

2007 Annual School Report Tomaree High School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way



Our school at a glance

Students

The 2007 school enrolment was 1271. Of these 339 were senior students.

On average 87% of junior and 83% of senior students attended each day.

Our school's retention rate of students from 2005 Year 10 to 2007 Year 12 was 54%.

Forty-three Year 12 students (37% of eligible students) received first round university offers.

Staff

Tomaree High School is fortunate to have a low turnover of teaching staff (7% in 2007). Our teachers are both enthusiastic and inspiring. There is a healthy mix of experienced and early career teachers (9% have been teaching for five or less years). The school had 88 teaching staff, assisted by 22 administrative and support staff.

All teaching staff met the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Significant programs and initiatives

The school ran a variety of programs to give students extra educational support throughout 2007. Some of these were:

- Real Futures
- Cooling Conflicts
- Pirate Quest
- Return to School Centre
- Learning Centre
- Student Forum
- Specialist Year 7 and 8 Classes.

Student achievement in 2007

Literacy and numeracy

Year 7 students performed significantly above average in state-wide literacy and numeracy tests. In literacy 88% of students achieved 'proficient' or 'high' compared with 84% for the state. In numeracy 65% achieved 'proficient' or 'high' compared with 63% for the state.

School Certificate

Seventeen students scored one or more Band 6 (the highest achievement band) in the School Certificate tests. In total our students gained 32 Band 6 and 168 Band 5 results.

Higher School Certificate

Twenty students scored one or more Band 6 in the HSC. In total our students gained 43 Band 6

and 81 Band 5 results. One student was placed on the Premier's All-Rounder list which included students who attained Band 6 results in at least five subjects. One student was placed eighth in the state in English Advanced. Seven students scored a Universities Admission Index (UAI) over 90. The school's top UAI was 98.5.

Messages

Principal's message

Tomaree High School shares a modern, well-equipped campus with Tomaree Primary School and Tomaree TAFE. The latest technology supports learning in an educational setting that received international recognition for its innovative design. Providing a personalised education for every student is a priority.

Tomaree High has a proud history of excellent academic and vocational results as well as outstanding success in artistic, cultural and sporting pursuits. This report provides examples of student and school successes and highlights our commitment to continuous improvement.

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.

Robert Farley, BSc Dip Ed

P&C message

Tomaree High School maintained a small but active and dedicated P&C Association which met on a regular basis throughout 2007. The P&C provided input to emerging policies and programs and community feedback on matters of interest and concern. Many P&C meetings were addressed by the leaders of different programs such as head teachers of school departments, community mentors, Hunter Valley Youth Express and Real Futures. Members of the P&C participated in the merit selection of both deputy principal positions that were filled substantively during the year. Additionally, the P&C examined options for updating and remodelling the school uniform and investigated the process for engaging a contractor to provide a permanent on-campus uniform shop. The P&C was represented at the Year 12 Farewell Assembly and Year 10 Presentation Assembly. On both occasions the P&C presented Student Citizenship Awards to deserving students.

Robert Rudge – P&C President

Student representatives' message

The Student Forum was again active in raising money for charity. Throughout the year approximately \$3000 was raised by the student body with leadership from the Student Forum.

The charities that benefited were the Cancer Council (Daffodil Day), genetic research (Jeans for Genes Day) and the Starlight Foundation.

In partnership with the Rotary Club of Salamander, our major focus for the year was to build a relationship between Tomaree High and the first school to be established in Nando Village, Papua New Guinea. We raised money to assist the work of Rotary and students filled shoe boxes with school supplies and treats for the children of the village. These were personally delivered by members of Rotary and two of our student leaders, Thomas Dowden and Jarrod Walker.

There were a number of leadership skill building opportunities for students throughout 2007 starting with a Student Forum training day for all members. Fifty Year 11 students completed a seminar on leadership at school, whilst interested students participated in the Impact Leadership seminar at the University of Newcastle and the Halogen Foundation Seminar in Sydney. All school students had the opportunity to build their leadership skills in a one-day seminar conducted by the team from Dare to Dream, held during the welfare days in Term 1.

Kayla Sharp

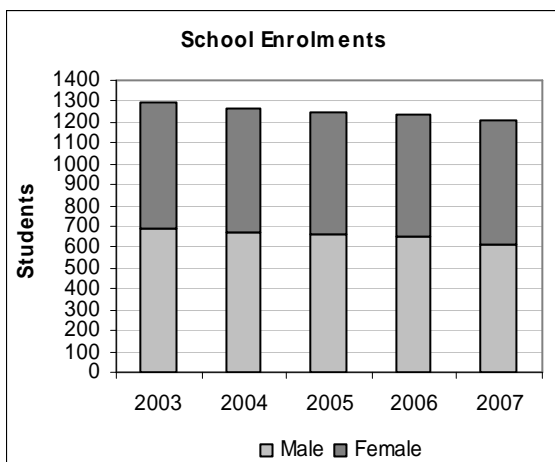
David Craig

School context

Student information

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

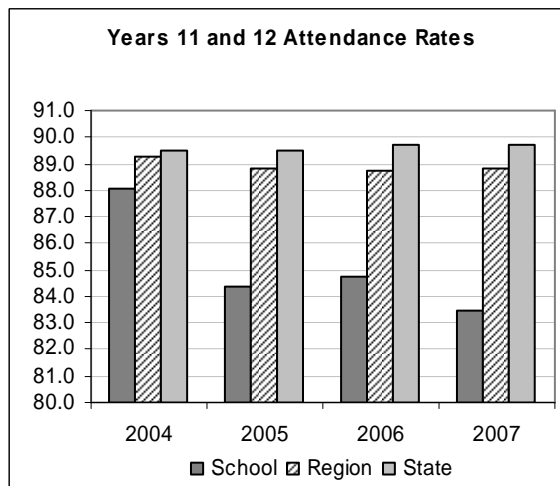
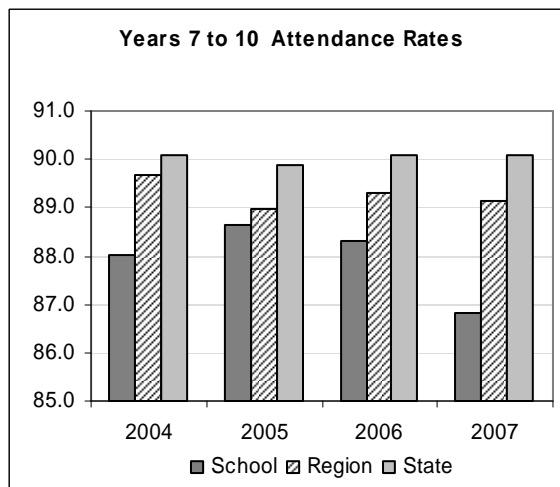
Student enrolment profile



The above graph shows school enrolments at the end of Semester 1 each year (not the enrolment at the start of each year). The trend over the last five years has been a slow decline in enrolments. However, Tomaree High continued to attract the vast majority of students progressing from local public primary schools (87% of Year 6 students in 2006 enrolled at Tomaree High in 2007).

Due to strong demand for enrolment the school strictly adhered to its enrolment policy, which gave preference to students who lived within its drawing area.

