School context statement

Merimbula Public School is situated in the heart of Merimbula, the coastal tourism capital of the Sapphire Coast on the Far South Coast of NSW. The school’s enrolment was 382 students in 2014. Enrolments included mainstream students, gifted and talented students, Aboriginal students (8%), students who are from non-English speaking backgrounds (5%) as well as students with learning disabilities, some of whom access additional support whilst working within one of our school’s two support classes.

Merimbula Public School employed 30 part time and permanent staff members in 2014. Over 20 casual staff were also employed by the school throughout the year. Staff employed included: Executive, Teachers, School Learning Support Officers (SLSOs), Administration Staff, a School Counsellor, Canteen Supervisor and a General Assistant.

Throughout 2014 the school principal, Michelle Hulme, was promoted to a position as Principal School Leadership for two days each week in Term 4. This position will continue for up to two years. As a result, Mr Kelvin Jamieson relieved as principal, sharing the role of principal as well as classroom teacher.

The school has continued to embrace innovative technology in 2014. It has first class facilities and award winning staff and programs. Staff have been recognised for their outstanding efforts in embracing public education and the school itself has been recognised for Excellence In Teaching and Learning as a result of implementing its whole-school synthetic phonics program.

Merimbula Public School continues to be committed to excellence, opportunity and success (the school motto). The school provides a caring, friendly environment in which students experience a variety of academic and extra-curricular activities designed to cater for their individual needs. Our students reach the highest level in a range of sporting, performing arts and academic ventures.

The school continues to foster a productive partnership between the community, parents, students and staff in a climate characterised by flexibility, commitment and teamwork. Merimbula Public School is a proud member of the Sapphire Coast Learning Community (SCLC) and Far South Coast Network.

Principal’s message

Throughout 2014, Merimbula Public School continued to provide innovative opportunities and quality teaching and learning programs for students. The school’s dedicated teachers, support staff and community volunteers worked collaboratively to lead outstanding literacy and numeracy programs, which have once again led to improved results – as illustrated in our 2014 National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results.

Our motivated and skilled staff and community volunteers also offered a range of sporting opportunities and performing arts opportunities during 2014.

One of the highlights of our sporting programs for 2014 included the Primary School Sports Association (PSSA) Australian Football League (AFL) team winning the State PSSA Championship and Tony Lockett Shield. Our school was the first school outside of the Riverina to win the event in 32 years.

Other sporting successes included our Girl’s Softball Team (PSSA) making Round 5, which was the furthest a team from our school had progressed in the knockout competition.

Performing Arts highlights again included students attending the Festival Of Instrumental Music at the Sydney Opera House, the Sapphire Coast Learning Community (SCLC) Performing Arts Festival, the SCLC Music Camp and submitting pieces for the SCLC Art Show. Increased participation in the arts soon led to the need for school evaluations to determine whether arts opportunities needed to be increased to cater for student interest.

Furthermore, the school also introduced Musical Theatre as a new arts program. Some students were able to take part in a weekly extension group if they demonstrated talent in singing and dance, whilst all students across the school took part in a 6-week program with a specialist teacher. Classroom music and performing arts opportunities, coupled with the new musical theatre offerings, resulted in the school holding a
Musical Showcase with an Aladdin theme. Funds raised from ticket sales have been allocated to the school’s performing arts program to increase music and visual arts resources for the new year.

As a result of the local afterschool and vacation care service going into liquidation, quick and timely evaluations and community consultation took place to ensure that the service was still offered to local families. In Term 4, the Helping Hands Network went into a licensing agreement with the school to open afterschool and vacation care onsite.

The afterschool and vacation care services adopted the school’s values, discipline policy, rules and vision. This was a great success. Funds raised from the lease of school premises, as well as funds raised from leasing premises throughout the year to Daylight Clothing for their on-site uniform shop, ensured further program equity and reduced schooling costs to families for extracurricular activities.

Another exciting development at Merimbula Public School in 2014 was holding community and parent consultation on special education needs for students. This resulted in a support class being established in Term 1, with a second class beginning in Term 3.

Parent and Citizen Association (P&C) support continued to be strong in 2014. The P&C supported the school in providing Merit Selection Panel Members when teaching positions were advertised. They supported transition to school initiatives, special day coordination and a range of fundraising events. The P&C fundraising supported a range of initiatives and programs across the school, with a high percentage of the funds targeting the new whole-school synthetic phonics reading program.

Resourcing the new whole-school synthetic phonics program was also supported by The Variety Club, who donated $3000 toward reading books. Many Variety Club members also came to the school in their cars for a fundraising morning. They had breakfast at the school, took part in fundraising activities and watched some of the school’s Performance Groups. One of the well-known Variety Bash members, singer John Paul Young, also joined in with the Year 4 Choir to sing his famous track “Love Is In The Air”.

Once again, having an eventful, fun and successful year cannot happen without the enthusiasm, support, dedication and time volunteered by staff, students, parents, caregivers, our amazing P&C and the community. We are very fortunate to live in such a caring and collaborative community where everyone works hard to ensure our school is the best that it can be. Thank you to everyone who has supported Merimbula Public School in 2014. I am extremely proud of our students, staff families and the ongoing commitment all show to our school.

I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous self-evaluation process and it is a balanced and genuine account of the school’s achievements and areas for development.

Michelle Hulme
Principal

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

As previously mentioned, the school’s enrolment was 382 students in 2014 (on census day). Enrolment numbers change throughout each year. In 2014 we saw around 20 new enrolments and around 20 students leave during the year as a result of families moving to and from the area.

Enrolments at Merimbula Public School in 2014 included mainstream students, gifted and talented students, Aboriginal students (8%), students who are from non-English speaking backgrounds (5%) as well as students with learning disabilities, some of whom access additional support whilst working within one of our school’s two support classes.

2014 saw a slight decline in student numbers. This was for two main reasons: we lost one of our biggest years when Year 6 left the school (over 60 students); and some of our students are no longer counted in the school’s numbers as they are located in one of the school’s on-site support classes.

Support classes are recognised as being a regional resource and although the school gets funded and staffed to run the classes, the...
students within them are not always counted in our student numbers. This is so that the school is not over-staffed should the students from a support class be counted twice. Support class students are staffed separately due to the need for considerably smaller class sizes.

### Student Enrolment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Student Class Sizes and Enrolment Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total per grade</th>
<th>Total in class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KU</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KW</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1Y</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1BD</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/1S</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2F</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2V</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3C</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4J</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4K</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/4H</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5A</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6B</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6H</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite our school starting the year with 17 and 19 students in each kindergarten class, following our motto “20 is plenty in Kindergarten”, additional enrolments throughout the year resulted in the class sizes growing. This was accepted as an alternative to reshuffling classes throughout the school.

### Student attendance profile

The following table illustrates the attendance patterns for students from 2009 to 2014. Despite the state attendance rates increasing, our attendance rates have slightly declined over the past 5 years.

