School context
Balranald Central School is in a remote, rural and isolated setting which means that some students who attend the school come as far as 100 km on a round trip each day. Our students benefit from the strong learning community atmosphere and we offer a comprehensive Kindergarten to Year 12 curriculum.

Balranald Central School aims to empower students to develop and use their individual talents with confidence, creativity and generosity in a safe and happy supported environment.

Total enrolment across Kindergarten to Year 12 for 2013 was 148.

Principal’s message
I am once again astounded by the number of programs that are in place in such a small school. This is testimony to the enthusiasm of staff, parents and the community who support every opportunity presented to students across the board.

A school is a component of all its parts and how they come together to form an entity that is able to give the very best for all its students. Without doubt this school is very richly endowed with infrastructure that gives it a capacity well beyond its current enrolment. It is vital that we maintain this for as long as possible.

The Trade Training Centre and Hospitality areas are very significant in creating an expectation of both high and determined performance by all students as they progress through their educational journey in the school. This year saw the increased influence of the Trade Training Centre as there were a number of practical activities hosted in this area including a Trade Olympics for student teams.

Due to this facet of the community, even as the population continues to decline the loss of services has been very much absorbed and the impact limited.

The updating of resources that has happened in the more recent past has given rise to a real air of positivity for the school and the wider community. This is the essence of what we need to take forward into the future.

Thank you to staff and the team of parents who take every opportunity to assist with the number of roles that come up at seemingly endless frequency. I have spent many years in a number of secondary settings so it has been quite an eye opener to be taken back into an environment where parents are such an integral part of the school’s operation. I would like to acknowledge all those who have worked at the school, for your efforts in ensuring that learning programs are delivered effectively and the school is well presented. This includes the teaching staff, the administrative staff, teachers’ aides, the cleaning staff, the general assistant and our volunteers. My thanks go also to the executive staff that has assisted me in ensuring that programs that had been set up were followed and completed.

It would be very remiss of me not to mention the broad range of successes the school has had in the sporting realm, both in the team area and individually. Our sporting achievements are still outstanding for a small central school. We have managed to be runners up in both State Netball and boys Cricket. Plus our younger team has shown pleasing development, which bodes well for the future, as this is the breeding ground for their future aspirations at a senior level. A special mention of the bowls team that have made state representation is warranted.

Well done Joseph Gervasi in both Discus and Shot Put at Regional and Discus at State level with a fourth place.

As we move forward on our path of school development and student growth there will be many challenges to be encountered. I have every confidence in the quality of staff, parents and students to make the most of all that we will endure.

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.

Erich Riesinger - Principal

P & C and/or School Council message
A busy year was had by the P&C, holding many successful fund raising events (BBQS, Movie nights, catering, Fairy Floss Friday, Walkathon, Raffle, Mother’s Day and Father’s Day stalls)

The P&C supported annual school excursions, school sporting teams, individuals that represented the school at state level and the primary Aerobic team that competed at the
National titles. We purchased new sand for the primary play equipment area, two gymnastic/high jump mats and $1000 of infants guided reading books. Donations of prizes to the Balranald Race Day “fashion on the field” and Royal Far West were also made.

The Euston Club grant that was obtained in 2012 was spent on beautifying the school, front garden, constructing shelving in the uniform shop and purchasing a slushy machine for the school canteen, which the students have especially enjoyed on 40 degree days.

The canteen was successfully managed by Wyneta Dalton, with assistance from Kathy Bruton and Jamie Jackson who joined the canteen this year, and Glenda Redpath who assists in the canteen when they are busy. The ladies always provide delicious lunches and excellent service to the staff and students of our school. Thank you to the parents who support the canteen through ordering your child’s lunch.

The school Uniform shop was managed by Lisa Dalton, who has done a wonderful job volunteering her time, ordering and selling uniforms for the benefit of our school community. Thank you to both the canteen staff and Lisa for operating the canteen and Uniform shop in a professional manner.

Lastly, thank you to the committee for all their hard work and dedication to making Balranald Central School a better school. All students benefit from the hard work of the P&C. I would like to welcome any community members to come along and join the P&C in 2014.

Samita Lockhart - P & C President

Student representative’s message
This year, we farewell five very valued members of the SRC; Morgan Lister, Fraser White, Nathan Jolliffe, Michael Simpson and Kaitlyn Duffy. These five people have been helping in the SRC for up to 6 years.

A special thanks to Morgan Lister and Fraser White, who put in a special effort helping the SRC. Morgan, with her up front approach to life, was out there always helping us to get things done and was always first to raise her hand to make a speech or two! Fraser was the man to go to if you ever needed help behind the scenes. He was always there to help whether it was making pizza or helping Mrs White to get things done!

