Our school at a glance

Students
The trend of small but steady decline in student enrolment in recent years has been arrested in 2010. Planning for 2011 includes strategies to consolidate student enrolments and to further increase retention rates. Revised procedures to follow up on student absences have led to an improvement in student attendance. Overall, attendance rates at Grafton High School are significantly higher than the North Coast Regional average but remain below state average.

Staff
The school had an entitlement of 69.9 teaching positions in 2010. All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools and regularly participate in professional learning activities.

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education
The Aboriginal Education Officer, together with additional funded support through Norta Norta and Schools in Partnership programs, provided support for all students with an emphasis on both attendance and specific learning outcomes. A student survey found that 96% of students believed the additional support had significantly improved their level of achievement.

Four Aboriginal students completed Year 12 in 2010, 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, modeled and reinforced through special programs.

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

Student achievement in 2010

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7
In the Year 7 NAPLAN Literacy results for 2010 our school had a higher percentage of students achieving bands 8-9 than similar schools. A higher percentage of our students achieved band 4 in reading, writing and grammar & punctuation when compared to previous years. The overall pattern of student achievement in 2010 for our school is superior to the similar school group in each aspect of literacy.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7
In the Year 7 NAPLAN Numeracy results for 2010 our school had a smaller percentage than the similar school group in bands 4-5 and a higher percentage in bands 7-8-9. There was a slight increase in the number of our students achieving in bands 4-5 when compared to previous years. The overall pattern of student achievement for our school is superior to the similar school group in numeracy.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9
In the Year 9 NAPLAN Literacy results for 2010 our school had a higher percentage of students achieving bands 9-10 in writing and grammar & punctuation. However, our students were over-represented in the lower bands for reading and grammar & punctuation. The overall pattern of student achievement for our school in 2010 is typical of schools in the similar school group.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9
In the Year 9 NAPLAN Numeracy results for 2010 our school had a smaller percentage of students achieving in the lower bands (5-6) than the similar school group. Although the percentage of students achieving in the higher bands was slightly lower than the school average for recent years the overall pattern of student achievement for Grafton High School in 2010 is higher than that of the similar schools group in numeracy.

School Certificate
School Certificate achievement in 2010 continued the very positive trend from previous years. The most pleasing results were achieved in History and Geography where overall performance was above state average. Performance of our students in all subject areas is superior to that of similar schools.

Higher School Certificate
Results for 2010 generally compare favourably with the school average for the past five years and state average results. In 2010 our HSC students achieved results at or above state average in Aboriginal Studies, Agriculture, Biology, Business Studies, General Mathematics, Hospitality, Industrial Technology and Senior Science.
Principal’s message

During 2010 there have been numerous exceptional achievements within the Grafton High School community. The focus of our efforts continues to be on classroom learning. Our 2010 HSC results reflected this emphasis, with 24 students scoring at least 85% in one or more courses. Notable high achievers were Briana Ellis (5 results above 85%), Allyson Bridle (4 results above 85%), Mollie Coombs Marr (4 results above 85%), Jamie-Lee Corrigan (3 results above 85%), Susan Hanna (3 results above 85%, including 2 band 6 results) and Mitchell Thomas (3 results above 85%). Overall achievement was pleasing with results in Aboriginal Studies and Hospitality outstanding. Our 2010 School Certificate results also reflected very positively on staff and student commitment to continuous improvement with results in Geography showing excellent improvement this year.

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 2010 with many students seeking placement in at least one Gold Standard class. In addition the first Selective Class on the north coast commenced in Year 7 at Grafton High School in 2010. This is an exciting opportunity to further support and challenge academically talented students in the Clarence Valley. Our Aboriginal students have received individualised support in their studies through the Norta Norta project and V-Tracks (a partnership project with TAFE). It is exciting to have recent Aboriginal ex-students as tutors and role models for our current students.

