2009 Annual School Report
Wallacia Public School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
Messages

Principal's message

Wallacia Public School has a long and proud history, and is an integral part of the semi-rural community it serves. Being a small school, there is a strong emphasis on caring relationships between staff, students and the wider community.

This year has seen many positive changes at Wallacia Public School. After a period of relative instability in staffing, I was very pleased to take up the appointment of Teaching Principal at the beginning of the 2009 school year, joining a small but committed group of teachers.

The focus areas for this year have been Literacy, Numeracy and Learning Technology. Students and teachers have worked hard to improve achievement levels in all of these areas. Intensive daily literacy and numeracy sessions, as well as increased use of technology in all classrooms, have resulted in significant progress towards our targets.

Highlights of the year included the development of the Penrith Valley Small Schools Network, and our continued involvement in the Glenmore Park / Mulgoa Valley Community of Schools. As part of the activities of these groups of schools, we participated in joint sporting events, and a very enjoyable Writers’ Festival. More details about these events are included elsewhere in this report.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff and students of Wallacia Public School for their continued commitment to learning. I’d also like to thank parents, our many volunteers, and the wider community for their ongoing support.

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.

Jenny Ruge

P&C Association

Wallacia Public School is fortunate to have the support of an active P&C Association. During 2009, the major fundraiser was the very successful Trivia Night held early in the year. This was greatly enjoyed by the many participants, and raised approximately $7000 for the school.

The P&C also ran Mothers Day and Fathers Day stalls, a Bunnings Barbecue, Easter and Christmas raffles, and a Car Boot Sale. As well as these fundraising activities, the members of the P&C Association supported the school staff and students in a range of activities, including running the school canteen one day per week, providing morning teas and lunches for special events, and running a fabulous Disco for students.

The P&C Association values the hard work and dedication of all its members, and encourages new families to join each year.

Mrs Jenny McBride
P&C President

Student Representatives

Students at Wallacia PS have a number of opportunities to develop leadership skills. Each year, two Captains and two Vice Captains lead the fortnightly assemblies, as well as represent the school on official occasions.

In addition, four Sports Captains carry out a variety of roles, including looking after the sports equipment and organising borrowing of equipment at lunchtimes. The Class Captain program provides opportunities for all students to demonstrate responsibility and leadership skills.

Teachers and parents are proud of the manner in which student leaders carry out their duties. They are always excellent role models for their peers.

School Captains: Daniella Bugeja (VC), Chelsea Fyffe (C), Connor Duncan (C), and Brooke Magri (VC).
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
Student enrolment numbers at Wallacia Public School have remained stable over recent years. While there has been some mobility, with a small number of families moving into or out of the area, the total number of students has not changed significantly. Across the 2009 school year, enrolments ranged from a low of 81 to a high of 98, with an average of 87 students enrolled at any one time.

Student enrolment numbers over the past five years are presented in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student attendance profile
Students at Wallacia PS generally maintain a satisfactory attendance rate. In 2009, as in previous years, the average attendance rate for the school was slightly above the regional and state average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>95.0</td>
<td>95.0</td>
<td>95.0</td>
<td>93.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, when analysed by year level, it is apparent that Kindergarten students at Wallacia PS have a higher absentee rate than all other grades. In addition, a small number of students account for a large proportion of all absences.

Management of non-attendance
Two main issues have been identified in relation to non-attendance, or low attendance rates. First, a small number of students account for a large proportion of student absences. School staff (and where appropriate regional HSLOs) work closely with these students and their families to overcome barriers to improved attendance. For example, reward and incentive programs were implemented for several students.

Second, the relatively low attendance rate of Kindergarten students is a concern, especially as a significant proportion of absences could not be accounted for by student illness. Reminders in school newsletters (including distribution of copies of the DET’s attendance information sheet for parents), and at regular school assemblies have aimed at encouraging parents to value their child’s attendance at school. Also, particular emphasis was placed on the importance of regular school attendance at the Kindergarten Orientation Day.