Whilst several measures are in place to support increased student attendance, this is difficult in a community that relies on tourism, as many families are restricted to having their own holidays outside school holiday periods.

The need for parents and caregivers to work during the holiday periods is also why attendance at the onsite vacation care has increased over the past year.

Despite these difficulties, the school introduced a range of new strategies to monitor and address student attendance. These new processes aligned with the new LMBR system and Student Wellbeing software. New letters were sent out, more phone calls were made to parents if non-attendance was not reported and the Home-School Liaison Officer (HSLO) was invited to speak to parents both at group Information Nights, and individually where required. Attendance Support Plans were developed with the HSLO to support increased attendance when students had regular absences or absences in excess of 20 days in total.

### Attendance Rates 2009-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>93.1</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>92.8</td>
<td>77.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>91.2</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>93.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>93.2</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>93.1</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>94.6</td>
<td>93.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>91.7</td>
<td>92.8</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>93.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>92.4</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>95.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>92.2</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>91.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>93.2</td>
<td>93.0</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>93.1</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>91.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Workforce information

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
<td>15.923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>5.172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27.895</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Australian Education Regulation, 2014 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce.

Whilst no permanent Aboriginal staff members were employed at the school in 2014, one high school student participating in the Djingg i program, as a pathway to university, completed work placement one day a week throughout the year.

Two new teachers were permanently appointed to Merimbula Public School when the support classes became established. Two of our temporary School Learning Support Officers (SLSOs) also received permanent positions at 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>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

All staff at Merimbula Public School participate in professional learning each year. Throughout 2014, all staff took part in a range of work health and safety training, child protection training, cardio pulmonary resuscitation training, emergency care training and training in the Department’s new Learning Management and Business Reform (LMBR) computer-based recording and data system.

Administration staff and school executive took part in additional LMBR training relating to components they are, or will be, required to use. The school’s Administration Manager was also released from her position for 4 weeks to enable her to lead staff through the training components and complete the extensive Adobe Connect training program, to allow the school to use the new system effectively.

With the establishment of two new support classes, teachers, executive and learning support officers took part in online behaviour training, non-violent crisis intervention training and other training relevant to the needs of the students within those classes. Support Class staff also used professional learning funds to be released from their duties to observe other support classes across the region, so that our new resource could be modelled off best practice.

Once again teacher professional learning funds focused on literacy and numeracy quality teaching. All K-2 staff, including casual staff, were trained in implementing the Targeting Early Numeracy (TEN) program. In addition, several teachers and learning support officers were trained in implementing the whole-school synthetic phonics program.

Other teacher professional learning included additional Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) workshops and workshops that allowed teachers to gain an understanding of the new Australian Curriculum in Mathematics, English and Science. Stage/Team planning days were also held each term so that teachers could, either by being released off class or by using Staff Development Days, further unpack the new syllabus documents and develop new teaching and learning units to support their implementation.

The school’s Executive Team, as well as some staff who are leading programs and/or relieve as Executive at times, also attended professional learning on how to support staff, students and parents through a coaching pedagogy.

All other professional learning was individualised, based on goals set by staff within each of their Professional Learning Plans. Some of this professional learning was accredited with the Board of Studies Teaching Education Standards (BoSTES), to support teachers who are maintaining their accreditation at Professional Competence.

Five staff members were working to maintain their accreditation at Professional Competence with BoSTES in 2014. Two additional staff members completed their accreditation at Professional Competence in 2014 and others indicated that they would be aiming to complete
their accreditation at Highly Accomplished in the new year, resulting in them attending workshops and/or online Adobe Connect sessions to find out more about the accreditation process and its requirements at the higher levels.

An average of $2000 per staff member was expended to support professional development by funding release as well as meeting registration costs for courses.

**Beginning Teachers**

One newly appointed permanent staff member was a beginning teacher in 2014. The school was allocated additional funds to support this teacher in attending professional learning on behaviour management, compulsory work health and safety training as well as training in numeracy, in addition to the training offered to all staff.

The beginning teacher was also given an additional two hours of release from face-to-face teaching to plan, program and assess for classroom teaching.

Two beginning teachers who were employed on a casual or temporary basis were also supported with additional professional learning. One of these teachers attended a regional Beginning Teachers Conference, supported through the school’s Professional Learning Funds.

**Financial summary**

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

The summary and accompanying table looks different to that in past Annual School Reports as the school, being a National Partnerships Empowering Local School (one of 229 on the trial), has been allocated funds to manage staffing as well as resources as part of the Local Schools Local Decisions Department reform. As a result, revenue obtained by the school is spent mostly on staffing costs, as identified in the pie graph on the following page, that illustrates the distribution of Resource Allocation Management (RAM) funds.

Grants and contributions received by the school include parent/caregiver payment of excursions, sporting days, discos, Year 6 end-of-year celebration dinner and events, special events and voluntary student contributions. Sales of goods and services include canteen sales, with profits returning to the canteen on salaries, equipment maintenance and purchase of goods and services.

All excursions, student initiatives and canteen costs are kept to a minimum for families, with funds obtained from the lease of school premises to the after-school/vacation care providers and uniform shop managers subsidising a range of student activities and additional student assistance. Over $15,000 of school funds were also used to pay for learning programs such as Mathletics, Fast ForWord and Reading Eggs as well as pay for student supplies to support families.

Whilst $54,333 was retained by the school at the year’s end, wherever possible 2014 funds were spent on 2014 students. Much of the balance carried forward was required to be returned to the State Disabilities Unit in the new year, following a funded student leaving the school. Other remaining funds were required to pay pending invoices for December staffing and purchases as in previous years.

**Financial Summary for the Year Ended 31 December 2014 (Merimbula Public School)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary for the year ended 31/12/2014</th>
<th>$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening Balance</td>
<td>(53,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td>(3,359,234)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriation</td>
<td>(3,205,429)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of goods and services</td>
<td>(60,200)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants and contributions</td>
<td>(92,595)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment income</td>
<td>(283)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain and loss</td>
<td>(727)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other revenue</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td>(3,358,501)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recurrent expenses</td>
<td>(3,358,501)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee related</td>
<td>(3,070,459)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating expenses</td>
<td>(288,042)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital expenses</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surplus/deficit for the year</td>
<td>(733)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance carried forward</td>
<td>(54,333)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* date source: Schools Finance - Learning and Business
Funds received through the Resource Allocation Model (Merimbula Public School)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>RAM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Base</td>
<td>2,333,607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>43,258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>11,889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-Economic</td>
<td>23,515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>143,210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted</td>
<td>395,197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>158,964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3,109,640</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

prior to the Executive Team, including the Administration Manager, making recommendations to the Principal on spending and budget distribution.

Throughout the year more consultation took place when budgets were accessed and/or modified. Families who applied for student assistance for their child/ren, and staff applying for professional learning or program funding, submitted applications to the Executive Team for consideration prior to approval being given. These changes were reflected in updated school policy and application forms and materials.