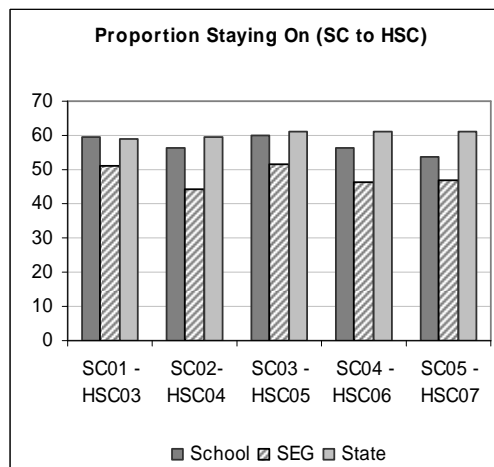
Student attendance profile



The graphs show Semester 1 attendance for the last four years. Both junior and senior student attendance continued to be below both state and regional average. Improving student attendance rates will be a school priority in 2008.

See 2008 Target 4

Retention Year 10 to Year 12



The graph shows the percentage of students staying on at our school from Year 10 to Year 12 over the last five years. Our school's retention rate is consistently above regional but below state average.

Post-school destinations

In 2007, of the Year 10 students who signed the Real Futures Charter, 82% were at school, 8% were in further education and training and 5% were in full-time work on 31 March 2007. The Real Futures program could not contact 5% of students as they had moved from this area.

Data showed that 6% of Year 9 left the school. Half of these students left to attend other schools outside our district. Just 1% of Year 9 students left to obtain a job. In Year 11, 20% of the cohort left during the year, 58% of these students left to take up an apprenticeship, work full-time or undertake further training.

Our HSC students again achieved higher than state average admission rates to university (37% of eligible students received a university place). TAFE studies were undertaken by 20% while 18% began apprenticeships, traineeships or cadetships. Ten percent found full-time work.

Staff information

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

Staff establishment

In 2007 Tomaree High School had 73 full-time and 15 part-time permanent teachers. The majority of these teachers had more than 15 years teaching experience. There was also a significant and growing percentage (9%) of teachers with less than 5 years teaching experience.

In addition, 14 full-time and 5 part-time support staff assisted students and staff. The school also had a Special Religious Education teacher, funded by local churches.

Position	Number
Principal	1
Deputy Principals	2
Head Teachers	15
Classroom Teachers	60
Teachers of Students with Disabilities	3
Support Teachers Learning Assistance	2
Teacher Librarian	1
Teacher of ESL	1
Careers Adviser	1
Counsellors	2
Total	88

Staff retention

During our 2006–07 staffing cycle one teacher accepted a transfer to another school and two retired. The proportion of teaching staff retained in 2007 was 97%.

Staff attendance

Staff have access to leave entitlements such as sick leave. In 2007 the average daily attendance rate for staff, as determined by the Department, was 95.4%.

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools. The following table gives a breakdown of teaching staff qualifications.

Qualifications	% of staff
Degree or Diploma	100
Postgraduate	15

Financial summary

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

Date of financial summary:	30/11/2007
Income	\$
Balance brought forward	481 106.45
Global funds	586 500.47
Tied funds	410 563.57
School & community sources	374 742.93
Interest	43 649.70
Trust receipts	57 931.94
Canteen	308 258.94
<i>Total income</i>	<u>2 262 754.00</u>
Expenditure	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	138 143.50
Excursions	117 959.70
Extracurricular dissections	136 584.72
Library	9 906.00
Training & development	2 369.63
Tied funds	412 055.24
Casual relief teachers	201 451.62
Administration & office	238 318.54
School-operated canteen	245 106.97
Utilities	106 224.54
Maintenance	49 891.74
Trust accounts	41 284.74
Capital programs	15 757.96
<i>Total expenditure</i>	<u>1 715 054.90</u>
Balance carried forward	<u>547 699.10</u>

The balance carried forward includes a significant proportion of committed funds. These include

funds that are 'tied' or held in 'trust' for specific purposes and unpaid goods on order. Funds available for discretionary use include \$60 000 set aside for asset replacement.

In 2007 the voluntary school contributions set by the school community were:

Years 7–10 per student	\$60
Years 11–12 per student	\$85

A full copy of the 2007 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the P&C. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2007

Achievements

Arts

The school provides a broad range of artistic pursuits including visual art, visual design, ceramics and photography and film production as well as performance activities such as dance, drama and music.

- The school's contribution to Starstruck was a feature. Thirty-two students performed, with Lisa Steane and Lana Steane featured dancers and Elliott Walker a featured singer.
- Jamie Saunders was a national finalist in the Moran Contemporary Photographic Competition making her the only student to achieve this status two years in a row.
- Natasha Chater attended state dance camp at the Sydney Dance Company and Teigan McCarty performed in the Tantrum Theatre production of *Riot* at the Civic Theatre Playhouse.
- Students in 7M and 7P visited the Sydney Opera House to see *Circus Oz*. They also attended a series of workshops to develop performance skills. Students demonstrated what they had learnt by presenting a polished show for parents, primary students and at a peer assembly.
- Students in 8G presented *Colour My World*, a variety show with song, dance, and drama which they performed to an invited audience and at a peer assembly.
- Various drama groups performed for parents at the school expo night, farewell assemblies, as part of the CAPA night and at the Year 9 Presentation Assembly in Term 4.

Sport

In 2007 students achieved excellence in a variety of team and individual sports.

- In swimming Tomaree High dominated the Port Stephens Zone Championships where

Brittany Stewart (12yrs), Jordan Black (13yrs), Reshaye Hollier (14yrs), Dean Elliott (14yrs), Matthew James (15yrs), Todd Elliott (16yrs) and Emma Bender (17yrs) were all age champions. Tomaree High was named Port Stephens Zone Champion School. The Hunter trials followed with Jordan Black, Brittany Stewart, Dean Elliott and Lauren Funnell gaining individual entries to the Combined High Schools (CHS) swimming carnival. Our 12yr boys and girls and 13yr boys relay teams also won through to the CHS carnival.

- Cross Country winners at zone level were Jordan Black (13yrs), Jake Rudge (14yrs), Glenn Schein (15yrs), Katie Phillips (15yrs), Ethan Arndell (13yrs), Matthew Denahy (17yrs), Reshaye Hollier (14yrs), Lisa Steane (12yrs), Sarah McAliece (17yrs), Drew Watkins (18yrs). Tomaree High was the Port Stephens Zone Champion School and had three competitors make it through to the CHS titles: Edan Taylor, Katie Phillips, and Sarah McAliece.
- Athletics Carnival winners at the zone championships were Jayden Parsons and Lisa Steane (12yrs), Adam Cottrell (15yrs), Rhiannon Metcalfe (16yrs), Sarah McAliece (17yrs). Tomaree High was the Port Stephens Zone Champion School. From the regional carnival, the following students were selected to represent at the CHS carnival in Sydney. Lana Steane (Shot and Discus), Jake Rudge (1500m Walk), Adam Cottrell (100m), Emmalee Harris (800m), Rhiannon Metcalfe (400m), Katie Phillips (200m Hurdles) and Sarah McAliece (400m).
- We had many students who trialled for regional teams this year. Some of these students represented the Hunter region at the CHS titles. In gymnastics: Lisa Steane, Kristen Neil and Laura Wilson. Lisa was placed first in her grade and her team won their division. In touch football: Sam Earl, Sarah Chippindale and Alesha Wythes were selected to represent the Hunter region.
- Tomaree High competed in many of the CHS knockouts throughout the year. The best performances were: Under 15 girls soccer reached the regional semi final; Under 14 Buckley Shield Rugby league reached the regional semi final; open girls hockey reached the regional semi final and table tennis reached the regional final.