Class sizes
In March 2003 the Government announced its commitment to publish primary class sizes in annual school reports in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible.

The following table shows our class sizes as reported at the 2009 class size audit conducted on Wednesday 18 March 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll Class</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total per Year</th>
<th>Total in Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/5/6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/5/6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/5/6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KINDERGARTEN</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structure of classes
There were four classes at Wallacia PS in 2009. An enrolment of 16 Kindergarten students enabled us to keep this class as a single-grade class. All other classes in the school were multi-age classes, as is necessary in such a small school.

When students in any particular grade cohort are split across two classes (as in the case of Grade 4 in 2009), our teachers create opportunities to ensure that these students maintain strong relationships with each other.

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
Total enrolment numbers at Wallacia PS entitle the school to a full-time Teaching Principal, plus three classroom teachers. In 2009, a new Teaching Principal took up the position at the beginning of the year, and two of the classroom teacher positions were filled by temporary teachers.

Additional entitlements include a part-time Teacher Librarian, and an allocation to cover
teachers’ Release from Face-to-Face allowance. A Support Teacher Learning and a School Counsellor are also allocated on a shared basis with several other schools.

The school's total staff entitlement is presented in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFF / Part time</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning</td>
<td>Shared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>Shared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(SASS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Members of the teaching staff are supported by a full-time School Administration Manager, one part-time School Administration Officer, a teachers' aide, and a General Assistant one day per week. There are no staff members of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background currently employed at Wallacia Public School.

**Teacher qualifications**

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools. In addition, one staff member has completed postgraduate qualifications in Language and Literacy Education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Financial summary**

A summary of the income and expenditure for 2009 is presented in the table below. This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

| Date of financial summary: | 30/11/2009 | Income $ |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Balance brought forward    | 81 429.94  |
| Global funds               | 73 258.07  |
| Tied funds                 | 49 356.84  |
| School & community sources | 17 475.27  |
| Interest                   | 3 051.46   |
| Trust receipts             | 5 795.95   |
| Canteen                    | 0.00       |
| **Total income**           | 230 367.53 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>21 570.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>15 913.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>9 156.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>35 595.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>12 725.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>23 242.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>10 928.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>5 103.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>2 520.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
<td>136 756.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance carried forward</strong></td>
<td>93 611.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the income and expenditure outlined above, the school received money from the Federal Government's national stimulus program. The school received $75000 under the National School Pride program, and this was used to upgrade the Administration block and refurbish the staff room. The school also received funding of over $850000 for a new permanent library to replace the existing demountable library. Construction of the new library will be completed in 2010.

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

There were a number of special events and significant achievements for Wallacia PS in 2009. Students excelled in a number of areas, in the Arts, in Sport, and in academic pursuits.

Achievements

Arts

In 2009, all students were provided with regular classroom experiences in all forms of creative and practical arts so that syllabus outcomes could be achieved. In addition, one talented teacher conducted a range of pottery / ceramics lessons for students in several classes.

All students participated in a specialist 10 week Dance program in Term 1. Each class developed their dance skills and rehearsed dances in preparation for our special Education Week performance.

Approximately 30 students joined the school Choir, which performed at special assemblies and events, including our annual Presentation Day assembly.

Many students participated in our Talent Quest, held in Term 4. During Terms 3 and 4, eight students participated in regular guitar lessons, giving them the opportunity to enhance their musical skills.

Students from Wallacia PS also competed in the Penrith Valley Public Speaking Competition, and performed extremely well.

A highlight of the year was the inaugural Glenmore Park / Mulgoa Valley Writers’ Festival. Students from the seven schools included in this community of schools submitted narratives for the festival. Seven students from Wallacia PS were selected to read their work at the festival, and have their stories published in a book.

Sport

The school’s sport program aims to provide students with opportunities to participate in a range of physical activities, and to develop an understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

During 2009, students in Grades 3-6 participated in the annual Swimming Carnival, Cross Country Carnival and Athletics Carnival. The Cross Country Carnival was conducted jointly with Mulgoa Public School, giving students the opportunity to compete against a larger number of students in their age group. Following the success of this joint carnival, a combined Athletics Carnival was held with Mulgoa PS, Luddenham PS and Orchard Hills PS. This joint carnival included a component for K-2 students.

