Rutherford Technology High School
Annual School Report 2014
School context statement

Rutherford Technology High School is an important member of the Rutherford Community of Schools. The school has enrolments of 1099 students, including 131 Aboriginal students. Rutherford Technology High School draws its students from rural, urban and mining communities. It is located within the fastest growing government area in New South Wales. Positive Behaviour for Learning underpins student wellbeing with our expectations for the school community being respect, responsibility and commitment. The school demonstrates great leadership in literacy and numeracy, the creative and performing arts, sport, agriculture and Aboriginal education. The school’s strategic directions focus on innovative and relevant teaching and learning, wellbeing and creating productive partnerships. Our highly dedicated, committed staff are instrumental in providing quality education for all students. The school benefits from a dedicated and active School Parents and Citizens’ Association.

Principal’s message

2014 has been another remarkable year for the school with outstanding success in the academic as well as sporting, cultural and environmental fields.

In the English, Mathematics, Science and HSIE departments it has been a year of programming, planning and development of units of work and for the National Curriculum, creating opportunity for our staff not only to understand the content changes of the new curriculum, but more significantly, reflect on their pedagogy and teaching strategies, and to expand their thinking on innovative and flexible approaches to curriculum delivery in these new courses.

The P&C and Canteen Committee have provided overwhelming support of our students and the school in 2014. These parent bodies provided financial assistance for resources and equipment which has significantly enhanced teaching and learning opportunities in the classroom.

A change to our commendation system, with entries made on SENTRAL, has increased the number of merit, gold, bronze, silver and gold awards presented to students at Year Assemblies. These awards acknowledge student achievements in academic, cultural, community and/or sporting domains. While Term 4 provided the opportunity to reward student academic effort and application with a number of hard-working students from Years 7 to 12 receiving this recognition.

The efforts of all staff is also commended, in that they work very hard to meet the needs of all of their students in their classroom and to implement strategies that will improve our core business of teaching and learning and the delivery of a progressive education for all students. A significant amount of personal and professional time is contributed from our teachers and I commend their endeavours.

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.

P&C message

All parents, carers and community members are encouraged to attend meetings and share in discussions. It is an ideal way to get up-to-date information, to hear about the opportunities for your child, to help decide how funds are allocated, to ask questions and to gain a better understanding of school policies, curriculum and activities. Our meetings are casual and friendly.

The funds raised through the canteen contribute to the many ways that the P&C support the school. The P&C’s major area of funding in 2014 included supporting the school magazine, a major art prize for HSC art work, as well as student leadership initiatives.

The P&C thank the current canteen volunteers who give generously of their time, but additional volunteers are always welcome and needed. If you have a spare day, even once a month, your help and support would be greatly appreciated.

Keiran Hall President

Student representative’s message

As student leaders within the Rutherford technology High School community we were granted with numerous opportunities to develop and enhance our leadership skills.

We were fortunate enough to attend a variety of leadership programs where we were able to share experiences and learn from other young leaders from around the state. We were also provided with the opportunity to travel to Sydney for the
Captains Leadership Day to Parliament and Government House and the National Young Leaders Day.
Throughout our time as leaders, Rutherford Technology High has provided us with countless opportunities from which we have gained valuable experience. The ongoing support we have received has allowed us to reach our potential and enhance our skills, which will benefit us in our future endeavours.

Hannah Witherdin and Josef Pemberton, School Captains

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

Student enrolment profile

Student attendance profile

Attendance
Rutherford Technology High School believes regular attendance at school is fundamental to student learning, with research indicating that students who attend school regularly are more likely to achieve educational success and increase their career and life options.

Rutherford Technology High School takes a positive approach to improving student attendance by identifying and implementing core values, practices and processes within a framework of student well-being.

Regular attendance is supported and promoted with students and the school community through the following intervention strategies:

Head Teacher Welfare

- Attendance data used to monitoring whole school student attendance and identify students of concern, resulting in student interviews, parental contact and meetings, development of attendance support plans including partial attendance program, to re-engage students with school.
- Refer students to alternate education programs including Links2Learning.
- Refer students and/or parent to School Counsellor.
- Identify and complete HSLO applications for students of concern.
- Liaise with Aboriginal Education Worker and community support agencies to develop support strategies for ATSI students, leading to improved attendance.
- Newsletter articles promoting the importance of regular attendance and explaining attendance processes.
- Attendance BBQ held Term 2, 3 and 4 for all students with above 95% attendance in a given term.
- Reward excursion held Term 4 for students with above 95% attendance for the year.
Year Adviser and Assistant Year Advisers

- Assistant Year Adviser interviews and parental contact for students with between 85-75% attendance, conducted twice a term.
- Students with 100% attendance recognised at PBL year assemblies and Presentation Day to celebrate excellent attendance.

Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO)

- Non-Attendance Improvement Strategy (NIPS) for students with attendance below 80% attendance, resulting in student interviews to identify attendance concerns, development of relevant support strategies and parental notification.
- Meet with Head Teacher Welfare weekly to identify students of concern, leading to Parental Intervention Program (PIPS).
- Monitoring of students on HSLO caseload and the development of Attendance Improvement Plans, resulting in support for individual students and their family.

Head Teacher Administration

- Monitoring incidents of multiple truancy which results in student interview and consequences, parental contact and student support strategies where necessary.

Administration Support

- Parent Intervention Program (PIPS) as per DEC guidelines
- SMS system daily for partial and whole day absences

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training
43% of the Year 12 students were enrolled in vocational or trade training in 2014. Year 12 students were engaged in the following VET frameworks: Business Services, Hospitality, Retail Service, Construction, Metals and engineering. Students were enrolled in Vocational Education courses at Hunter TAFE campuses at Maitland, Kurri Kurri, Newcastle and Singleton.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent Vocational educational qualification
97% of the cohort were awarded a Higher School Certificate. 3% were awarded a Record of Achievement and have transitioned into supported employment programs.

Post-school destinations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-school destinations</th>
<th>Year 10 %</th>
<th>Year 11 %</th>
<th>Year 12 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>seeking employment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE entry</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>university entry</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Workforce information

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

Workforce composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
<td>58.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>19.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>81.57</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Australian Education Regulation, 2014 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce. In 2014 the school employed an Aboriginal In Class Tutor through Norta Norta Funding, an Aboriginal Liaison worker as well an Aboriginal SASS worker and two teaching staff.

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>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

There was a significant change in the focus of professional learning for the school during 2014. The shift to school-based learning through classroom observation, utilising teacher buddies and team processes via professional learning teams. Classroom observation focused on two areas, 21st century learning and focus on reading. A significant part of professional learning funds was used to implement teacher release for classroom observations.

School development days focused on the mandatory requirements of child protection, WHS and anaphylaxis. Quality teaching through focus on reading, 21st century learning and project based learning as well as student and staff welfare, particularly around the area of PBL.

