Burwood Girls High School
Annual School Report
Principal’s message

In 2012, the results for the Higher School Certificate were outstanding with 23 students achieving an ATAR greater than 95. The NAPLAN results also indicated positive growth and this can be attributed to the efforts of staff in ensuring that strategies for teaching and learning are appropriate and meet the needs of all students.

Teachers were involved in classroom observations and discussions as part of our professional learning program. Workshops in technology supported teachers in managing Moodle and providing online learning for students. Our students have embraced the use of technology in the classroom and developed outstanding work in film, design and engineering as well as developing a range of initiatives.

The school continued to promote performing arts. The band program grows stronger each year with an increase in the number of ensembles, more students performing at special events with a greater involvement in state groups.

The dance program also grew stronger and the finale for 2012, the Dance Showcase was a magnificent event – so professional that a dance excursion was planned to the USA for 2013.

Burwood GHS continued to be recognised by our school community as a leading comprehensive school for girls. Groups from China, Japan, Kuwait and Thailand visited our school to observe quality teaching and learning. I had the opportunity to visit Korea and Vietnam to demonstrate teaching strategies and discuss opportunities for students in NSW schools.

We were disappointed that Burwood Council did not remove the temporary access road on our sporting fields despite the efforts, letters and petitions from our school community.

We were delighted with new stage curtains and a new toilet block completed ahead of schedule.

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 achievements and areas for development.

Mia Kumar
The P&C Association continued to meet on the third Wednesday of each month with the new president and committee. Special presentations from the school executive and others included discussions on:

- Higher School Certificate results
- Cyberbullying, legal rights and responsibilities (this was provided by Constable Thompson, the Youth Liaison Officer at Burwood Police Station)
- New assessment procedures (Record of School Achievement) for Year 10 in lieu of the School Certificate examination
- The junior English curriculum and program
- A simulated classroom experience in PDHPE
- Creative Arts curriculum in the junior years
- School policies regarding the submission of assessment tasks and considerations for selection of subjects for the HSC.

The P&C was also instrumental in supporting the school on the issue of the continued occupation of Wangal Park access road by Burwood Council. In particular the P&C wrote to Burwood Council expressing its concern about the council’s disregard of the school’s request to vacate the premises. The P&C also prepared a petition for signature by all incoming Year 7 parents. This petition helped to motivate the Minister to write to the Council directing it to remove the access road to Wangal Park to enable the school to have free and unfettered access to its adjacent playing fields.

The P&C operated the Uniform Shop and welcomed the addition of a new blue blazer as part of the school uniform. The P&C continued to provide financial support for the purchase of new picnic tables for the playground.

Successful P&C events were the Year 7 Welcome BBQ, Year 7/8 Disco and a Cybersafety workshop.

I would like to thank parents for their continued support and look forward to supporting the P&C in its initiatives in 2013.

Alice Magoffin, President, P&C

School Council message

Burwood GHS encourages students, staff, parents and community members to engage in the school’s decision-making process. Our School Council ensured all these groups were represented and had input into setting school priorities. The School Council met four times during 2012. The School Council has been very active in the ongoing discussions with Burwood Council as well as with the local Member over the use of school land for access and building of Wangal Park.

Council Members were involved in:

- Interview panels for the selection of staff
- Supporting school evaluation processes
- Identifying education needs
- Determining school aims and policies
- Preparing input for management plan
- Preparing surveys to assist planning
- Assessing the school’s budget/financial needs
- Identifying facilities improvements.

Tim Cunningham, Chairperson, School Council

Student representative message (SRC)
The SRC consisted of a group of students elected from Years 7-11 which met fortnightly to discuss ideas and concerns from the student body. Each year group identified ways of implementing ideas and managing concerns of the student body.

This year the SRC introduced a new presence online, creating a group on Facebook to which all the members were invited. Using social media was a most successful strategy to increase communication. Members received information efficiently, including reminders about their responsibilities. This forum was also used to make suggestions outside meeting times. It was an excellent strategy as everyone was aware of who they were working with and what they were working on. Projects included:

- Approaching the issue of cleanliness, care and conditions in the toilets. The SRC promoted student awareness of the impact of misuse of toilet facilities on the tasks of the cleaners. There was little progress but it would be a valuable project for future SRCs.

- Contributions made to our “Hands Across the Ocean” charity were a great achievement. Each year group fundraised for a different cause to aid disadvantaged people overseas. All projects were successfully completed.

The SRC was very enthusiastic and active, and students see it as a great leadership opportunity. Achievements for overseas causes were successful as well as our communication strategies. The students have many informed ideas about improving the school. We would encourage the SRC leaders in 2013 to provide more attention to issues within the school, as well as maintaining the SRC's passion for overseas aid.

Kristina Karatasas, Year 11 2012

**School context**

**Student information**

In February 2012, student enrolment was 1134 with 213 students entering Year 11 and 199 entering Year 12. Applications for enrolment continued to increase and an additional class was implemented in Year 9.
absenteeism. Letters were regularly sent when written explanation of absence was not received. Student reports contained an attendance profile each semester. The number of exemption requests for leave to travel overseas increased.

**Retention to Year 12**

Between 2010 SC and 2012 HSC, 83.5% student continued their studies at Burwood GHS compared to 63.4% statewide. Some students chose to enrol at selective or senior high schools.

**Post-school destinations**

- From our 2012 HSC cohort of 187 students, 80% (152) were offered university places.
- One student achieved an ATAR of 99.95 (equal 1st in NSW) and will study medicine.
- 12% students (23) achieved an ATAR of at least 95 and have enrolled in medicine, business, dentistry, actuarial studies, law, engineering and arts.
- 25% students (48) achieved an ATAR of at least 90 and some pursuing careers in performing arts and teaching.