As a result of these carnivals, a number of students went on to represent Wallacia PS at district level. The Outstanding Sportsperson of the Year was Ella Merchant, who represented the school at Sydney West Regional level in both Swimming and Athletics.

Students also participated in skill development sessions in a number of sports. A Learn to Swim program was also conducted, allowing many students to improve their skills. Most students participated in a 10 week Gymnastics program, and thoroughly enjoyed improving their balance and flexibility.

During 2009, Wallacia PS participated in the Active After School Communities (AASC) program, which provided a variety of after school sport activities, usually two afternoons per week.

Other

Throughout 2009, we continued our involvement in the Glenmore Park / Mulgoa Valley Learning Community, building partnerships with the surrounding schools. In addition to the joint activities discussed above, Year 5 students participated in a very enjoyable Science and Technology Day at Glenmore Park High School.

Students from Wallacia PS participated in a number of excursions to enhance learning in classroom programs. Students in K-2 enjoyed a day at the Brewongle Environmental Education Centre.

Late in the year, students from Stage 2 and Stage 3 participated in the ZooSnooze program at Taronga Zoo. Students and staff visited the Powerhouse Museum and Hyde Park Barracks before arriving at the zoo for a memorable evening tour. After bunking down in the ‘Backyard to Bush’ exhibit for the night, we all awoke to the sounds of the animals and were lucky enough to hand-feed the giraffes!
**Academic**

In the National Assessment Program (NAPLAN), the results across the Years 3 and 5 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 8. The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in the assessments.

**Yr 3:** from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)

**Yr 5:** from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3**

In 2009, 14 Year 3 students from Wallacia PS completed the NAPLAN test in Reading, while 13 students completed the tests in Writing and Language Conventions. The average performance of our students was below state average, with our students performing significantly better in Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation than in Reading.

In Overall Literacy, no students from Wallacia PS scored in Band 1 (the lowest), and only 16% scored in Bands 2-3. This means that 84% of our students scored in the top three bands compared to 77% of students in the state. However, the vast majority of these students were in Band 4, indicating that, while our students are typically not achieving very low levels, they are also not achieving very high levels of Overall Literacy.

In Reading, 50% of Wallacia PS students scored in the top three bands, and this was similar to the school’s results in 2008. In Writing, no students scored in Bands 1 or 2, and 84% achieved scores in Bands 4-6 (compared to 69% of Wallacia students in 2008). In Spelling, 69% of our students scored in the top three bands, compared to 56% in 2008. In Grammar and Punctuation, 77% of our students scored in Bands 4-6, compared to only 50% in 2008.

Overall, these results indicate that, while the school performance in Year 3 Writing, Spelling, and Grammar and Punctuation has improved from 2008 to 2009, there is still some way to go to match state average achievement levels. In particular, we need to work to improve the performance of our students achieving in the upper bands. However, there has not been a corresponding improvement in the performance of our students in Reading, and this needs to be a priority area for 2010 (see Target 1).

The following tables show the achievements of Wallacia PS students in 2009, compared to the achievements of students in other similar schools (Like School Group).
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3

Of the 14 Year 3 students from Wallacia PS who completed the Numeracy tests in 2009, only 21% scored in Bands 4-6 (the top 3 bands). This performance is slightly lower than previous years, and below state average performance. Students’ achievements in Numeracy have been identified as a key area for improvement for the school (see Target 2).

In Reading, 64% of our students achieved scores in Bands 7-8 (the top two bands), compared to 40% of students in the state, and only 22% of Wallacia PS students in 2008. In 2009, Wallacia students achieved average scores well above state average.

In Writing, no students from Wallacia PS scored in Band 8 (the top band), but 71% of students scored in Bands 6-7. While our students achieved an average score just below state average, their performance was a significant improvement over previous years. Our students also achieved scores slightly below state average in Spelling, but scored significantly higher than state average in Grammar and Punctuation.