In 2014 the school exceeded its spending allocation on short-term casual relief, used when staff members are sick, on family and/or community service leave or short-term long service leave. The Principal, with support of the staff, applied for supplementation in an attempt to regain the over-spend in school funds, which would otherwise have been spent on learning resources (At the time of publishing this report, a response/feedback from the Department’s Finance Unit had not yet been received).

All funds remaining from 2014 will be rolled over and added to an ongoing Technology Budget as the school will need to replace all of its 18 Interactive Whiteboards within the next three to ten years.

A full copy of the school’s 2014 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.

The school has a range of financial management processes and governance structures to meet new financial policy requirements as a result of having received substantially higher funding amounts in 2014. Payments to and from the school are centrally managed with more than one staff member having to sign off on purchases, regardless of how small the amount.

In addition, teams and committees were required to submit detailed budget proposals for all school programs before funding was allocated. Budgets and program funds were then discussed at an executive level prior to being allocated. Consultation with staff at a range of levels, group and individual Professional Learning needs of staff, parent and community consultation and school self-evaluations were taken into account

School performance 2014

The following pages illustrate school performance, achievements and future priorities, which are related to academic results as well as achievements in other school programs.

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 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)
Year 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)
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.

Alternatively:

**NAPLAN Year 3 - Literacy** (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)

Merimbula Public School Year 3 reading results were exceptional in 2014. 30.8% of Year 3 students achieved the highest level (Band 6) in reading as identified in NAPLAN and 19.2% of students were recognised in Band 5. This was a higher result than that in Similar School Groups (SSGs) and that achieved on average across the state, resulting in 50% of our students being assessed as being proficient or in the highest two bands compared with 41.6% in SSGs and 46.1% across the State’s Public Schools.

This was particularly reassuring, indicating the success of the school’s recently implemented synthetic phonics program and pedagogy, as the Year 3 average (2010-2014) of students in the proficient bands was identified as being 36.6%. Continued funding and support of this program is planned to achieve even greater results in the coming years.

Reduced numbers of students performing in the lowest band (Band 1) were also recorded. 1.9% of students compared with a 7.3% average (2010-2014) was identified, a huge reduction despite 7.2% of SSGs and 6.1% of Department still achieving Band 1 results on average. This has indicated that our Learning Support Program, whereby the lowest reading group in each class receives daily assistance from the Learning Assistance and Support Teachers (LASTs) has been successful. The school varied the mix of its staffing under Local Schools Local Decisions in 2014 to use its Reading Recovery allocation to employ a second LAST for this support program. Due to the reported success, the variation will continue in 2015.

**Year 3 NAPLAN Reading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average score, 2014</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>SSG</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>417.7</td>
<td>404.1</td>
<td>416.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Skill Band Distribution**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number in Bands</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage in Bands</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Average 2010-2014</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSG % in Bands 2014</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State DEC % in Bands 2014</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student improvement in Year 3 reading has had a dramatic effect on improving student outcomes in Grammar and Punctuation, as measured by NAPLAN.

**Year 3 NAPLAN Grammar and Punctuation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average score, 2014</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>SSG</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>433.1</td>
<td>411.4</td>
<td>427.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Skill Band Distribution**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number in Bands</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage in Bands</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Average 2010-2014</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSG % in Bands 2014</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State DEC % in Bands 2014</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 2014, 30.8% of Year 3 students were in the highest band in NAPLAN (Band 6). This was in comparison to a 17.7% average from 2010-2014 and a SSG average of 21.6% and State average of 29.7%.

Once again only 1.9% of students were represented in the lowest achievement band compared with 4.1% in similar schools on average and 4.7% on average across the state.

Writing results for Year 3 students could still improve and the school would like to see more students move from the middle bands to the proficient ones. With improved student results being seen in spelling and reading, students will become more capable writers. The school will also support their development in writing through targeted teacher professional learning as part of the coming three year School Plan.

NAPLAN Year 3 - Numeracy

Student results in Year 3 Numeracy have improved at Merimbula Public School, as measured by 2014 NAPLAN results. 19.2% of students achieved Band 6 results compared with only 10.6% on average from 2010-2014. They also achieved higher results on average than students
in SSGs and Department of Education and Community (DEC) schools across the state, where 11.8% and 16.4% of students achieved Band 6 results. Implementation of the Targeting Early Numeracy (TEN) program K-6 has led to improvements in this area. Further improvements should continue in the coming years with casual teaching staff being trained in the program at the end of 2014. Teachers will also be more confident in involving parents in leading group activities and training them to teach new efficient numeracy strategies to their children.

Whilst the overall average score for Merimbula Public School was not as high as that obtained by the state DEC schools, Merimbula Public School achieved higher results than similar schools and the students made a marked improvement on past years.

**Year 3 NAPLAN Numeracy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>SSG</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number in Bands</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>401.1</td>
<td>392.6</td>
<td>401.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage in Bands</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Average 2010-2014</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSG % in Bands 2014</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State DEC % in Bands 2014</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Year 5 NAPLAN Reading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>SSG</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number in Bands</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>481.5</td>
<td>488.7</td>
<td>497.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage in Bands</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Average 2010-2014</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSG % in Bands 2014</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State DEC % in Bands 2014</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NAPLAN Year 5 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)**

More Year 5 students could be achieving proficient results in reading – as identified in NAPLAN data when compared to students across the state or in SSGs. Staff members have shared that they believe these results will change dramatically in the coming years with students having been taught through synthetic phonics methodology since the start of their schooling.

Whilst results are not as high as the DEC state average, particularly in the highest band, the results are still similar. 55.8% of Merimbula Public School’s Year 5 students achieved results in the highest 3 bands, compared with 51.8% of students on average between 2010 and 2014 (an improvement). Slightly more DEC students on average received results in the top 3 bands, 55.6%, and slightly fewer students in SSGs achieved in the top 3 bands on average (54.2%).
The big achievements in Year 5 reading results are seen in the growth that students have made following two years of synthetic phonics, and improved LAST programs, being implemented since the students sat for NAPLAN in Year 3.

Student growth in reading was an average of 116.6 points, compared with 76.6 points for SSG students and 78.78 points for DEC students on average. Merimbula Year 5 students will continue to improve in reading growth, between Year 3 and 5, more and more with time. Our growth from 2008 to 2010 when we first began to trial synthetic phonics, and its partner program Fast ForWord, was 91.5 points which, despite being higher than the growth in SSGs and across the DEC schools is nowhere near as high as what we now achieve as a result of synthetic phonic pedagogy being school-wide.

Where reading growth for SSGs and DEC schools on average have declined, Merimbula Public School continues to lead the way with new strategies and innovative programs, which have resulted in staff and the school winning awards and developing training programs for other professionals.

