Robert Townson High School  Annual School Report

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
Principal's message

Robert Townson High School was established in 1987 to serve the communities of Raby and St Andrews in the City of Campbelltown. The school has a strong commitment to providing the means by which all students can achieve their potential academically, culturally, socially and in sport. We encourage personal best from every student.

Robert Townson High School services 980 students. Our curriculum offers a diverse range of subjects and we cater for Lifeskills, vocational and academic subjects. Within our school is a specialist unit for hearing impaired students in which we had 17 students ranging from Year 7 to Year 12.

We expect that our students will study diligently, wear school uniform and behave in a manner which brings credit upon themselves and their school.

The purpose of this report is to inform you of the achievements of the school, some significant programs and aspects of student performance. The report also includes information on the achievement of our 2005 targets and our targets for 2006.

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.

Warren Parkes

Parents and Friends

Our Parents and Friends (P&F) group meet on the second Wednesday of every school day month. While the majority of our meetings commence at 7PM we try to hold some meetings at luncheon to allow people who can not make evening meeting times. Over 2006 we have addressed such issues as school achievement, yearly projects, community involvement in school programs and specific issues as they arise.

In 2006 our Uniform Shop group raised funds and made the following purchases; a 24,000 litre water tank installed to irrigate our school’s feature garden established the previous year and all of the school hall’s performance area curtains were replaced.

Our P&F were also successful when applying for the Commonwealth government’s Investing in Our Schools grant. To date they have paid for the installation of student air conditioning, increased power supply to our school and shade for the students in our main student recreation and communication area.

Latifa Ayshan (President)

Student representative's message

Our student representative council SRC is a group made up of student elected members comprising Year 12 student leaders and two boys and girls from years seven through to eleven. The SRC meet weekly taking with them suggestions and ideas from the student body. They also discuss issues affecting them in the wider community.

Our SRC raise funds to be able to support different initiatives within the school and across the community. Fund raising programs have included selling flowers on Valentines Day, crazy hat day, chocolate sales and student talent quests.

Our SRC has supported, via fundraising; the Red Cross, World Vision and SIDS research.

In 2006 our SRC attended a Values, Anti-Racism and National Young leaders Forum. They accordingly brought back many strategies to discuss and implement with their peers.

Funds were also allocated to fellow students to assist them when they participated in the field of sport in area, state and Australian competitions.

Our achievements

The Arts

Our senior visual arts students continued to excel in 2006 and the school community celebrated the success of these Year 12 students at an exhibition of their HSC artworks in the Library for parents and friends to view.

Year 12 students Matthew Attard, Kenneth Boardman, Gurkiran Flora and James Runge were preselected for Art Express, an exhibition of outstanding works by 2006 HSC visual arts students from schools across New South Wales. James’ work was displayed at David Jones and Kennent’s at the College of Fine Arts.

Our junior visual arts students worked on a range of projects throughout the year. A Year 10 visual arts class completed two murals to complement the existing murals in the top quadrangle and further enhance the school environment. Special congratulations to Amanda Neloska and Poulang Ros who took ownership of a mural each and displayed extra commitment to the project.

John Carroll, Matthew Loncar, Paul Loncar and Dale Palmer designed a range of new logos for Burnside, which were displayed as part of the “Participate” project at Campbelltown Arts Centre. One of the logos is being further developed by a professional graphic artist to be used by Burnside on future pamphlets.
A number of students from Years 8 to 10 were selected to attend a range of gifted and talented visual arts workshops and camps throughout the year. Year 9 students Elizabeth Kemp, Katherine Khammarath, Adam Ramsdale and Rebecca Williams attended an art technology camp and all four students films were selected for the Director’s Choice Exhibition at Homebush in December. Linda Dudek and Kristee Husband in Year 8 attended the Hot House program for junior gifted and talented students. Nicole Sleiman in Year 10 attended a district gifted and talented art camp.

Thirty students from years 7 to 11 had their artworks displayed at Campbelltown Arts Centre as part of an exhibition organised by Macarthur Workplace Learning which showcased student work from across the Macarthur community. This was an excellent display for the local community to be able to view the wide and varied range of artworks produced by our students.

Year 11 photography students Leanne Clauson, Ashley Huggett and Phonthawat Srisonkhram, trained with the Macarthur Advertiser at Wests Stadium in the area of photojournalism and sports photography. They worked closely with the PDHPE faculty throughout the year as the school sports photographers, capturing both still and video images of various sporting events.

A number of Year 11 Photography students ran a photographic workshop for a class of Year 5 and 6 students from Robert Townson Public School. Each student produced a photogram in the darkroom, while also completing relevant literacy and numeracy activities. Later in the year, a selection of our students’ artwork was exhibited at the Robert Townson Public School Art Exhibition, displaying the close links between the two schools.

Nine students entered the Ingleburn Alive Festival Photographic Competition. Rachel Downey and Amanda Nelsosa in Year 10 entered some self-portraits and received second place in the high school division. Leanne Clauson and Sabina Hamilton in Year 11 were Highly Commended for a pinhole photograph taken of the school.