On behalf of the SRC, we would like to thank and farewell these students who have finished Year 12. We have very big shoes to fill but will try our best to take over the role of these fantastic role models.

During 2013, the SRC were responsible for:

- Painting and hanging murals
- Restoring basketball rings and boards
- RU OK Day cupcake-o-gram
- Wear Purple for Halo Day
- Footy Colours Day
- Black Balloon Day
- School Emblem Mosaic
- Good Friday Appeal pizzas
- Helping Hands Program
- Primary and Secondary Disco

Our biggest thanks goes to Mrs Michelle White! Mrs White has been running the SRC for as long as we can remember. We couldn’t have gotten to where we are today if it wasn’t for her and her husband, Mr White. Michelle is always willing to help and loves the SRC. Thanks so much Mrs White we couldn’t have done this without you!

We have held fundraisers for Cupcakes for a cure, sold popcorn at the Athletics Carnival for Chances for Children, and fundraised for the school’s gardens as well as some promotional banners.

As a result of this enthusiasm, the SRC have decided to invite 4 students from each year, 3-6 in the primary to work on the SRC for a term. Then another 16 students for a term and so on. In this way all students who want to help will all get the opportunity. Hopefully this will make the SRC stronger and students will enjoy having a say in what happens in their school.
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

Primary class sizes are included in the annual school report in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible.

These reflect the need to keep the K/1/2 classes to; at or below 20 where possible. While maintaining class sizes at reasonable numbers is dictated by students distributed in year groups, we try to have Stage classes where possible while limiting the number of multi stage classes.

Primary enrolments

Student attendance profile

The attendance of primary students remains constant around 94.4%. It is higher than regional but marginally lower than state attendance rates.

The attendance rate for secondary students is stable at 88.5%. It is above regional levels and just 1.4% below state central school levels.

Our combined attendance rate is still better than regional rates and just below state rates.

Secondary attendance rates continue to remain below state attendance rates. This is an area that requires the assistance of parents to address. The “Missing school leaves gaps in your education” message has been used in the newsletter plus at parent meetings where possible. There has been a gradual improvement in comparison to Regional data, but there are particular year groups that need specific attention. A specific attendance target has been included in the School Plan for 2014.
Management of non-attendance

The school has a Student Attendance Policy which has been reviewed. There is significant school intervention and interaction with parents before further action is pursued. This can take the form of home visits, interviews and the sourcing of external support services where possible to assist parents and caregivers in their role of ensuring students attend school each day. There is a referral process for students with significant attendance issues to the NSW Department of Education and Communities Home School Liaison Unit for follow-up and further action.

Post-school destinations

Upon completion of the Higher School Certificate:

- 27% went onto further study at University, TAFE or via pathways.
- 18% destination unknown
- 55% gained full time employment

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

- Of the 11 students in Year 12 in 2013, four undertook training in two or more VET subjects. Six students studied one VET option. This resulted in fifteen courses for the eleven students.
- Two students successfully completed School Based Traineeships in Aged Care and Children’s Services. They were entered into the NSW State training Awards where one student represented the Riverina in the State interview in the area of Aged Care.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent Vocational educational qualification

The 11 Year 12 students all successfully completed their HSC studies in 2013.
Workforce information

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

The school currently has three substantive executive and two in relieving positions. There is a good balance of experienced and younger staff.

There is a full complement of school administrative and support staff with a number of in class support staff.

Workforce composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>6.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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</table>

The Australian Education Regulation, 2013 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce.

The staff is made up of a mix of executive, classroom teachers and support staff. The school is still undergoing a level of restructure from a reduction of student numbers over the last few years.

The staff is made up of 11% Indigenous staff who hold various positions in the school.

Teacher qualifications

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
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<td>Postgraduate</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation</td>
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Financial summary

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

Expenditure

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<tr>
<th>Teaching &amp; learning</th>
<th>Key learning areas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excursions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
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<td>Library</td>
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<td>1059.54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
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<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
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<td>School-operated canteen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
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<td>110787.66</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balance carried forward</td>
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</table>

Currently this includes information based on Tied funds from both State and Federal sources. As of next year CAP and other sources will be reported and noted under either Transition or Equity. Reporting will be via the School Plan and Annual School report.

A full copy of the school’s 2013 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 2013

PBL

During 2013 the Positive Behaviour for Learning team concentrated on extending the skills within the team and implementing a trial reward system. Bruce Scott and Luke Kelleher attended network meetings and frequently liaised with Vicki Hutton. This collaboration allowed for a smoother development of new processes. Caryn Jones went to a training course in Sydney which allowed her to bring back a raft of new ideas for the team to consider.
Early in the year, the digitised logos were printed and most have been placed around the school playground for students to see. The remaining signs have been agreed on by all staff and require printing in the New Year.