2010 will be the final year of service for several members of staff:

- Mrs Rosemary Marshall, Head Teacher (Home Economics), at GHS since 1979
- Mr Ross McGarvie, Head Teacher (Mathematics), at GHS since 1986
- Mrs Margaret Ashenden (at GHS since 2002), Mr Stephen Tatham (at GHS since 1979) both English teachers
- Mr Earle Page (at GHS since 1982), Mrs Kay Caley (at GHS since 1987) both Science teachers
- Mr Kevin Watkins (at GHS since 1984), Mr John Bell (at GHS since 1984) both Industrial Arts teachers
- Mrs Kerry Hughes (at GHS since 1977) Food Technology teacher
- Mrs Nancy Johnston (at GHS since 1981) in school administration

The highlight of some outstanding sporting achievements in 2010 was winning the NSW CHS Championship in women's squash (Moana Gray, Tegan Morgan, Rebecca Gray and Caligh Bell). Brittany Huxley (tennis), Sarah Jones (rowing) and Johanna Tarrant (rowing) were honoured for their exceptional sporting achievements with NSW CHS Blues. The number of Grafton High School students selected into regional and state representative teams is evidence of high levels of participation across many sports.

During 2010 staff of Grafton High School have initiated and trialled changes to senior curriculum organisation that include strategies to work in close partnership with South Grafton High School (including joint Executive Meetings and shared classes). Increasingly, the local public schools are forming a powerful partnership to share resources that provide unequalled opportunities for all students.

In 2010 Grafton High was selected to participate in a statewide trial of English Studies for senior students and another major trial for an exciting new model to manage school resources. On a local level, staff have played key roles in developing the concept of CareerLink and Fresh Start. Both projects draw together schools, TAFE, University, local business and local government to create wonderful opportunities for our students in the Clarence Valley.

Staff of Grafton High have also taken on leadership of many valuable programs within the school: Premier's Sporting Challenge, Premier's Student Volunteering Awards, RoadWhyz, SRC, Peer Tutoring, QuickSmart, Peer Support, GHS Centenary Planning, Sister Speak and Environment Committee are all examples of staff working to create better opportunities for students at Grafton High. The variety of educational initiatives that so many of the staff of Grafton High School have engaged in within our community of schools, at regional, state and even national level puts our school at the leading edge of teaching and learning. I applaud the staff of Grafton High School who have embraced the challenge to change and create new pathways – always with a focus on improved student learning outcomes.
In my final year as principal of Grafton High School I thank staff, students and parents who have offered such strong support. We can reflect with pride on the progress we have made – and the challenge lies ahead to maintain the momentum for ongoing improvement at 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 President’s Report

On behalf of the Grafton High School P&C Association, I would like to thank the parents who have taken the time, throughout the year to support us and the school community in general.

Most of our funds are raised through the GHS Canteen and we owe a huge debt of gratitude to Penne Davis and her team of helpers for all of their hard work and efforts throughout the year. With Penne retiring from her position this year we wish her well for the future and thank her once again for some 29 years of service to the canteen, with the latter 24 years at the helm as supervisor.

The canteen is always looking for more helpers, so if you can spare some time and are interested in being part of the school in a very practical way, please contact the school. Working in the canteen is where you find out what is really happening at the school.

Other fundraising activities throughout the year have included the Debutante Ball, the Spring Fair and other fundraising BBQs conducted by the P&C volunteers.

The P&C hold their meetings on the fourth Thursday of the month. Everyone is more than welcome to attend and it would be great to see more parents attend as this is a large school and all of our efforts go straight back to improve things for our children. Contact the school for further information.

Our school is turning 100 years old in 2012 and special events are being planned to commemorate the event over Easter 2012. The P&C will form an integral part of these celebrations and your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

I would like to thank all of the members of the P&C for their support throughout the year. Thank you to Andrew Patterson and David Lynch who represented the P&C on school panels and to the parents who attended our meetings, fundraisers and other events. Together, you have all contributed to our achievements this year. I would also like to thank Karen Crispin and her helpers who put together the 2010 Debutante Ball. Thank you also to the School staff, Principal, Mr Colin Lang, and Deputy Principals, Mrs Pauline Glasser and Mrs Liz McMillan, who attended our meetings and functions.