The Year 10 drama class performed “A Midsummer Nights Dream” for Year 8 students, as well as for parents and friends at a special evening. Students from a range of classes in the Creative and Performing Arts and TAS faculties assisted with scenery, costumes, sound, stage and lighting. Samantha Blasanato, Chantelle Bugeja, Nathan Bass and Stacey Laundess were selected from the drama class to attend a gifted and talented camp to further develop their skills where clowning was the main theme.

The music department administered a range of performing arts activities in 2006, Band being a continued focus. The Band, which features brass, woodwind, percussion and keyboard, aims to develop gifted and talented musicians at all levels of experience. Integral to the development of the Band as a performing ensemble is its range of performance engagements throughout the school year, including Variety Night, the Year 12 Graduation assembly, the Year 6 into Year 7 enrolment day assembly and Presentation Night.

The annual Variety Night was an opportunity to showcase the considerable talent of musicians, dancers and actors in the school. These included the Year 11 music class, the Year 9 and 10 elective music classes, the Year 10 drama class, and many other students from Year 7 to 12.

A number of Year 11 music students organised a school Talent Quest, providing a platform for students of all years and levels of expertise to perform in front of a captive audience. Mitchell Hunter in Year 11 initiated, promoted and prepared the concert, which raised over $1500 which was donated to the palliative care unit of Camden Hospital. Some of these Year 11 music students also performed at the HSC visual arts exhibition night, as well as the art exhibition held at Robert Townson Public School, strengthening the links between the two schools.

Other performances for the wider community included the Year 10 music class performing at the Education Week concert at Robert Townson Public School. The Year 11 rock group performed at the opening of Education for the Sydney South West region at Homebush.

**SPORT**

Sport is an integral part of the RTHS curriculum. Students were offered chances to build skills and discover sports in the Year 7 integrated system. Students from Years 8-12 are given the chance to represent their school in a variety of sporting competitions organised by Macarthur Zone.

The school entered teams in the following NSWCHS knockout competitions.

**Boys – Touch, soccer (Bill Turner Cup and Opens) AFL, hockey, volleyball, cricket, triathlon, netball and rugby league (Buckley Shield, Arrive Alive Cup and the University Shield).**

**Girls – Cricket, triathlon, soccer, touch, hockey, volleyball and netball.**

Mr Kelava organised and ran another very successful Titans Cup soccer competition. The event has now developed a very strong reputation and attracts the best soccer schools (by invitation only) in South Western Sydney Region. Robert Townson placed third in this competition in 2006. The tournament, under the supervision of Mr Kelava, was operated by elective PDHPE students from Year 9 and 10.
Mrs Child ran a very successful Macarthur Zone netball gala day. Twelve teams participated in this tournament and all did very well. Robert Townson had two teams entered into the Western Suburbs Rugby League knockout. Mr Garland coached the 13 years (semi finalists) and Mr Child coached the 15 years. Wests once again hosted the West Cup (in a variety of age groups). RTHS had two teams involved in the week to week competitions. Both teams performed well.

Students also helped out at Primary School Sport Association gala day offering refereeing and officiating at carnivals. The elective PDHPE students from Year 10 did an excellent job running a primary/high school rugby league development day for the primary students.

The major sporting awards for 2006 were: Sportsperson of the year – Lisa Farrell
Mitchell Bek's Sports Award – Joshua Curtain.

Lisa Farrell of Year 10 was also a recipient of the Australian Government Sports Achievers Award, received a Macarthur Zone Sports blue for hockey and was a member of the NSWCHS hockey squad.

In 2007, the focus will be on sports competition through the Macarthur Zone and a school house sports system. During Term 4, 2006 students nominated and voted for house names. The following were successful. Freeman (A-E) Red, Beachley (F-K), Kewell (L-Q) Yellow and Bradman (R-Z) Green.

School initiatives
Our school is in its second year of the running and operation of a school Coffee Shop. A Commonwealth Bank Financial Literacy Grant provided “start-up” capital for a mobile coffee shop to operate at special functions and one day per week at school. The program caters to a variety of special needs and mainstream students by providing real life numeracy and literacy experiences in catering and small business operations.

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

A full copy of the school's 2005 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meeting of the Parent and Friends body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

Aboriginal education
Students of an indigenous heritage were involved in a number of courses and activities to build upon areas of interest and expertise. Through participation in a number of activities, bonds were strengthened not only within the school but with the wider community as well.

Particular highlights for 2006 were the recognition of student excellence at the SWS Region Aboriginal Student Achievement Awards. Two students were recognised, Breanna Collier for sport and Elizabeth Barrass for student leadership, citizen and community service and academic excellence.

Two students (Breanna Collier and Melissa Attard) also attended the Bjurali Youth Art Careers Workshop at the Museum of Contemporary Arts. At the beginning of the year, 9 students participated in the Aboriginal Young Peoples Forum (Breanna and Jessica Collier were workshop leaders). This forum was hosted by Campbelltown Council.

One student (Nathan Collier) attended the Koori Job Ready construction course and got himself an apprenticeship at its completion.

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A joint Robert Townson High and Robert Townson Primary project is planned for 2007 with an artistic/mentoring theme. Finally big congratulations to Elisabeth Barrass, RTH school captain 2007.