Extension and Enrichment

- Timothy Schein (Year 12) was the Hunter winner of the Sydney Morning Herald Young Writer of the Year Award.
- Kate Prince (Year 12) was zone finalist in the Lions Youth of the Year Award.

- Shaylia Naldo, Cassidy Loane, James White and Chelsea Turrell (Year 9) were runners-up in the zone final of the Teasedale Cup debating.
- Connor O'Sullivan, Jarrad Courts (Year 7), Jesse Cranney (Year 8) and Jeffrey Bell (Year 10) received distinctions in the Westpac Mathematics Competition.
- Year 10 geography student Joel Burns received a high distinction in the Australian Geography Competition, while 16 other students received distinctions.
- Year 10 geography students entered the WESSTA Junior Geography Competition, gaining 4 high distinctions and 28 distinctions.
- At the University of Newcastle Year 11 and 12 physics and chemistry students participated in Experiment Fest.
- Melissa Halliday and Bradley Russell (Year 10) were selected to attend the National Indigenous Science Camp held at the University of South Australia in Adelaide.
- Ella Burchmore (Year 7) made the state final of the Minister's Young Designer Awards for students in Years 7 and 8 studying technology.
- Class 10 Science 1 competed in the Science and Engineering Challenge in Newcastle finishing third against all Hunter schools.
- Mitchell Brown, Samantha Smyth, Darren Bailey and Kara Bouchier (Year 10) won prizes from Legacy for essays on Kokoda in the Legacy Essay Competition.
- Year 10 students Emily Beckett, Emily John, Michael Cavarretta and Jordan Murphy travelled to Canberra to participate in the Global Communities for Sustainability Project, working with schools from Australia and India.
- Teagan Hunter (Year 12) had her textiles and design major project selected for inclusion in the Textile Exhibition of Excellence, whilst all Year 12 textiles and design major projects were exhibited at the local Community Arts Centre to wide acclaim.

General (including citizenship)

- Year 11 hospitality students demonstrated their skills at the Port Stephens Food and Wine Festival.
- Senior hospitality and Year 10 food technics students catered for major school events, including the Year 12 Farewell and the Real Futures Charter Signing Ceremony.
- Senior building and construction students designed and built seating and shelters in the playground.

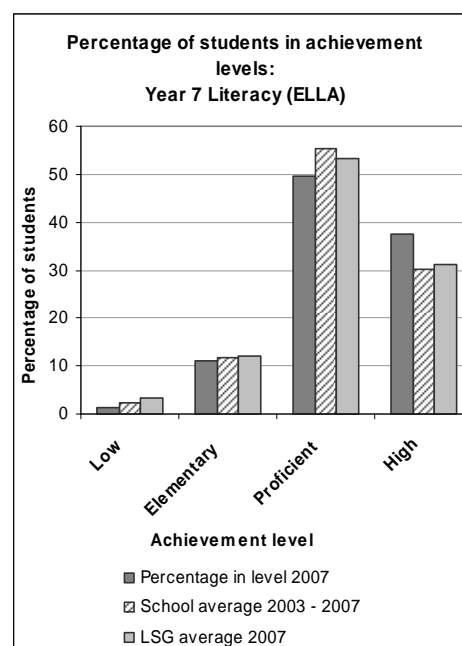
- Year 12 agriculture students successfully harvested the school's 2007 vintage wine with the assistance of local winery Diver's Luck.
- Year 12 primary industry students operated and managed the school nursery, producing native trees for mine rehabilitation company Unimin and generating income of \$2000.
- Year 10 completed a peer support training course and then assisted the transition of Year 6 students into Year 7.
- Year 12 students raised \$2500 for the Heart Foundation in the lead up to their graduation assembly.
- The school's welfare team ran a program of year group camps designed to develop social skills and peer cohesion. Year 9 attended the Royal Easter Show, Year 10 travelled to the Gold Coast, while Years 7 and 8 attended the Aussie Bush Camp. An excursion to Newcastle for students with privilege cards was conducted in Term 4.

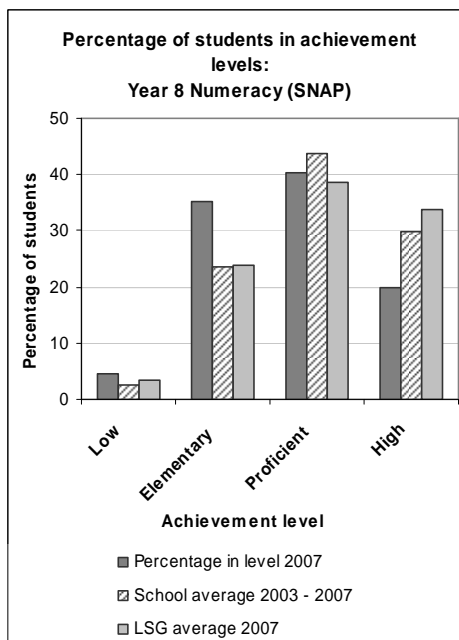
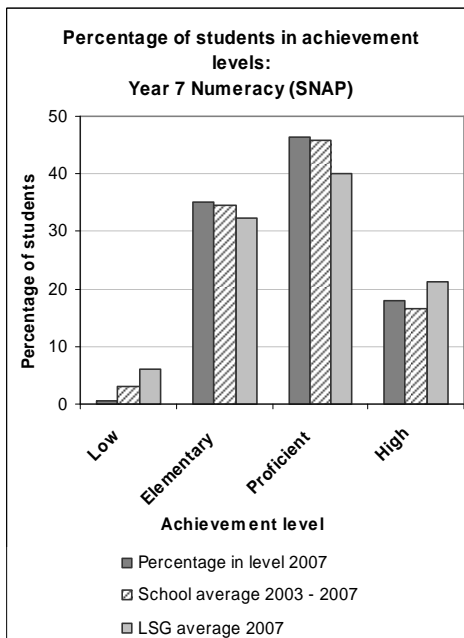
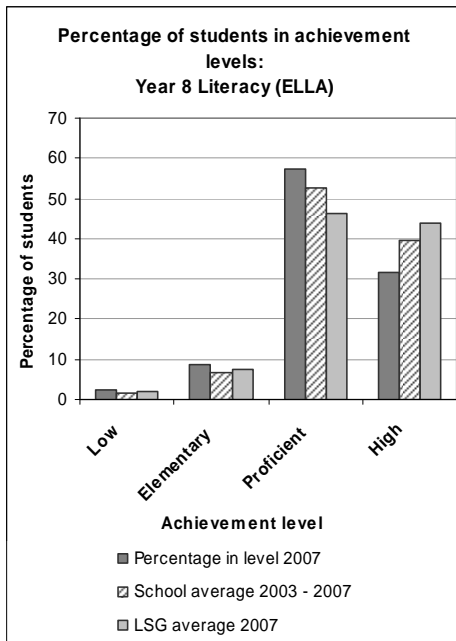
Academic

Literacy (ELLA test) and numeracy (SNAP test)

In the English Language and Literacy Assessment (ELLA) and Secondary Numeracy Assessment Program (SNAP) tests undertaken by our Year 7 and Year 8 students, performance was reported as 'low', 'elementary', 'proficient' or 'high'.