An increasing proportion of permanent and temporary staff are teachers undertaking proficiency or maintenance of proficiency accreditation. Funding and training was set aside to support this.

Beginning Teachers

The school received funding for four beginning teachers and their mentors in 2014. The funding was used to provide reduced face to face teaching time and release time for orientation and professional development. Not all funding was fully utilised as one teacher went on maternity leave, one took a term’s leave and another was promoted to another school.

Significant funding was also allocated by the school for the orientation and professional development of casual and temporary teaching staff.

Financial summary

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
<th>30/11/2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>878829.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>808909.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>1320116.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>344015.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>35180.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>83631.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>3470682.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expenditure**           |            |
| Teaching & learning       |            |
| Key learning areas        | 161382.70  |
| Excursions                | 59207.33   |
| Extracurricular dissections| 97914.28  |
| Library                   | 6962.28    |
| Training & development    | 4563.57    |
| Tied funds                | 1008809.88 |
| Casual relief teachers    | 267917.11  |
| Administration & office   | 136240.32  |
| School-operated canteen   | 0.00       |
| Utilities                 | 180307.46  |
| Maintenance               | 36917.55   |
| Trust accounts            | 92984.52   |
| Capital programs          | 47748.63   |
| **Total expenditure**     | 2060955.63 |
| **Balance carried forward**| 1409726.96 |
A significant proportion of teaching and learning programs and staff training and development came from tied funds expenditure.

A full copy of the school’s 2014 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

**School performance 2014**

Rutherford Technology High School continues to be proactive and creative in designing and offering a variety of opportunities for our students.

In 2014 students from this school entered 3 mathematics competitions:

- The Mathematics Challenge for Young Australians
- The Australian Mathematics Competition
- The Colin Doyle Prize

The Mathematics Challenge for Young Australians was run in March to June. Our students were given 6 problems to solve and were allocated 3 weeks to hand in their solutions. 6 students, 2 each from years 8 to 10, attempted these problems. The Year 8 students entered the Junior section, while the Years 9 and 10 students sat for the Intermediate section. Our students worked well over the 3 weeks, and were all awarded certificates of Participation.

The Australian Mathematics Competition saw an increase in entries from recent years, with 98 students from all years sitting for the 75 minute test in August. This test has 25 multiple choice questions in three difficulty sections, plus 5 questions without given answers (also quite difficult). This test is very prestigious, with over half a million students around Australia doing the test at the same time. 11 of our students received Credit Awards, while about 60 received Proficiency Awards and the rest were given Participation Certificates.

Three of the students in the top class in Year 11 sat for The Colin Doyle Prize in November. This test, set by the Newcastle Mathematics Association in conjunction with The University of Newcastle, is only for the top level students in Year 11. It involved 11 questions in a 3 hour paper, all very challenging. While our students were not among the prize winners, they are to be commended for their efforts.

Competitions such as these are good for our students, allowing them to see their achievements in a larger cohort, in a regional and national setting. We anticipate entering these competitions again in 2015.

The annual Newcastle Herald Newspaper Competition for local Hunter Secondary and Primary schools was entered again this year using our Year 7 Independent Learning class, 7R, as the competitors.

Through an extensive unit of class work, based on the use of persuasive language and a variety of text types, inclusive of Context, Audience and Purpose, the 7R students built knowledge and practised skills that lead to a team of ‘journalists’ and ‘photographers’ creating a four A4 page presentation including articles, editorials, advertisements and supporting photographs.

The process is very engaging and supports students to build higher order skills, enabling them to critique peer work samples in a collegial and supportive environment, therefore building sound relationships between them and the classroom teacher. The students in this year’s competition covered a variety of concepts and issues relevant to school life and the local community - particularly the building and development of the new school extensions.

Rutherford Technology High School was very privileged to be the recipient of a ‘Special Mention’ award - Emily Caldwell for her photography.
The competition is a very worthwhile and successful experience for all involved. We are looking forward to being part of the competition again in the future.

**Sports**

This year has been another year filled with fun, excitement and positive performances across a variety of sport for students of RTHS. Our school teams have represented with pride in many sporting ventures including Cricket, Netball, Touch, Rugby League, Basketball, Tennis, Soccer, Ten Pin Bowling and Futsal.

We had two team from RTHS stand out in Regional competitions with both the Boys Tennis and Table Tennis teams making it through to finals. Both teams were runners up and consisted of similar players with Aaron McDonnell, Ryan Hall, Bryce Pratt and Michael Brown in the tennis team. Aaron McDonnell, Ryan Hall, Nathan Hall and Michael Brown were in the table tennis team.

Our swimming, athletics and cross country athletes again proved successful at school, zone, regional and state level. For the first time in many years RTHS were the winning school at the Coalfields Zone athletics carnival.

We had 42 students qualify for Zone Swimming, 72 students to Zone Athletics (25 regional representatives) and 34 to Zone Cross Country (12 regional representatives).

There was a significant change to Thursday sport with the introduction of a rotating system associated for school sport each Thursday. This system saw a facilitator responsible for running sports such as Basketball, Table Tennis, Soccer and Indoor games and teams playing a variety of these sports throughout the term. Students saw the benefit of this by not being assigned to do a particular sport for the entire term. We still utilized facilities within the community such as Archery, Indoor Sports Centre, Ten Pin Bowling, Anytime Fitness and Genesis Gym, Laser Tag, Go Karts and Aqua Golf for those students wanting to pay sports each week.

Our Year 7 students have been involved in a variety of sports as a part of their integrated program. This has seen them participate in a variety of Indigenous and modified games during Term 1, a professionally coached Tennis program during Term 2, Lawn Bowls and Ten Pin Bowling during 3. Term 4 saw them participate in a Lifesaving program at Maitland Pool as part of their double sport periods, rather than the intense four day program that they had participated in during previous years.

**The School Musical**

Ms Hornery and Miss Clunies-Ross selected an American Music classic – Bye Bye Birdie. The students and staff responded with great enthusiasm and came along with us on the journey to put this show on. There was initially a week of auditions due to the overwhelming interest by the students to be involved in the show. Every recess and lunch break for a semester was used to rehearse either the band, solo vocalists and chorus numbers. After school rehearsals for the band and a weekend was put aside closer to the show for a full day of rehearsals for the cast and crew.