Multicultural education
During 2006 it was decided by our student welfare team that we would address ongoing issues of tension between different groups of year 9 and 10 boys. One ongoing problem often involved the use of inappropriate racial slurs. A program development team was formed comprising of teachers, police, TAFE and the Campbelltown Diversity Centre personnel. The outcome was a two day event called HECTIC (Hope, Empower, Change, Teamwork, Inspire, Courage).

During this event the students were brought together in a setting outside of school (Minto Police Youth Centre) where they listened to motivational speakers, participated in teamwork tasks and played games. They were individually interviewed and their progress monitored. The conclusion of the day was a DVD presentation of their growth over the program and the installation of a mural in the student recreation area. Overall the participants and presenters found that the groups were more harmonious and understanding of each other.

To help them further at school we have two trained staff ACROs (anti-racism coordinators).

Vocational Education & Training
Vocational education has become an important part of the senior curriculum. Students who successfully completed a two-year VET course could qualify for up to TAFE Certificate III, enjoy advanced standing at TAFE and improve their employment opportunities. VET subjects studied at school or TAFE contribute towards the award of the HSC and a University Administration Index if the student undertakes the Higher School Certificate examination.

A total of 39 students attended either Campbelltown, Liverpool, Macquarie Fields or Padstow TAFE to study a range of VET courses including accounting, property services, childcare, aeronautical skills, airbrushing, vehicle maintenance, beauty therapy, hairdressing, horticulture, welfare and community services. Three hearing impaired students undertook TAFE courses in discrete classes where extra support was available.

Holly Bates undertook a part time traineeship with Big W. This was a work based program that combined paid work and structured training. This qualified towards three units of Retail as part of her HSC qualifications.

Nathan Bennett in Year 11 was selected as VET student of the year at RTHS for studying Metal and Engineering and Construction. He was awarded a prize by Macarthur Workplace Learning Program.

All Year 10 students completed at least one week of supervised work experience in an industry of their own choosing. Students were required to arrange their own work experience placement using their resumes prepared in career education lessons. The school directly assisted a very small number of students who were unsuccessful in finding work placement or whose work placement was cancelled due to employer circumstances. During their work experience, students were required to keep a work diary and were visited by a member of the teaching staff.

Prior to work experience all Year 10 attended a Macarthur Area Careers Expo where they were able to talk to industry representatives and representatives from TAFE, University and private providers. They were also able to attend a variety of lectures, including apprenticeship and traineeships, grooming/presentation skills, industries where there are job shortages and job related skills. Students were able to choose their activities and network with students from other schools.

Four students were successful in winning awards and prizes at the South Western Sydney Region VET evening. Students won awards in the following frameworks. Deanna Vlahovic for Hospitality, Shareef Alnimer for Metal and Engineering, Chad Swift for Information Technology and Matthew Walker for the Discrete Hospitality course for students with disabilities.

The School To Work program involved all students in Years 9 and 10. Students were required to compile a summary of work related skills and experiences gained through their studies and extra curricular experiences. This information was kept in their Employment Related Skills Log book which the students were able to take home. This program should ensure that students are well prepared when they apply for employment.

Student Welfare and Wellbeing
The focus for this year has been to consolidate existing programs and interventions within a strengths-base framework. Programs operating in the school have continued to use an interagency focus and have diversified in their approach to engaging students and empowering them to take individual responsibility for their well-being.

“Activ8” - This Burnside pilot program has operated in the school over twelve months targeting students who were identified and referred by the Leaning Support Team. The program focused on developing positive personal
relationships, assertiveness, goal setting and self esteem.

“Youth Pathways” - This Mission Australia program utilised the services of a caseworker who was operating out of the school for two days per week. The students followed individual education plans under the guidance of a caseworker and with the input of the Learning Support Team within the school. This program focused on identifying individual student welfare needs and developing strategies to combat the problem. Students developed team working, leadership and working co-operatively skills.

“BrainBusters” Homework Centre - This program evolved from a student leadership project initiated by senior students as part of a coaching program. The centre operated for one afternoon each week targeting Year 7 and 8 students with learning support needs. Senior students worked individually with the juniors giving them specific attention to areas of development.

“Townson Alternative Program” (TAPS) - This program involved disengaged students at risk of not completing school. The program consisted of a multi-agency partnership between Robert Townson High School, Teen Ranch, Police Citizens Youth Club, Burnside and Campbelltown Youth Services. Students were engaged in individual goal setting and attended a range of alternative educational activities twice each week to support them in re-engagement in their schooling. Evaluation of all leaders and students was positive. Harassment and racism issues were also dealt with.

Mentoring - Thirty-five students participated in a two-day workshop learning the skills of mentoring. This pilot program will be extended in 2007 with twenty students from the pilot program being selected to undergo advanced skills in mentoring. These students will support Year 7 students in their transition from primary to high school.

Work Education - This was a curriculum based program which was extended based on individual educational plans for each student. This course is recognised as a school priority as it has links with TAFE, industry, the wider business community and competency-based learning. It will enhance the skills of students making the school-to-work transition.

School planning

Progress in 2006

**Target 1: Cater for the academic growth of gifted and talented students.**

Students commencing Year 7 in 2006 were identified for their giftedness and talents. These students were placed in an academic group and appropriate developmental programs were provided. A significant part of the course provided for demonstrating their achievements to peers and parents in several presentations over the year. School community members were surveyed as to their opinion of the program with some recorded on video as part of the evaluation of the program.