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

One student was involved in a McDonalds traineeship undertaking Retail Services as part of her HSC pattern of studies.

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

Twenty-seven students studied VET Hospitality at the school. Ten students accessed VET courses through TAFE including Tourism, Financial Services and Information Technology. One student achieved a Regional VET Award.

**Staff information**

The teaching staff comprised of new scheme and experienced teachers who were well supported by an excellent administration team, two learning support officers and two general assistants.
Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers Adviser</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band Coordinator (school funded)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifted and Talented Coordinator</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>96.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were no Indigenous members of staff.

Staff retention

The retention rate from 2011 to 2012 was 95%. There were four retirements.

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>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Financial summary

**Date of financial summary** 30/11/2012

**Income**
- Balance brought forward 152583.86
- Global funds 645724.85
- Tied funds 264301.56
- School & community sources 1170796.18
- Interest 21345.59
- Trust receipts 106199.68
- Canteen (leased) 28080.00
- Total income 2389031.72

**Expenditure**

- Teaching & learning: 233940.42
  - Key learning areas
  - Excursions 351514.90
  - Extracurricular dissections 190130.72
- Library 21633.66
- Training & development 777.81
- Tied funds 240344.43
- Casual relief teachers 125824.99
- Administration & office 279018.49
- School-operated canteen 0.00
- Utilities 178985.03
- Maintenance 40640.70
- Trust accounts 97857.77
- Capital programs 0.00
- Total expenditure 1760668.92

**Balance carried forward** 628362.80

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

A full copy of the school’s 2012 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and P&C.

School performance 2012

Achievements

Arts

The school continued to provide a range of opportunities that targeted talented students in a diverse range of disciplines. School assemblies provided opportunities for students to showcase skills by staging individual or ensemble performances. Assemblies recognised student achievement with the presentation of awards. Variety Night was held in Term 2 and featured dance, drama and music classes as well as dance items featured on International Day. Variety Night continued to be the most well supported
performing arts evening at the school with 24 items involving 176 students.

The visual arts faculty produced the Dragon Mural project, a magnificent six metre long tiled mural where each Year 8 student developed a personalised tile design. The dragon’s body was made up of over 130 of these tiles. The features of the dragon were made in clay after school by a group of gifted and talented Year 8 students. The project was not only a great way to create an enduring memory of students’ art experiences but also enhanced student understanding of Asian literacy through their study, research and presentations on a range of Asian cultures.

The Year 12 Visual Arts Exhibition was a highlight with a wide diversity of concepts and media. A student’s digital animation was selected for the Robin Anderson Film Awards and screened at the Dendy, Opera Quays.

Year 11 visual arts students participated in the National Art School's HSC Extension Course in Studio Practice. Year 10 works were exhibited in the World’s Biggest Classroom Exhibition. These included wearable artworks exhibited at Burwood Westfield as well as life size cellotape figures which were suspended from the ceiling in the foyer of the Entertainment Centre for the Schools Spectacular. Student works were printed on posters and coasters for Burwood Council’s promotional material for White Ribbon Day. Posters were exhibited to promote the Proud Schools Project. Year 9 Photographic and Digital Media students participated in the Curating Cities Project for the City of Sydney and their work was exhibited in Burwood Park.

In the performing arts, both Camerata Strings Ensemble and String Ensemble continued to expand, and contributed excellent performances to the annual Variety Night, Blue and Gold Assemblies and Presentation Day. The newly formed String Quartet was especially outstanding and invited to perform at the Curriculum and Learning Innovation Centre’s Partnership Forum and at the Sydney Morning Herald’s Young Writers Awards.

Burwood GHS was strongly represented at regional and state levels through The Arts Unit and Sydney Region. These included a strong contingent of students in the Arts Unit Symphony Orchestra, Arts Unit String Sinfonia, NSW Junior Singers and Schools Spectacular choristers. Students were also selected for Sydney Region Orchestra, and participated in music camps and concerts at the Opera House.
Dance had a successful year for elective classes, ensembles and the dance company. Students performed at the Sydney Region Dance Festival, Schools Spectacular and the annual Dance Showcase. This was another huge success where all elective dance classes, ensembles, troupes and companies worked collaboratively to perform a range of dance works based on the theme "Stop. Rewind. Fast Forward". Students participated in the HSC Callback workshop and viewed many of the exemplary student works from around the state in Performance, Composition and Appreciation. A New York Tour was planned for 2013 and students worked exceptionally hard to produce performance items and fundraised for the trip.

HSC Drama and Elective Drama Showcase evenings were held in Semester 2. This allowed parents and friends to see a range of performance skills such as group devised works, individual monologues and performance installation works. Four Year 11 students attended the State Drama Camp and then conducted skills workshops for their peers.

The third annual Anne Beams Writers Awards included 88 student nominees from three categories: Junior, Intermediate, Senior Writer of the Year, as well as the Anne Beams Writer of the Year. Students were also nominated for ESL writers of the year in each category.

Students from Years 7-10 were involved in the Premier’s Challenge Debating competition. Students were also able to attend debating workshops and four coaching days were offered by the school for the first time.

**Sport**

Burwood GHS continued to dominate in all areas of sport in 2012. There were many successes at zone, regional and state levels. We were again the Northern Suburbs Zone Overall Girls Champion School. This was due to our swimming, cross country and athletics teams gaining first place in the zone competitions.
There were 311 entries for zone competitions, 91 at regional level, 17 students competed at state level with two at national level.