The outstanding dedication of the students in learning lines, vocal pieces, chorus numbers and, in particular, the very challenging band music, culminated in a fun, entertaining and tongue-in-cheek show. The vocal talents of lead roles performed by Ashlee Brown, Eula Pacamalan, Liam Faustini, Blake Wilkins-Everett, Jack Williams, Grace Quilty, Zoe Fletcher, Kellie Taylor plus the phenomenal cast of year 7 – 10 students who supported them. Principal, Mr Whiting made a cameo in amongst our actors/singers in the show playing the Town Mayor. A massive part of the musical was the band who due to the technical requirements of the music for the show, were specially selected by Ms Hornery and Mr Avery. This very talented group of musicians went above and beyond the expectations of the Music staff and spent months of recess, lunchtimes and after school rehearsing this music. The band members were Ryan Peters, Lara Butler, Bella Diaz, Ryan Paton of Year 10; Jared Gregson and Luke Hall of Year 11, Tim Hackett of year 9, Special guest Mrs Tracey Corlis (parent and Manager of Foleys Music Newcastle), our brave teaching staff Mrs Steffanie Smith from Maths and Mrs Jessica James of HSIE
who came on board to help us, plus of course Mr Avery and Ms Hornery.

Many parents and staff contributed to the production by making sets, costumes making, ironing and assisting in costume changes in the show, making posters and flyers, hospitality, front of house – selling tickets and programs, providing ushering and stage crew, publicity, finance, technical support.

Staff who assisted: Mr O’Leary – Set construction, Mr Fean - painting sets, Mr Cromarty – Props, Mr Wirth – Sound/lighting/photography, Mrs M Clarke – Costumes, Ms Clarke and Mrs Cotterill – flyers, posters and programs.

The school refurbished the sound and lighting in the hall prior to this event. This was completed by “LifeLike Atmospheres”. Co-Owner of this well-known Hunter Valley based business, Jacob Harwood, completed his Certificate II in Entertainment Industry at RTHS in 2005. Owners Jacob and Trent worked with our technical crew to run the sound and lighting for the show. This gave our year 11 students, who assisted them, industry standard experience running lights, sound and back of house.

Three of our feeder schools attended the matinee –Branxton, Lochinvar and Telerah who collectively brought over 300 students to the show.

All in all we estimate that there were over 150 staff, students and families involved in putting on the Musical.

The year progressed with an array of events including the following:

- Year 12 class members Josef Pemberton, Mason Brett, Ashlee Brown and Lane Southern along with students from year 10 including Ryan Peters, Ryan Paton, Caitlin Pettit and Emily Lambourne played in a lunchtime concert in the quad outside the music block.

- Visits to the Conservatorium of Music in Newcastle to attend the HSC Music lectures with Ms Hornery, included Josef Pemberton, Mason Brett, Ashlee Brown, Lane Southern and Kiera Hopley of Year 12; Ryan Paton, Lara Butler, Kate Butler, Jack Williams, and Liam Faustini of Year 10. One of the highlights of the day was to hear ex-RTHS music student David Hemsworth perform a solo classical guitar piece written by the Dean of Music.

- A large number of students elected Music for Year 9. They have worked positively during the year. A special mention to Ricky Christensen and Cooper Sujecki who have assisted the support class and the year 8 independent class with guitar and drum classes. These boys have been exceptional in their assistance to their peers.

- Year 10 Music class are an exceptional group. More than 50% of the class were in the musical, ten assisted the year 12 class with their HSC, twelve of the class are members of the school band. It has been a long time since I have worked with such a talented class, who, may I say, are multi-instrumentalists. From their study of the classical Period to the contemporary, their knowledge and skill are evident. Specific mention must be made of Ryan Peters, Ryan Paton, Lara Butler, Kate Butler, Jack Williams, Caitlin Pettit, Bella Diaz, Liam Faustini, Emily Lambourne, (ring ins – Grace Quilty, Lily Crockett and Eula Pacamalan).

- The Year 11 Music class have studied three topics this year - Jazz, Notation and Music for Film, Radio, Television and Multimedia. Two of the class, Jared Gregson and Luke Hall, did an exceptional job in the band for the musical; support student Temicka Exposito has surprised us all with her excellent drum skills; Colleen Miller and Jamii-Lee Cooper from the support class have worked hard at being singer/guitarists.

- RTHS hosted the annual Education week awards assembly this year. Josef Pemberton and Mason Brett of year 12 not only hosted the event, they also performed a highly entertaining piano/drumkit piece. This happened to be one of their HSC pieces.

- The HSC Music class (Josef Pemberton, Mason Brett, Ashlee Brown, Lane Southern and Kiera Hopley) had a performance evening in the school
hall on August 6th. Parents and invited friends attended this Trial HSC night where Mr Avery and Ms Hornery marked their solo and group practical work. Year 10 students Ryan Peters, Ryan Paton, Emily Lambourne, Caitlin Pettit and Jack Williams assisted in the performances.

- The HSC was held on September 9th in the Staff Common Room. Josef, Mason, Ashlee, Lane and Kiera left their exams pleased with their efforts. They had spent, in some cases, several months searching for the right piece for this day, before finding the music and then hours of solo and/or group rehearsals. Year 10 students assisting with the HSC were - Ryan Peters, Ryan Paton, Emily Lambourne, Caitlin Pettit, Jack Williams, Eula Pacamalan, Grace Quilty, Lily Crockett, Lara Butler and Kate Butler.

- Mason Brett, Josef Pemberton, Lane Southern and Ashlee Brown of the Year 12 Music class could not be stopped after their HSC practical exam. This group along with their year 10 helpers decided to host the last assembly of Term Three. From the balcony outside the common room they serenaded the entire school for thirty minutes. We were entertained by every piece of music I have heard Year 12 play in class over the last year.

- Ashlee Brown and Josef Pemberton performed to parents, staff and guests at the Year 12 Formal Dinner held at the Crowne Plaza in Pokolbin.

- The Year 12 class elected to perform two group pieces at their final farewell assembly in the hall. Kiera Hopley, Lane Southern, Mason Brett, Ashlee Brown and Josef Pemberton teamed up for their finale with the support of some Year 10 music students.

- The School Band has reformed in Semester Two after the musical and began afresh to play at the Presentation Day assembly in December at the Maitland City Bowling Club.

- Year 11 student Luke Hall played a piano version of Canon by Pachelbel at the Presentation Day assembly.

- Students from the Year 10 Music class had a half day visit to two of our partner primary Schools. At Telerah we strolled through K – 6 classrooms visiting, and performing to each class. At Branxton Public school we played to the whole school at an outdoor lunchtime concert with the students singing & dancing along with the students in what turned out to be a highly interactive event.

**DRAMA**

- Drama Ensemble auditions were held at the start of the year. Students from years 9, 10 and 11 were awarded a position in this group – Kellie Taylor, Hannah O’Brien, Nikita Carter, Annabelle Mulligan, Mel Travis, Caitlin Bailey, Lachlan Dallen, Blake Wilkins, Ashley Fry and Declan Johnson.