Three different student classes worked in conjunction with a similar group of students at Robert Townson Primary School. One of the History groups entered their work in an area History Competition. Five of the students received awards as recognition for the quality of their work.

Our achievements include:

- Identification of G&T students.
- An increase in the number of faculties and hence teaching programs focusing on G&T.
- Two presentations to the school community by G&T students.

**Target 2: To develop a continuum of Learning from Kingergarten to Year 12.**

A K-12 curriculum plan was developed between Robert Townson High School and Robert Townson Primary School. Priority was given to English and Science. All areas reviewed their prior student outcomes and achievements and they later developed teaching and learning programs for stage 3 and stage 4 that made the transition for students easier. This was achieved by developing appropriate literacy and numeracy skills and subject specific material building on what students already knew.

It was agreed between both feeder primary schools and Robert Townson High School that all BST, ELLA and SNAP results will be shared and analysed together. This will provide a scope of literacy and numeracy skills in a K-12 framework that each school can build upon.

Our achievements include:

- The establishment of a K-12 management plan.
- Joint leadership developmental programs involving primary and high school teachers.
- Pilot K-12 curriculum programs operating between the schools.
- Recognition of student excellence ceremonies.
**Target 3: Improve student Literacy and Numeracy results.**

All ELLA and SNAP results were identified in detail using both external DET consultants and staff from Robert Townson High School and appropriate developmental programs put in place.

Our achievements include:
- Each KLA was developed in the use of appropriate diagnostic software to identify student growth and ability.
- Each year 7 and 8 student’s results were analysed by question.
- Individual and team developmental programs were designed and implemented.

**Target 4: Higher levels of safety and security for all of our students.**

Over 2006 our Occupational Health and Safety Committee reviewed school practices in terms of current requirements. An internal audit was completed in October of 2006 and all findings made available to staff.

Our achievements include:
- An OH&S consultancy paper was produced and submitted to the staff for ratification.
- A two meter fence was installed encircling the whole school.
- A lockdown/lockout procedure developed. The school conducted three emergency evacuation drills and continued to improve the process using appropriate resources and procedures.
- Staff undertook further training in emergency care and first aid including the areas of Anaphylaxis awareness and treatment. Staff began training in the understanding of identification of risk assessment and risk minimisation.

**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 2005 our school carried out evaluations of the Educational and management practice.

**Educational and management practice - Student Leadership**

**Background**

Until 2006 student leadership programs had followed a conservative direction where the student leaders were engaged in simple organisational activities around the school community. A survey was conducted with the student leaders to determine strategies and techniques that could be implemented to develop leadership with the student leaders.

One of the first programs to be implemented to develop leadership skills following the survey was a Mentoring in the Community TAFE Outreach course.

**Findings and conclusions**

The findings from the survey, combined with qualitative data, including interviews conducted with the students, revealed a gap between student and school expectations of leadership programs and outcomes. Eighty-seven percent of students stated that they were willing to put more effort into activities in and around the school community if they received training in leadership and offered an opportunity to put this training into practice through various programs. They also wanted to be recognised as student leaders through greater community participation.

Twenty students from Years 9, 10, 11 and 12 completed the Mentoring in the Community course. They attended one afternoon per week, after school for one term. They received a statement of attainment from TAFE for completing the course.

The students expressed high degrees of satisfaction with the mentoring course. They developed skills in communication, negotiation and goal setting.

A second initiative was the Maximising Potential in Macarthur program, which was a joint venture between private industry, the University of Western Sydney and the school. Nominated students and teachers received personal coaching on a one-to-one basis for four months. The culmination of the coaching was a joint presentation from the students which was showcased at the University of Western Sydney in October. The students reported that the coaching was intensive and helped them determine their goals and directions for the senior years of schooling.

**Future directions**

The mentor and coaching programs will become an established part of leadership training for students at the school. Other directions for student leadership development include greater participation in community activities and peer mentoring of younger students at both primary and high school levels.
Curriculum

Gifted and Talented Students- Middle Years

Background
RTHS operate a G&T class in stage 4. The content of the lessons was driven by syllabus requirements with the guidance of the classroom teacher. Parents were happy that their children were involved in the class structure but would have liked to see more engaging content. As a result a Middle School project was designed and developed with the adjoining primary school (Robert Townson Primary School) and as a pilot operated out of the TAS and English faculties.

Findings and conclusions
Students in the TAS faculty were involved in the project since its inception. They, facilitated by their years 6 and 7 teachers, chose the curriculum content, the style of learning and were involved in self assessment. All students, working under the topical theme of “Water Conservation” produced a plan of action in a group situation and presented it to the school community. Students and parents were surveyed as to their level of satisfaction and all responses indicated satisfaction with the project. Several parent responses were filmed for later presentations. Students not involved indicated their disappointment in this being only a pilot model. Student materials and video interviews were used as part of a presentation to other teachers and principals.

Future directions
The success of the pilot has lead to an increase in the number of faculties becoming involved in the project. In 2007 we will extend the project into mathematics and science.

