for the Red Cross Calling, the Red Shield Appeal and the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Appeal. Students also participated in a range of special events conducted within the school to support worthwhile community causes.

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 the assessments.

Yr 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)
Yr 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)
Yr 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)
Yr 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

In the School Certificate the performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from Performance Band 1 (lowest) to Performance Band 6 (highest).
Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7

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In the Year 9 NAPLAN Literacy results for 2009 our school had fewer than the Like School Group average in bands 5-6-7 and a higher number in band 8-9-10 for reading, grammar and punctuation. In writing the school is over-represented in the lower bands. The overall pattern of student achievement for our school is similar to the like school group and near to state average, except in the highest band.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9

In the Year 9 NAPLAN Numeracy results for 2009 our school had fewer than the Like School Group average in bands 5-6-7 and a higher number in band 8-9-10. The overall pattern of student achievement for our school is superior to the like school group and close to state average in numeracy.

School Certificate

School Certificate achievement in 2009 continued the very positive trend from previous years. The most pleasing results were achieved in History and Computer Skills where overall performance was well above state and like school group averages. Overall results reflect the very positive impact of a whole school program implemented to improve each student's performance at the School Certificate. Whilst results in Mathematics show the school achieves below state average in the highest band the overall pattern of School Certificate achievement has improved and is better than the like school group. The level of computing skills for Grafton High School students was higher than both state average and that of the like school group. It is a school aspiration to consistently achieve at state average across all areas tested.
School Certificate relative performance comparison to Year 5 (value-adding)

The value added for the 2009 cohort reflects an outstanding trend of improvement in English, Maths, Science, History and Computer Skills compared to the school average for 2005-2009. The growth above state average in History is an outstanding achievement by the 2009 School Certificate cohort. Ongoing strategies to improve performance in Year 10 will be strengthened in 2010, especially in Mathematics and Geography.

Higher School Certificate

The charts below show average student achievement in the 2009 Higher School Certificate exams for courses with larger numbers of students. Results for 2009 generally compare favourably with school average for the past five years and state average results. In 2009 our HSC students achieved results at or above state average in Aboriginal Studies, Business Studies, Extension 2 English, Food Technology, Industrial Technology, Modern History and Senior Science.

Results in English (Extension 1, Advanced & Standard), and Legal Studies were somewhat below state average and below the school’s five year average. Initiatives will be put in place to improve 2010 Higher School Certificate results.
Higher School Certificate relative performance comparison to School Certificate (value-adding)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance band</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School 2009</td>
<td>-6.8</td>
<td>-3.4</td>
<td>-7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Average</td>
<td>-4.3</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>-4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005 - 2009</td>
<td>-4.3</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>-4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSG average 2009</td>
<td>-2.1</td>
<td>-2.5</td>
<td>-3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pattern of value-added performance in 2009 is disappointing for high and low performance groups. Strategies to raise the value-added performance will be incorporated in planning for 2010.
Minimum standards

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards for reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy for years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

The performance of the students in our school in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy is compared to these minimum standards. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these standards are reported below.

Percentage of Year 7 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>91.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>89.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>90.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>90.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>94.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of Year 9 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>89.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>81.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>90.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

In 2009 the Aboriginal Education Team, under the leadership of Mrs Armstrong, had two priorities. With Norta Norta funding to support student learning in stages 4 and 5 an Aboriginal person was employed to provide additional support for every Aboriginal student in Years 7 and 8. Students with poor attendance records and students with identified learning difficulties were given priority. Support included communication with parents, classroom assistance, help in accessing resources and liaison with teaching staff. In most cases attendance was improved and a student survey indicated above 98% of students believed this support had benefited their learning. Individual tutorial assistance was provided for senior Aboriginal students.

Multicultural education

Year 7 students are explicitly taught values of tolerance and acceptance of individual differences through the Thinking Skills program which is at minimum standards. The Quicksmart program provides targeted support in numeracy.
taught for two hours per week. In addition all Year 7 and 8 students are immersed in cultural understanding as part of the Language program, which involves an introduction to languages in Year 7 followed by the study of single language in Year 8. Multicultural education is also reflected in junior teaching programs. The school has an anti-racism coordinator and an anti-bullying coordinator to provide counsel and support to students in specific cases.