In both summer and winter grade sport competitions, our performance was outstanding. The winning teams were the juniors (14’s) netball, European handball and football (soccer). In the 15’s competition, the netball team won with touch football, soccer and volleyball teams runners up. In the opens competition soccer won, with netball, softball and volleyball runners up. The basketball teams made the semi-finals.

The school was represented at the following knockout regional competitions: basketball, netball, softball, touch football, water polo, football, indoor soccer and volleyball. The 15’s netball team was placed 8th in the region.

Sports that students were selected to play in a state competition or a national team were: diving, equestrian, athletics (12 years relay), basketball, cross country, gymnastics, hockey, table tennis, trampolining and swimming (butterfly and freestyle relay).

The school performed well in soccer. The opens indoor soccer team competed at the State Futsal Championships and made it into the finals as did the Under 14’s. The opens team was 2012 runner up State Futsal Champion and the knockout soccer team was the Sydney North Regional runner up for 2012.

Zone Sport Gala Day for Year 7 in Term 3 was a wonderful success with 152 students participating in netball, soccer or volleyball. Year 9 students trained and coached the Year 7 teams which helped to strengthen the school sporting spirit.

A Year 10 student received a Combined High Schools Sporting Blue award for her outstanding efforts in diving.

A Year 12 student received a Sydney North Regional Sporting Blue award for basketball.

Science and Engineering Challenge

Year 9 Science students participated in the Newcastle University Ausgrid Science and Engineering Challenge in 2012. Our team of 40 Year 9 students was southern NSW finalist and Burwood GHS was the only comprehensive girls
high school represented as all other finalist teams were Year 10 students from selective schools.

The Scientist in Schools Program was initiated to create partnerships between practising scientists, teachers and students. In 2012, a number of partnerships were formed and students were able to benefit from visiting scientists who presented hands-on science demonstrations, gave insights into current research and discussed careers in science.

**Rags to Riches**

The *Rags to Riches* workshops and the final fashion parade were a joint initiative with Burwood Council. Textiles and Design students were mentored for nine weeks by fashion designer Rachael Cassar who inspired students to recycle existing fashion pieces and textile items to produce new masterpieces.

The *Rags to Riches* fashion parade was spectacular and showcased upcycling, recycling, restyling and revamping. It highlighted the creative ability of the students involved.

**Burwood GHS Ensemble Program (BEP)**

This program consisted of three concert bands, a contemporary choir (*The Musettes*), a percussion ensemble, a flute ensemble (*The Fluteloops*), a clarinet ensemble, a brass ensemble, a young community band for local primary students of the Inner West Program and six rock bands. There was a busy program of private instrumental and vocal lessons. Several small chamber groups were formed on an “as needed” basis for school and DEC events, Burwood Council citizenship ceremonies and celebrations. The Ensemble Program continued a busy year of performances for local community events such as Burwood Council ceremonies for Australia Day and citizenship, Burwood, Ashfield and Croydon Park RSL ceremonies and ANZAC marches. Our own fundraising concerts “Big Night Out”, “A Little Night Music” and many ongoing community and school events were successful. The Inner West Band Festival provided a forum for local ensembles to play as well as a collegial exchange between their conductors. The Senior Concert Band toured Bingara and the Intermediate Concert Band travelled to Mogo, providing workshops and concerts for those communities.

BEP was supported financially by fees from members, school sponsorship of the Director position, Burwood Council, Wests Ashfield, Burwood RSL, Optimum Percussion, Logans Music and Sax and Woodwind.

For 12 years, BEP had a productive relationship with Burwood Council and our bands functioned as the community band. In return the council sponsored the BEP, $6000 each year. Performances included Senior Citizens week, citizenship ceremonies, Enfield Australia Day ceremony, ANZAC Day marches and ceremonies, Sandakan Memorial, Burwood Festival and the Mayor’s Christmas Party. The council decided to cease this arrangement. However we are
committed to supporting the community in any way we can. Achievements in 2012 included:

- The brass ensemble established as a successful group
- The chamber music program consolidated and provided high level music ensemble education
- Instruments were thoroughly inspected, serviced and listed
- $7000 was spent on repair and maintenance of instruments
- Inclusion of BEP program on the school website contributed significantly to improved communication with parents
- Improved participation rates for lower pitched instruments and saxophones
- The purchase of trolley and 25 new stands.

**Academic**

In the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), the results across Years 7 and 9 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.

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7**

In literacy, 39% Year 7 students gained a Band 8 or 9 in reading (29% statewide), 37% in writing (19% statewide), 58% in spelling (34% statewide) and 42% in grammar and punctuation (29% statewide).
In response to results in writing, the school spent Term 4 developing a Stage 3/4 Focus on Writing program to implement in the Inner West Learning Community Project for 2013.

**Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7**

In numeracy, 47% Year 7 students gained Bands 8 and 9 compared with 18% statewide. Few students were in the lower bands.

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9**

Our Year 9 students achieved better than the state in Bands 9 and 10 in all literacy areas. 34% in reading (21% statewide), 35% in writing (16% statewide), 49% in spelling (26% statewide) and 30% in grammar and punctuation (21% statewide).
In numeracy, 40% students gained Bands 9 and 10 compared to 25% statewide. Few students were in the lower bands compared to the state.

**Progress in literacy and numeracy**

Progress in both literacy and numeracy has been significant. Growth in the top bands is significantly better than the growth in the top bands statewide in all areas. In particular, improving numeracy results in the top bands can
be attributed to the introduction of the Agnesi and extension programs.

Minimum standards

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

The performance of the students in our school in NAPLAN is compared to these minimum standards. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these standards are reported below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 7 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students excluded)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Numeracy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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*.