In term 4, 2013 the PBL team began a trial with a reward system for positive behaviour and a new referral system for when negative behaviour could no longer be dealt with at a classroom level. The positive reward system involved students receiving tickets and participating in a game of BINGO. This positive reward system appears to have been highly effective, with many students discussing the game regularly. This positive reward system also had a clear effect on a few students who would usually find themselves in trouble at school. These students are a clear indication that with the continued implementation and cooperation of all staff that PBL can have a great effect on student behaviour within and outside of school.

The negative behaviour management of the trial appears to work well. The introduction of reflection questions causes students to take ownership of and understand their behaviour. This allows students to learn appropriate behaviours and why they are important. The introduction of a buddy teacher between the classroom and executive level has also reduced the number of students who are dealt with by Mr Richard White. This has changed the attitude of some students who thought it was not bad if they were disciplined by executive members of staff.

The collection of data highlighted that certain students who do the right thing all the time were missing out on positive rewards at the beginning of the trial. However, upon discussion and training of all staff members this outlying data appears to have been rectified.

In the coming year, the team will continue to implement both the positive reward system and negative referral system as well as begin teaching specific lessons to help students develop socially acceptable behaviours. The addition of the remaining signs in the New Year will also act as a visual reminder for students when in the classroom and in the playground. It is also important to teach the same lessons to staff so that each staff member provides positive rewards for the correct reasons. This uniform implementation will create a predictable routine for students and allow them to develop and understand the required skills.

KROP (Kids Rapt on Performance)

This year saw a very talented and committed group of students head off to Griffith to perform their very creative set. The excitement was at fever pitch by the time it was all go. After watching all the schools bring their performances to the public it was our turn. All the anxiety and worry was forgotten once the lights were down and it was show time.

Well done to all students and the support of Miss Caryn Jones, Mr Bruce Scott, Miss Carmen Woods and Mr Graham Longford, plus a bevy of highly excited parents who all helped get this show on the road.

Well done everyone and from all reports this is now a school tradition that will have overwhelming support from the school and community alike.

Aerobics

This year has seen the introduction of yet another activity for our students. With the creation of a junior team and the rapid uptake of a senior team, Aerobics hit the ever increasing schedule of our kids. Practice sessions before and after school, were just a small part of the commitment by all. The trip to Sydney to perform at State level was enormous, with both teams doing wonderfully well for their first time. The Hotshots managed to qualify for Nationals at the Gold Coast which swung a huge combined effort into play.

Special thanks to Mrs Kellie Bevan for her amazing levels of enthusiasm and the team of parents who made this happen.
The path next year will be quite a deal more challenging as we will no longer be newbie’s, but seasoned professionals with a reputation for making it to nationals.

Balranald competed successfully in the Central Schools Netball competition making it to the State Finals in the under 16’s competition. The students competed admirably at the finals and were very competitive in all games.

Other

Primary Initiatives

- The continuation of the **Homework Club** at the beginning of the year. It is now staffed by volunteers from both the Primary and Secondary faculties every Tuesday afternoon. Primary students enjoy afternoon tea between 2.45pm and 3.00pm until Homework Club commences at 3.00pm and runs until 4.00pm. A large number of students have participated in the Homework Club and some days up to 40 students have attended. Primary students who attend Homework Club have also been rewarded with an Achievement Award and parent feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

Sport

The primary sporting year was once again very busy. Primary students had the opportunity to participate in Annual K-12 Swimming, Cross Country and Athletics carnivals during the year and then represent Balranald Central School at zone and regional level.

The efforts of the Primary Swim Team at the Moulamein District PSSA Swimming Carnival deserve mention. A number of students were selected to swim at the Riverina PSSA Swimming Carnival and most managed to attend with some deal of wrangling by parents.

The Cross Country was held on the regular track. This was very successful with great participation across the school. No secondary students took the opportunity to run at regional due to busy commitments at school and the awkward timing of this event.

Academic achievements

**NAPLAN**

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

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

Year 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)
Year 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)
Year 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)
Year 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

The **My School** website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing (NAPLAN).
Click on the link [http://www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au) and enter the school name in the *Find a school* and select *GO* to access the school data.

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

![Graph showing percentage in bands: Year 3 Numeracy](image)

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

![Graph showing percentage in bands: Year 5 Reading](image)

![Graph showing percentage in bands: Year 5 Spelling](image)
NAPLAN Year 5 - Numeracy

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

NAPLAN Year 7 - Literacy

NAPLAN Year 5 - Numeracy
NAPLAN Year 7 - Numeracy

NAPLAN Year 9 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)
NAPLAN Year 9 - Numeracy

Percentage in bands:
Year 9 Writing

Percentage in bands:
Year 9 Grammar & Punctuation

Percentage in bands:
Year 9 Spelling

Percentage in bands:
Year 9 Numeracy
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).