Planning for 2007
Planning and Management for Robert Townson High School is a three year process. At the conclusion of each year all current plans are evaluated by the school community and appropriate additions and modifications are made and incorporated into the revised plans.

Target 1. Improvements in Literacy and Numeracy
Strategies to achieve this target include:
- All students will participate in a daily reading program.
- A home reading scheme for all Year 7 students in terms one and two.
- Focus on Language Program in terms three and four for all years. A literacy focus for the week will be introduced in roll call and this aspect of literacy is included in student teaching programs throughout the week.
- Targeted students will participate in the “Focus on Language Program”.
- With the exception of English all KLAs will develop numeracy teaching strategies based on areas for further growth and place them in their teaching programs.

Our success will be measured by:
- An increase in year 8 ELLA results
- An increase in the lower achieving group in SNAP
- Teaching programs which incorporated numeracy.

Target 2. To develop a continuum of learning from kindergarten to Year 12
To reduce student disengagement from their learning in stage 4, teaching programs and methods will be developed which result in engagement and interest in schooling.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Programs are developed with our feeder primary schools that engage and extend current year 6 students.
- Transition activities are developed and implemented to encourage student interest in learning at RTHS.
- A support structure is developed and implemented to assist year 7 students to quickly gain confidence in their place at school.

Our success will be measured by:
- Year 7 “middle school” programs operating.
- Year 7 surveyed responses about school engagement are positive.
- Staff teaching year 7 are trained in mentoring.
- Year 7 mentor programs are operating.

Target 3. To improve the general welfare of staff and students
Student welfare and discipline issues utilise an increasing amount of all teachers’ time. The number of students placed on suspension and expulsion continue to rise and some students continue to participate in behaviour which places themselves and others at risk.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Staff are trained in an alternative form of dealing with student management issues.
- At risk students are targeted and placed in appropriate intervention and curriculum programs
- Interagency support personnel are utilised to assist student development.
- Year 9 students trained as mentors.
- Year 7 social skills curriculum developed and implemented.
Teachers trained as mentors for year seven pastoral care classes. Our success will be measured by:
- Suspension rates are lower.
- Staff survey responses indicate a greater sense of worth and wellbeing.
- Parent survey responses indicate a greater level of satisfaction with the school.

Student information

Student enrolment profile
Student enrolment at the end of 2006 was 933. Student enrolment has declined slightly over several years. This includes families re-locating to other suburbs within and outside of Campbelltown. Forty nine different cultural backgrounds are represented in our student body comprising a total of 33 percent of our student population, with the largest being Arabic, followed by Hindi and Spanish. Forty seven percent of our students were female and fifty-three percent were males.

Retention to Year 12
Retention rates for senior students continue to be above the state levels. Our students value post compulsory education and those students who elect to leave before completing the HSC are supported in choosing a vocation or TAFE course.

Student attendance profile
Students continue to attend our school at a rate greater than the state and region.

Post-School Destinations
Surveys are undertaken each year to determine the destinations of students after they leave school.

Typically about 30 per cent of students completing Year 12 proceed directly to University studies. In 2006, 32 students were offered a position at a variety of institutions. Students accepted offers in degrees such as Psychology, Nursing, Teaching, Medical Science, Applied Science, Finance and Business Management.

Students leaving after Year 12 to take up TAFE studies comprise 30-40% of the senior students.

Each year about 20% of Year 10 students choose not to continue senior study at school. The majority enter into an apprenticeship, many of which originate from the school work experience program or employment.

A small number of students leave before the completion of the School Certificate. Each one of those students has been assisted into employment, labour market program or a specialised TAFE program.

RTHS participated in this inaugural award for the 2006 Australian Defence Force for students who demonstrated commitment in areas such as leadership, teamwork, community involvement and values. Wasim El-Haj Year 12, Mitchell Bagley Year 11 and Nathan Bass Year 10 all received a certificate and cash prize.
Staff
There are 69 teaching staff at Robert Townson High School. This includes specialist teachers such as ESL, counsellor, librarian, careers, teachers of hearing disabilities and learning support teachers. Thirteen support staff are also employed to service school community needs.

Staff retention
From a staff of 69 teachers one teacher left to undertake a promotional position and two teachers left to seek employment elsewhere.

Staff attendance
In 2006 the average daily attendance rate for staff was 95%.

Staff qualifications
All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in New South Wales’ public schools. Seven teachers have a minimum of a teaching diploma and 62 have a university degree. Eight have postgraduate degrees.

Professional learning
In line with the school management plan, staff are given access to a wide range of Professional Learning opportunities. In 2006 expenditure breakdowns are as follows

- Beginning Teachers 4%
- ICT 24%
- Literacy/Numeracy 7%
- Quality Teachers 38%
- Syllabus Implementation 3%
- Career Development 12%
- Welfare and Equity 12%

Each staff member received on average $463.00. Each member of the support staff received on average $512.00.

Major expenditures in Quality Teaching included a linked conference with Robert Townson Public School, with an emphasis on middle schooling programs for 2007.

There was a reduced expenditure in Beginning Teachers Programs and Syllabus implementation due to a stable and more experienced staff. In-school use of Numeracy consultants has reduced the budget needed to be spent on Literacy and Numeracy.