Higher School Certificate

In 2012, the school was successful in value adding for all students. The value-added for students in the low group was 2.8, in the middle group 9.3 and for the high group 6.4. By definition, the state average relative performance is zero so we can be very pleased with the relative performance of students in the 2012 HSC.

ESSA

Students in Year 8 sat for the Essential Secondary Science Assessment Online Test. Students performed above state average with 76% students achieving in the top three levels compared to state average 59%.
In English as a Second Language, 41% students achieved results in the top two bands compared to 25% in the state.

In Standard English, 48% students achieved results in the top two bands compared to 16% in the state.

In Advanced English, 84% students achieved results in the top two bands compared to 54% in the state.
In Extension 1, 100% students achieved results in the top two bands compared to 87% in the state. The school continued to achieve outstanding results in this course.

In Extension 2, 50% students achieved the top two bands compared to 78% statewide.

Six students completed the English Studies course for the first time in 2012.

In Drama, 60% students achieved results in the Bands 5/6 compared to 44% in the state.

Mathematics

In General Mathematics, 61% students achieved results in Band 4 or higher compared to 51% statewide.

In Mathematics, 69% students achieved Band 5/6 compared to 52% statewide.

In Mathematics Extension 1, 81% students achieved results in the top two bands with 32% students achieving the top band.

In Mathematics Extension 2, 95% students achieved results in the top two bands compared to 88% statewide.

Science

In Biology, 35% students achieved Band 5/6 compared to 26% statewide.

In Chemistry, 48% students achieved Band 5/6 compared to 42% statewide.

In Physics, 37% students achieved Band 5/6 compared to 34% statewide.

In Senior Science, 62% students achieved Band 5/6 compared to 40% statewide.

History

In Ancient History, 28% students achieved results in the top two bands compared to 26% in the state.

In Modern History, 65% students achieved results in the top two bands compared to 46% in the state.

In History Extension, 50% students achieved a result in the second top band compared to 47% statewide.

In Studies of Religion 1 Unit, 90% students achieved a result in the top band compared to 42% in the state.

In Studies of Religion 2 Unit, 42% students achieved results in the top two bands compared to 41% in the state.

Social Sciences

In Legal Studies, 55% students achieved Band 5/6 compared to 40% statewide.

In Society and Culture, 27% students achieved Band 6 compared to 14% statewide. One student came 7th in the state.

In Business Studies, 13% students achieved Band 6 compared to 8% statewide.

In Economics, 40% students achieved Band 5/6 compared to 48% statewide.

Languages

Results were significantly above state average in all Background Speakers, Heritage, Continuers and Beginners courses with outstanding results in Chinese Heritage, French Continuers, Italian and Japanese Beginners. Students presented in five languages in ten different courses. Eleven students studied languages externally via the Open High School and the Saturday School of Community Languages (SSCL).

In Chinese Background Speakers, 86% students gained a Band 5/6 compared to the state average of 65%.

In Chinese Heritage, 100% students gained a Band 6 compared to 35% statewide. Two students gained 1st and 2nd place in the state.

In French Continuers, 88% students gained a Band 5/6 compared to 64% statewide.

In French Extension, 100% students achieved top two bands compared to 91% statewide.

In Indonesian Continuers, 100% students gained a Band 5/6 compared to 55% statewide.

In Indonesian Extension, all three students gained a Band E3.

In Italian Beginners, 72% students gained a Band 5/6 compared to 33% statewide.

In Italian Continuers, 64% students gained a Band 5/6 compared to 52% statewide.

In Japanese Beginners, 59% students gained a Band 5/6 compared to 41% statewide. One student was placed 2nd in the state.
• One student studying French Beginners externally was placed 4th in the state.

Creative Arts
• In Visual Arts, 74% students achieved Bands 5/6 compared to 54% statewide.
• In Music 1, 80% students achieved Band 5/6 compared to 58% in the state.
• In Music 2, 50% students were placed in the top band compared to 34% in the state.
• In Music Extension, all students were placed in the top two bands.

TAS
• In Textiles and Design, 56% students achieved Bands 5/6 compared to 46% in the state.
• In Hospitality, 36% students achieved Band 5/6 in the examination, compared to 28% in the state.

PDHPE
• In PDHPE, 10% students achieved Band 6 compared to 7% statewide.
• In Dance, 75% students achieved Band 5/4 compared to 60% statewide.
• In Community and Family Studies, 13% achieved Band 6 compared to 8% statewide.

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

Strong partnerships were formed with Aboriginal communities and competencies in Aboriginal cultures were developed. At our International Day all students engaged in a lesson focused on the Close the Gap campaign to support Indigenous Australians. During these lessons students learnt words for a traditional indigenous song Innanay which they sang at our International Day assembly led by a group of senior Tidda Girls. An Indigenous Year 7 student and her grandmother participated in the Close the Gap lessons.

To celebrate National Reconciliation Week, Indigenous author Boori (Monty) Pryor visited as well as the Honoroble Linda Burney MP who shared her story with us. Linda spoke about the three hands of support – truth, equity and justice, in aiding the reconciliation process.

We celebrated Indigenous Literacy Day in September by selling friendship bracelets, ribbons and badges made by Year 8 students. The students raised $225 for the Indigenous Literacy Foundation. An Indigenous student participated in the Nura Gili Science and Engineering program sponsored by UNSW.

The highlight of NAIDOC Week celebrations was the annual school assembly where the Beatty Clan Crew performed on stage and demonstrated a variety of Torres Strait Islander songs and dances. Students were invited to join in dancing, singing and rhythmic clapping. Richly symbolic and colourful in action and meaning, the NAIDOC Assembly program proved a great success in fostering understanding and respect for the culture of our First Australians.