Due to the low number in the year and the size of each cohort it is not possible to publish graphs for any group.

Record of School Achievement (RoSA)

There were no students who had left the school and requested their RoSA credential from this cohort. All students are still working towards their HSC credential at this time.

All work both internal and external to the school will accumulate towards the RoSA until students graduate with a HSC credential at the end of their Year 12 studies.

Significant programs and initiatives

Education Week

Education Week celebrations were once again a highlight for Primary students during the year, with many parents and community members present at events. The Education Week theme *NSW Public Schools – creating the future*, was clearly evident in all the activities undertaken in Primary. The popular ‘Blokes, Books and a BBQ’ made way for the activities night for parents with iPad exploration, cake decorating and Visual Arts immersion. Those in attendance also had the opportunity to tour the new Trade Training Centre and were very impressed with the new woodwork and metalwork facilities.

The traditional ‘Grand friends Day’ was once again a well-attended event, the highlight being the class performances during a special Education Week Performance Assembly, held after visitors to the school enjoyed a wonderful morning tea, courtesy of the P & C.

Primary Report

The school day for primary remained the same as the previous year with the students beginning classes at 9.00am and finishing school at 2.45pm. During the year a variety of activities took place for Primary students from Kindergarten through to Year 6.

These activities included:

Music Lessons

Lessons continued to run on Mondays for our primary students. Our Tutor again travelled across from Swan Hill to deliver guitar and drum lessons. The students would have a different time each week with Mrs Samita Lockhart making sure the timetable allowed for them to not miss the same lesson. The school also hosted a Music tutor from South West Arts for part of a day which included members of the community.

Science Program

This year all primary classes were fortunate enough to gain the knowledge and support of Miss Yulina Aliwarga. Miss A, as she was affectionately known by the students, worked with the classroom teachers to implement exciting and engaging programs that allowed our students to experience a ‘hands on’ science program. Our K/1/2, Year 3/4 and 5/6 classes all had one afternoon a week of science activities.

ICAS Competitions

Students had the opportunity to participate in the University of New South Wales Academic Competitions in a number of subjects, including, Computers, English and Mathematics. This was coordinated by Teacher-Librarian, Mrs Adrienne Gorman.

ANZAC Day

Students attended ANZAC Day ceremonies on 25 April and represented Balranald Central School in the march, wearing full school uniform. The Primary Captains shared a reading and laid a wreath during the ANZAC Day ceremony.
Bush Dance
Students in Year 3/4 spent Term Three learning a variety of different bush dances. On the last day of term all primary students participated in a workshop with the Billy Tea Bush Band in the morning and another dance after lunch. A Bush Dance was then held for the community that night with many of our students showing their parents how it is done.

GRIP Leadership Conference
This year our two Primary Captains, Jayden Wilkinson and Lily Dunn, travelled to Mildura with a group of our future leaders from Year five to participate in the GRIP Leadership Conference. Our students were willing participants on the day, joining in numerous activities to help them develop the leadership skills of young leaders, providing them with the skills to have a positive influence on those around them. Jayden and Lily both developed into fine school leaders during the year.

Book Fairs
Mrs Gorman hosted a number of Book Fairs in the school library during the year. Students were given the opportunity to visit the fairs before they commenced to look at the books on offer and make a wish list of items they wanted. It was pleasing to see the number of students and parents who attended the Book Fairs.

Circus Program
Bec Cohen returned to Balranald and all students from K-6 had the opportunity to participate in a three week Circus Sports Program. Students had at least two lessons a week over the three weeks and learnt a variety of skills. A number of students attended after school sessions which built towards a performance in the last week of their visit.

Primary Assemblies
Primary Assembly was moved to be held three times a term in the school hall. This provided each class with the opportunity to present and host the Primary Assembly, sharing with the community the fantastic work they complete in their classrooms. Students were presented with Assistant Principal’s and Primary Merit Awards.

Positive Behavior for Learning
PBL started in term four this year with students receiving tickets in recognition of making great choices. Student’s tickets also contributed to a class prize, with all Primary classes earning a casual day and icy pole. Two classes received a can of soft drink as well. At the end of term, the students with the most tickets collected were invited to a BBQ to celebrate their achievement.