What is really rewarding is to see students who were not confident and were underachieving in reading prior to 2014 now enjoying and engaging in reading. For example, in one of the school’s Year 5 classes the top three growth measures for individual students in reading were 209, 177 and 170 points. In the other class the highest growth recorded was 260, 214 and 180 points. These six students were all participants in quality learning and support programs that had been funded by the school through additional Empowering Local School funds and resourced by the P&C and Variety Club.

| Average progress in Reading between Year 3 and 5* |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                   | School            | SSG               | State DEC         |
| 2008-2010         | 91.5              | 83.3              | 83.7              |
| 2009-2011         | 92.6              | 74.0              | 74.0              |
| 2010-2012         | 79.2              | 75.9              | 79.2              |
| 2011-2013         | 105.9             | 85.8              | 85.7              |
| 2012-2014         | 116.6             | 76.6              | 78.78             |

Similarly to the Year 5 reading results, Year 5 Grammar and Punctuation results in NAPLAN illustrated that our results are comparable to SSGs however lower than DEC results on average. Our results, however, have improved on those achieved by our Year 5 students on average in past years. 13.6% of our students achieved results in the highest band, compared with 10% of students on average from 2010-2014. We had 27.2% of students represented in the top two bands, being recognised as being proficient. 26.7% of SSG students in Year 5 were recognised as being proficient in Grammar and Punctuation where as 41.2% of students across the DEC achieved proficient results.

While there is still room for improvement at Merimbula Public School, improvements are taking place and can be seen in our growth from Years 3 to 5.
Year 5 NAPLAN Grammar and Punctuation

Year 5 student growth in Grammar and Punctuation is 99.0 points on average (2012-2014) compared with only 76.1 points between 2011 and 2013. SSG average growth (2012-2014) was 85.8 points and DEC growth was 79.52 points on average.

With our new whole-school literacy programs and related staff professional learning, grammar and punctuation results should continue to improve for our Year 5 students.

Improved spelling is a focus area for our Year 5 students in the coming years. Students in Stage 3 who have been taught reading through whole language programs, prior to being in the primary years, are finding decoding and spelling more difficult than many of our current Stage 2 students who have been taught to decode and apply phonological knowledge since being taught how to read in Kindergarten. Our learning and support staff have developed a synthetic-phonics spelling program to address the needs of all students in spelling. In the coming years, spelling results should improve to reflect this new focus.

What our results do show once again, for Year 5 students in spelling, is the exceptional growth being made since the students were in Year 3.

Between 2012 and 2014 our Year 5 students have improved 101.4 points on average, compared with SSG growth being 79.1 and state growth being 80.63. Our new programs are highly effective and should place future Year 5 students in a position to do very well whilst continuing to support all current Stage 3 students in further improving.
Year 5 students again received results that were comparable but slightly lower than those received by DEC and SSG students. Unfortunately the growth was not high like in other areas of literacy for Year 5 students. This can be attributed to less time being spent on writing, prior to when NAPLAN took place in May, as teachers were working hard to implement new strategies and a new synthetic phonics program. As previously mentioned, greater focus on writing will take place in the coming years. Our teachers believe that students having a strong understanding of reading and spelling strategies will support them in improving their writing results.

NAPLAN Year 5 - Numeracy

Our Year 5 student results in numeracy are not as positive as the ones received by their Year 3 peers. Student growth however has reflected school improvement in numeracy.

Year 5 numeracy results will improve in the coming years as all students in Kindergarten to Year 2 will have been participating in the TEN program. To further support students in improving their numeracy results in the primary years, in 2015 all Years 3 to 6 teachers will be trained in implementing the Taking Off With Numeracy (TOWN) program in their classes, supporting them in further differentiating their mathematics lessons to better meet the needs of each child.
**Other achievements**

Throughout 2014 Merimbula Public School continued to take pride in offering a diverse range of opportunities to students. These included opportunities in Learning Support, the Arts, Sport and in Stage-Based opportunities.

**Achievements in Learning Support**

Once again a class of Year 4 students participated in the neuroplasticity-based learning improvement program Fast ForWord. Students who had been underperforming at school, particularly in reading, took part in the program to develop their processing speed, memory retention and overall reading ability. During the 6-month program, whereby students took part in a 1-hour lesson a day, students made gains in their reading age by up to 36 months (or 3 years) as measured by the Neale’s Assessment, which was independently administered by a casual staff member. Other student growth over the 6 month period was 34 months, 33 months, 25 months, 22 months, 22 months and 14 months of growth in their reading age.

**Achievement in The Arts**

In 2014 our students once again had the opportunity to be part of the Hip Hop Dance Group, Recorder Ensemble and Vocal Group. Each of these groups performed at Eden High School over Education Week as part of the Sapphire Coast Learning Community (SCLC) Performing Arts Festival.

In addition, the school introduced a Musical Theatre group, which was supported by a new music tutor that was employed to upskill and support teachers through equity funding. The Musical Theatre Group not only performed at the SCLC Performing Arts Festival, they also opened a whole-school Musical Showcase that was held in our Jackson Hall. During the showcase, each class presented a musical item. The school’s performance groups also showcased what they had learned throughout the year. All funds raised from the sale of tickets has been put towards the 2015 Performing Arts Budget.

Our Recorder Ensemble once again performed at the Sydney Opera House as part of the Festival Of Instrumental Music, which continues to be a yearly highlight for the students and their families.

Some of our talented arts students also participated in the SCLC Music Camp. Students worked with music teachers and tutors from around the Sapphire Coast to learn new skills, compose music and perform with their peers from across 16 other schools.

Merimbula Public School was also represented at the SCLC Visual Arts Show, with several student pieces receiving praise and awards.

Merimbula Public School is looking to expand its performing arts programs in 2015. To support students in developing their visual arts and music skills, as well as reintroduce instrument tuition, the school will be advertising for a music and art teacher in the new year. The teacher will teach art and music to all classes to enhance opportunities in the arts and develop student creativity in alignment with the Melbourne Declaration and self-evaluation findings.

**Sporting Success Stories**

Merimbula Public School had another successful year in sport. Students K-6 participated in a range of skill-based programs with local coaches and sporting clubs, including in: AFL, league, cricket and hockey. This ongoing support from dedicated volunteers no doubt ensures the success of our students in PSSA knockouts each year.

The school’s AFL team, consisting of two girls and 18 boys, achieved the highest acknowledgement and achievement in 2014, winning the Tony Lockett Shield and being declared State Champions in the PSSA Knockout after they defeated Holbrook Public School in the State Final, 10-13-73 to 3-1-19.

The school’s Boys Soccer, Boys Rugby League and Cricket Teams also experienced success, with each team winning several rounds and showcasing student talents.

Our Girls Softball Team achieved the school’s best ever result, getting to the fifth round of the PSSA State Knockout. Our Girls Netball Team also progressed through several rounds whilst the Girls Soccer and Basketball Teams performed well despite early exits from the competition.

Students participated in a range of Zone and Regional Selection Opportunities, ensuring Merimbula Public School students represented the South Coast in Rugby League, AFL, Soccer, Netball and Cricket. Our school also had record numbers of representatives once again at
Regional Carnivals for Swimming, Cross Country and Athletics.