Respect and responsibility

International Women’s Day (IWD), ANZAC Day, Harmony Day, Close the Gap and NAIDOC Week are all national celebrations that were recognised and incorporated into school culture at Burwood GHS through special performances. The school continued to develop awareness of global issues with special guest speakers and students addressing school assemblies.
Human trafficking of women and girls was a special focus of IWD led by a Year 12 student. Considerable funds were raised to support organisations working to overcome these atrocities. Students were encouraged to take responsibility in initiating change and in working towards a more equitable society for all. Opportunities for active citizenship were provided for students through SRC meetings and assemblies chaired by prefects. These assemblies provided a forum to promote various “Hands Across the Ocean” charity fundraisers and local causes such as Shave for a Cure, Breast Cancer Awareness, ACON Red Ribbon sales, White Ribbon Day, MS research and Wear It Purple Day.

The Duke of Edinburgh Scheme involved 47 students including eight gold awardees.

The Tiddas Girls promoted awareness of indigenous Australians, the Leos group met regularly and the Environment Committee continued its campaign for a sustainable clean environment. The band program was involved in the local community, performing at many functions such as Australia Day Citizenship ceremonies, Seniors Week and Anzac Day.

A new group, True Colours, was established to foster a positive and secure learning environment for students. Burwood GHS was nominated to be involved in this Proud Schools pilot program.

We continued to promote the core values of the school, including respect and responsibility, as an essential aspect of education. These values were a focus of our Welfare STARR days, developing mutual respect and responsible behaviour regarding drugs and alcohol as well as positive peer relationships. We also encouraged parental participation in their daughters’ education.

Proud Schools

Burwood GHS was one of 12 schools in NSW selected for involvement in an anti-homophobia pilot project called Proud Schools, as we were identified as a school which is supportive of diversity. Research indicates that same sex attracted and gender questioning young people experience homophobic abuse at school and that there are negative impacts of homophobia on education, health and wellbeing.

Whilst the school aimed to continue the good work achieved in terms of anti-homophobia, it became apparent that the Proud Schools team had many new ideas and structures to
Successful strategies raised awareness and truly celebrated diversity within our school community. The anti-bullying and harassment policy now includes an explicit message about anti-homophobia.

A True Colours support group for teachers and students was established and raised awareness of social justice issues in our school community. The student body sang ‘True Colours’ in an assembly and were invited to contribute to our True Colours mural in the playground. Year 9 Visual Art students engaged in a Proud Schools design project. Posters were displayed around the school conveying positive messages and information about useful resources in the library.

Our Proud Schools team met regularly to initiate ideas, plan and implement strategies. We provided open and transparent communication within the school community including assemblies, True Colours group activities as well as reports to P&C and School Council meetings. For Wear it Purple day, 90% staff and many students wore purple which was a positive sign of support for the project.

Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officers from Ashfield and Burwood Police attended Wear it Purple day and presented a Year 9 Wellbeing workshop on anti-homophobia and being safe in our community. All staff attended a professional learning workshop presented by a researcher from University of Western Sydney.

**Multicultural education**

We have a large and culturally diverse population. The percentage of students from language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE) was 68% and represented 73 different language groups. Burwood GHS had 40% LBOTE staff. In addition to the six languages offered, 11 students studied other languages at the Open High School including German, Korean and Modern Greek. Thirty-six students studied their background languages at the Saturday School of Community Languages.

Multicultural education is embedded in the curriculum and the Year 7 Asia Literacy program brought an Asia focus to languages, visual arts, TAS and English. Multicultural awareness and understanding is the very essence of courses such as languages, international studies, society and culture and studies of religion. Students participated in excursions to the Nan Tien Temple, Bangara Dance Company, Korean Education Centre, Chinese Gardens and the Italian Forum. Cultural awareness programs were supported in school by visits from the Korean, Indian and Indonesian Consulates and a French theatre group. Speakers at our assemblies addressed issues on Asia, Africa and the Pacific.

Excursions to Bali and Samoa provided staff and students with valuable cultural experiences to enhance learning. The school hosted exchange students from Norway, Finland and France and our students participated in exchange programs to France, Italy and Japan. Our school was a regular destination for visits by overseas
delegations to observe and discuss quality teaching and learning. In 2012, educator groups from China, Japan, Kuwait and Thailand visited the school and our students acted as interpreters and guides. We welcomed 78 students from our sister school in Nanjing.

At our annual International and Harmony Day, students dressed in clothes from their own or an “adopted” cultural background while others chose to dress in orange, the colour for Harmony Day. The formal concert included student speakers outlining ‘Hands Across the Ocean’ programs, multicultural fashion parade, and a lively performance by a street theatre group from the USA. Forty-five SRC students coordinated 26 different food stalls and parents joined us for a multicultural feast. The afternoon concert involved a wide range of performances from our diverse cultural groups in the school. Funds raised were used to support our school’s Hands Across the Ocean charities.

We are proud of the cultural harmony binding our students into a strong and proud multicultural community, which contributes to a positive and inclusive school culture.