In 2007 the vast majority of students in Year 8 improved both their ELLA and SNAP results compared with their Year 7 results in 2006. (The graphs below show the performances of two different cohorts.)





National benchmarks

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum desirable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages. These are referred to as national benchmarks.

The performance of the students in our school in the Year 7 ELLA and the Year 7 SNAP is compared with these benchmarks. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these benchmarks are reported below.

Percentage of Year 7 students in our school achieving benchmarks in 2006 and 2007

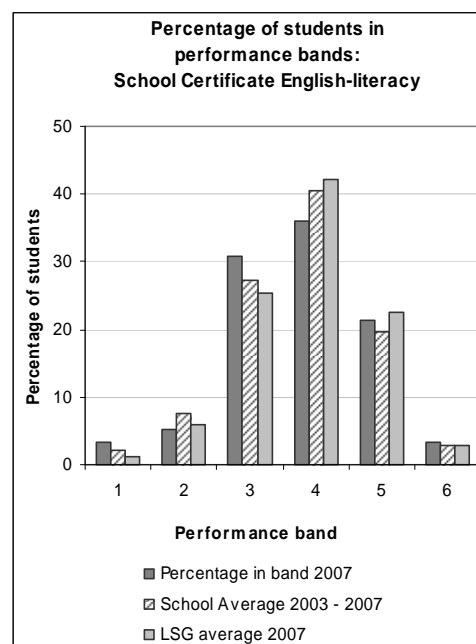
Percentage of Year 7 students meeting national benchmarks				
	2006		2007	
	School	National	School	National
Reading	79.5	*	87.9	*
Writing	93.9	*	93.2	*
Numeracy	57.1	*	71.5	*

* National benchmarks were not available at the time of printing this report.

School Certificate

Tomaree High had 209 students who sat for the formal state-wide tests in English-literacy, mathematics, science, Australian history civics and citizenship, Australian geography civics and citizenship and computing skills. Results were reported in six bands, with Band 6 the highest level of achievement and Band 1 the lowest.

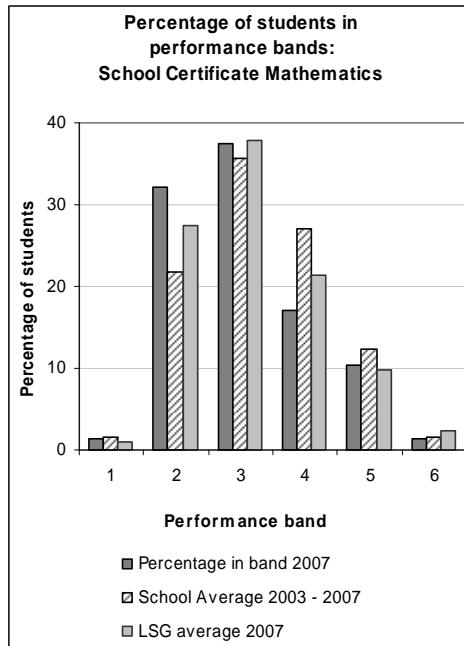
English-literacy



The results in English-literacy showed a slight decline, with 60% of students scoring in the top three bands (Bands 4, 5 and 6) compared with the state average of 72%. This compares with the

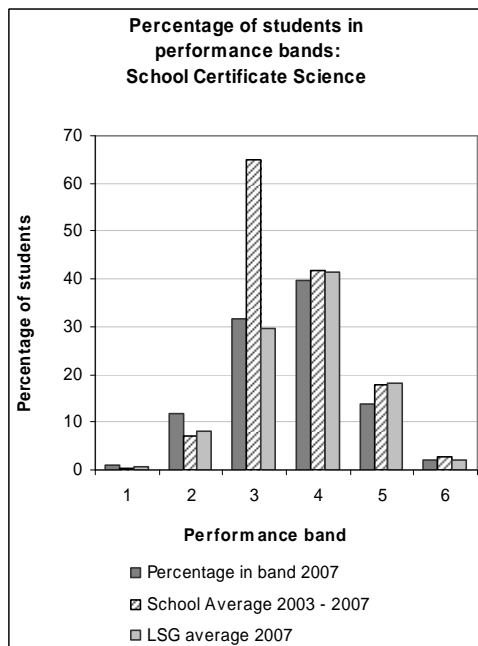
previous year, where 62% achieved the same result. Seven students achieved a Band 6, which was the same number as the previous year.

Mathematics



In mathematics 28% of students attained a top three band compared with the state average of 55%. This was similar to the previous year where 30% of our students achieved these bands. Three students achieved a Band 6. Lower and upper band students demonstrated improved performance over previous years.

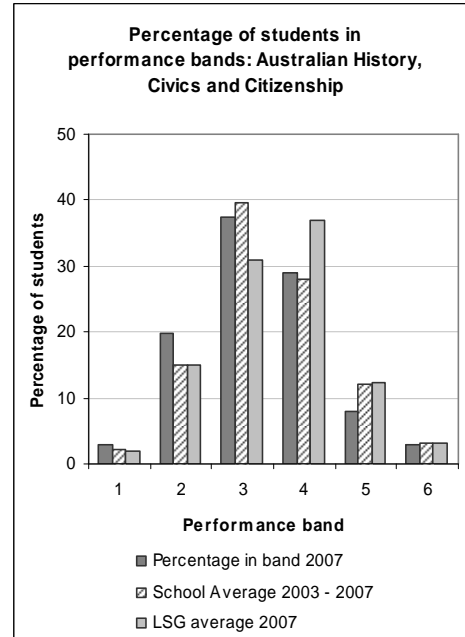
Science



In science 55% of students scored in the top three bands compared with the state average of 65%. This compares with the previous year, where 54% achieved the same result. Value-added results, using Year 5 Basic Skills Test (BST) results, were positive for students in both

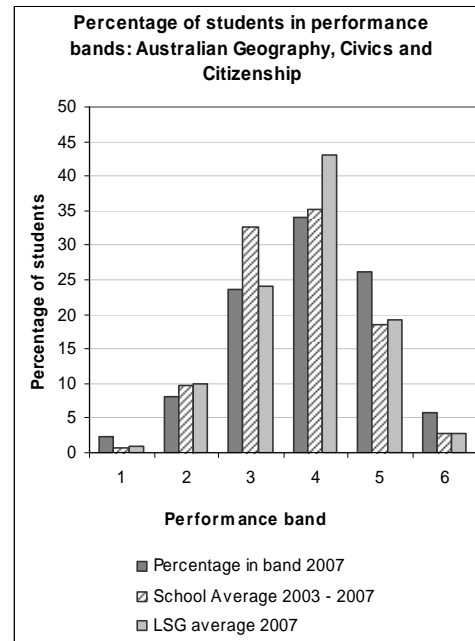
lower and upper bands. Four students attained Band 6.