Mr Lang is retiring this year and I would like to extend my thanks to him for his support and leadership in the Grafton High School community over the past eight years. I wish him well for the future

Don Morgan, P&C President

Student representative’s message

What a privilege it has been to lead the student body of Grafton High in 2010! This year Grafton High School’s Student Representative Council has held many functions. This has included discos each term. From these discos the SRC has raised funds to support a range of worthy causes as well as contributing to projects around the school. SRC funds have also been 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 have also supported many charities in the wider community. These charities have included Jeans for Genes Day, Biggest Morning Tea and RSPCA Cupcake Day. 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.

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 it is a way to demonstrate our support for 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. This was a great experience and we greatly appreciated Mrs Glasser’s support in organising the trip.

Thanks to Mrs McCallum for her leadership, friendship and support as SRC Coordinator. We were sorry when she moved to Taree but have appreciated Mrs Campbell’s guidance as the new SRC Coordinator.

Allison Elliot and Levi Parberry
Captains 2010
School context

Student information

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

Student enrolment profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>469</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The steady decline in student enrolments over recent years has been halted. Increased student enrolments into Year 7 and Year 11 together with improved retention rates have led to a slight increase in enrolments for 2010. The school must develop strategies to maintain this positive trend as student numbers in our partner primary schools do not indicate a strong growth in enrolments over the next few years.

Management of non-attendance

Systems have been put in place to routinely contact parents when students have unexplained absences. Student attendance is managed as a student 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. Additionally, in 2010, text messaging has been introduced as a means of giving parents more immediate advice on their child’s attendance.

Retention to Year 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SC04- HSC06</th>
<th>SC05- HSC07</th>
<th>SC06- HSC08</th>
<th>SC07- HSC09</th>
<th>SC08 - HSC10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>66.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEG</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>61.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>62.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The very significant increase in proportion of students staying on to complete the Higher School Certificate in 2010 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 vocational options for all students, including CareerLink and the highly successful pathways program. Work
Education and Agribusiness have been successfully delivered in Stage 5 (Years 9 and 10). 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 overwhelming majority of students completing Year 10 in 2010 have indicated their intention to continue enrolment at Grafton High School with a view to completing the Higher School Certificate. Of students who left the school from Year 10 2010 four sought enrolment at other local schools, five left the Clarence Valley and seven left to undertake employment or study at TAFE. Of 19 students who left school from Year 11 six left the Clarence Valley, ten left to undertake employment and three left to study at TAFE. Two students opted to repeat Year 11 in 2011. From 137 Year 12 2010 students seventy nine were offered places in university courses within New South Wales. From a post-school destination survey 32% of the cohort accepted university positions (including those who have deferred for a year), 17% enrolled in TAFE courses (including trainees and apprentices) and 48% gained substantial employment. One student opted to repeat Year 12.

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training
In 2010 76 of 137 (56%) Year 12 students studied at least one vocational course. Of these 47 studied a course at TAFE and 29 studied a vocational course delivered at Grafton High School.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification
In 2010 76 of 137 (56%) Year 12 students studied at least one vocational course. Of these 47 studied a course at TAFE and 29 studied a vocational course delivered at Grafton High School. 134 of 137 (98%) students enrolled in Year 12 2010 met requirements for completion of the High School Certificate.

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

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>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>51.6</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</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>86.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

At Grafton High School a full time Aboriginal Education Officer provides additional support for our indigenous students. As a result of participation in an affirmative action program the school has an Aboriginal person employed as a full time member of the administration team.