With students performing well at Regional Tennis Trials, the school has decided to enter a Tennis Team in the 2015 PSSA Knockout.

**Stage-Based Opportunities**

Assistant Principals led their Stage Teams to coordinate a range of opportunities for students in 2014. These opportunities included:

- Participation in the Premier’s Sporting Challenge;
- Entry in the Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition;
- Participation in the Premier’s Spelling Bee;
- Community involvement and fundraising, such as when hosting the Variety Club;
- Hosting a Mini Fete;
- Holding a Year 5 Camp and Year 6 Sydney Excursion, as well as local excursions and visits to local oyster leases to compliment Science and Human Society and its Environment units of work;
- Citizenship and leadership opportunities, such as Student Representative Council (SRC) participation and/or taking part in student leadership roles such as an SRC Leader, Technology Monitor, Library Monitor, Bus Monitor, Flag Monitor, House Captain/Vice Captain and Junior House Captain or Vice Captain.

**Significant programs and initiatives – policy**

In 2014 Merimbula Public School staff and community collaborated to offer a range of quality innovative programs in Aboriginal Education and Multicultural Education.

**Aboriginal education**

In 2014 staff participation in the *No Gaps No Excuse* cultural awareness training package continued to ensure that Aboriginal education was a priority for Merimbula Public School.

Aboriginal perspectives were embedded in all key learning areas and units of work. Educating all children about Aboriginal history, culture and contemporary Aboriginal Australia.

Aboriginal students and their families took part in an excursion to Jigami Farm Aboriginal Cultural Centre as part of our NAIDOC Week Celebrations. The children learnt about traditional Aboriginal foods and food preparation procedures, seed grinding, Johnny cakes, gathering tools, seafood and bush meats. The children also learnt about traditional and modern painting techniques, dance, boomerang throwing and storytelling.

Once again, the school’s Aboriginal students hosted our NAIDOC Week Assembly, showcasing stories and activities from their Jigamy Excursion.

**Multicultural education and anti-racism**

All students at Merimbula Public School continue to participate in quality teaching and learning programs that develop knowledge, skills, values and positive attitudes about multiculturalism. These programs are developed by teachers during planning days and are enhanced through the inclusion of cross curricular perspectives embedded in the new Australian Curriculum.

Units of work develop cultural awareness as too does the school’s continued participation in the NSW Department of Education and Communities Arts Unit’s Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition.

Once again the school’s Anti-Racism Contact Officer supported staff and students in developing their understandings and ensuring harmony within the school.

Parents, caregivers and the community were involved in multicultural events as well as evaluating how more opportunities could be introduced in the coming years. In 2015 a range of Multicultural food days and canteen options will be introduced as will further units of work in alignment with the new Australian Curriculum for History.

**Significant programs and initiatives – equity funding**

In 2014, Merimbula Public School received equity funding to support students. Equity funding received under the new RAM was allocated for Aboriginal background, socio-economic background, English language proficiency and learning and support needs.
Aboriginal background

Aboriginal background equity funding was used to support all students and staff in learning about Aboriginal education, history and how to best teach Aboriginal students. Local elders attended Staff Development Day sessions to educate staff and further enhance school leaders’ understanding of what opportunities in Aboriginal education would further support students and community.

The equity loading also supported Aboriginal student participation in NAIDOC Week excursions and activities as well as employing a staff member to work with the students to develop an iMovie to showcase their learning. Funds were also used to ensure that all students and community members could celebrate NAIDOC Week effectively, with guests being engaged and a community barbeque being provided at the school’s NAIDOC Week celebration day.

One of the school’s greatest achievements was supported through the use of Aboriginal background equity funds, Aboriginal students being recognised in proficient bands as measured by NAPLAN. These achievements were made possible through additional support and tuition being provided for Aboriginal students. Each Aboriginal student received 15 minutes of tutoring in the MultiLit reading program with a School Learning Support Officer daily for six months. Furthermore, our Aboriginal students achieved their best Year 3 Reading results in years, as measured by NAPLAN. Our 7 Year 3 students received an average of 398.8 points in reading. This was compared to a 2010-2013 average of 348 points. The 2014 average for all Aboriginal Year 3 students in the State was 356.1 and for all DEC Aboriginal students was 351.6, demonstrating that our student cohort is improving and that our school is closer to bridging the gap than it has ever been (the State average for all Year 3 students in reading was 422.3 and our staff are excited to see if we can continue to improve on our results and remove the gap in accord with the Partnership Agreement between the Department and the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated).

All fund expenditure on Aboriginal background initiatives were decided upon in consultation with the local Aboriginal community and Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG).

Socio-economic background

Socio-economic background funding supported the school in being able to implement differentiated programs for students by subsidising online learning platforms such as Reading Eggs and Mathletics.

The socio-economic funding subsidised the school’s community-sponsored Breakfast Club, feeding up to 80 students daily. The funding also provided uniforms and subsidised uniforms and excursion reductions for students whose families were experiencing hardship.

The socio-economic background funding also further supported programs that were set up with Aboriginal background funding. For instance, additional Learning and Support Officer hours were paid for to support Aboriginal students in receiving one to one MultiLit reading tuition, and improve their reading outcomes.

A Musical Theatre Tutor was also employed at Merimbula Public School in 2014, using socio-economic background funding. This was to ensure that all students had access to quality performing arts opportunities and a specialist teacher, regardless of their financial background. This was a successful initiative, with all students taking part in an end-of-year performance. Students are now motivated to take part in more performing arts initiatives since being exposed to a wider range of learning experiences. This program will be expanded in 2015 to include students receiving free musical instrument tuition and equipment loans.

As a result of team-teaching with the Musical Theatre Tutor, teachers were motivated and enthused to improve the quality of their teaching in the arts. Their motivation soon turned into
dedication when teaching music lessons as part of the showcase. This also resulted in a Ukulele Club being introduced during lunch breaks for any child interested.

Musical partnerships with other schools across the SCLC were further developed as a result of renewed teacher interest in the arts. More teachers became involved in the SCLC Performing Arts Festival and Music Camp, with some being trained in sound and lighting stage management techniques.

**Learning and Support**

Learning and support equity funds were used in 2014 to employ additional School Learning Support Officers (SLSO) to work with students on behaviour improvement programs, positive playground behaviour initiatives and to support students with special needs on the playground, in addition to what the students’ individual funding allowed. The funding also allowed an SLSO to enter behaviour data into the new LMBR system daily and support school staff with the additional workload.

Learning and support funds were also used to increase the hours of employment for one of the school’s Learning Assistance and Support Teachers, who was employed as a result of varying the mix of staffing. This allowed her to work with the lowest group of readers in each Kindergarten class as well as the Stage 1 students she was funded to work with.