These breakdowns are expected to vary over the next year, particularly in the area of Beginning Teachers. Numeracy consultancy will continue in 2007.

Student performance

Literacy – ELLA

Background
The Literacy Team has utilised ELLA results, regional STLA support, advice from Primary School Teachers and other diagnostic tools to target students with high literacy needs.

Results from ELLA
- Year 7 girls and boys performed similarly to those of the South Western Sydney region. The results from 2006 Year 7 ELLA were similar to or slightly below the results of Year 7, 2005.
- Year 8 results were similar to the regional results however improvement scores were not as great as those of the region. Improvement in the lower and mid range achieving students was encouraging.

Programs/Achievements
- The following programs or initiatives operated in Peer reading targeting Year 7 students with trained Year 9 tutors.
- Parents as tutors. This involved a team of parents who gave literacy support to selected Year 9 or Year 10 students.
- A home reading scheme for all Year 7 students in terms one and two.
- Daily focus on reading.
- Focus on Language Program in terms three and four. A literacy focus for the week was introduced in roll call, awareness posters were displayed around the school and more detailed posters were displayed in classrooms. Teachers included this aspect of literacy in their teaching programs throughout the week.
- Volunteer Year 12 tutors to assist junior students.
- A student literacy database used to track student’s progress. The database is used to select students for literacy support and as a communication tool to assist KLAS with programming.

Future Directions
- Current programs (as mentioned above) will operate in 2007.
- Regional STLA and the school’s STLA will develop strategies to motivate junior students to participate in the “Focus on Language Program”.
- Coffee Shop – Due to a second round application with the Commonwealth Bank a financial Literacy Grant will be used to purchase technology to provide real life literacy experiences for special needs students.
Numeracy – SNAP

Background
Numeracy improvement continues to be a whole school priority. This has been addressed by identifying student numeracy areas for development from SNAP data and having each faculty select appropriate skills that can be incorporated into their teaching programs.

A numeracy support group is operating for those individual students who have been identified as having difficulty with basic numeracy skills. The support groups receive daily tutoring from older students who have undergone a school based training program and use school developed resources.

Results from SNAP Year 7
- Overall Year 7 students’ results were just above last year’s cohort and performed above the regional average.
- We performed well in Number, Space and Data with both boys and girls results above the regional average in Space the girls performed at the State average level.
- In Measurement, girls performed above the regional average and the boys were below it.
- Our weakest strand was Patterns and Algebra.
- Comparing boys and girls, the Year 7 girls performed significantly better than the boys.
- We had more students in the Elementary and Proficient Bands than both Regional and State averages.

Results from SNAP Year 8
- Overall Year 8 students’ results were slightly below the regional average. Even though they have improved compared with their results from 2005, they have not improved as much as the regional average.
- Across the five numeracy strands, we performed best in Data and poorest in Space.
- In the strands of Data and Number, boys performed at about the regional average.
- Comparing boys and girls, the Year 8 boys performed slightly better than the girls.
- The number of students in the Low Achievement band has improved. In 2005, 4% of the cohort was Low compared with only 2% in 2006.
- Across the bands, we had more students in the Elementary and Proficient Bands than both the Regional and State averages.

Programs/Achievements
- Ongoing implementation of tutoring in numeracy during roll call where Year 8 students, identified by the SNAP data, were tutored by Year 9 peers.
- Establishment of Year 10 numeracy groups to support their School Certificate preparation.
- The Regional Mathematics Consultant trained staff across all KLA’s on SNAP results and also incorporated numeracy strategies into teaching programs.

Future directions
- Develop and implement a program to target specific School Certificate weaknesses to be implemented in Year 10 numeracy rolls which will operate throughout the year.
- Develop a whole school strategy to target Year 7 students who achieved proficiency in the 2006 SNAP test with the aim to shift them into the high band in Year 8.
- Consultancy support will work with the Mathematics faculty and be aimed at developing a Middle School initiative in Numeracy to focus on a common strand to be taught with two Year 7 classes and two Year 6 classes from Robert Townson Public School.
- The Regional Consultancy support will continue to work with staff across all KLA’s on SNAP results and also incorporates numeracy strategies into lessons.

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

English
English Literacy test results showed a similar pattern to last year. One student scored Band 6 (2 last year), but there was a significant increase in Bands 5 and 4 (11.50% and 40.6% of the total.) Band 5 and 4 results are significantly above State average.

Far fewer students scored in Band 2, increasing our numbers in Band 3 (32.94%). No student scored in Band 1.

Results indicate that there has been an important shift from low scoring results to middle bands and from middle to upper bands. Results for the top 25 percent of students remain on the lower end of state averages, our middle performing group of students scored in the state average range, and our lowest 25 percent of students scored in the highest 20 percent of their state range.

Results were evenly distributed between boys and girls.

Mathematics:
One hundred and seventy three students sat the School Certificate mathematics examination. Two students achieved a Band 6, both boys and 6 students, 5 boys and 1 girl, achieved a Band 5. This represented 5% of the total candidature.

Eighteen students achieved a Band 4 and 59 students achieved a Band 3. The majority of the students scored a Band 2, a total of 79 students
In 2006 a new School Certificate syllabus for history was introduced that will be examined for the first time in 2007 that should cater better for more capable students.