Staff retention
The retention rate of staff at Grafton High School is high. In 2010 there was been one transfer and one teacher on exchange to Canada. Nine members of staff retired during or at the conclusion of 2010. This has created the opportunity to appoint several new graduates to complement the experience that exists within the school.

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>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Financial summary

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary:</th>
<th>30/11/2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income $</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>500663.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>610626.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>367817.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>377020.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>30460.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>64030.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>1950618.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expenditure

Teaching & learning
- Key learning areas: 119115.09
- Excursions: 133234.81
- Extracurricular dissections: 144653.18

Library: 12387.91
Training & development: 0.00
Tied funds: 396132.89
Casual relief teachers: 189224.09
Administration & office: 147531.32
School-operated canteen: 0.00
Utilities: 130521.07
Maintenance: 12387.91
Trust accounts: 50687.21
Capital programs: 27970.68
Total expenditure: 1399483.62

Balance carried forward: 551134.94

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 2010 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 2010

Grafton High 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.

A dedicated team of staff and students worked tirelessly to present the musical Wolfstock. The standard of the production was a tribute to the talent and commitment of all involved.

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 2010 include:

- 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. 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 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

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

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7**

In the Year 7 NAPLAN Literacy results for 2010 our school had a higher percentage of students achieving bands 8-9 than similar schools. A higher percentage of our students achieved band 4 in reading, writing and grammar & punctuation when compared to previous years. The overall pattern of student achievement in 2010 for our school is superior to the similar school group in each aspect of literacy.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7

In the Year 7 NAPLAN Numeracy results for 2010 our school had a smaller percentage than the similar school group in bands 4-5 and a higher percentage in bands 7-8-9. There was a slight increase in the number of our students achieving in bands 4-5 when compared to previous years. The overall pattern of student achievement for our school is superior to the similar school group in numeracy.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9

In the Year 9 NAPLAN Literacy results for 2010 our school had a higher percentage of students achieving bands 9-10 in writing and grammar & punctuation. However, our students were over-represented in the lower bands for reading and
The percentage of our students achieving in the top 3 bands (bands 4-5-6) is substantially higher than similar schools in all academic subject areas and comparable in computer skills. When compared to state averages our students are under-represented in band 6. However there is a continuing pattern of improvement. The school aspiration to consistently achieve at state average across all areas tested is within sight.

**Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9**

In the Year 9 NAPLAN Numeracy results for 2010 our school had a smaller percentage of students achieving in the lower bands (5-6) than the similar school group. Although the percentage of students achieving in the higher bands was slightly lower than the school average for recent years the overall pattern of student achievement for our school in 2010 is higher than that of the similar schools group in numeracy.

**School Certificate**

School Certificate achievement in 2010 continued the very positive trend from previous years. The most pleasing results were achieved in History and Geography where overall performance was above state average and similar school group average.
School Certificate: Relative growth from Year 5 (value-added)

The value added for the 2010 cohort reflects an outstanding trend of improvement in Maths, Science, History and Geography compared to the school average for 2006-2010. The growth above state average in History and Geography is an outstanding achievement by the 2010 School Certificate cohort. Ongoing strategies to improve performance in Year 10 will be strengthened in 2010, especially in English and Computer skills.
Higher School Certificate

The charts below show average student achievement in the 2010 Higher School Certificate exams for courses with larger numbers of students. Results for 2010 generally compare favourably with the school average for the past five years and state average results. In 2010 our HSC students achieved results at or above state average in Aboriginal Studies, Agriculture, Biology, Business Studies, General Mathematics, Hospitality, Industrial Technology and Senior Science.

Results in English (Advanced & Standard), Food Technology and Legal Studies were somewhat below state average and below the school’s five year average. Initiatives will be put in place to improve 2011 Higher School Certificate results.

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

The pattern of value-added performance in 2010 is disappointing for high and middle performance groups. Strategies to raise the value-added performance across all achievement standards will be incorporated in teaching and learning strategies for 2011.

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 in the following table.