**Respect and responsibility**
The values underpinning public education in New South Wales are explicitly taught to students at Grafton High School and are evident in anti-bullying programs run for identified students, a school awards program that recognises students’ contribution through community service. Specific programs included within the curriculum to promote respect and responsibility are:

- Thinking Skills in Year 7 (2 lessons per fortnight)
- Peer Tutoring (Year 11 students supporting Year 7 and 8 students in the daily school reading program)
- QuickSmart Tutoring (Year 10 students supporting Year 7 students in the numeracy program)
- Studies in Today’s Society (including a component of community service)
- Values education through drama presentations for Years 7-10 presented by Brainstorm Productions

**Progress on 2009 targets**

**Target 1**

*Increase the apparent retention rate from Year 10 to completion of Year 12 from 51% to 60%*

Strategies to achieve this target included:

- Increasing student enrolment in vocational courses so that 60% of students study at least one vocational course
- Deputy Principals, Year Advisers and Careers Adviser provide proactive mentor support to “at risk” students

Whilst the percentage of students completing the HSC did not reach 60% the destination data indicates that most students who left school went on to further study or jobs with associated training opportunities.

**Target 2**

*Increase the retention and engagement of Aboriginal students from Year 8 to Year 12*

The percentage of Aboriginal students at Grafton High School has steadily grown to 9%. The challenge is to engage these students and to achieve the same retention rate as for the broad school enrolment. Strategies to achieve this target included:

- Engaging additional Aboriginal staff to mentor and support Aboriginal students
- Developing personalised learning plans with each Aboriginal student
- Regular parent meetings to actively involve parents in their child’s learning experience

The success of these strategies is evident through:

- The number of Aboriginal students who successfully completed the School Certificate
- The number of students who successfully completed Year 11 and the HSC

Parent meetings were not well attended.

**Target 3**

*Raise expectations of classroom learning outcomes across Years 7-12*

The principles of the successful program to improve student learning outcomes in Year 10 are being extended to all years. Strategies to achieve this target included:

- Implementation of a Gold Standard Class program available to all students across core subjects in Years 7-10
- Mentoring project in Year 11 to support students "at risk" and challenge students with high aspirations
- Increased student participation in Career Link

Our success was evident through:

- Very positive student and parent responses to a survey of the Gold Standard program during its first year of operation
- School Certificate and HSC results in 2009

**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 2009 our school carried out evaluations of the Gold Standard Class program and the revised day structure.

**Educational and management practice:**

**Gold Standard classes**

**Background**

To provide an improved learning opportunity for junior students the Gold Standard Class program was implemented by the school executive in 2008.
Gold Standard classes were offered to junior students in the core subjects. Students were required to apply for the classes and the criteria for inclusion included a commitment to independent learning. Classes were fully subscribed in every year. A survey to evaluate the program was completed by staff, students and parents toward the end of 2009.

Findings and conclusions
Findings were summarised under the following areas:
- 98% of students from Gold Standard classes indicated a positive experience on every aspect of the survey.
- 100% of parents supported the innovation.
- 95% of staff teaching Gold Standard Classes indicated that it created a more positive learning environment.

In summary, the survey data indicated that the Gold Standard Class program has been valued by the whole school learning community. This has been a positive innovation to be strengthened in future years.

Future directions
The Gold Standard Class program will continue in its present form for 2010. A regular review of student commitment will be introduced to ensure that students maintain their commitment to a positive learning environment.

Curriculum: Day structure and senior curriculum options

Background
Until 2008 Grafton High School has followed a traditional day structure of 8 by 40 minute lessons on a weekly cycle. In 2009 the school community agreed to a trial an organisation with 6 by 50 minute lessons each day, spread over a 10 day cycle. This trial was evaluated in term 3, 2009.

Findings and conclusions
The level of support for the new day structure was higher in the survey than the original vote to trial the structure. Some elements of the current organisation will be modified in 2010, however, the basic structure is endorsed by almost 90% of those surveyed.