Year 6 to 7 (2013) Transition
As part of Year 6 to 7 (2013) Transition Program, students from Balranald Central School, St Joseph’s Balranald and Euston Public School participated in a number of Transition Program activities held over a number of days. Activities included faculty sessions in Science, Agriculture, Technology (Wood and Food), and cooking pizza lunches in the pizza oven and the ‘Pinnacle of Success’.
Kindergarten Transition
Students enrolled to attend Balranald Central School in Kindergarten in 2014 were invited to attend the Kindergarten Transition Program. Held over a number of weeks, prospective students participated in activities in the K/1/2 classroom.

Balranald 5 Rivers Festival
As part of the Balranald 5 Rivers Festival, primary students had the opportunity to participate in poetry and art competitions and to visit a wonderful exhibition of Indigenous Art on display at the local Balranald Art Gallery. Students had the opportunity to view amazing works which included traditional dot paintings, landscapes, portraits, didgeridoos and woven baskets. Poet Murray Hartin visited the school and spoke about writing poems, particularly using rhymes as part of the composing process. He shared some of his written work with the students, entertaining them with his witty repertoire.

Primary Swimming Program
During Week 9 and Week 10 of Term 4, all Primary students participated in an intensive NSW Royal Lifesaving Society’s Swim and Survive Program. The lessons took place from 10.00am to 12.40pm daily, with a session for each primary class. Sessions were taught by primary AUSWIM accredited staff members Mrs Stevens, with assistance from Mr Graham Longford. Mrs Stevens oversaw the program in her capacity as a NSW Royal Lifesaving Society Instructor and Examiner.

Primary Merit Award Excursion
The Primary Merit Award Excursion for students who have achieved a Silver or Gold Award once again took place. Students travelled by bus to Mildura and visited the Mildura Wave Pool, had lunch at McDonalds and then participated in a game of Ten Pin Bowls before returning to Balranald.

Handball Competition
During term three the primary students participated in a handball competition coordinated by the Year 5 students and Mr Graham Longford. The competition was a great success with all primary students getting involved. It was a knockout format and after some highly entertaining and close results our victors emerged. The students displayed great sportsmanship and respect for each other throughout the competition.

Year 3/4 Curriculum Excursion
Year 3/4 students travelled to Borambola for a three day excursion. A fantastic time was had by all with every student showing a willingness to push themselves to try new and perhaps challenging things! Students were given the opportunity to work together to solve problems, climb a ten metre wall, learn how to control a kayak and ride a BMX. It was very pleasing to see the smiles on our student’s faces as they participated in all the activities. It was great to have Mr Riesinger and Mrs Paulina Fica and Mr Steve Calleja helping with supervision and driving our bus. Their valuable contribution enabled us to give our students these learning opportunities.
Walkathon
What a wonderful afternoon we had for our walkathon in term two. Our P & C organised a fund raising activity with the students receiving prizes from the amount of money raised. The sun was shining, the students had a fantastic time walking laps around the football oval. The P & C organised a wonderful afternoon tea for us, it was a great way to finish a fun afternoon.

Street Art Workshop
A group of indigenous students enjoyed a day working with Melbourne based street artist Andrew Bourke, who taught them street art techniques. They worked together to create a mural for the school.

Aboriginal education
A number of initiatives and activities took place during the year in Aboriginal Education at Balranald Central School. A new look Balranald Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) was formed during the year and supported the education of Indigenous students with a number of initiatives. The AECG students nominated for Riverina Regions Proud and Deadly Indigenous Awards. The AECG also supported two AECG Awards at the end of year Presentation Night for a primary and secondary Indigenous student who has displayed academic or sporting excellence, citizenship and promoted the cultural awareness and recognition of Aboriginal culture within the school.

Multicultural Education
Harmony Day was celebrated by primary and secondary students. Australia is a diverse, multicultural country and Harmony Day is a day when students have the opportunity to respect other peoples and their cultures. The official colour of Harmony Day is orange and it was fantastic to see so many students get into the Harmony Day spirit, wearing orange coloured clothing on the day to celebrate Australia’s rich cultural diversity. Students were also provided with an assortment of items that included badges, balloons and stickers that are produced to celebrate and promote Harmony Day.

Transitional Equity Funding
During 2013 the school utilised Transitional Equity funding to:

- Reduce the cost associated with excursions by subsidising the travel component
- Reduce the cost of visiting performances and increase the participation rates in creative and performing arts (CAPA) and the Circus challenge.
- Ensure students gain access to drama workshops with Bell Shakespeare.
- Use teacher intervention to improve oral language skills in Early Stage 1 and Stage 1.
- Facilitate improved access to external enrichment programs such as ‘Reach’ and ‘Girls and Boys’ programs, guest motivational speakers and Circus Skills workshops, resulting in higher levels of self-esteem and student achievement.

The programs mentioned benefited every student, encouraging them to participate in educational programs that otherwise may have been inaccessible due to geographic isolation and financially too expensive.