The following tables show the achievements of Wallacia PS students in 2009, compared to the achievements of students in other similar schools (Like School Group).

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5

In 2009, 14 students in Year 5 at Wallacia PS completed the NAPLAN tests. Our Year 5 students achieved excellent results in all areas of Literacy.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5

The achievement levels of our Year 5 students in Numeracy in 2009 were below state average achievement levels. While no students from Wallacia PS were placed in Band 3 (the lowest band), 36% were placed in Band 4. However, this represented an improvement over 2008 results, when 66% of Wallacia PS students were placed in Bands 3-4.

In 2009, 21% were placed in Bands 6-8 (the top three bands), compared to 59% of students across the state. These results indicate that Numeracy needs to continue to be a priority area for our school (see Target 2).

Progress in literacy

Data was matched for 11 Wallacia PS students who completed the Basic Skills Tests in 2007 and the NAPLAN tests in 2009. Overall, our students achieved outstanding progress from Year 3 to Year 5 in both Reading and Writing.

The average progress in Reading of our students was 154.1 points, compared to 88.4 points for students across the state. This outstanding progress was common to all our students, with 100% of students achieving growth equal to or above the expected growth from Year 3 to Year 5.

The average progress in Reading for matched students is shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>136.2</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>154.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSG</td>
<td>83.5</td>
<td>88.3</td>
<td>93.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>88.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our students also achieved outstanding progress in Writing. On average, our students achieved 148.0 points growth, compared to 57.7 points across the state. This growth was consistent across all students, with 100% of our students achieving equal to or above the expected growth. Boys in Year 5 at Wallacia PS achieved slightly higher growth in Writing than girls.

The average progress in Writing from 2007 to 2009 for matched students is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>111.9</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td>148.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSG</td>
<td>71.3</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>76.1</td>
<td>69.3</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Progress in numeracy

Unfortunately, our students’ excellent progress in literacy was not matched in numeracy. The average growth in achievement from Year 3 to Year 5 for Wallacia PS students was 63.7 points, compared to an average of 93.4 points across the state. Only 27% of our students achieved growth equal to or above the expected level.

The average progress in Numeracy from 2007 to 2009 for matched students is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>186.3</td>
<td>61.3</td>
<td>63.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSG</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>80.4</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>93.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once again, this indicates that Numeracy teaching and learning needs to continue to be a priority for the school (see Target 2).

Minimum standards

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

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

Percentage of Year 3 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2009

| Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at and above minimum standard |
| Reading                  | 93 |
| Writing                  | 100 |
| Spelling                 | 85 |
| Punctuation and grammar  | 100 |
| Numeracy                 | 86 |

Compared to the percentages of Year 3 students achieving minimum standards in 2008, these figures are comparable in reading and writing, higher in punctuation and grammar, and lower in numeracy.

In Year 5 in 2009 compared to 2008, a higher percentage of students achieved minimum standards in reading, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy. The percentage of students achieving the minimum standard in writing fell from 100% to 93%, but in a school with a small cohort of students, this figure is not significant.

Percentage of Year 5 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2009

| Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at and above minimum standard |
| Reading                  | 100 |
| Writing                  | 93 |
| Spelling                 | 93 |
| Punctuation and grammar  | 100 |
| Numeracy                 | 100 |

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

Our school provides programs designed to educate all students about Aboriginal history and culture, as well as foster understanding of contemporary Aboriginal issues. Aspects of Aboriginal history and culture are taught across all curriculum areas, with a particular emphasis on HSIE and literature.

In 2009, an Aboriginal performer engaged students in storytelling, music and dance to enhance their understanding of Aboriginal culture. Teachers focussed on ensuring that Aboriginal perspectives were included in all major units of work across all Key Learning Areas.

Multicultural education

Multicultural perspectives are integrated across Key Learning Areas, and particularly through the teaching of Connected Outcomes Group (COGs) units of work. Wallacia PS promotes inclusive teaching practices that recognise and value the cultural backgrounds of all students.