- The School Ensemble participated in the largest short play festival in the world for young people for the eighth year in a row – Fast and Fresh. The ensemble had two plays reach the final: Leftovers written by Ashley Fry and Jade Snoeck and “Pinky Promise” written by Jade Snoeck. A contingency of over sixty staff and students travelled to Sydney to see the performances.

- Ten Drama students from years 9 & 10, Lachlan Dallen, Joshua Witek, Joshua Buscombe, Ashlee Fry, Belina Pannowitz, Laura Wade, Troy Snoeck, Georgia Horne and Chanelle Hedges attended the week long drama camp “Hunter Drama Works”. This culminated in a highly successful performance evening.

- Seven Drama students Lachlan Dallen, Joshua Witekm Joshua Buscombe, Ashlee Fry, Laura Wade and Troy Snoeck were successful in winning a spot into the Hunter Regional Drama Showcase Evening.

- Year 11 student Kellie Taylor was accepted and attended the State Drama Camp.

- Year 7 participated in a theatre sports competition.

- The year 12 Drama Class held a performance evening in the staff common room of their individual HSC solo and group pieces for staff, parents and friends.

- Drama students were heavily involved both on stage and back of house for the school musical.

- Year 8 Drama class presented Pantomimes as part of their semester
elective course. This event was very well received by this very enthusiastic group of actors.

VISUAL ARTS, VISUAL DESIGN AND PHOTOGRAPHY

- Hannah Witherden was the recipient of the annual P&C art prize and was awarded $500 for the purchase of her art work.
- The 2014 HSC Body of Works were marked off site at Telarah Public school in their old library space.
- Students attended exhibitions at MRAG (Maitland Regional Art Gallery) and Newcastle Regional Art Gallery.
- In May, 45 years 9, 10, 11 & 12 Art Students went to Sydney for Art Express and the Archibald Prize at AGNSW (Art Gallery New South Wales) and to see the Biennale at MCA (Museum of Contemporary Art).
- In June students went to Cockatoo Island for the Biennale 2014 and visited the Brett Whitely studio in Surry Hills.
- Mr Fean and selected Art students were responsible for painting the sets and some props for the school Musical Bye Bye Birdie.
- Mr Cromarty and Mr O’Leary made sets and props for the show.
- Art Staff helped with the musical. Ms Cotterill designed and made the program whilst Ms Clarke and Ms Cotterill designed posters for advertising.
- In mid-December 2014, The Year 10 Visual Design class under the instruction of Mrs Wolff published the annual school magazine.

Academic achievements

NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10.

The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

Year 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)
Year 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing (NAPLAN).

Click on the link [http://www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au) and enter the school name in the Find a school and select GO to access the school data.

Alternatively:

NAPLAN Year 7 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)

![Graph showing percentage in bands for Year 7 Reading](image-url)
NAPLAN Year 9 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)
Higher School Certificate (HSC)

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

Agriculture

During 2014 several achievements were recognised both via the school magazine and local media. These include: Placing 2nd in the Local Steer competition, 2nd in Carcass and 4th in Herdsman ship.

At the Beef Bonanza RTHS was placed 3rd and 5th with the two cattle displayed.

Students at RTHS are able to access Agriculture on a number of levels in their time at school. Students can participate in Agriculture subjects via the Tech. Mandatory in Stage 4, elect a farm orientated Mini elective in Stage 4, chose a BOSTES Stage 5 course in Agriculture or in Stage 6 with additional access to a VET Primary Industries course. With this level of access it fosters an interest in the Cattle Show Team – held during sport time, and also greater interest in Agriculture as some of our school leavers/graduates progress on to careers in Agriculture via CB Alexander College - Tocal

The size of school farm is 2.1 Ha, 11 paddocks with water troughs and fully fenced. 0.5 Ha Vegetable gardens, 4 Shaded green houses. Harding Off area. Propagating Area. Cattle yards and Sheep yards. Machinery Shed and Hay storage. Large Chicken run/coup. Animal Husbandry Lab. Aquaponics System.


RTHS access community members with specific expertise in cattle handling and showing, as well as Poultry show preparation. All VET Primary Industry studies attend a 3 day intensive farm tour at a working farm. Dubbo annually. PI students get to participating in running a working cattle and cropping farm.

At RTHS we pride ourselves on providing opportunities for students to demonstrate their skills in Agriculture. In 2014 we have entered teams into the Sydney Royal Poultry & Pigeon Show for the Steggles School Meat Bird Pairs Competition, and Royal Highline School Egg Competition. We are also active participants in the CB Alexander Agricultural College Steer competition annually. RTHS received 9 ribbons and was placed 6th out the 13 schools entered. Students have also participated in the 2014 Cows Create Careers, Singleton Cattle Show, Muswellbrook Cattle Handling Comp and the Upper Hunter Beef Bonanza. These are in addition to running Agriculture in Stage 4, 5 and 6 at RTHS.

The PBL team is looking forward to developing and implementing further lessons addressing all of the remaining matrix areas such as playground, classroom and assemblies in 2015. A new two-tiered system of acknowledgement of positive student behaviour will be introduced with a strong focus on celebrating student achievements with our whole school community. Staff will also undertake extensive training in behaviour management to further enhance the implementation of PBL strategies at RTHS.

Special Education

Rutherford THS has a special education support unit with three classes for students with mild and moderate intellectual disabilities. Many of the support unit students have additional needs including vision impairment, Autism Spectrum Disorders, and/or a mental health diagnosis.

In 2014, the support classes were structured by stage rather than by level of disability. This created a stage 4 class with year 7 and 8 students, a stage 5 class with year 9 and 10 students and a stage 6 class with students in years 11 and 12. Each class had approximately 14 students at any one time, each with the support of a teacher and a school learning support officer (SLSO).

The support unit students are integrated with mainstream classes for elective subjects and sport from the beginning of year 7 and through to year 11 and 12 where students are able to attend up to three selected subjects with their mainstream peer group. In 2014 the core subjects taught in the support classes were English, Mathematics, HSIE and Work and Community Studies with students following a life skills curriculum. Science, PDHPE, Music and TAS were taught by specialist
mainstream teachers in purpose built labs and workshops to ensure the students had equal access to the school’s facilities. In 2014 two stage 4 students commenced attending mainstream lessons in Mathematics and/or English with very positive results.

All students in the support unit have an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) that is reviewed yearly. This planning process is undertaken with the students and their parents to enable them to set short and long term goals, which will enhance their opportunities for a successful transition to life after school.

The support classes participated in a community access program designed to assist them with generalising the skills they learn in the classroom to community settings. For example, they visited local shops to purchase ingredients for cooking lessons so that they could practice shopping and money handling and they visited locations as far afield as Newcastle, which required planning and undertaking a journey including catching public transport.

Students in the stage 6 support class were offered the opportunity to participate in the Getting Started program run by Mai-Wel and 7 students attended the program on Wednesdays throughout terms 1-3. Due to their positive participation in the program, these students were invited to continue in term 4 with some undertaking ongoing work experience.