Australian history, civics and citizenship



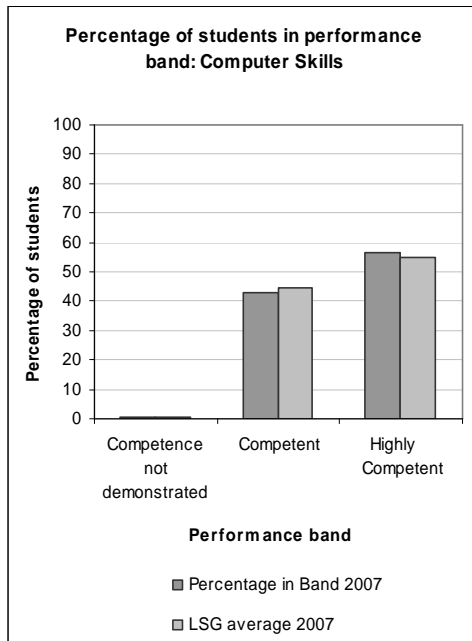
Thirty-nine percent of students scored in the top three bands with the state average being 60%. Students in the upper bands value-added significantly compared with BST results. One student gained a perfect score in this exam. Six students achieved a Band 6.

Australian geography, civics and citizenship



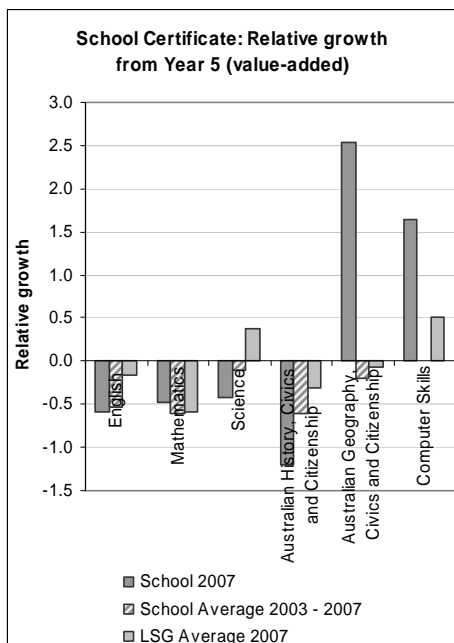
Sixty-six percent of students achieved in the top three bands compared with 71% for the state. Students in upper and lower bands value-added compared with their BST results. One student gained a perfect score. Twelve students obtained a Band 6 compared with ten the previous year.

Computing skills



Of the students who undertook this exam 98.1% were determined to be either highly competent or competent compared to the state result of 97.6%. Value-added data shows significant improvement in both upper and lower band groups.

School Certificate relative performance comparison to Year 5 (value-adding)



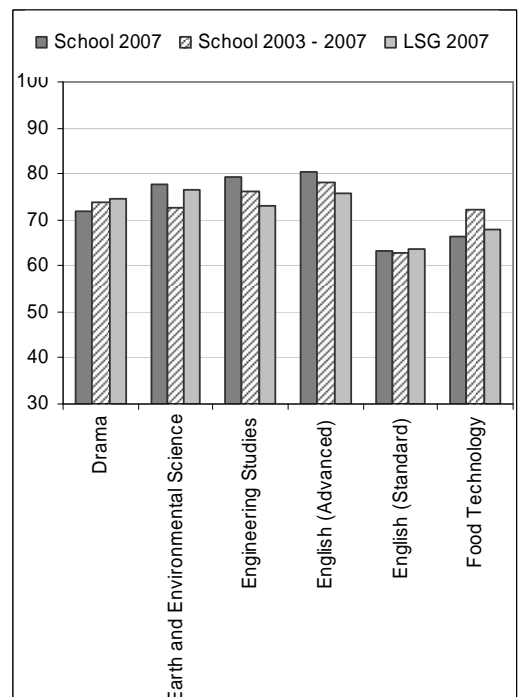
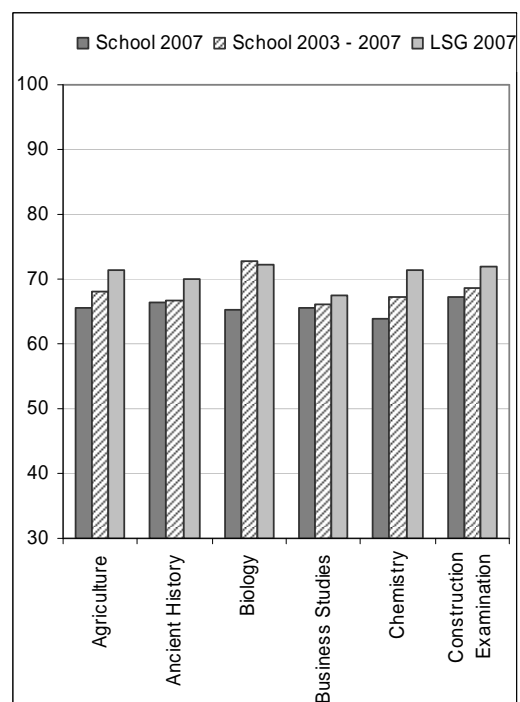
Overall results show that the school value-added at close to the state average. Female students achieved greater value-added results in English-literacy, mathematics and Australian history, civics and citizenship. The opposite occurred in science. In Australian geography, civics and citizenship and computing skills students demonstrated excellent value-adding without any real gender difference.

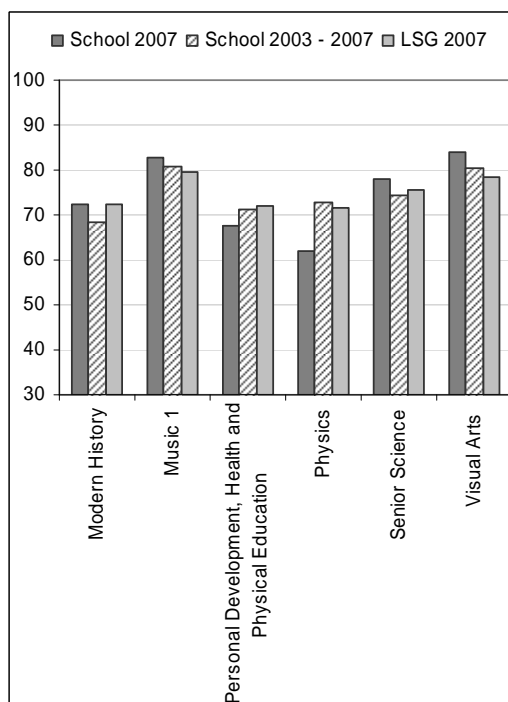
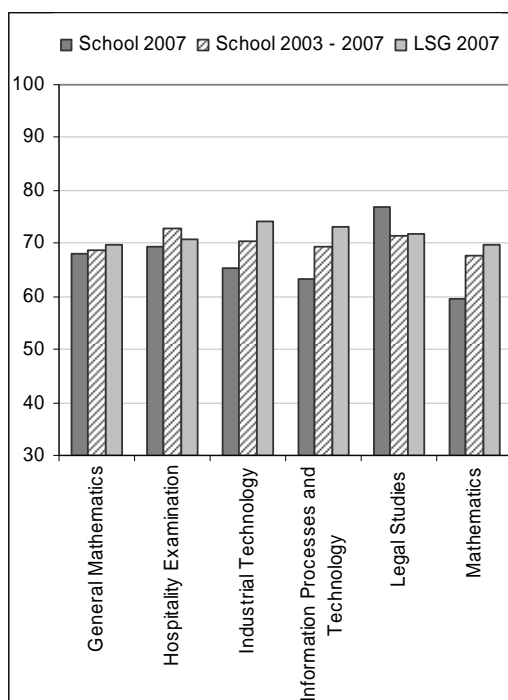
Higher School Certificate (HSC)

In the HSC, performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from Performance Band 1 (lowest) to Performance Band 6 (highest). It is not valid to equate Band 6 results in different subjects.