Some of the learning and support funds also funded student participation in Fast ForWord. The Fast ForWord Program develops skills that increase a student’s ability to process new information. It is a technology-based learning application that increases learning capacity by using exercises that build neuronal connections (pathways in the brain). The program was developed by Dr Michael Merzenich who developed the cochlear ear implant. Some of the skills developed by participating students include: phonemic awareness, listening accuracy, phonics, working memory, vocabulary, syntax, reading fluency, focused attention, comprehension and critical thinking. Students participating in the training attend the school’s Learning Support Room for an intensive one-hour computer based training session daily for 6 months.

Other flexible learning and support funds were used to release teachers that needed to: support students with transition, complete Transition Plans, complete Behaviour Support Plans and complete Risk Assessments for students experiencing difficulty. The funds were also used to support Kindergarten teachers in working with local preschool staff and early childhood service providers to ensure that the school’s Preschool to Kindergarten Transition Program and Orientation Days were successful.

Merimbula Public School has been recognised for its outstanding learning support programs. An Understanding Dyslexia and Reading Difficulties professional learning online resource has been developed by filming Merimbula Public School staff, students, parents and programs as an example of best practice when supporting students.

School staff have also been awarded regional and Director General awards for their achievements in this area. The school has also been filmed as a case study for the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data web site to support school students with disability.

**Other significant programs and initiatives**

**Empowering Local Schools National Partnership Funding**

Merimbula Public School has been able to implement a number of initiatives as a result of having a greater level of financial and decision making flexibility. The school has strengthened its capacity to focus on literacy and numeracy improvement on a whole-school level: improving staff knowledge, increasing staffing hours and by resourcing staff with quality teaching and learning materials that support them utilising their new knowledge and understandings in the classroom.

**Sapphire Coast Learning Community (SCLC)**

Merimbula Public School is a member of the SCLC and participates in school networking, shared professional learning, the development of shared continuums of learning, shared music camps and performing arts festivals. Over 410 staff take part in an annual combined school staff development day and have a shared early childhood continuum.
Teaching Synthetic Phonics/Phonemic Awareness

The school has adopted a whole-school synthetic phonics approach to teaching reading. All staff are trained in this method. Programs address word attack skills, sight word recognition, reinforced reading and other essential reading components in a highly focused daily session within every class. The programs are also utilised by support staff when providing small group and one to one reading intervention. In 2014 school funds were used to support increased teacher training in this area.

Targeting Early Numeracy (TEN)

TEN supports teachers in developing a class program that incorporates short, focussed and frequent opportunities designed to increase the rate and proficiency of numeracy learning for students. The assessment schedule then identifies targeted students with specific numeracy learning needs, so that individualised programs can be introduced to support them in developing early numeracy strategies and mental computation to solve addition and subtraction problems.

Positive Behaviour For Success

The Positive Behaviour for Success (PBS) program continued in 2014. Following the implementation of a new computer operating system within the school, time was spent focusing on adjusting this program to enable the successful recording of student data. Flow charts simplifying the process to be followed for positive and negative behaviour were introduced. More emphasis was placed on using the language of the values in all situations and signs around the school reinforce this. Data shows that the number of major behaviour incidents reduced in the upper years.

School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

School evaluation processes

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The priorities of our 2012-2014 School Plan included:

School priority 1 - Health and Wellbeing

School priority 2 – Engagement

School priority 3 – Curriculum and Assessment

School planning 2012-2014:

School priority 1

Health and Wellbeing

Outcomes from 2012–2014

1.1 Improved understanding of the school values.
1.2 Behaviour expectations are taught.
1.3 Ongoing reward system is evident.
1.4 A system for responding to behaviour errors is in place.
1.5 Improved monitoring, communication and management of behaviour data.
1.6 Work, Health, Safety (WHS) practices are adhered to.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

1.1 Students, staff and community members have an increased understanding of the school values, following increased communication about the values and new signage being posted in the school.
1.2 Behaviour expectations were taught in class and at school assemblies. Student leaders now conclude school assemblies by reminding their peers of how they can focus on demonstrating each of the four school values in a different way. Students who attend time-out, following negative behaviour incidents, are also given additional reminders of how they could be demonstrating the school values.
1.3 A new flow-chart was developed to support staff, including casual staff, in understanding how to respond to behaviour incidents. The related procedures and supporting documents are now included in a casual staff induction resource given to new employees.
1.4 Improved monitoring and analysis of behaviour data is evident with Executive staff and School Administration Staff engaging with the new LMBR and Student Wellbeing recording system. Evaluations were shared
with staff throughout 2014. Additional training for staff will take place in 2015 to further improve staff capacity in analysing the behaviour data and developing action plans to reduce negative behaviour and acknowledge and promote positive behaviour.

1.5 Work Health and Safety (WHS) practices were adhered to in 2014. The school executive team also completed the WHS Self-Evaluation, ensuring such, in preparation for its Audit taking place at the beginning of Term 1 in 2015.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Ongoing implementation of new LMBR features took place, together with providing quality professional learning to support staff in engaging with such.
- Continuation of the Positive Behaviour for Success Program occurred.
- Accessing new WHS resources and updating school policy and procedures to support new/best practice took place, resulting in new induction resources and processes.

School priority 2

Engagement

Outcomes from 2012–2014

2.1 All staff will have a Professional Learning Plan.
2.2 The LAST will team teach with teachers to support implementation of a whole-school synthetic phonics program.
2.3 Teachers will develop class, school and learning community programs that are differentiated.
2.4 Staff participate in professional learning to enhance leadership capacity.
2.5 School Plan targets and the school vision drive decision making.
2.6 Attendance rates to 94% in 2013 (and 95% in 2014).
2.7 Technology integration meets learner needs.
2.8 Targeted learning support programs are further developed across the school.
2.9 Improvements in Aboriginal Education delivery and outcome achievement for all Aboriginal students.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

2.1 All staff do have a Professional Learning Plan and have participated in coaching sessions with their supervisor to develop and evaluate their plan.
2.2 Increased team teaching sessions have taken place with the LAST supporting teachers to implement the whole-school synthetic phonics program.
2.3 Teachers have developed differentiated learning programs for students, focusing in particular on literacy and numeracy whilst using the learning continuums.
2.4 Staff have participated in professional learning to enhance leadership capacity. This professional learning has included Online Behaviour Management, Covey’s 7 Habits of Highly Effective Leaders and Growth Coaching International’s 3-day Coaching program.
2.5 School Plan targets and the school vision drive decision making. This is demonstrated in Stage, Staff and Executive Meetings where the School Plan is regularly addressed as can be seen in meeting minutes.
2.6 Attendance did not increase to 95%. It was only 91%. Attendance has been monitored and new procedures have been put in place to support improvement in this area where possible.
2.7 Technology integration meets learner needs more effectively in 2014. Eighty iPads are now used by students across the school to support differentiation. The school has also evaluated technology integration and will be distributing its Technology Room Computers across the school ready for improved integration and greater access to technology in 2015, especially with more technology-based differentiated learning programs being used across the school, such as Reading Eggs which was introduced in addition to Mathletics in 2014.
2.8 Targeted learning support programs have been further developed across the school as a result of increased equity funding as part of the RAM, as previously shared.
2.9 Improvements in Aboriginal Education delivery and outcome achievement for all Aboriginal students have also been achieved, as identified previously.
Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Ongoing professional learning using continuums and differentiation, particularly when integrating technology and 21st Century learning skills, took place during Staff and Stage Meetings which were led by the school’s Curriculum Committee.