Students in the stage 5 support class undertook an extensive in-school work experience program in 2014 with students applying for a variety of jobs from assisting the clerical staff with the preparation of the school newsletter, to working in a pop-up restaurant to prepare and serve a two course meal for a staff committee. They also prepared food to be sold to staff to raise money to fund the class community access program. The students completed written applications and underwent interviews for their school based work experience positions to prepare them for future job seeking.

The stage 4 support class students ran the school recycling program throughout 2014 and also maintained a very productive vegetable and herb garden, selling the produce to raise funds to support class programs.

In November, 24 students and 6 staff attended an overnight excursion to Sydney and stayed at the Sydney Harbour Youth Hostel. The students caught the train from Telarah station and used public transport to get around Sydney. While in Sydney they participated in an amazing sailing adventure on Sydney Harbour with Sailors with disABILITIES and enjoyed a visit to Luna Park and the Sydney Aquarium as well as eating out at a restaurant in the city. The excursion was a great success with the students showing excellent behaviour and putting the skills they had learned throughout the year into practice in the community.

In 2015 the support unit will welcome 11 new students into year 7 necessitating a restructuring of classes. There will be a greater focus on work experience both in and out of school and regular, meaningful activities in the wider community to further develop the students’ life skills in a variety of environments.

**Science**

The Science Faculty has had an eventful and exciting time – competitions, excursions, new equipment and excellent achievements in the classroom throughout 2014.

HSC students attended *Expt Fest* at Newcastle University again in 2014. Students had access to and used equipment normally reserved for industry and university students. Workshops were run in Physics Chemistry and Biology and covered several HSC outcomes.

Year 12 Chemistry enjoyed a trip to the Australian National Maritime Museum in conjunction with Chemistry students from Maitland High School. The visit covered experiments and tours of decommissioned warships and a submarine. The
class was also fortunate to tour the Orica site on Kooragang Island to view the production of Ammonia.

Throughout the year my staff has been truly amazed and delighted with the efforts students have put into their work in Science, be it poster projects in Stage 4 Science, Student Research Projects in Stage 5 Science or just the high quality work and effort put in each day.

The Faculty is looking forward to 2015, with work to commence on the refurbishment of the 6 Science Laboratories, 3 Preparation rooms and a new, larger staffroom.

**Significant programs and initiatives – policy**

**Student Welfare**

**Student Welfare focus areas for 2014 were:**

- The ‘Sense Ability’ resilience-based program will be taught explicitly to Year 7 – 10 PBL classes and will be enhanced through KLA initiatives in other academic years. Welfare days will be held in each semester for each year group with a continued focus on student well-being.
- Implement proactive support programs across the school to support student well-being and improve resilience
- To build knowledge, skills and understanding of all members of the Welfare Team and additionally to build leadership capacity and density through peer mentoring and ongoing professional development.
- To continue to review and strengthen LST processes and procedures to support learning and well-being of all students.
- Introduce and embed Peer Support in order to strengthen the Year 6 into Year 7 transition process

Support for students at Rutherford Technology High School continued to grow during 2014. The school was very fortunate to have a dynamic and caring team working collaboratively to identify and support the needs of a diverse range of students.

**Our achievements in this area include:**

- PBL lessons conducted by Year Advisers for all students in Years 7-10 using the ‘Mind Matters’ and ‘Sense Ability’ framework to embed the core values of respect, responsibility and commitment
- The Welfare team continued to work in conjunction with the Healthy Schools Healthy Futures (HSHF) project which is a collaboration between Hunter New England Health and The University of Newcastle to increase resilience in adolescents. Through fortnightly PBL lessons, issues relating to resilience were addressed. Staff also undertook wellbeing training. The HSHF program has allowed the Welfare team to look more strategically at how we can support our school community.
- Delivery of a range of student well-being programs which aim to strengthen student resilience, build self-esteem, and develop communication, decision making, and conflict resolution skills. Programs and presentations include Year 7 Peer Support program, Year 7 and 8 Cyber Safety Seminar delivered by the school’s Police Youth Liaison Officer, Year 9 Reach workshops, Year 10 Love Bites program, Year 11 Peer Support Leaders training, and Year 12 HSC Stress Management. Whole school initiatives include Bullying No Way presentation, National Day of Action against Bullying activities, Cowards Punch presentation, RUOK Day, and Motivational Media presentations.
- Year 9 girls ‘Shine’ program focused on building student capacity, raising self-esteem and self-belief in students by celebrating individual diversity and promoting personal and life skills.
- Breakfast Club, which is fully staffed, operated twice weekly, supporting
students by assisting with nutritional needs, improving knowledge of healthy lifestyle and providing a supportive and connected environment for participating students.

- Plan It Youth Mentoring program operated for Year 10 students who are contemplating leaving school and do not have a clear pathway to employment, training or other education. This volunteer mentoring program builds strong links between school and community, and was successfully completed by 22 students in 2014. The re-engagement of students in their learning and a stronger commitment to themselves is a positive outcome for the program. As a result of participating in the Plan-it Youth program Caitlyn O’Brien, who is now in Year 11, secured a Hunter Youth Mentoring Collaborative scholarship of $2000 to assist with educational expenses associated with senior schooling.

- Immunisation programs were conducted for Year 7 students (boys and girls) and included vaccinations for chickenpox, DTPa (covering diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis whooping cough), and HPV. Year 9 boys were vaccinated for HPV.

- The Peer Mediation program continued where trained Year 10 mediators are used to conduct a structured mediation between small groups of students who are in conflict. This process has proven effective in changing the way students understand and resolve conflict in their lives. As well as developing student leadership skills, positive outcomes of the program include improved self-esteem and the development of listening and critical thinking skills. These are all important life skills which are transferable to the wider community. The program has resulted in reduced need for teacher intervention in student conflict, positive learning environment in the classroom, and improved playground climate. During Term 4 peer mediation training was undertaken by 20 Year 9 students who self-nominated for the program. These students will become Peer Mediators in 2015.

- Reach, a 100% youth led program which makes their workshops extremely relevant for young people. Workshops are available throughout Victoria and NSW and RTHS was identified as a pilot school in the Hunter Region for this innovative program. Students from years 7 and 9 were presented workshops on resiliency ‘being a hero’, and these themes were continued in PBL lessons with Year Advisors.

- Learning Support Team (LST) structure and processes reviewed with new structure implemented in order to improve efficiency and student support. Two separate LST teams were formed, which are aligned to year groups and meet weekly to address the specific learning needs of referred students. These teams work closely with the student, parents, teachers and community agencies to coordinate, develop, implement, monitor, and evaluate educational programs.