**Percentage of Year 7 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>90.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>89.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>94.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>81.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>95.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Individual learning plans and intensive support is provided for those Year 7 students not achieving at minimum standards. The Quicksmart program provides effective targeted support in numeracy.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>88.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>81.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>84.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>81.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>94.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Individual learning plans and intensive support is provided for those students not achieving at minimum standards.

**Significant programs and initiatives**

**Aboriginal education**

In 2010 the Aboriginal Education Team, under the leadership of Mrs Armstrong, had two priorities: improved attendance and successful completion of course requirements. With Norta Norta funding to support student learning in stages 4 and 5 an Aboriginal person was employed to provide additional support for each 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 96% of students believed this support had benefited their learning. Individual tutorial assistance was provided for senior Aboriginal students.

In cooperation with the Aboriginal Education Officer teaching staff have worked to encourage and support Aboriginal students to achieve the Higher School Certificate. In 2010 four Aboriginal students (of six students enrolled in Year 10, 2008) successfully completed Year 12. Of these students two have accepted places at University and two have full-time employment.

**Multicultural education**

Year 7 students are explicitly taught values of tolerance and acceptance of individual differences through the Thinking Skills program which is 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 a 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 as well as a school awards program to recognise 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 10 & 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 for Year 11 and 12 students (including a component of community service)
- Values education through drama presentations for Years 7-10

**Connected learning**

Grafton High School has taken significant steps in 2010 to enhance learning through the use of available technology. Through Digital Education Revolution funding students in Years 9 and 10 have individually allocated notebook computers. The school has wireless network facilities to allow network access throughout the school. Electronic conferencing facilities and the use of interactive whiteboards in all faculty areas will be used to enhance shared curriculum delivery in association with South Grafton High School.
Progress on 2010 targets

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 have included:

- Increase student enrolment in vocational courses
- Proactive mentor support to “at risk” students
- Improved data collection processes for destination of students who leave school prior to completion of their HSC

Our success is evident in:

- 83% student retention from Year 10 (2009) to completion of Year 11 (2010)
- 66.1% student retention from Year 10 (2008) to completion of Year 12 (2010) which is substantially above regional and state performance
- 90% of students leaving prior to completion of Year 11 or Year 12 had gained meaningful employment or enrolled in TAFE programs

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 have included:

- Aboriginal staff have been engaged to mentor and support Aboriginal students
- Teachers have been engaged as tutors to provide learning support for senior students
- A personalised learning plan for every Aboriginal student is at some stage of development
- An after-school homework centre supported voluntarily by teachers along with employed mentors was regularly used by Year 10 students and strongly supported by parents

Our success is evident in:

- All 9 Aboriginal students enrolled in Year 10 completed the School Certificate
- All 6 Aboriginal students enrolled in Year 11 have completed Preliminary HSC results
- All 4 Aboriginal students enrolled in Year 12 have completed the Higher School Certificate
- Attendance rates for Aboriginal students are, on average, less than 5% below the cohort average

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 have included:

- Strengthening of the Gold Standard Class program in Years 7-10 to the point where an additional (7Silver) class will be introduced in 2011
- Proactive staff mentoring for Year 11 students has significantly reduced N-Award warnings and increased the rate of successful completion of Preliminary HSC requirements
- 12 students have school based traineeships and apprenticeships supported through the Career Link program
- All staff have had opportunities to participate in training and development focussed explicitly on working with gifted & talented students

Our success is evident in:

- High student demand for Gold Standard classes
- Excellent improvement in School Certificate Geography results
- Continued improvement in School Certificate Maths, Science and History results in 2010
- Continued good performance in HSC courses
- Improved enrolment into Year 7 and 11
- Excellent improvement in retention rates
- High levels of staff participation in identified professional learning programs
- Positive student feedback on learning opportunities created through the Year 7 Selective Class
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 senior school organization and Aboriginal education.