“Hands Across the Ocean” charities

Burwood GHS continued to live up to the school motto “Not For Ourselves Alone” and raised over $8000 for overseas charities which provided better healthcare, education and employment opportunities for women and children. Our donations included:

- $1000 to the Jodie O’Shea orphanage in Bali.
- Reading books, text books and resources were taken to Samoa in July by Society and Culture students and presented to Tuasivi College and the Loto Taumafai School for children with special learning needs.
- $1500 was donated to i-India vocational education centre for girls in Jaipur, India.
- $500 was donated to a school for Burmese refugees on the Thai border, following an address on International Day by an ex-student who worked there as a volunteer.
- $750 to Project Futures, a Sydney based charity that helps to stop the trafficking of young women across Asia into the sex trade.
- $400 donation to Fred Hollows Foundation.
- $400 to Osu Children’s Home in Ghana.
- $500 to a program in Zambia which educates grandparents in modern parenting skills as they are becoming the prime carers when parents have died from AIDS.
- $400 to Médecins Sans Frontières.

**Inner West Learning Community (IWLC)**

Our school, along with Croydon and Summer Hill Public Schools received $16500 funding for the establishment of the Inner West network of schools. The project aimed to develop a shared vision to build capacity and enhance pedagogy in the middle years of schooling (Years 5-8). The 2011 Annual School Reports for each school indicated a shared need to improve teacher quality, literacy skills and student engagement and attainment.

Each school established IWLC teams which worked collaboratively and shared expertise across Stages 3 and 4 to improve student transition, learning and empowerment in the middle years. Teachers were engaged in ongoing professional learning involving reflective and evidence based practice. In Term 4 we conducted
a writing project across the three schools and identified explicit writing skills to develop with our students. In 2013, we aim to implement a consistent middle school pedagogy embedded across the community of schools to improve student engagement and attainment. We hope to develop teacher confidence in using explicit targeted literacy learning strategies to meet individual student needs.

Student leadership

Encouraging and promoting student leadership continued to be a strong feature of our school.

Eight sports house captains led their teams at the swimming and athletics carnivals. Our band leaders, Concert Mistress and Head Girl Music ensured the smooth operation of rehearsals and performances. School musicians tutored primary students. When special overseas delegations visited the school, our students accepted roles of interpreters, guides and hosts with great ease. Fifty big sisters guided Year 7 students in their transition to high school. The Environment Committee, SRC and prefects were key groups fostering teamwork, leadership, cooperation and negotiation skills.

The Environment Committee’s major project raised $3000 to buy a chilled, filtered water fountain to reduce reliance on bottled water. Other programs included environmental conferences, student workshops, improved recycling, fundraising and video production to raise awareness of issues such as litter.

Twenty-five students from Years 11/12 were elected by staff and students to the prefect body, including three captains, to lead the prefects in chairing assemblies, hosting school events, representing the school, and taking on special responsibilities such as orientation tours for new students and the Years 7/8 Disco. A prefect initiative in 2012 was the introduction of a traffic roster where prefects, assisted by executive staff, supervised pedestrian crossings after school.

The SRC was a strong group of 50 students elected by peers as year representatives who met fortnightly. There were many opportunities to develop teamwork and leadership skills. Our spectacular International Day was the highlight of the SRC calendar with each member playing a role in leading cultural or performance groups to ensure the day’s success.

Representatives from Year 9 participated in zone and regional meetings and three Year 11 representatives were effective members of the School Council. Year 10 students were responsible for our annual International Women’s Day Assembly. SRC members attended a range of leadership conferences throughout the year. Each year cohort continued our “Hands Across the Ocean” projects with fundraising activities for their nominated charity.
Student wellbeing and welfare

The transition program for Year 7 continued to be successful. The Year 11 Big Sisters mentoring program engaged the Year 7 students in a series of workshops and fun activities which included sessions on the school’s Core Values and the school’s Anti-bullying and Harassment policy, interactive activities and a welcome barbeque. The Year 7 and Year 9 camps enabled students to engage in team building and personally challenging activities.

Welfare STARR days for Years 7-11 provided interactive and informative sessions relevant to each cohort such as special workshops on bullying, developing positive relationships, self-esteem, safe partying, drugs and alcohol and their impact, at risk behaviours and consequences and the Crossroads program. Special workshops on Cyberbullying presented by the local Police Liaison Officer were organised for Years 7-10. The Year 12 STARR day successfully provided workshops on study skills, time management and managing stress.

The school participated in the Proud Schools pilot program to support the needs of rainbow youth and respect the diversity of students in the school. The Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy was reviewed to include a statement of the right of all students to be supported in an inclusive and respectful environment.

A youth worker was appointed for 20 hours per week for school support, providing case management for identified students. She organised and delivered the program “To the Core” for students at risk or disengaging from school.

A Korean Community Liaison Officer was appointed to improve communication with parents of our Korean students.

The international students program and policy was reviewed and improved.

The peer mediation program trained Year 10 and Year 11 students in the resolution of peer conflict and dealt with issues effectively.

Gifted and Talented program (GAT)

In 2012, the GAT program expanded with involvement of 24 students from Year 7, 16 students from Year 8 and 6 students from Year 9. Students continued to be involved with pursuing rich tasks and investigations nominated by them.
Evaluations of their learning were shared with parents and peers at special workshops.

Many faculties were involved in ensuring talented students had opportunities to develop their special interests and talents. In particular, the mathematics faculty’s Accelerated Learning Program continued successfully in 2012, with over 100 students participating across Years 7 to 11. The first group of Year 11 students completed the HSC Mathematics Course to achieve strong results. Of the 21 students who participated, all students achieved results in the top two bands and 62% gained a Band 6. The mathematics faculty also initiated the Agnesi Program for Year 7 students where 25 students were accelerated in their mixed ability classes with individual learning contracts and teacher support.

**Progress on 2012 targets**

**Target 1: Leadership and Management**

Our achievements include:
- Implementation of middle school and senior school teams to improve student wellbeing
- Development of strategies to ensure success of middle school teachers
- Consistent process for teacher assessment
- Opportunities for developing leadership skills for both students and staff
- Teacher training on use of student data.