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

English
Students performed very well in all three of the English courses studied. Extension 1 and Advanced English results were significantly above State average results. Standard results were also above the State average. The top students exceeded the State average for their bands, and the very bottom students scored below.

In Advanced English 18% of the candidates scored Band 6 and 54.5% scored Band 5. The remaining students scored Band 4, with no students in any lower Band. These are by far the best results we have ever achieved in this course, and are significantly higher than the State results.

In Standard English, our results were also above State average. Four candidates, 10.41% scored Band 5, a result only one student had achieved previously since the course began. This was far above the State average. Band 4 results were close to State average (30.42%). An equal number of students scored Band 4 a better score than the State average.

Australian Geography, Civics & Citizenship
School Certificate geography, civics and citizenship results showed a marked improvement over those results achieved in the previous two years. Students in all three performance areas – low, middle and upper, all demonstrate growth since completed their Basic Skills Test. The average growth is in line with state patterns of performance for all groups.

Australian History, Civics & Citizenship
Student examination results were below state averages with 28% of students placed between Bands 4 and 6 compared to 47% across the state.

Comparing student results since their performance in the BST it is evident that students in the middle and lower bands show a greater level of improvement over time.

These results are consistent with student performance in the School Certificate in Australian history, civics and citizenship over the past five years.

Science
One hundred and seventy three students sat for the science School Certificate examination in 2006. Generally, student performance was similar to that of the previous year.

One student achieved a Band 6. Twenty students achieved a Band 5. This was 12 percent of the total candidature. Fifty six students achieved a Band 4. This was approximately 32 percent of the school total which is similar to the State results.

The number of Band 3 students at Robert Townson High School was significantly greater than the state average. Only 43 percent of students were in Bands 4 to 5 in science which is lower than the states average. Seventy two percent of the students achieved a Band 3 or 4 which is significantly higher than the State value of 59 percent.

The majority of the students demonstrated state expected growth compared to their Year 5 achievement in the BST. The progress of middle and high achieving students had all improved from the 2005 results. The most significant improvement was from the lower achieving students.

(46% of the students). This was significantly higher than the state average of 24%. We also had 8 students achieve a Band 1.

Compared with their performance in the BST, students in the Lower, Middle and Upper Bands all showed progress compared with previous years. The most significant results were in the lower and middle bands.

English
Students performed very well in all three of the English courses studied. Extension 1 and Advanced English results were significantly above State average results. Standard results were also above the State average. The top students exceeded the State average for their bands, and the very bottom students scored below.

Only two students attempted Extension 1 English, with both students scoring in Band E3, the second top Band.

In Advanced English 18% of the candidates scored Band 6 and 54.5% scored Band 5. The remaining students scored Band 4, with no students in any lower Band. These are by far the best results we have ever achieved in this course, and are significantly higher than the State results.

In Standard English, our results were also above State average. Four candidates, 10.41% scored Band 5, a result only one student had achieved previously since the course began. This was far above the State average. Band 4 results were close to State average (30.42%). An equal number of students scored Band 4 a better score than the State average.

Approximately 32% of students scored in the lowest two Bands, which is below the State average.

Combined or separated, English courses were above the State average. Students in English were the second highest performing KLA in the school after CAPA.

Mathematics
Students sat for the mathematics exams across 3 subjects (General (67), mathematics (16) and extension 1 (8)). We also presented the applied mathematics course for less academic students and had 21 students study this option.

In the general mathematics course, we achieved 20% of our candidates in the Bands 4 & 5 and 55% with Bands 3 and 2. Compared with their school certificate data, the students in Bands 1 & 2, showed significant improvement and overall, the candidates in general mathematics showed positive growth.

Of the 16 students studying 2U mathematics, 12.5% scored a band 6, followed by 44% in Band
5. These results were almost double the state average and compared with their school certificate results, all but 3 students demonstrated growth.

All extension 1 candidates achieved a Band E2 or better with one student achieving a Band E4 and 3 achieving a Band E3.

Overall, the general mathematics results were slightly below both the state and the school average and the mathematics results were 0.36 above the state average and on par with the school results.

Science

Fifty four students sat for the HSC in science in 2006 which was a significant increase in students compared to the 2005 HSC candidature. Eight sat for physics, eleven sat for chemistry and thirty five sat for biology.

Physics students achieved results in Bands 1 to 5. A total of 63 percent of the physics students achieved Band 4 or higher which was similar to 2005 results. Thirty eight percent of the students achieved a Band 4 which is higher than the State average.

Biology students achieved results in Bands 1 through 6. Three students achieved a Band 6 making a total of nine percent of the candidature which is higher than the State average. A total of 55 percent of the students achieved a Band 3 or higher.

Chemistry students achieved results from Bands 1 through 5. A total of 36 percent of the chemistry students achieved a Band 5 which is significantly higher than the State average. Seventy three percent of students achieved Band 4 or higher which is ten percent higher than the State average.

Compared to their performance in the school certificate, the majority of biology and chemistry students demonstrated a minimum of State expected growth. Fifty percent of physics students performed below the State expected growth. The majority of low performing students across all senior science subjects reduced the overall performance of science relative to the other subjects across the school. Improvement can be facilitated through appropriate subject choice for less academically capable students.