Future directions
Joint meetings between school leaders of both Grafton High School and South Grafton High School have explored options for shared curriculum delivery in the senior school. To facilitate shared delivery the two schools have synchronised aspects of school organisation. This will include a Senior Period, starting at 8.30am for senior Grafton High School students, to increase flexibility. The modified day structure and curriculum sharing will be evaluated in 2010 to further shape curriculum organisation in 2011 and beyond.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2009 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented below.
- Parent and student responses to the survey on Gold Standard Classes are reported in the evaluation above.
- To give a voice to all students the Student Representative Council conducted a Quality of School Life Student Attitude Survey. The survey data is analysed by the DET and allows comparison with statewide norms. The survey measured student attitude in the areas of General Satisfaction, Achievement, Teachers, Relationships, Self Esteem, Sense of Identity. Our school data shows that Grafton High School students feel very positive (80% agreement) about the relevance of schooling, their sense of identity and their achievement. The data shows that students are not so positive (<70%) about self esteem & status and teacher relationships.
- This survey will be repeated in 2010 as a tool to measure progress.

Professional learning

The deputy principals from Grafton High School provided active leadership for the 2009 regional conference for deputy principals and within the school actively support the development of aspiring school leaders.

Through school development days, faculty groups and individual mentoring all teaching staff participated in training and development activities focussed on quality teaching in the classroom.

Teachers also worked in pairs to observe each other teaching with a focus on elements of the Quality Teaching Framework. All staff participated in professional learning sessions to increase awareness of generational change and to build strategies to increase engagement.

All staff received training in Occupational Health and Safety, Child Protection Procedures and the Staff Code of Conduct.

The average number of days of professional learning for each member of teaching staff was 4.2. The average number of days of professional learning for Support Staff was 2.3. The average expenditure per staff member on professional learning in 2009 was $470.
School development 2009 – 2011

Targets for 2009-2011 have been developed through ongoing consultation with staff, students and the school community.

Targets for 2010

Targets for 2010 are derived from the 2010 management plan.

Target 1

Increase the apparent retention rate from Year 10 to completion of Year 12 from 51% to 60%

The number of students electing to re-enrol from Year 10 into Year 11 is high (80%) and Grafton High attracts new enrolments from other schools into Year 11. However, a high percentage of students leave school prior to completing their Higher School Certificate. In part this is directly linked to the success of vocational programs within the school.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Increase student enrolment in vocational courses so that at least 65% of students study at least one vocational course
- Key welfare staff provide proactive mentor support to “at risk” students
- Improve data collection processes for destination survey of students who leave school prior to completion of their HSC

Our success will be measured by:
- Student retention data to end of Year 11
- Student retention data to end of Year 12
- Destination data for students

Target 2

Increase the retention and engagement of Aboriginal students from Year 8 to Year 12

The percentage of Aboriginal students at Grafton High School has steadily grown to 9%. The challenge is to engage these students and to achieve the same retention rate as for the broad school enrolment.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Engage additional Aboriginal staff to mentor and support Aboriginal students
- Engage tutors to provide learning support for senior students
- Every Aboriginal student to have a personalised learning plan
- Establish a parent group to actively involve parents in their child’s learning experience

Our success will be measured by:
- The percentage of students successfully completing the School Certificate, Year 11 and the HSC
- Attendance rates
- Achievement rates compared to all students
- The participation of parents at meetings

Target 3

Raise expectations of classroom learning outcomes across Years 7-12

The principles of the successful program to improve student learning outcomes in Year 10 can now be extended to all years.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Further development of the Gold Standard Class program available to all students across core subjects in Years 7-10
- Further development of mentoring projects in Year 11 to support students “at risk” and challenge students with high aspirations
- Increased student awareness of and participation in Career Link
- Focus staff training and development on classroom practice and gifted & talented programs

Our success will be measured by:
- Data from a further survey of the Gold Standard program
- School Certificate and HSC results in 2010
- Enrolment and retention rates in 2010
- Staff participation rates and feedback for identified professional learning programs
- Evaluation of effective learning in the initial Year 7 Selective Class

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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Liz McMillan (Deputy Principal)
Paula Wicks (Parent)
Don Morgan (P&C President)
Riley Taylor (SRC Representative)
Clare Trimble (SRC Representative)

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