In 2007 130 students sat for the HSC examinations. Final HSC marks were based on 50% in-school assessment and 50% HSC examination.

The following graphs show the mean (average) score for all HSC subjects (with greater than 10 students) compared with the mean score for students at Tomaree High over the last five years and the Like Schools Group (LSG) 2007 candidature.





English

Results in advanced English were above state average, with 49% of students receiving a Band 5 or 6 compared with the state average of 47%. Nine students scored a Band 5, with seven students achieving a Band 6. In English extension 1, four students (67%) scored in the top band compared with 22% in the state. In English extension 2, all of the candidates scored in the top two bands compared with the state figure of 79%. Both of these results were well above state average. This continues a significant pattern of improvement demonstrated over the past four years. The results in English standard were below state average, with only 29% in the top three bands, compared with 39% across the state. Girls significantly out-performed boys.

Mathematics

In mathematics, 25% achieved in the top three bands compared with 70% for the state. In general mathematics, 12% of students were placed in the top two bands compared with the state average of 23%. Two students attained a Band 6 in this course. Mathematics extension 2 results were below state average, with all students scoring in the third band. In mathematics extension 1, two of the seven students (29%) were placed in the top two bands, compared with 75% of the state.

Sciences

In senior science, 50% of students achieved results in the top two bands compared with 37% in the state. Results in physics, chemistry, biology and earth and environmental science were below state average. However, Band 6 results were achieved by students in senior science, physics, biology and earth and environmental science. All students in earth and environmental science and senior science value-added compared with Year 10 results. In agriculture 30% of students scored in the top three bands, compared with 76% of the state.

Human society and its environment (HSIE)

Legal studies and society and culture results were well above the state average. All students (50%) in legal studies achieved Bands 5 and 6 compared with 41% of the state. Three students gained a Band 6 in ancient history with one student gaining the same result in business studies. Marks in ancient history, modern history, history extension and business studies were below state average.

Technology and applied studies (TAS)

Marks achieved in design and technology, engineering studies, and textiles and design were all above state average. All eight students who sat for the textiles and design exam scored in the top two bands compared with 56% for the state, with five students gaining Band 6. In engineering studies 36% of the students achieved a Band 5 or 6 compared with the state average of 29%. Results in information processing and technology, food technology and industrial technology were below the state average. However, some individual results in these subjects were outstanding.

Creative and performing arts

Results in visual arts and music were significantly above the state average. All students studying visual arts or music 1 achieved in the top three bands. Five visual arts students gained a Band 6 and in music 1 two students attained the same result. The results in drama were below state average. However, one student was successful in gaining a Band 6.

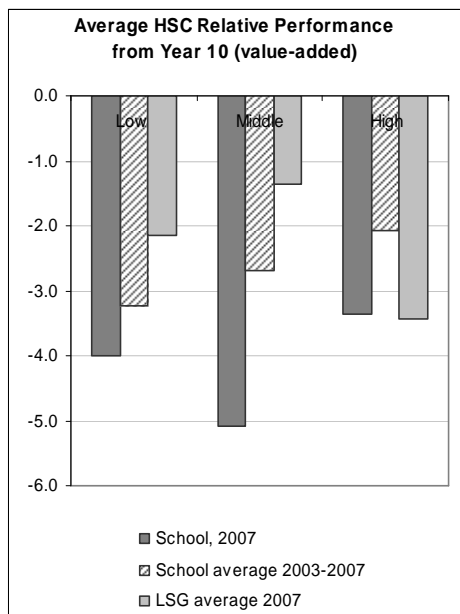
Personal development, health and physical education

Personal development, health and physical education students scored below the state average. The results in community and family studies were above the state average, with 86% of students scoring in the top three bands. This compares with the state average of 70%.

Vocational education and training (VET)

Fifty-nine students studied a VET course in the frameworks: primary industries, metals and engineering, hospitality, retail operations and construction. Of these, 56 students sat for the optional VET exam in their chosen framework. The exam results in primary industries were above the state average. Exam results in other frameworks were below the state average.

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



Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

A highlight of 2007 was the opening of the first Aboriginal resource room on the Tomaree Peninsula, Boolarng (meaning 'together'). Approximately 50 members of the local Aboriginal community attended the opening. This was followed by a smoking ceremony conducted by Jamie Tarrant, Chairperson of the Worimi Land Council. With the support of Janine Hayward, Aboriginal Education Worker, the resource room became an important meeting point for Aboriginal students and resulted in increased knowledge of, and interest in, Aboriginal identity and heritage. The *Boolarng Times* was published twice in 2007 to keep students and parents informed.

Melissa Halliday and Bradley Russell attended the annual Science Summer School for

Indigenous students conducted by the University of South Australia. Both students reported the experience as an absolute highlight of their lives so far. Five Aboriginal students completed their HSC in 2007, with Grace Mayers and Reanne Common continuing their studies at University. Three students Jessica-Lee Astley, Jackson Read and Tanille Potter attended a leadership camp. Tanille was invited to join the junior regional Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG). Hayley Naden was selected for the Commonwealth Bank's Aboriginal traineeship, a position offered to all Aboriginal students in the Hunter.

Also in 2007, the Parents in Schools Partnership Initiative (PSPI) was implemented at Shoal Bay Public School to improve outcomes for all Aboriginal students enrolled in public schools across the Tomaree Peninsula. The 2007 funding submission was successful and all schools gained eight hours per week to provide mentoring and in-class tutoring for Aboriginal students.

Multicultural education

In 2007 Tomaree High continued to promote cultural diversity. Significant achievements included:

- Opening the Aboriginal resource room.
- Appointing an Aboriginal Education Worker.
- Twenty-five Year 10 students led 'Cooling Conflicts' workshops in four primary schools, which involved over 200 primary students.
- Revising KLA programs to include culturally inclusive elements that celebrate and develop understanding of cultural, linguistic and religious differences.
- Conducting signing lessons for special education students.
- Welcoming the State Minister for Fair Trading, Linda Burney, a person of Aboriginal heritage who was both informative and inspirational.

In 2007 fifty students were enrolled at Tomaree High whose main language spoken at home was not English. Two students were enrolled in the new arrivals program and received intensive English as a Second Language (ESL) support. We also welcomed overseas exchange students Kristoffer Pinholt and Kit Poulsen, both from Denmark, whilst 2006 HSC students Raegan Arndell and Sasha Maher spent 2007 in Germany and France respectively, both sponsored by Rotary.

Respect and responsibility

In 2007 Tomaree High School reinforced the following belief statements that were developed and endorsed by the whole school community the previous year.

To achieve excellence we should be:

- respectful
- responsible
- honest
- tolerant
- cooperative.