- During 2014 the School Drama Ensemble had an integral role in presenting Anti-Bullying workshops to all RTHS year groups. The process of identifying a potential bully was made explicit through these workshops and students were encouraged to ‘stand up against bullying’. In order to support the school’s zero tolerance policy for bullying, RTHS continued to maintain its ‘report a bully’ process through the school intranet, with all reported incidents addressed by the Anti-Bullying Coordinator.

- Welfare team members attended ‘Accidental Counsellor’ and ‘MindMatters’ professional development to build essential knowledge, skills and understanding. This assisted staff with developing best practice in supporting our students.

- Year advisers continued to be of integral support to our students and are key points of contact for both students and their parents or caregivers. RTHS year advisers and assistant year advisers have built
strong relationships and a sense of connection amongst year groups through initiatives such as the Year 8 Great Aussie Bush Camp and the Year 9 excursion to Wet’n’Wild.

- Peer Support operated for the first time during Term 1 2014, in order to improve and strengthen the Year 6 into Year 7 transition process. The program facilitated the development of leadership skills in senior students and fostered social networks across the school. Peer support groups met weekly during Term 1 and completed a module called ‘Behaving with Integrity’ with a focus on values. The program culminated with an excursion for all Year 7 students and their Year 11 leaders to Walka Water Works. During Term 4 2014, 60 Year 10 students participated in a 2 day training program which developed skills in leadership, teamwork, problem solving and communication. After completing training, these students went on to assist with the Year 6 Vulnerable Students transition program. Peer Support leaders also contributed significantly to Orientation Day where they co-led small groups of Year 6 students and delivered 2 Peer Support sessions. The aim of these sessions was to familiarise Year 6 students with the high school environment, its routines and procedures.

**Looking forward to 2015 our focus will be:**

- To continue developing strong links with community agencies whose expertise can be used to assist with staff professional development and with implementing programs which support student well-being.
- Embedding the newly developed Mind Matters mental health modules to promote and protect the mental health, resilience, and social and emotional wellbeing of all members of the school community, including students, teachers and parents.
- The evaluation of current welfare programs, and the implementation of proactive interventions across the school which support and improve student well-being and resilience.
- Working collaboratively to ensure Stage 5 into 6 transition program includes mentoring, leadership, and student voice opportunities.

**Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL)**

In 2014, PBL was focused on employing universal strategies to embed our core values of respect, responsibility and commitment into the systems and practices of staff and students of Rutherford Technology High School.

The first priority of the PBL team was to develop a matrix of school wide expectations for student behaviour across all settings of the school. This matrix forms a scope and sequence of lessons to be explicitly taught to all students. In 2014 lessons were developed and taught to ensure students understand the expectations related to movement on the bell. These are: Respect Personal Space, Keep Left, Know Your Timetable, Line Up Quietly, Move Straight to Class, and Arrive at Class On Time. Students who demonstrated these behaviours were acknowledged using “Targets Tokens” which were then placed in a fortnightly draw with one prize being awarded in each year group. The teaching and practice of these expected behaviours was further supported with a variety of systems such as signage around the school and the implementation of a warning bell 2 minutes prior to the regular bell at the end of lunch and recess.

PBL initiatives were further supported through staff training including sessions on staff development days aimed at enhancing staff understanding and consistent practice regarding the teaching and recognition of school wide expectations.
Aboriginal Education

131 students were enrolled in the school representing 12% of the school’s population. Programs operated to improve student’s knowledge of their Aboriginal culture, literacy and numeracy skills and attendance rates.

2014 saw us continue our affiliation as a Stronger Smarter Learning hub, and we have a number of staff trained in the Stronger Smarter philosophy. A number of staff are now also trained in the 8Ways of Aboriginal Learning, and are introducing the 8Ways to their faculty with the aim of embedding an Aboriginal perspective into our programming and enhancing Aboriginal education across the school. Cultural awareness is also being raised through several staff members participating in Connected to Country programs. They are then able to share this cultural awareness with their faculty.

We welcomed Mr Michael Heitmeyer as our Aboriginal School Liaison Officer and under his mentoring our Brospeak program has been a strong support for our young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men. The Birrawol Aboriginal boy’s dance group has been in high demand throughout the year. We held a corroborree during Term 4 which was well supported by our community, and students from our feeder primary schools also participated which made for a very entertaining night.

It was pleasing to see many of our senior students took advantage of the Norta Norta Individual Sponsorship program for tutorial assistance throughout the year. Many of our younger students were involved in Norta Norta tutoring under the watchful eye of Mrs Barbara Meister, our Norta Norta tutor.

The Sistaspeak program was in operation sporadically throughout 2014. The program is aimed at supporting young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island girls to be strong and proud young women. Two staff members will be trained as Sistaspeak facilitators in Term 1 2015 and Sistaspeak will be running again during 2015. Our Junior AECG also had a presence in our school throughout 2014.

We celebrated NAIDOC week throughout the last week of Term 2. We conducted a smoking ceremony and officially opened our Yarning Circle near the Bush Tucker garden. The Yarning Circle has been enhanced with a graduation wall, remembrance wall, a firepit and seating. We welcomed our official guest, Mr Michael Hill of NSW State Forests, formally thanking him for his support in providing the timber for the seating around our Yarning Circle. It was pleasing to see many members of the community in attendance. All our students appreciate being able to use the Yarning Circle as an open air classroom. Throughout NAIDOC week we had many activities happening throughout the school. We had traditional painting, boomerang and clapstick decorating, students cooked Johnny cakes, and traditional games were played during sport. It was pleasing to see the support given to our Staff v Indigenous Allstars Touch Football match by staff, students and community members who cheered on both staff and students. Our Aboriginal students worked with Mr Bower from the PDHPE department to design an Indigenous Allstars football jersey for these games, and our deepest appreciation goes to Hunter Sheds for sponsoring the Allstars shirts. We conducted a full school assembly in order to build staff and student knowledge and empathy for Aboriginal issues. Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students did an excellent job assisting in the running of our NAIDOC activities.

VET (Vocational Education and Training), Transition and Careers

The VET and Careers and Transition team at RTHS consists of Mr Christopher Olsson (Head Teacher Careers/VET) Mr Toby Butler (Transition Advisor) and Mrs Debby Elliott (Careers Advisor).

VET, Transition and Careers continued to be a focus at RTHS with the students given opportunities to develop a wide range of qualifications and experiences which will enhance their transition from school to work.

RTHS offers seven VET frameworks in Years 11 and 12. These frameworks are Retail Services, Business Services, Primary Industries, Hospitality, Metals and Engineering, Construction and Sports
Coaching. All of these frameworks offer a national qualification. Over 150 students participated in VET classes during 2014. In 2014, the VET frameworks were audited by an external authority. This is a regular part of our Registered Training Organisation’s accreditation process. The process is quite involved and is held over several months from start to finish. The VET staff at RTHS, through their dedication and commitment to their students and VET, passed the audit process with flying colours.