National partnerships and significant Commonwealth initiatives
2013 saw the school participate in the final phase of the Low SES School Communities National Partnership Program. The school community had taken part in a series of surveys to identify where the school was positioned in terms of various
aspects of its performance and to gauge the community’s perception of future directions to be pursued. This process generated a collection of data that has been aggregated into a wealth of knowledge to guide the ongoing development of the school.

The results had been used to create a Situational Analysis for the school and were instrumental in the development of the schools’ three year plan that incorporated many of the views and beliefs expressed by all sections of the school community.

The School Plan had identified a number of critical areas to address. The first was the re-introduction of Music into the school. Another area brought up by parents was the need to have a language within the Stage 4 curriculum. Many of the strategies used to address the School Plan have been generated as a result of this consultation process. These aspects were able to be achieved as well as the provision of both Visual Arts and a PDHPE specialist teacher.

After being a part of the Low SES School Communities National Partnership Program the school has made significant progress towards our identified targets. But more importantly there have been opportunities to explore new ways to operate and make better use of resources.

More details regarding some of the initiatives can be found throughout this report in various sections.

School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

School evaluation processes

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan.

2013 continued a whole school focus on Teaching and Learning. As professional educators each of us takes ownership and responsibility for continual improvement in teaching practice. We are committed to the achievement of:

- Quality Instruction
- Quality Relationships
- Quality Leadership

We use a strategic planning cycle to support continuous whole school improvement.
- Review, Data Analysis and Planning
- Professional Development
- Embedding within Programs and Implementation
- Assessment and Reporting
- Review, Data Analysis and Planning

School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013

School priority 1

Improved participation of students in literacy initiatives across the school.

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- Primary (literacy). All students achieve band 4 and above in Year 5 NAPLAN in 2013.
- Increase the number of students (in years 3 and 5) in the top two bands.
- Increase the number of students in years 7 and 9 in the top two bands.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- Whole school focus on literacy in primary in the first session each day.
- Clearly identify the areas that need work for each student and focus on these as a class group.
- Identified students take part in the “Fast ForWord” program this year.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

- Review of current practices and focusing resources toward teacher learning.
- Greater use of the L3 processes that involve active in class student teacher interaction.
- Address the needs of students in Stage 1 and 2 to maximise outcomes with the use of a range of programs to improve reading and comprehension skills.
School priority 2

Students improve their numeracy results across the board by participation in remedial activities as identified by the school.

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- Primary (Working Mathematically). All students move up one band in overall numeracy by 2013.
- Increase the number of students (in years 3 and 5) in the top two bands.
- Move students out of the bottom two bands in year 3 and 5 in the NAPLAN overall numeracy.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- Whole school primary focus on numeracy in the second session each day.
- Students access Mathletics across the school as an in school and home initiative.
- CMIT strategies used across the primary school in all classes.
- Use small group focused activities to address identified areas of need in numeracy.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Identify the learning needs of students and use small group strategies to focus on rebuilding missing knowledge and understanding.
- Make more effective use of concrete learning styles of students to enhance physical connections to numeracy.
- Revisit, rebuild and revise the early concepts for those students struggling with basic understanding in numeracy.

School priority 3

Improved participation and relevance of education as a pathway to the future.

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- Primary and secondary students are more focused on successfully participating across the school in all class and extracurricular activities, including those within the community.
- Increase the retention of Year 10 to Year 12 to 68% and track their successful transition into further study or employment.
- Students access Traineeships and apprenticeships in their patterns of study.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- Make use of the “Maths in Trades” initiative for Year 7 to 10 students.
- Increase opportunities to access leadership and external experiences in the workplace.
- Greater access to experiences beyond the town.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Make more effective use of the “Maths in Trades” program to increase the involvement of all genders in hands-on learning.
- Encourage the take up rates of students who can gain Certificate 1 outcomes through involvement with the core program.
- Make greater use of the benefits of the “Maths in Trades” program for Stage 6 students in their pattern of study.

School priority 4

Build strong links with Aboriginal parents and the community by increasing opportunities for input into school practices.

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- Improving the learning outcomes for Aboriginal students and closing the gap by increasing the engagement of students in school and external programs.
- Provide avenues to employment beyond school.
- Increase the relevance of school as a pathway to external learning opportunities.
Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- Tutor support for students in most need.
- PLP for all students across the school. Regular meetings to monitor short and long term goals.
- Establish an Aboriginal language program within the school.
- Establish a group learning activity to cater for different learning styles. Access Yanga National Park as part of the program.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Increase the use of local pathways of employment for students.
- Revitalise how the students access Work Experience opportunities within the local and wider community.
- Access a wider scope of opportunity for traineeships within the community by building links with the Shire and larger employment groups.