**Target 2: Curriculum and Assessment**

Our achievements include:
- Implementation of improved assessment and reporting of student outcomes
- Observations of teaching practice and sharing teaching strategies among all staff
- Quality teaching and learning framework (QTLF) embedded into our school culture
- Technology innovation in teaching and learning.

**Target 3: Engagement and Attainment**

Our achievements include:
- Staff using data for informed decisions about differentiated learning
- Innovative programs, structures and roles to meet student needs
- Increased parental and community participation in school events.

**Target 4: Literacy and Numeracy**

Our achievements include:
- Improved growth in numeracy and literacy
- Meeting our targets
- Early and effective intervention for students with learning difficulties
- Development of writing skills (IWLC).
School evaluations

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. In 2012 our school carried out evaluations of DER laptops and Special Religious Education (SRE).

DER laptop program

Background

DER laptops were introduced into NSW schools in 2009. Since then our school has implemented a comprehensive professional development program to support the integration of technology into teaching and learning. The DER laptop program has delivered laptops to every student in Years 9–12. It was necessary to develop a range of professional development initiatives to support both teachers and students.

Findings

- An online staff survey was conducted at the beginning of the DER program to gather data regarding current teacher attitudes, skills and goals in relation to Information Communication Technologies (ICT). From these findings, faculty professional learning targets were developed to meet the needs of teachers.
- School Development Days were organised to focus on ICT and quality teaching and learning. Staff members were involved in a series of cross-faculty workshops to share practices and discuss innovation and the use of technology in faculty programs.
- A Moodle site was developed as an online learning platform for all classes to access. Some functions of Moodle included assignment submissions, upload of classroom files for students to access, discussion forums, self-paced learning and quizzes.
- Teacher technology experts were identified and they facilitated lunchtime and after school professional learning sessions for staff on software such as OneNote and the use of Moodle.
- The Teacher Librarian developed a library Moodle site to support faculty needs for Information Learning Literacies.
- The school applied to be involved in the Sydney Region DER Action Learning Research Project and the English, PDHPE, science and history faculties participated. The science and PDHPE faculties, along with students, presented their projects at the state and regional ICT conferences. Burwood GHS was recognised as a lighthouse school in ICT.
- Students presented a workshop to teachers to showcase their DER work and answer questions about students’ perspectives on learning with laptops.
- The school has a coordinated approach to the introduction of laptops for Year 9 classes. Introductory workshops are implemented for Year 9 which included the setting up OneNote, storing information and effective research tools. These were designed by an expert teacher and led by a range of staff to develop teacher capacity in the school.
- A Year 9 Field Study Day was held during the year to ensure the students developed expertise in a range of the laptop software applications.

Conclusions

The evaluation of the DER program at our school has found that students had enhanced learning outcomes. There was an improvement in programming and planning using the QTLF and technology. There was increased evidence of differentiation in the mixed ability classroom and
there was improvement in how students are perceived as learners.

**Special Religious Education (SRE)**

**Background**

Provision of special religious education is a requirement of the Education Act 1990. Historically, Burwood GHS has made provisions for religious groups to access students during the long recess on Tuesdays. In 2011 we introduced SRE seminars for students in Years 7-10 once per term and these continued in 2012.

Following a proposal by a local scripture board, Inner West Scripture Team Christian Education Association, we began a trial of formalised SRE classes in Year 7. The Scripture Board funded and appointed an SRE teacher to present timetabled lessons each week.

Students who did not elect to attend SRE classes were engaged in supervised private study. Weekly SRE classes were 40 minutes in duration and in Term 1, SRE classes were held during the first half of each lesson. In Terms 2 and 3, SRE classes were held during the second half of each lesson. Students rotated through different subjects including English, maths, science, PE, history and language.

There were 37 students who attended SRE classes, which represented 24% of the cohort.

**Findings and conclusions**

In a survey of students who participated in the SRE classes the following was found:

- 39% students enjoyed learning about religion
- 27% preferred not to miss out on class work while attending SRE lessons

In a survey of students who did not participate in the SRE classes the following reasons were given:

- 39% did not want to miss out on regular lessons being taught
- 21% students were a different religion
- 20% students gave ‘other’ as a reason
- 18% didn’t attend scripture in primary school
- 8% students reported parents would not allow them to attend SRE lessons
- 8% reported that none of their friends attend.

Students surveyed indicated that if offered an alternative to SRE they expressed interest in the following: 4% Islam, 16% Buddhism, 2% Hinduism, 11% Ethics, 21% Catholic, 9% Protestant, 6% Orthodox and 28% Other.

Year 7 students were asked their preferences for attending SRE classes in Year 8. Their responses were:

- 54% were unsure about attending
- 40% would not attend
- 6% would definitely attend

The religious seminars held each term had the following attendance rates: in Term 1, 196 students (28%), Term 2, 143 students (20%), Term 3, 181 students (26%) and Term 4, 170 students (24%).

**Future directions**

- To reduce disruption to classes, Year 7 students will have the option of attending a timetabled SRE lesson fortnightly in 2013.
- Formal evaluation of the trial SRE program will be completed in Semester 2 next year.

**Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction**

In 2012 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their responses are presented below.

**Parents**
Year 7 and 8 parents were surveyed about their daughter’s transition to high school and 85% parents felt that the school’s transition process had been effective. However, 15% felt there could have been more feedback other than written reports and parent/teacher nights. Other strategies to improve communication will be considered for 2013.