In 2014, for the first time, Stage 5 (Year 10) VET classes were held in Sport, Fitness and Recreation. This involved our students being enrolled in this qualification with classes held here at RTHS and at Genesis Fitness Rutherford. This initiative was a massive success and several of the students involved are continuing training in this field to gain higher qualifications.

Over 100 of our students participated in a variety of TAFE Vocational Education and Training (TVET) courses. These courses were held at a variety of Hunter TAFE campuses and included frameworks such as Animal Studies, Automotive, Beauty, Children’s Services, Human Services, Hairdressing and Tourism.

In addition to VET and TVET, there were 11 School Based Trainee and Apprenticeship students who worked with local businesses to develop skills and qualifications, directly related to their future careers. These traineeships were in the areas of Business Services, Aged Care, Agriculture (Equine) and Retail Services.

Throughout the year numerous additional activities were held to enhance and consolidate career awareness with our students. Some of these activities included the RTHS Business Breakfast, University Road Show (Years 11-12), Impression 10 interviews (Impression 10 is a mock interview situation with local business leaders which prepares students for future employment), Try a Skill at Hunter Valley Training Company (Year 9), Youth Express Careers Van (Year 12), Hunter Valley Careers Expo (Years 10-12), Money Matters Workshop (Year 11) and Defence Force Recruiting (Years 10-12). Courses such as White Card, First Aid, Responsible Conduct of Gambling and Responsible Service of Alcohol were also held at school as way of enhancing the student’s school to work opportunities.

Transition programs for ‘disengaged’ or ‘at-risk’ students have also made a valuable contribution to students in 2014. Programs such as the TAFE/PCYC Fitness program and the Hunter Valley Training Company Trailer Build Project gave students an opportunity to develop confidence and skills in an alternative environment to school. These courses have had great results with students reengaging in education and in some cases gaining meaningful employment.

Further development of our Careers website www.rthscareers.com has made resume development and job seeking more accessible. Student surveys have allowed for timely feedback from our students about career aspirations and post school destinations.

Multicultural education and anti-racism
The school continued to grow in its diversity as we welcomed students and families from a range of cultural backgrounds.

Continued appointment and training of Anti-Racism Conflict Officers (ARCO). Their role is advertised to the school community.

Supported special multicultural days such as ‘Harmony Day’ through the school curriculum. Students are involved in activities both at school and at our partner primary schools in support of these special events.
Significant programs and initiatives – equity funding

Aboriginal background

The school received funding of $70,872.00 for 115 Aboriginal students. This funding was used to:

1. Employ an Aboriginal Liaison Worker for four days a week. This enabled us to re-focus on Brospeak, Aboriginal Dance and Aboriginal cultural training.

It, also, enhanced communication with our Aboriginal community and assisted in the development of Personal Learning Plans.

Time was, also, spent assisting our Norta Norta tutors in enhancing the literacy and numeracy skills of Aboriginal students in the classroom.

2. The completion of the school yarning circle, Aboriginal graduation wall and bush tucker garden.

3. The running of Aboriginal cultural activities such as NAIDOC week, camps and cultural days.

The school, also received Norta Norta funding of $37,743.00. This was used to employ an Aboriginal tutor to work with Aboriginal students in Years 8 and 10 to enhance literacy and numeracy outcomes.

The school received funding of $91,683.00 for individual tutoring for Year 11 and 12 students. A full-time, and number of part-time tutors were employed. This significantly improved senior Aboriginal student assessment completion and academic outcomes.

Socio-economic background

As part of the RAM funding for socio-economic background the school received $508,344.00 cash funding and staff funding of $327,342.00.

Staff funding was used to:

- Facilitate two smaller literacy classes in Year 7 and one in Year 8 to initiate programs to assist students with high level literacy needs.
- Increase Learning and Support Teacher allocations.
- Employ a full-time Senior Study coordinator
- Slightly reduce junior school class sizes.
- Increase choice in the senior school.

Cash funding was used to fund:

- The hiring of a Community Liaison Officer to build community and business links.
- The hiring of a Technical Support Officer.
- School action teams running educational projects across the school (enrichment, attendance, celebration, 21st century learning, PBL, Careers and Transition)
- Targeted welfare programs.
- Student leadership and student voice program
- Vocational Education programs
- Learning resource material
- Classroom enhancement program
- Stage 6 programs (targeted Band 5/6 strategy, Year 12 mentoring, senior study resourcing)
- Staff training and development (welfare, executive development program, WHS, VET, HSC improvement, 21st century learning)
- Classroom enhancement project
- CAPA enhancement through the purchase of a sound and lighting system for the hall, allowing projects like the school musical.
- Enrichment and transition projects with partner primary schools.
- Software licencing for literacy and numeracy programs.
English language proficiency

During 2014 we received ESL funding for two students which was for the hiring of a staff member for 0.2 FTE.

Learning and Support

During 2014 the school received staffing for 3.4 Learning and Support Teachers (LaSTs) and funding of $111,338.00 for students requiring low level adjustment. These resources were used to support students in their learning through a number of initiatives. Individual and Class literacy plans were developed and implemented for Year 7-10 students. These plans were developed using information from the Literacy Continuum and NAPLAN data. Class literacy plans were used to plot students along the continuum and to assist placing students in class groups in order to differentiate the work. Students were also grouped based on continuum clusters to allow teachers to implement Focus on Reading Super Six Strategies which would support students to move along the Literacy Continuum.

Individual literacy plans were developed for each student in Year 7-10 based on NAPLAN data and were attached to the student’s profiles on Sentral to assist teachers to identify areas to work on with individual students. These plans suggested targeted approaches using the Focus on Reading Super Six Strategies: Questioning, Visualising, Monitoring, Summarising, Predicting and Making Connections. Staff were then delivered this information during the Term 3 Staff Development Day and understanding of the Literacy Continuum and the importance of differentiation were key outcomes of this presentation.

In addition, staff at Rutherford Technology High School have been adjusting the learning of students in their class by implementing strategies from the Learning Adjustment Registers which were developed through consultation with Learning and Support Teachers and students. The Learning Adjustment Registers have been established for all Literacy Classes and for individual students who have been identified through the Learning and Support Team meetings.

Learning and Support Teachers have also helped to further whole staff knowledge of literacy strategies through presentations at Staff Meetings such as NAPLAN planning information and in class support. Students have benefited from small group work for assessment tasks and reader/writers for testing situations. One to one interventions such as assessment task scaffolding have also been vital for our most at risk students, including those with learning difficulties.