Respect and responsibility

Values Education is an integral part of effective schooling. Teachers at Wallacia PS are strongly committed to the teaching of values, and ensure this is included across the curriculum. In particular, there is a strong emphasis on the teaching of values through the student welfare program. In recognition of the important role that story plays in children’s learning, the school has also adopted an approach to specifically teaching values through children’s literature.
Progress on 2009 targets

Target 1

To improve the performance of students so that 80% of all students achieve grade / Stage outcomes in Reading.

As a result of evaluations in 2008, teachers engaged in professional learning to enable them to provide more intensive, focussed Guided Reading lessons to meet the needs of all students. Additional resources were purchased to support the reading programs across the school.

Our achievements include:

- Approximately 70% of students in grades K-2 met stage outcomes in reading;
- All students who had been identified as achieving well below stage expectations at the beginning of 2009 had made excellent progress by the end of 2009;
- Our Year 5 students achieved well above state average results in the NAPLAN reading test. In addition, 100% of these students achieved equal to or above the expected progress from Year 3 to Year 5.

Target 2

To improve the performance of students so that 80% of all students achieve Stage outcomes in Numeracy.

The establishment of a highly structured daily Numeracy session in every class enabled teachers to target instruction to meet the needs of all students. Teachers engaged in professional development sessions on the effective teaching of numeracy, and purchased resources for use in classroom programs.

Our achievements include:

- Approximately 90% of students in Kindergarten and Grade 1 met learning expectations at the end of the year;
- The Mathletics computer-based program was utilised in all classes to support numeracy learning;
- Students in Year 5 achieved higher performance levels in NAPLAN numeracy test than 2008, although levels remain below state average.

Target 3

To increase the use of ICT in all classrooms.

All teachers participated in a range of professional development sessions that enabled them to increase their use of the Interactive Whiteboards in every classroom. In addition, the acquisition of approximately twenty laptop computers facilitated increased use of technology by students in Grades 3-6.

Our achievements include:

- All teachers effectively utilised technology in their teaching across Key Learning Areas;
- All students used the computer-based Mathletics program on at least a weekly basis;
- Students in Grades 3-6 regularly accessed technology to support their learning in a variety of ways, including publishing work, conducting research, and presenting their work through PowerPoint presentations.

Key evaluations

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2009 our school carried out evaluations of School Leadership and Reading.

Educational and management practice

The school conducted an evaluation of School Leadership through the use of the School Map survey.

Background

After a period of instability in the Teaching Principal position at the school, a new Principal was appointed for the beginning of the 2009 school year. Previous evaluations had indicated some dissatisfaction with the leadership of the school. Teachers and parents were surveyed on their current perceptions of School Leadership.

Findings and conclusions

Overall, parents and teachers agreed that the school leadership had a positive influence on the school. They agreed that school leaders had a clear understanding of the school and had made changes that were positive for students.

However, they indicated that more could be done to involve all groups in the school in decision-making. They also indicated that, while the school leadership did take responsibility for the learning of all students, more needed to be done to motivate and inspire students. Staff indicated that they felt supported by the school leadership, but would like more involvement in decision-making.
Future directions
In 2010, opportunities will be provided for parents and staff to have a greater input into determining the future directions on the school. In particular, this will be done through inviting greater participation in developing the school plan for 2011 and beyond.

Curriculum
Staff conducted an evaluation of the Reading skills and practices of students at Wallacia PS.

Background
Analysis of Basic Skills Test and NAPLAN test results over recent years indicate that Reading is an area of concern for Wallacia PS. With the exception of Year 5 students in 2009, students have not performed to expectations on external testing regimes.

Findings and conclusions
Although most students meet stage expectations in reading aloud, a significant number of students have difficulty with reading comprehension. This is in large part because many students are able to read, but simply choose not to. For example, many students do not participate in the Home Reading Program, and only 15 students completed the Premier’s Reading Challenge in 2009. Students are generally reluctant to read longer and more complex texts (such as novels), and borrowing rates from the school library are relatively low.