There was 36% parents with students in the middle school who indicated a desire to access online current research on young adolescents and their learning needs. We also received a positive number of parents who would like online support in the following areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of online support</th>
<th>Year 7 Parents</th>
<th>Year 8 Parents</th>
<th>Year 9 Parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asking questions about learning</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing independence</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework and study skills</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy skills</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy skills</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following the introduction of a Year 7 Asian Literacy focus in 2011, 78% parents stated their daughter enjoyed this focus in Languages, Visual Arts and Technology classes.

Parents reported their daughters did not see the Careers Adviser. Analysis indicated that 55% Year 10, 62% Year 11 and 71% Year 12 students did not access the Careers Adviser in Semester 1. Additionally, 68% parents of Year 10 students requested more support in the Year 11 subject selection process.

Students

Student satisfaction was strong and there was a willingness to lead, coordinate and participate in a range of school events.

Students in Years 7 to 9 participated in a statewide research project for the DEC on middle year learners. The following graphs represent sample answers gathered from our students:

The following graphs represent sample answers gathered from our students:

13. We learn by doing problem solving activities (individually or with others).

5. I get to do a lot of ‘hands on’ learning.

27. My teachers provide good feedback to me on my work that helps me know how to improve.

Students enjoyed their learning. Opportunities for problem solving, ‘hands on’ activities as well as good feedback from teachers, were valued by students.
Teachers need to focus more on differentiated learning as 33% Year 9 students felt they rarely worked at their own pace and level. Students feel they are successful learners as 65% Year 7, 86% Year 8 and 80% Year 9 students reported this in the survey. A high proportion of students felt they had a real say in what happened in our school.

Many HSC courses require students to manage a major project or performance prior to the HSC exams. This can create great stress for students who have to juggle completion of these projects as well as prepare for the Trial HSC exams. Year 12 students were surveyed on how they managed their subject commitments and whether they would prefer the Trial HSC examination period changed. The findings were as follows:

- 47% Year 12 students had at least one major work to submit or perform for the HSC.
- When given the option of moving the exam period, 61% students without major works and 46% students with at least one major work preferred the exam period to remain in Weeks 4/5 in Term 3 and not an earlier date.

**Teachers**

Establishment of professional support teams (PST) was widely seen as a positive initiative in developing quality teaching practice in the school. The teams approach using faculty pairings was seen as a good model, allowing for both faculty specific and cross faculty sharing of ideas. Feedback was very positive and supportive, as PSTs provided opportunity for constructive appraisal and reflection of teaching practice.

**Professional learning**

In 2012 the focus on school-based professional learning using the expertise of teachers and students within our school community continued.

Our executive conference, ‘Make Waves’, set the agenda for the year and focused on the benefits and challenges of ‘making waves’ in an organisation to facilitate effective change. We focused on executive leadership for the introduction of the Australian curriculum in 2014, school practices, literacy continuum 7-10, analysis of student learning outcomes and quality teaching and learning to meet student needs.

Planned quality professional learning occurred at five school development days:

- In Term 1, the focus was school priorities and procedures, student achievement in the HSC, occupational health and safety and learning support for Year 7 students.
In Term 2, our focus was again on Quality Teaching and Learning at Burwood GHS. Teachers participated in workshops on:

- differentiating lessons to meet all student learning needs;
- backward mapping relating to programming, teaching and assessment;
- how to give students quality feedback about their learning;
- using the QTLF to code assessment tasks, work samples and lessons;
- programming ideas for quality teaching and learning;
- technology innovation in classrooms;
- Asian literacy project;
- Proud Schools project and initiatives;
- the literacy continuum 7-10.

In Term 3, we piloted a single focus day on establishing professional support teams and observation models for lessons analysis based on the QTLF.

In Term 4, teachers collaborated by sharing knowledge of students with 2013 teachers and using Smart data in planning for the 2013 classes. The ‘hand-over’ process was seen as highly successful and teachers valued input from their colleagues.

Burwood GHS was invited to participate in the development of a statewide Literacy Continuum 7-10. The four faculties who participated in this project were English, Mathematics, History and Science. Learning activities were developed incorporating strategies for developing student literacy skills. These were shared with teachers across the state when the Literacy Continuum 7-10 was released to NSW schools in December.

Teachers also accessed courses provided by DEC and Professional Teachers’ Associations.

The average expenditure per teacher on professional learning was $681 in 2012. We spent 51% of our professional learning funding on quality teaching and syllabus implementation and 30% for welfare and equity programs.
School priority 2
Curriculum and assessment
Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Strategic planning implementation of NSW syllabuses for the Australian curriculum.
- Review assessment policy and procedures.
- Embed QTLF into school culture.
- Continue effective use of technology.
- Develop unified executive team to plan for teacher assessment and teacher effectiveness.

School priority 3
Engagement and attainment
Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Teachers train in use of data for informed decisions.
- Access and implement successful programs for disengaged students.
- Monitor appropriate use of resources and regular review of integration funding.

School priority 4
Literacy and numeracy
Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Early identification and intervention for students in lower group in literacy and numeracy.
- All teachers to take responsibility for developing literacy strategies in classrooms.
- Focus on grammar and punctuation for Years 7/8 and improved writing skills.

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.

Robert Brett, Community Representative
Elaine Browne, Manager, P&C Uniform Shop
Tim Cunningham, President, School Council
Katerina Frolov, Student Representative
Perry Kritselas, Parent Representative
Mia Kumar, Principal
Tara Lau, Student Representative
Janina Longman, Deputy Principal
Alice Magoffin, President, P&C
Leanne McKee, Parent Representative
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Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at: http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/asr