Educational and management practice

A comprehensive independent review of all aspects of Aboriginal Education was carried out during Term 4 by a team from the Dare to Lead project. Data was gathered from school records and interviews with students, staff and parents.

Background

Grafton High School has an Aboriginal student enrolment of 9%. All schools in the Grafton Community of Schools participated in the Dare to Lead review to gain objective information that can be used in a cooperative approach to improving educational outcomes for our Aboriginal students.

Findings and conclusions

The review commended several areas of current school practice including the work of the Aboriginal Education Officer (Fran Williams) and the Careers Adviser (Scott Barnier), the support provided by the homework centre and the inclusion of Aboriginal perspectives in programs for several faculties.

The comprehensive set of recommendations included developing a strong Aboriginal Education Committee, further work with student Personalised Learning Plans and 6-7 transition programs. It will be helpful to build a more comprehensive set of data to measure the effectiveness of new strategies.

Future directions

In 2011, with the support of funds available through Schools in Partnership and Norta Norta, key personnel within the school will develop and implement a revised Aboriginal Education plan focusing on identified priorities from the review.

Curriculum

A detailed survey was conducted amongst staff, students and parents to evaluate the impact of changes to senior school organization that were introduced at the beginning of 2010.

Background

In 2010 Grafton High School, in partnership with South Grafton High School, trialed a number of significant changes to senior organization. These changes included a senior day commencing at 8.30am, shared curriculum delivery for students at both schools as well as increased flexibility and choice for senior students.

Findings and conclusions

Overall support for the changes was very strong (parents 94.5%, students 89.9%, staff 87.5%). Punctuality to morning classes was a concern for staff and students. The fact that senior students miss morning assemblies and roll groups was perceived as a negative (in terms of communication and connection to the rest of the school). There was strong agreement that supervisory support would ensure that students made better use of study lessons.

Future directions

Senior organization will continue, with some modifications. A later assembly will be scheduled on Tuesday and student notices will be posted at the sign on desk to improve communication. A senior mentor will provide support for students. Punctuality will be a focus in 2011. Liaison between the schools will continue in an effort to strengthen the curriculum options already offered.

Parent, student & teacher satisfaction

In 2010 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their responses are represented in both of the major evaluations reported above.

Professional learning

The Deputy Principals from Grafton High School provided active leadership for the 2010 Regional Deputy Principals’ conference 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. Features of professional learning in 2010 were shared executive meetings with South Grafton High School and shared development activities with all staff from our community of schools.

Teachers 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 professional learning days for teaching staff was 4.6 and for Support Staff 2.4 days. The average expenditure per staff member on professional learning in 2010 was $560.
School development 2009 – 2011

Targets for 2011

Targets for 2011 are derived from the 2011 management plan.

Target 1

*Increase the apparent retention rate from Year 10 to completion of Year 12 from 65% to 70%*

The number of students electing to re-enrol from Year 10 into Year 11 is high (80%). Grafton High also attracts new enrolments from other schools into Year 11. Despite recent improvements, a significant number of students leave school prior to completing their Higher School Certificate. In part this is directly linked to the success of vocational programs. However, students leaving school early have limited credentials for the future.

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

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
- Strengthen the Aboriginal Education Committee with parent participation

Our success will be measured by:
- Retention rates
- Attendance rates
- Achievement compared to all students
- The participation of parents at meetings

Target 3

*Raise staff and student expectations of learning outcomes across Years 7-12*

The key principles of the successful Year 10 program can be applied to all years.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Focus staff training and development on classroom practice with gifted & talented
- Expose staff to the standard and expectations for students in successful selective schools
- Regularly celebrate high standards of academic achievement across the school
- Strengthen the expectations of staff and students in the Gold Standard Class program
- Study skills programs for Years 11 and 12
- Increased student awareness of and participation in Career Link

Our success will be measured by:
- Student growth in NAPLAN
- School Certificate and HSC results in 2011
- Enrolment and retention rates in 2011
- Evaluation of effective learning in the Selective Classes

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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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