School priority 5
Build the capacity of all students and staff within the school with increased opportunities to take on whole school roles and external training.

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- Access to quality teacher training that improves classroom practice.
- Develop strategies that enhance student outcomes and engagement that can be incorporated into the new Australian curriculum.
- Develop skills and confidence to enable 21 Century teaching strategies to be used in classrooms.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- All staff have access to technology and skills development to make use of new practices.
- DER initiatives are used in classrooms across the school.
- All classrooms have IWB’s and students are technologically literate.
- Staff keep up to date with the Australian Curriculum and maintain currency in educational theory.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Make better use of the skills base of staff within the school to train across the wider community.
- Increase the access to online training packages that can be used by all staff.
- Focus on the training needs within the school by provision of in school training for staff. Make this available to other schools and the wider community.

Professional learning

Key professional learning activities revolved around technology including a focus on utilising new technologies. This included the new connected classroom and ongoing development activities on embedding quality teaching and utilising data to inform programming and teaching/learning.

Professional learning funds were also expended on individual staff professional development within their key learning area (subject specific) and some funds were spent on executive professional development and on teachers in their first five years of teaching (beginning teachers) professional development.

Support staff also had access to professional learning opportunities as appropriate to their needs.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2013, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented on the next page.

Students were given a survey based on a series of questions about the schools current practices. Students were able to indicate that they believed that what they did at school was really very important to them and gave them a good base for further employment. External programs that the school accesses were very popular to all students. The ability to access Music, Visual Arts and other specialist areas made the school a better place to be. The overwhelming consensus
is that a raft of good things happening with a strong need for greater variety and diversity. The school has a history of high achievement in many sports in the State Central Schools competition. Students are very motivated and are committed to excelling at many sports and associated activities. The overwhelming push has been for students to gain jobs and employment. This is one of the reasons why some students are not able to aspire to further education as it is not seen as a necessity with employment stability easily accessible. This is one of the focuses that the school has identified as a priority and has been working towards with a number of cohorts. The need to expose students to greater opportunities and give them a heightened awareness of choices for the future by sharing with students from other linked city-based schools.

Parents had indicated that they would like to have more input into school decision making processes. Parents will be invited to take part in gatherings to provide feedback on the school plan, situational analysis and resource planning. The school will explore ways to give parents the chance of being members of various school committees. Planning is underway to adjust existing schedules and timelines to cater for this. Parents and the wider community are very supportive of the school. There is a strong belief that the school offers a very broad education base. There is also a level of unhappiness with people sending their children out of town to access other educational opportunities. People have been used to a school that had the capacity to offer a much wider curriculum by being part of the Distance Education Network. The loss of this and the levels of staffing it provided to the school is still being felt within the community.

The refurbishment of the Hospitality room and the establishment of a Trade Training Centre has opened a range of opportunities for the community to access TAFE courses in the Hospitality and metals fields. The school will operate our VET options on a Thursday, to give more people access to these programs with the community courses being run at night.

The increased use of the Trade Training Centre facility has been critical in enhancing the community’s perception of the school. This has resulted in increasing the links between the community and the school by running a wide variety of skills based courses from this facility. Plus there were other areas that would further enhance the connections to the school. The Men’s shed, Shire and other groups are keen to make use of the schools facilities and student base. Our students have been successful at accessing traineeships in Aged Care and Children’s Services with the option to develop a Horticultural traineeship.

One community organisation, Balranald Inc. has accessed our facilities with a range of training packages they have brokered to support locals in gaining employment opportunities in the sand mining operations soon to opening within the town. Educational Trust is very willing to give support for students who seek to access opportunities beyond the school environment.

**Program evaluations**

**Background**

“Maths in Trades”

The increased use of the Trade Training Centre facility has been critical in enhancing the community’s perception of the school. This has resulted in increasing the links between the community and the school by running a wide variety of skills based courses from this facility. Plus there were other areas that would further enhance the connections to the school. The Men’s shed, Shire and other groups are keen to make use of the schools facilities and student base. Our students have been successful at accessing traineeships in Aged Care and Children’s Services with the option to develop a Horticultural traineeship.

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**Program evaluations**

**Background**

“Maths in Trades”

**Youth Engagement Challenge:** Students find it difficult to link what they are learning in the classroom with real life challenges, particularly in the area of mathematics. Students are becoming disengaged in this subject at an early age, and yet when asked what they would like to do as a career, the trades are what they are looking for. There is a consistent uptake of students electing to undertake the VET framework course of Metals and Engineering. The feedback from TAFE and Employers is that the ability of young people (in general, not just Balranald specific) to apply mathematics in the workplace is weak.
**Proposed Project:** To form a link with Sunraysia TAFE to provide an industry based learning experience to Junior Secondary students so that students can practise their mathematical skills and make informed choices about future career opportunities. Each term a nominated year group (Years 7 to 10) can elect to join the program and complete various projects. The TAFE teacher will work with the schools mathematics department to help revise the mathematical concepts to be covered in the workshop.