These beliefs have been displayed, as a series of five posters, in every classroom and the MPC.

In 2007 an Effective Behaviour Support survey was conducted with all staff. It measured the effectiveness of school-wide behaviour systems within classroom and non-classroom settings. The survey found that 98% of teachers believed that school beliefs statements were in place and 86% of teachers felt they strongly and positively affected classroom environments, whilst 14% of teachers felt they only partially affected classroom environments.

Our beliefs statements will continue to provide a common language within the school. They are explicitly taught during pastoral care lessons and provide a comprehensive framework for positive student–teacher relationships across the school.

Specialist Classes in Years 7 and 8

In 2007 our specialist classes continued to be successful with the 2006 cohort moving into their Year 8 classes with minimal changes.

For incoming Year 7 students the program offered the opportunity to be selected into either an academic extension class, or a creative and performing arts (CAPA) class. Year 6 students from across the Tomaree Peninsula gathered at our school to take part in one or both of the audition days for CAPA, and the selection day for academic extension. Twenty-eight students were selected from a very competitive group of students to form our academic extension class. An overwhelming response for CAPA auditions resulted in the formation of two high-quality CAPA classes. One class focused on dance and drama, the other on music and visual arts.

In 2007 the academic extension classes worked through the curriculum more quickly, and completed challenging projects that extended their learning in each key learning area. This included work in the form of ‘rich tasks’ that allowed students more choice and the ability to work independently on specialised tasks.

The CAPA classes worked across KLAs with a creative focus. Students in these classes worked on a ‘rich task’ with a specific focus. This task encouraged extension of current skills and experimentation across the disciplines of CAPA. Year 7 focused on *The Circus*, while Year 8 worked on *The Colours of My World*. Throughout the year various performances and presentations were attended by parents and family, allowing students to display their new skills.

Transition from primary to high school

In 2007 a team of teachers worked together to improve the transition to high school for the incoming Year 7 students. The team included a teacher representative from each of the Peninsula primary schools and the high school. The activities organised included a walking tour of the high school, sample high school lessons, a sports day, visits by current Year 7 and 10 students, a parent information evening and an orientation day. These activities provided greater confidence in the transition to high school.

The transition team will continue in 2008 with an emphasis on improving the continuity of learning.

Specialist behaviour programs

Tomaree High expanded provision of alternative educational settings on the Tomaree Peninsula. Two years ago, the Return to School Centre (RTSC) was established to cater for students from Years 5 to 8 who had been suspended from their school for up to 20 days. This provided suitable students with teacher support whilst their suspensions were resolved. Special programs were delivered in this setting that focused on academic and social skill development.

In 2007 the Tomaree Alternate Learning Centre (TALC) was established. It also catered for students in Years 5 to 8, but placements were for longer periods than the RTSC, up to six months. Individualised programs in the TALC addressed behaviour and learning difficulties.

The aim of both centres is to help students successfully transition back to their home school.

Programs for students with additional educational needs

The education of students with additional educational needs was an important component of the educational programs offered at Tomaree High in 2007. All students were valued for their contribution to the school community and were welcomed within their year cohort on excursions and other co-curricula activities. In addition to two specialised support classes, a significant number of students were individually supported within normal classes. This support included adjusted lessons, teacher’s aide assistance and specialised support teachers (e.g. hearing, vision, behaviour and learning assistance) and provision of alternate learning tasks, both on and off site.

Services for students with additional learning needs were overseen by the Learning Support Team (LST). The LST co-ordinated program adjustments for students with a range of physical and intellectual disabilities through a process of appraisal, access, programming and reappraisal.

In 2007 the LST ensured that:

- Each student’s learning support needs were student-centred and coordinated.

- Regular, two-way communication occurred between the school and its community.
- Teaching and support staff participated in a range of professional development activities.

Student Welfare

In 2007 the work of the Student Forum, the students' leadership group, was refined. Students participated in leadership preparation courses at school and with other students from Newcastle and Sydney schools. This helped them motivate the student body to develop a partnership with a school from a very poor community, Nando village in Papua New Guinea. Students worked with the Rotary Club of Salamander to send shoe boxes filled with school supplies and treats to the children of the village. The students also raised \$1000 for the village.

Students participated in a pastoral care program during roll call that consolidated the work on our school's beliefs statements. These sessions also focused on anti-bullying, study skills, developing positive relationships and significant events like Daffodil Day and Remembrance Day.

The school's anti-bullying plan was reviewed and endorsed by the whole school community and incorporated into the Welfare and Discipline Policy. Strategies to build resilience and prevent bullying were featured in regular year adviser lessons presented to Years 7 and 8.

Progress on 2007 targets

Target 1

Increase student ownership of and engagement in learning.

Our achievements include:

- Provided extensive teacher professional learning (TPL) focused on the Quality Teaching (QT) Framework. TPL funds, school development days, staff and faculty meeting time was devoted to learning about programming and teaching, with explicit links to the QT elements.
- Reviewed and refined assessment tasks to incorporate QT elements.

Target 2

Promote positive student-teacher interactions.

Our achievements include:

- Established the Tomaree Alternate Learning Centre for students in Years 5 to 8 who needed to develop positive behaviour skills.
- Developed an updated student commendation and reward system incorporating a system of tangible rewards.

- Engaged social researcher Michael McQueen who worked with teachers to develop strategies to engage students in learning.
- Faculties developed and shared 'Positive Behaviour Plans' to encourage consistent use of positive behaviour management strategies across the school.

Target 3

Lift student attendance rates to the 2006 regional average.

Our achievements include:

- Purchased a new attendance system that incorporates the ability to automatically send SMS messages to parents. The system will be implemented in 2008.
- Interviewed all senior students with attendance concerns and worked with parents and students to address identified issues.
- Phoned the parents of students absent for two consecutive days.

Target 4

Actively promote a positive image of our school's students and staff in the wider school community.

Our achievements include:

- Implemented a strengthened Year 6 into 7 transition process. A representative team of teachers from across Peninsula schools met regularly throughout the year to evaluate and improve procedures and monitor progress.
- Reviewed the policy and selection processes for our school's Year 7 specialist classes and published detailed information for parents.
- Launched an up to date school website, wrote regular press releases of significant student and school achievement and purchased an electronic school sign.
- Increased the number of positive contacts with parents, passing on good news and celebrating students' successes.

Target 5

Encourage students and staff to work together to improve the school environment.

Our achievements include:

- Refurbished, monitored and maintained student toilet facilities. Students led this process.
- Sealed the dirt road to the school farm and lined with logs that serve as additional student seating.
- Senior class groups constructed additional seating and shade areas in the playground.

Key evaluations

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations - one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2007 our school carried out evaluations of student welfare structures and literacy across KLAs.

Student welfare structures and processes

Background

During Term 3 a team of four teachers attended the Fifth Annual Redbank School Conference in Sydney. This conference focused on managing challenging behaviours of students in schools. The team investigated a new approach to welfare and discipline based on Positive Behaviour Support (PBS). The key elements of this scheme were to develop a common set of values, create a positive climate in the classroom, gather reliable data to inform decision making and develop a set of common rules stated in a positive sense. A second team visited Jamison High School, a PBS school in the Penrith District. This was an opportunity to see PBS in action.