Future directions
In 2010, teachers will provide additional explicit instruction in reading comprehension skills. Additional resources will be purchased to support Guided Reading lessons (including novels), and all students will be encouraged to complete the Premier’s Reading Challenge.

A more structured and consistent approach to the Home Reading Program will be developed to encourage students and parents to participate in this program more fully. Parent workshops will also be conducted to educate parents about the role that they can play in supporting their child’s reading development.

Other evaluations
In addition to the evaluations discussed above, teachers of the two primary classes decided to conduct an evaluation of students’ perceptions of the learning environment. All students in Grades 3-6 were asked to complete a 47 item survey on the Quality Learning Environment.

Students’ responses were analysed to reveal the relative strengths in the learning environment created in the school, as well as areas where students felt improvement was needed. Overall, students agreed that teachers at Wallacia PS hold high expectations of their students, and believe that they can achieve high standards. Students reported that teachers almost always explain what students are going to learn, and why, and that teachers are good at helping students when they are having difficulty.

However, students felt that they didn’t have enough opportunities to make choices in their learning, and did not agree that learning was always ‘fun’. Although the majority of students claim that they always try to do their best in class, they felt that this was not always the case with other students, and that some students were not always respectful to teachers.

Overall, the results of this evaluation indicate that teachers at Wallacia PS should seek more ways to provide students with choices in their learning, and investigate ways to enhance student engagement.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction
In 2009 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. In general, all stakeholders expressed satisfaction with the operations of the school. However, some people expressed reservations about changes made in 2009, and were concerned that these changes may detract from the friendly, family-like atmosphere in the school. In particular, some stakeholders expressed concern that the increased focus on structured classroom learning programs might detract from students’ enjoyment of school.

These concerns are valid and need to be taken into consideration in determining future directions. While the learning of students must remain paramount, it will be important to ensure that efforts are made to improve student engagement in learning, and to ensure a balance of activities across all Key Learning Areas.

Professional learning
Staff participated in a range of professional learning opportunities in 2009. All staff attended a series of workshops to develop their skills in using Interactive Whiteboards in the classroom. They also enhanced their skills in computer-based assessment and reporting processes.

A number of teachers worked with a regional Literacy / Numeracy Leader to enhance their classroom teaching skills, particularly in the area of Numeracy. All staff updated their CPR and Emergency Care training.
School development 2009 – 2011

The targets listed below are part of a three year plan for school development. Literacy and Numeracy will continue to be key areas for development. Increased use of technology in learning will also be a key target.

Targets for 2010

Target 1
To improve Literacy achievement levels of all students across the school.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Review school programs to ensure explicit teaching of all aspects of literacy across all classes. Develop scope and sequence to guide programming;
- Analysis of NAPLAN results to identify specific weaknesses;
- Provide additional release for staff to work together to develop classroom programs addressing specific needs or areas of difficulty;
- Enhance student engagement by increasing the use of quality literature in classroom literacy programs.

Our success will be measured by:

- School policy and program in place which defines scope and sequence and assessment procedures;
- Support programs developed for students experiencing difficulty;
- Year 3 students decreasing the gap between state average performance in NAPLAN literacy tests and school performance;
- Increased participation in library borrowing, Home Reading Program, and Premier's Reading Challenge.

Target 2
To improve the Numeracy achievement levels of all students across the school.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Increased collaboration between teachers to ensure consistency of teaching practices across the school;
- Development of targeted programs for students experiencing difficulty in numeracy;
- Regular assessment of students to more closely monitor students’ progress and achievement.

Our success will be measured by:

- A decreased gap between Year 3 and Year 5 students’ NAPLAN numeracy scores and state average performance;
- Best Start and SENA testing indicating that 90% of students K-2 meet or exceed grade expectations in Numeracy achievement;
- Explicit targeted programs developed for all identified students experiencing significant difficulty in numeracy learning;
- Increased student engagement in, and enjoyment of, numeracy learning.

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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