**Findings and conclusions**

This program allows students to explore the possibility of Trades as a career pathway. Students are able to get their hands dirty in the Metals trade and hopefully will be able to fully realise the importance that mathematics has in this industry. Balranald does not have a local TAFE, although the local school has recently received a Trade Training Centre, staffing issues in the VET trades area has resulted in the school busing students to Swan Hill to complete the Metals framework. The early morning start has formed a barrier for some students to undertake the VET Metals subject. This approach allows students to undertake the Metals program, with minimal travel involved. This program also forms a relationship with TAFE.

This program has formed a strong relationship with Sunraysia TAFE, the destination of most community members for post-school training options. The school, in particular the Maths, TAS and Careers departments are able to complement what is being taught in the program. This program provides a much needed TAFE link in the local community. It also aligns with the Local Council's community plan that has identified a need to upskill the local workforce for the anticipated arrival of the mining industry in the Balranald area in 2016 onwards. Currently the school is funding the program, but we are looking to make this a long term project and are seeking ways to ensure this. This project has meant that there is a TAFE presence in the town and has spilled over into the provision of adult community classes.

This program has the capacity to:

1. Cater for a mixed ability group who are predominately interested in a Trades career pathway.
2. Emphasise the application of skills in the metals and engineering trades.
3. Emphasise to students the importance of mathematics for entry into the trades, which is an identified weakness across all industry areas.
4. Assist in students reaching a level of maths expected by trades.
5. Expose students to the abilities and skills required in the workplace and everyday life.
6. Develop a stronger link with our nearest TAFE.
7. Allow students to make informed choices about subject selection for Stage 6.
8. Increase student skill level and employability in anticipation of the possible new mining industry beginning in the area in 2016.
9. Link classroom learning in the mathematics, technical and applied studies; and careers areas of the school and make these subjects more relevant for students, particularly in the junior secondary areas.

Specific skills practiced by students include:

1. Performing calculations as well as developing skills to make accurate approximations for jobs undertaken.
2. Solving new challenges by investigating, modelling, reasoning, visualising, problem solving and working as a team.
3. Developing time management skills to complete their project in the designated time.

**Future directions**

The program has had an amazing impact on students across the school. It has totally redefined the gender balance of students participating in practical subjects.

Our ongoing challenge is how to finance this program in the future. The benefits have been very clear for all participants, with students engaged in a series of in school skills based programs to test the level of their understanding and capacity.

The addition to the capacity to gain recognition of the skills learnt, is another incentive to engage
in this program. In addition, the ability to use this as a stepping stone into metals and engineering careers is an added bonus.

The capacity for this to be used as a community based course is worth noting as well. There are very few facilities within the community that have the level of technology found in the Trade Training Centre.

**Program evaluations**

**Background**

The primary school has had a number of programs in place for some time. Each of these serve a very specific purpose in the life of the school and have historically been held at times that have suited the school, parents and the community. With changes to school operation and the schools Occupational Workplace Safety requirements there has been a need to look at the placement of many of these programs.

The main focus areas were the times for primary sport, assemblies and the best use of peak learning times for students.

**Findings and conclusions**

The issue of primary based sport was one of these. In the past, the school had this on Fridays after lunch, with the capacity to amend this in terms 1 and 4, which are the hotter parts of the year. As a school there are only two areas that are able to provide cover in times of excessive heat. These areas are also used by secondary students participating in PDHPE and other external courses.

As part of a trial process, the primary students sport session was moved in the week and during the day to best make use of climatic and learning times. As a result of this it was found that student participation and engagement had increased. There was a higher level of engaged learning and participation taking place at the trial times. This also resulted in better interactions between students during these times even when classes were mixed in non class based groups.

The number of assemblies that the primary school had each term was also looked at. Each class had a duty to run an assembly on a two week cycle. This resulted in an uneven distribution of duties for each of the three classes and the time of the week made it very restrictive for the classroom teachers. The redistribution was that each class only had an assembly each term and the day was changed from Friday to Wednesday. The result was that the number of parents and families who were able to attend increased, plus the renewed focus on class performances gave families a better opportunity to engage with their children.

**Future directions**

The success of these trials will see the school continue to look at all the structures that are in place to see where we can put change in place to give families and the community greater access to students and whole school processes.

**About this report**

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school’s practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school’s future development.

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