Business Studies

Results in business studies were positive. Business studies students achieved marks which were better then the State average in business studies. Value added data indicates that student growth since completing their School Certificate was, with the exception of three students, at least in line with State growth patterns or much higher. This was most pronounced in Bands 3 and 4 Only one student failed to produce a result equal to or better then their School Certificate result.

Legal Studies

Legal studies students produced results which were slightly below the State average. Student performance in this subject was higher than in the majority of other subjects in which they sat for examinations. Value added data indicates that legal studies students, with the exception of three, achieved State level patterns of growth with seven students demonstrating growth in the top 25 percent of their respective groups. One student achieved a Band 6 result.

History

Students sat for examinations in ancient history (47), modern history (26) and extension history (1). Once again three ancient history students achieved Band 6, and once again it was the highest number for any single subject in the school. Students who achieved in the lower Bands of the School Certificate examination in 2006 generally displayed value added growth in both modern and ancient history in the 2006 HSC. Modern history results were on the whole, below State average, but ancient history results were on State average and extension history results were above State average.

The new syllabus for ancient history seems to be catering better for our students, but further topic refinement for modern history is in progress.

Creative and Performing Arts

Twenty students sat for the visual arts examination. Results were consistent with state trends. One student achieved Band 6. Sixty percent of candidates achieved a result not less than Band 5, more than the State result of 55%. No student achieved less than Band 4. These results are consistent with previous years, showing a slight increase in results. The faculty will continue to offer the photography, video and digital media course and visual design as subjects which further extend our visual arts students, and also act as alternative subjects to non academic students.

Technology and Applied Studies

Students sat for the HSC examinations in four TAS Subjects; community and family studies (9 students), engineering studies (9 students), industrial technology – timber furnishings (14 students) and software design and development (9 students).

Community and family studies and software design and development students achieved results across Bands 3 to 6, with two students in community and family studies and one student in software design and development achieving Band 6. engineering studies and industrial technology
students achieved results in Bands 2 to 5. Across all TAS subjects the total breakdown was 7% Band 6, 11% Band 5, 34% Band 4, 41% Band 3, 7% Band 2 and zero in Band 1.

All four courses demonstrated positive value added growth in student's results since completing their School Certificate examination. This value added growth was particularly significant in software, design and development and engineering studies.

Students are constantly made aware of the rigours of HSC study and the need for commitment and application during their senior years. The participation in additional activities, such as external competitions and major works displays is encouraged. Opportunities for extension work as well as additional class time for project work, is made available in TAS courses.

PDHPE

There were 14 students who sat for the 2 unit PDHPE examination. Sixty five percent of candidates achieved a Band 3 or better. Students were slightly below the State average.

The PDHPE faculty will continue to assist students by offering study booklets, review/study sessions, use of teachers with special skills in certain topic areas and incorporate the quality teaching model into all lessons and tasks. Students will be made aware of the work involved in the course and appropriate subject selection will be encouraged.

VET

Three students elected to sit for the business services examination. Thirty three percent scored Band 4 and 66% Band 2.

Fourteen students elected to sit for the hospitality examination. Fourteen percent scored Band 5, 14% scored Band 4, 50% scored Band 3 and 22% scored Band 2.

Eleven students elected to sit for the information technology examination. 18% scored Band 5, 27% scored Band 4, 18% scored Band 3, 27% scored Band 2 and 9 % scored Band 1.

Three students elected to sit for the construction examination. Sixty six percent scored Band 3 and 33% scored Band 2.

Two students elected to sit for the retail operation examination with both scoring Band 4.

To improve student results in the future the VET teachers will encourage only the students who wish to include the course as part of their UAI to undertake the examination. The examination is not compulsory.

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 English Language and Literacy Assessment (ELL) and the Year 7 Secondary Numeracy Assessment Program (SNAP) is compared to 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 2004 and 2005.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2004 Percentages</th>
<th>2005 Percentages</th>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>%68.5 *</td>
<td>%93.9 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>%62.6 *</td>
<td>%63.4 *</td>
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* National benchmarks were not available for 2004 or 2005 at the time of preparation of this report

Percentage of Year 9 students achieving national benchmarks

The Federal Government Schools Assistance Act also requires schools to report the proportions of Year 9 students meeting national benchmarks in reading, writing and numeracy. At present, this information is not collected and there is no Year 9 national benchmark information. This will be provided in Annual School Reports when the national testing and benchmarks are in place for Year 9.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2006 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their responses are presented below.

“…Very happy with the school…”

“friendly and supportive”

“…competitive and score highly all the way…”
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.

Warren Parkes, Principal
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Information to help you read this report

Reading achievement and performance band graphs

- This bar shows the percentage of students in our school in each skill band in 2005.
- This bar shows the average percentage of students in our school in each band between 2001 and 2005.
- This bar shows the average percentage of students in each band in schools like ours (our Like School Group).
- This bar shows the state average in each band for the last five years, 2001-2005.

Like School Groups (LSGs)

For reporting purpose all Government schools in New South Wales have been divided into eight groups. Our school has been allocated to one of these groups based on the community which we serve and our geographical location. Throughout the report we have compared the achievements of our students to the achievements of students in schools like ours, that is, to students in our Like School Group.