- Further coaching of teachers and the Executive Team in using GROWTH Coaching techniques took place. Staff who lead programs and/or relieve as Executive regularly were also trained.

- Communication with parents and caregivers regarding student attendance was improved, supported by new roll keeping software introduced as part of LMBR.

- Improved learning outcomes for Aboriginal students became evident as the students were supported through targeted reading and mathematics support programs.

School priority 3

Curriculum and Assessment

Outcomes from 2012–2014

3.1 Strengthened literacy and numeracy outcomes and scope and sequences across the school.

3.2 Professional learning leads to greater staff awareness of how to implement targeted literacy and numeracy programs.

3.3 Improved assessment and reporting practices are evident across the school.

3.4 Australian Curriculum in English, Mathematics and Science are being implemented.

3.5 Whole-school synthetic phonics reading program is implemented.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

3.1 Strengthened literacy and numeracy outcomes are evident, as illustrated in the previously shared NAPLAN data. Whole school scope and sequences were also developed by the school Executive Team in consultation with teaching staff.

3.2 Professional learning took place, supporting staff to have a greater awareness of how to implement targeted literacy and numeracy programs.

3.3 Improved assessment and reporting practices became evident across the school. Teachers now record literacy and numeracy continuum data in the Planning Literacy and Numeracy (PLAN) resource and send PLAN reports out to parents to identify student strengths and areas for further development.

3.4 The Australian Curriculum in English, Mathematics and Science are being implemented.

3.5 A whole-school synthetic phonics reading program has been implemented.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Further support developing quality teaching and learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy occurred, providing quality professional learning and Stage Planning Days for staff.

- Refinement of whole school scope and sequences took place, in align with the new Australian Curriculum and related professional learning.

- Further development of the whole-school synthetic phonics program included phonics being embedded in spelling and handwriting lessons.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2014, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. The following evaluations took place:

1. Teaching and Learning;
2. Tell Them From Me: Focus On Learning;
3. Mathematics;
4. PBS Perceptions (Survey);
5. PBS Data (Benchmarks of Quality); and
6. Community, Staff and Student Consultation took place.

The responses are presented below.

Evaluation 1 – Teaching and Learning

Background:

Merimbula Public School staff, students (one in every five Years 3 to 6 students) and parents (one in every five families) were given a School Map
Survey on learning. The survey was in a pen and paper format and survey participants were required to select answers from multiple choices, related to the school and its learning environments to determine staff, student and parent satisfaction with teaching and learning at Merimbula Public School.

Findings:

- All staff, 79% of students and 95% of parents shared that learning opportunities at Merimbula Public School are provided within a stimulating and secure learning environment. 18% of students shared that this is sometimes the case.
- 89% of staff, 95% of students and 98% of parents shared that the learning needs of all students are addressed through the use of appropriate resources almost always or usually.
- Over 90% of staff, students and parents believe that expectations of individuals are understood and promote excellence almost always or usually.
- 12% of staff, 5% of students and 5% of parents shared that students rarely engage in self-assessment.
- 100% of staff believe that students are provided with a relevant curriculum almost always. Over 95% of students and parents believed that this was almost always or usually the case.

Conclusion/Future Directions:

- In 2015 staff will investigate a range of 21st century teaching and learning pedagogies, and project based learning, to further engage students in lessons so that students find them more stimulating. Students will evaluate lessons more regularly to give teachers feedback and teachers will give each other feedback as part of their Performance Development Plan evaluations.
- More student self-assessment needs to take place.
- Staff, students and parents are happy with the school’s programs, teaching, learning opportunities and curriculum.

Evaluation 2 – Tell Them From Me: Focus On Learning

Background:

The Focus on Learning Survey took place as a self-evaluation tool for teachers to identify effective classroom and school practices as well as areas for future improvement.

Teachers completed questions which required them to provide scores between 1 and 10, indicating strong agreement or disagreement relating to statements of practice about leadership, collaboration, learning culture, data informing practice, teaching strategies, technology implementation and integration, inclusivity and parent involvement.

67.9% of participants were permanent teachers and 32.1% of those surveyed were casual or short-term temporary staff.

Findings:

- Teachers agreed that the School Executive: help them to establish visible learning goals for students; provide them with useful feedback; help them to improve their teaching; provide them guidance to monitor student progress; and support them during stressful times.
- They also strongly believe that the School Executive create a safe and orderly school environment.
- Teachers shared that the Executive rarely take time to observe their teaching.
- Teachers strongly believe that they work collaboratively with other staff, that they talk with their colleagues about how to engage students and that they discuss the learning problems of particular students with teachers.
- Teachers strongly believe that they monitor the progress of individual students and that they set high expectations for student learning.
- Teachers shared that they believe they: discuss learning goals, talk with students about learning barriers, engage students in learning and they work with students who have behavioral problems.
- Teachers shared that they seldom give examples of what an “A”, “B” or “C” piece of work looks like.
• Teachers were neutral in their responses as to whether they give students weekly written feedback on their work.

• Teachers shared that they sometimes: get students to use computers to track their own progress, help students set goals to use new technological skills, and sometimes work with students to identify a challenging learning goal relevant to the use of interactive technology.

• Teachers shared that they always set clear behavior expectations prior to lessons.

Conclusion/Future Directions:

• School Executive and other school leaders will take more time to observe teacher lessons and give feedback in 2015.

• Teachers will readdress assessment rubrics in 2015, looking at ways they can demonstrate to students what quality work will look like.

• Teachers will give students more regular feedback, and will give written and/or verbal feedback to individual students at least weekly by the end of 2015.

• Confident technology-using teachers will investigate quality teaching practices when using technology in the classroom and they will share these with their colleagues.

• Staff will have access to more iPads and school computers in 2015 so that they can integrate the use of technology into their teaching and learning programs more effectively.

Evaluation 3 – Mathematics

Background:

Teachers were surveyed using electronic Survey Monkey software to inform the School Executive if teachers believe that Mathematics is being taught effectively and to determine areas for future improvement.

Participants completed some yes/no answers, multiple choice selections and were given the opportunity to comment.

Findings:

• 81.25% of teachers believe that their Stage Team programs mathematics collaboratively.

• 100% of teachers shared that they use a variety of practical, technological and hands-on resources to teach mathematics.

• 80% of teachers shared that their Stage is plotting students on the Numeracy Continuum.

• Only 14.29% of teachers shared that they would prefer students to be grouped within ability-based classes in mathematics.