Findings and conclusions

Our school had already implemented much of the PBS philosophy, with a clear set of school values and beliefs developed in 2006 and a common set of classroom behaviours identified. All faculties had developed 'Positive Behaviour Plans' in 2007. However, it was clear that more needed to be done to implement a system of tangible rewards to reinforce positive behaviours. Also, we needed to improve collection and analysis of welfare data.

Future directions

In 2008 we will:

- Introduce a tangible reward system to encourage ongoing positive behaviour.
- Erect simple, visible signage to assist teachers to reinforce playground expectations.
- Review the school discipline policy within a PBS context.
- Modify our Student Tracking and Welfare (SWAT) program to assist in data analysis.

Literacy across the curriculum

Background

Analysis of ELLA results in 2006 and 2007 revealed areas of deficiency. HSC results also indicated that lower literacy levels were impacting on a significant proportion of students' HSC results. In response, the school evaluated literacy learning across all curriculum areas in Stage 4 (Years 7 and 8).

Findings and conclusions

The evaluation found that:

- Year 8 had substantial deficiencies in reading, language and writing.
- Boys, particularly in Year 8, showed little or no improvement on their 2006 Year 7 results.
- Quality teaching surveys showed that Year 8 boys tended to disengage from lessons involving literacy elements. This was not evident with Year 7. Also, the surveys showed a great deal of variation between faculties in the teaching of literacy.

Future directions

In 2008 Tomaree High School will, in Stages 4 and 5:

- Complete a scope and sequence plan for literacy across all KLAs.
- In all KLAs, as appropriate, emphasise the development of extended writing skills.
- Implement effective strategies to improve boys literacy learning. Extensive teacher professional learning will support this.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

Background

In 2007, for the second time, the school sought the opinions of the school community regarding school culture.

A random sample of students and parents were asked to complete a survey. The survey asked respondents to rate the school as 'Almost always', 'Usually', 'Sometimes' and 'Rarely' against 13 areas of school operation.

Findings and conclusions

- Parents again scored the school highly in the areas of using praise and reward, continuous improvement and the ability to encourage students to achieve their best.
- Year 7 students had the most positive responses to all questions. Year 8 scored the school highly in focusing on students as the area of main concern and in encouraging everyone to do their best. Years 9 and 10 rated the school less positively with the majority of responses in the 'Sometimes' category. They felt that the school rarely made important changes to what it did. Years 11 students were more positive, most students felt the school usually did well in the areas surveyed.
- Teachers did not complete the survey in 2007.

Future directions

In 2008 we will:

- Work towards a strong, sustainable and positive school culture by developing meaningful school mission and vision statements.
- Encourage community involvement in the new student reward program.

Professional learning

Background

In 2007, our school continued to focus on three main professional learning priorities as outlined in the school plan.

- Support the effective implementation of the QT Framework to increase student engagement with curriculum, and to improve student academic outcomes.
- Support quality relationships, and student and staff welfare, through effective behaviour management practices.
- Support staff in career and leadership development opportunities.

Findings and conclusions

- All teachers took part in faculty and cross-faculty workshops on staff development days as well as during various staff meetings throughout the year. Sessions focused on the implementation of QT, behaviour management, improving student engagement in the classroom and promoting positive teacher–student relationships.
- Individual professional learning opportunities were undertaken by members from all faculty areas. These activities and courses included the areas of career development, literacy and numeracy across the curriculum, QT, information and communication technologies (ICT), supporting beginning teachers, welfare and equity, and the implementation and delivery of current syllabi.
- There was a total of \$42 438 spent on teacher professional learning in 2007.
- The following table shows the broad breakdown of spending.

Beginning Teachers	5%
Literacy and Numeracy	6%
Use of ICT	7%
Leadership and Career Development	16%
Quality Teaching	20%
Welfare and Equity	20%
Syllabus Implementation	26%

Future Directions

In 2008 we will continue to target teacher professional learning funds to support our school's plan. Funds will continue to be spent in the areas identified in the table. The ratio of spending may change depending on the availability of professional learning opportunities and emerging needs.

School development 2006–2008

In 2005 an inclusive consultation process provided the opportunity for all members of our school's community to contribute to the development of our 3-year Strategic Plan 2006-2008. Each year an annual School Plan has been developed that addresses the five priority areas identified in the Strategic Plan.

Targets for 2008

The targets below will help focus our work in implementing the 2008 School Plan.

Target 1

Increase student engagement in learning by 25% compared with 2007.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- All teachers will address the QT elements deep knowledge, deep understanding, engagement and connectedness when planning learning activities.
- Volunteer teachers will invite peers to code lessons for the QT elements above.
- We will strengthen the subject selection process Years 8 into 9 and 10 into 11 to ensure that students make informed choices.
- We will implement a new commendation and reward system to encourage positive attitudes to learning.

Our success will be measured by:

- The percentage of students above or below 25% who respond either 'Always' or 'Mostly' in the QT surveys 'Intellectual quality and significance' and 'Quality learning environment'.

Target 2

Lift the literacy and numeracy skills of our Year 9 students to equal the respective state averages.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- We will implement whole-school literacy and numeracy plans that ensure skills in both areas are explicitly taught across all KLAs and in all stages.
- We will establish a Peninsula Public Schools professional action learning team to co-

ordinate literacy programs and the skill development of teachers across and between Peninsula schools - primary and secondary.

Our success will be measured by:

- The percentages above or below state averages of the Year 9 cohort's literacy and numeracy results compared with their Year 8 results in the external tests ELLA and SNAP.
- Faculty monitoring validating that literacy and numeracy plans are published and all faculties are systematically implementing appropriate aspects of the plans.
- The number of times that primary-secondary sharing and skill development activities have occurred and the number of teachers involved in these sessions.

Target 3

Reduce the number of student discipline incidents requiring deputy principal or principal intervention by 20% compared with 2007.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- We will collaboratively develop strengthened student discipline procedures that include reinforcement of positive behaviour.
- We will communicate the strengthened procedures to all stakeholders.
- Individual faculties will annually develop, implement and evaluate a 'Faculty Positive Behaviour Plan' within general school guidelines.

Our success will be measured by:

- The percentage reduction in the number of disciplinary interventions required by deputy principals and principal in 2008 compared with 2007.

Target 4

Lift student attendance rates to the regional average within two years.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- We will implement a new electronic roll marking system that allows automated SMS messaging to parents.
- We will increase the number of phone calls to parents if an attendance problem is suspected.
- We will work with parents and provide appropriate student support to lift the attendance of individual students.
- We will reward all students with 100% attendance in any one school term.

Our success will be measured by:

- The percentage improvement in overall school attendance rates in Semester 1 2008 compared with Semester 1 2007.
- The number of students with 100% attendance in a school term in 2007 compared with 2008.
- Achieving regional average attendance by the end of Semester 1 2009.

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.

The school's 2007 self-evaluation team included:

Sue Lawless	Parent Representative
Margaret Turton	Parent Representative
David Craig	Student Representative
Kayla Sharp	Student Representative
Paul Baxter	Staff Representative
Sue D'Arcy	Staff Representative
Keith Freeman	Staff Representative
Leonie Lee	Staff Representative
Ray Milton	Staff Representative
Robert Farley	Principal

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