Our current Year 7 students also benefited from Learning and Support Teacher visits in Term 4 where Year 6 teachers could discuss any learning and support needs with the High School team. This assisted Rutherford Technology High School to place students in correct classes and organise additional support for those students with high needs. All data collected during these visits was communicated to class teachers who could adjust programs where necessary in order to cater for their incoming students.

In 2015, Learning and Support Teachers continue to implement and improve on interventions including assisting staff to scaffold assessment tasks, adjust classroom teaching work/practices to cater for individuals with learning difficulties and work with students in small groups and/or one to one. There have been regular meetings of literacy class teachers this year to identify students who are in need of support. This has been a proactive approach and has helped form a collaborative view of supporting students with their literacy needs. Lyn Walkden has also presented the Autism Spectrum Disorder course to teachers of students with ASD at our school. This has been a valuable resource for teachers who are making adjustments in their classes for students with special needs.

Year 7 students are also benefiting from the Reading Eggs Program and NAPLAN writing preparation delivered by Marilyn Porter. Small reading groups with Learning and Support Teacher intervention will be established in Term 2, 2015 to help students to continue to improve upon this area of literacy.
School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

School evaluation processes
NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used include:

- The formation of a community strategic planning team comprising parents, Aboriginal community, students and staff to evaluate the 2012-2014 plan and pan for 2015 and beyond.
- NAPLAN analysis
- SMART and RAP analysis
- Community well-being policy and procedures review.
- Staff, parent, business and student surveys and focus groups

School planning 2012-2014:

School priority 1
Leadership and Management

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- “Quality Systems – a Guide for Schools” matrix is met at each level of school administration.
- A model established for BYOD
- Planned upgrade of school facilities.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

- A BYOD strategy developed.
- Plan for current and future upgrade needs for the school established.
- Peer professional learning, and classroom observation, model developed for staff training and development.
- Planning team established to look at future directions of the Rutherford Learning Community.
- Executive leadership training and development undertaken.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Worked with local sponsors and DEC policy to establish a Bring Your Own Device strategy.
- Worked with Cambridge Education in establishing leadership training for executive staff.
- Established a facilities planning team.
- Fostered links with partner schools in the Rutherford Learning Community.
- Used “Quality Systems – a Guide for Schools” to guide systems development

School priority 2
Wellbeing and Engagement

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- Increase overall attendance rate from 87.3% in 2012 to 88% by 2014
- Increase Year 11 attendance rate from 86% in 2012 to 88% in 2014
- Decrease overall number of student suspensions from 386 in 2013 to less than 350 in 2014
- Increase the number of positive student referrals each year by 20%

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

- Overall attendance rate was maintained at 87.3 %
- Year 11 attendance rate met the goal of increasing from 86% in 2013 to 88% in 2014.
- PBL initiative saw a significant increase in positive commendations.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Improvement vision driving teaching and learning.
- Funding for improving classroom environments
- Classroom expectations developed with student engagement as a priority
- Strengthened Learning Support Team structures, with two separate teams developed.
- Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) focus
- Positive celebrations of attendance
School priority 3

Literacy and Numeracy

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- Increase average NAPLAN numeracy growth (Year 7 to 9) from 29 in 2013 to 37 by 2014
- Increase average NAPLAN reading growth (Year 7 to 9) from 28 in 2013 to 37 by 2014
- Decrease the number of students below the National Minimum Standard in NAPLAN writing (Year 9) from 41% in 2013 to 25% in 2014
- Decrease the number of students below the National Minimum Standard in NAPLAN reading (Year 9) from 14% in 2013 to 10% in 2014.
- Decrease the number of students below the National Minimum Standard in NAPLAN numeracy (Year 9) from 21% in 2013 to 10% in 2014.
- Increase the number of students at the proficient level in NAPLAN writing (Year 9) from 3% in 2013 to 10% in 2014
- Increase the number of students at the proficient level in NAPLAN reading (Year 9) from 7% in 2013 to 10% in 2014
- Increase the number of students at the proficient level in NAPLAN numeracy (Year 9) from 8% in 2013 to 10% in 2014
- Increase HSC value–added data for students at the upper levels

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Leaders in Focus on reading trained, and working across KLAs.
- Training and development for all staff in Focus on Reading
- Explicit teaching of literacy skills.
- Staff training in using SMART and RAP data to enhance student outcomes.
- Training and development for staff in “Teaching the HSC”
- Targeted band 5 and 6 tutorials.
- Training and development for staff in 21st century learning models

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

- Year 9 NAPLAN numeracy growth exceeded expectations moving from 29 in 2013 to 45 in 2014
- Reading growth in Year 9 moved to 31 in 2014 from 28 in 2013.
- Decreased the number of students below the National Minimum Standard in numeracy in Year 9 form 21% in 2013 to 14% in 2014
- Increased the number of students in Year 9 at the proficient level for reading from 3% in 2013 to 4% in 2014.
- There was a significant improvement in HSC results in 2014 with 3 Band 6, 30 Band 5 and 107 Band 4 compared to 1 Band 6, 16 Band 5 and 70 Band 4 in 2013.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2014, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. This was done through parent surveys and focus groups in developing the strategic plan, focus groups and the “Tell Them from Me” survey for students, and staff focus groups.

Their responses are presented below:

Positive:

- Welfare and learning and support structures. Students rated advocacy at school extremely high compared to state averages. They feel they have someone at school who consistently presents encouragement and whom they can turn to for advice.
- A high level of staff, students and parents believe the school fosters positive relationships.
- Positive Behaviour For Learning program
- Business and Vocational Education links
- Improved communication measures such as the school App, Facebook, SMS messaging, and Sentral emailing.
- High percentage of parents and students value schooling outcomes compared to state averages.
- Excitement about the upgrade occurring to school facilities.
Development:

- Student outcomes related to writing in particular.
- Number of students with tertiary educational aspirations is down on state average, as is the number of students planning to finish Year 12.
- Anxiety levels of students, particularly those entering Year 12.
- Promotion of the school in the community.
- Greater differentiation in learning and the development of individual learning plans.

Future Directions
2015-2017 School Plan

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

The school will be focusing on three strategic directions:

1. **Quality Learning** – For all members of the RTHS learning community to be engaged and continuous learners, capable of achieving their individual potential.

2. **Quality Relationships** - To foster a culture of resilience and respect within the whole school community. Promoting an environment that enhances staff and student well-being.

3. **Quality Community Connections**- To work in collaboration with the Rutherford group of schools to build innovative partnerships, based on respect and high expectations within the wider community.
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.

Michael Whiting- Principal
Simone Hughes-Deputy Principal
Kylie Fabri-Deputy Principal
Kristine Turner- Head Teacher Welfare
Craig Trotter- Head Teacher Mathematics
Steve Edwards- Head Teacher Science
Loretta Hornery- Head Teacher CAPA
David Thomas-Head Teacher PDHPE
Michele McKenna- Head Teacher HSIE

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