• Over 90% of teachers believe that teaching mathematical games is a useful strategy when teaching key mathematics concepts.

• 35% of teachers believe that there are adequate resources for the teaching of Mathematics at Merimbula Public School. Some of these teachers identified additional resources that could be purchased.

• 65% of teachers believe that more mathematics needs to be taught.

• A range of professional development needs were addressed by teachers, with over 70% of teachers sharing that they would like to see expert teaching demonstration in mathematics.

Conclusion/Future Directions:

• Teachers are to plan how they will collaborate to develop quality teaching and learning programs in mathematics as part of the school’s Professional Learning Policy.

• Further professional learning will take place to ensure that all teachers are plotting students on the Numeracy Continuum by the end of 2015.

• Stage Teams are to look into collecting Mathematics resources and completing a school-wide audit to ensure that wanted resources are not already owned by the school.
• Additional resources are to be purchased by the school in align with those required for use when teaching students skills and understandings in align with the new Australian Curriculum for Mathematics.

• A teacher will be trained as a TOWN Facilitator. The school’s TEN and TOWN Facilitators will offer at least one Professional Learning Staff Meeting after school each term to support teachers in attending quality mathematics teaching demonstrations.

Evaluation 4 – PBS Perceptions (Survey)

Background:
Staff members were surveyed using electronic Survey Monkey software to identify the effective features of the Positive Behaviour for Success Program and to determine areas for future improvement.

Participants completed some yes/no answers, multiple choice selections and were given the opportunity to comment.

Findings:
• 81% of staff members believe that PBS addresses the school values.
• 55% of staff members do not like the way PBS is implemented in the school, mostly due to them disagreeing with having a whole-school award and because the positive behaviour playground awards need reviewing.
• 80% of staff would like a positive behavior to be taught each week.
• 100% of staff like the idea of having a “Time-Out Room” for students who do not behave on the playground.

Conclusion/Future Directions:
• PBS lessons are to be developed by the PBS Committee to support teachers in explicitly teaching behaviour lessons that embed the school values.
• The PBS Committee are going to review the playground award system and improve it.
• The PBS team will develop lessons for teachers to address weekly and PBS values will be addressed at weekly assemblies.
• In 2015 a Time Out Room will be introduced whereby non-compliant students can be excluded from the playground while they participate in PBS lessons to address more appropriate choices they could be making.

Evaluation 5 – PBS Data (Benchmarks of Quality)

Background:
Staff members completed a Departmental survey on PBS to identify areas of priority when improving the PBS initiative at Merimbula Public School.

Regional staff analysed the data and shared the following findings.

Findings:
Positive aspects of PBS include:
• The team has principal support, regular meetings and a clear purpose.
• PBS has clear documentation and procedures.
• The values are posted around the school.
• Staff expectations are linked to the school values.
• Expected behaviour routines are taught in the classroom.
• Students and staff can identify the school values.

Priority areas for future improvement include:
• Staff members need to be more aware of behaviour problems across the school through regular sharing of data.
• PBS goals need to be reviewed.
• Staff feedback needs to be obtained more regularly to improve PBS.
• Rewards systems need to be applied more consistently across the school.

Conclusion/Future Directions:
• The PBS Committee in 2015 will address the priority areas identified in the findings of this evaluation.
Evaluation 6 – Community, Staff and Student Consultation

Background:

A community, parent and caregiver information evening was held at the school to share school initiatives, evaluation results and possible future initiatives. Participants gave feedback and came prepared with ideas on how to further improve the school and its teaching and learning programs and extra-curricular opportunities.

The parents of incoming 2015 Kindergarten children were also interviewed on their hopes and expectations of Merimbula Public School during Term 4 of 2014, during their enrolment interview. They also gave suggestions regarding what they would like to see offered to their child over the 2015-2017 School Plan cycle.

Findings:

- Parents and caregivers placed high importance on the arts and it being taught to all students K-6.
- Parents wanted more creative and higher order lessons taught, with teachers ensuring that students are not using technology too often.
- Community members, parents and caregivers shared that they would like to see students learn more about sustainability and participate in a structured gardening program.
- Community members, staff, parents and caregivers shared that they would like to see more gardens and outdoor play areas in the school.
- Parents, particularly parents of incoming students, placed high importance on teaching school values and multiculturalism. Some of these parents were interested in their child/ren learning a language other than English.

Conclusion/Future Directions:

- The school will advertise for a Music/Art Teacher to fill its next vacant position where possible.
- The School Executive together with the Connections Committee will investigate opportunities to teach a language other than English at Merimbula Public School.

Future Directions

2015-2017 School Plan

NSW DEC is implementing a new school planning process for 2015-17. The new plan will be published on the school’s website from the beginning of Term 2 2015.

The 2015-17 School Plan, for Merimbula Public School, was developed through consultative decision making processes. The School Plan has also been created using the following processes:

- Development of the school’s vision, purpose and values through staff, Parents & Citizens, community and Student Representative Council (SRC) consultation.
- Engagement with the Melbourne Declaration to readdress the school’s vision in response to whole-school evaluations on: Teaching (the Tell Them From Me survey); Positive Behaviour for Success (PBS); Literacy and Numeracy teaching and learning, resources and learning; Attendance; and the soon to be administered Wellbeing and Mental Health (Kids Matter survey).
- Embracing the School Excellence Framework to set high expectations and improvement measures that align with the Department of Education and Community’s (DECs) reforms and priorities.
- Staff meetings and evaluations using quality improvement tools, such as when completing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) charts to evaluate practice and facilitate change.
- Community consultation meetings, whereby parents, caregivers and
community members were invited to give feedback on assessment data, school programs and proposed initiatives whilst also offering suggestions for improvement.

- Discussion and consultation with local preschools and early childhood centres/services, incoming 2015 Kindergarten Parents/Caregivers, local partner schools and high schools and the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG).

- Participation in developing SCLC and Community of Schools (COS) strategic directions and milestones.

- Evaluation of staff Performance Development Plans.

- Extensive evaluation and discussion regarding internal and external student achievement data, looking at benchmarks, school trends and student growth.

**The 2015-17 Strategic Directions for Merimbula Public School include:**

**Strategic Direction 1: Effective and Equitable Literacy and Numeracy Practices**

To ensure access to exemplary literacy and numeracy programs is equitable and consistent for all students, delivered at a high standard by staff and community members who ensure learning is personalised, purposeful, engaging and developmentally appropriate.

**Strategic Direction 2: Confidence, Creativity and Resilience**

To provide an environment where achieving one’s best is inevitable so children are empowered to be committed learners who develop confidence, creativity and leadership skills for life while at the same time having a sense of self-worth, self-awareness, empathy and respect.

**Strategic Direction 3: Informed Leaders and Active Community Partnerships**

To develop strong, successful partnerships with parents, caregivers, community, support personnel and partner schools to ensure effective and consistent educational delivery, shared expertise and professional practice.

**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 more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the report and have the opportunity to provide feedback about the report at: