2008 Annual School Report
Robert Townson High School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
Our school at a glance

Robert Townson High School was built in 1987 and services 930 students. Our school serves the communities of Raby, St Andrews and Varroville.

We are a comprehensive co-educational high school with a specialist school for students with a hearing disability. Our school community values the wearing of full school uniform, appropriate social behaviours and a commitment to learning.

Our students participate in a wide curriculum which features academic and vocational study, sporting skills and extra curricula and leadership activities.

Messages

Principal's message

Robert Townson High 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.

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 2008 targets and our targets for 2009.

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

P&C and/or School Council message

Our Parents and Friends (P & F) meet every second Wednesday of the month during school terms.

Our Annual General Meeting takes place in March of each school year.

The elected committee oversaw the general operation of the P & F which included general school input, community feedback, fundraising and representation of the community.

A second parental body operates within our school – our Uniform Shop committee. These parents staff and stock our uniform shop with all profits returned to the school. This year they donated $5250 towards the purchase of a security sound system to be used for increased student safety.

Robert Townson High School Parents and Friends Association

Student Representative Council message

The SRC meets every Wednesday and discusses fundraising and issues that can enhance students' wellbeing and the betterment of the school in general.

Funds were raised for Red Cross, Leukaemia Foundation, Worlds Greatest Shave, Red Nose Day, (SIDS) and the 40 Hour Famine.

School Leaders throughout the year liaised with the school on important issues such as the 20th Anniversary Celebrations, toilet facilities and grounds maintenance.

Student Leaders attended leadership conferences in Darling Harbour and were able to pass on that knowledge to the incumbent SRC.

The SRC also financially supported students representing Robert Townson High School in events such as state and national sport competitions.

Ross Barker

SRC Co-Ordinator

School context

Student information

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

Student enrolment profile

The following table shows the student enrolment profile over the last five years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>484</td>
<td>460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>441</td>
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Student attendance profile

The following two tables show the student attendance profile over the last four years for junior and senior students.

### Years 7 to 10 Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>90.8</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>88.3</td>
<td>88.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>90.7</td>
<td>90.8</td>
<td>90.7</td>
<td>91.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>90.1</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>90.1</td>
<td>90.1</td>
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### Years 11 and 12 Attendance

<table>
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<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
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<td>School</td>
<td>91.8</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>89.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>89.5</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>89.8</td>
<td>90.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>89.5</td>
<td>89.7</td>
<td>89.6</td>
<td>89.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structure of classes

In the junior school, the curriculum was divided into two modules: Years 7 - 8 and Years 9 - 10. In Years 7 and 8, all students follow a compulsory core curriculum determined by the Board of Studies. Classes were of mixed ability except for one class of higher achievers each year. In Years 9 and 10, students undertook a core curriculum of English, mathematics, science, PD/H/PE, Australian history, geography, civics and citizenship plus two elective subjects. Classes were streamed in mathematics. All other subjects were of mixed ability.

The senior school was divided into the preliminary course (Year 11) and the HSC course (Year 12). English is the only compulsory subject. The large size of our senior school ensured that we were able to offer a wide range of traditional and VET courses.

Retention Year 10 to Year 12

Our retention figures show a result slightly below state and regional averages however the pattern is only a few percentage points lower. A significant proportion of our students continue to value an early start to their vocation and the practical skills that can be offered at TAFE. Our school continues to work with post compulsory age students in the development of appropriate school to work programs which meet their needs.

Post-school destinations

Surveys are undertaken each year to determine the destinations of students after they leave school. Typically about 20 percent of students completing Year 12 proceed directly to University studies. In 2008, 22 students were offered a position at a variety of institutions. Students accepted offers in degrees such as Business and Commerce, Health Science, Applied Science, Marine Science, Engineering, Teaching, Arts, Law and Pharmacy.

About forty percent of students completing Year Twelve enrol in TAFE studying a variety of courses including Accounting, Fitness (personal training), Children’s Services and Graphic Design.

Approximately ten percent of students have taken up apprenticeships in fields such as electrical, plumbing, shipwright, panel beating and wall and floor tiling. Other students have gone to private colleges, work or volunteer work.

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

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

Robert Townson High School has selected students for the Australian Defence Force Leadership and Teamwork Award who have demonstrated commitment in areas such as leadership, teamwork, community involvement and values. Joel Rub Yr 10, Christopher Nelson Yr 11 and Darren Peterson Yr 12 were the award winners for 2008.

Staff information

Sixty seven teaching staff were employed in 2008 allowing the school to offer a broad curriculum to cater for individual needs and requirements. The majority of our staff are experienced teachers. All of our staff are offered the opportunity for further training and development to meet their needs. As well as teaching staff, we have support and guidance staff to assist students with issues that may arise.
Staff establishment

In 2008 Robert Townson High School employed specialist teachers in areas such as ESL, counsellor, librarian, careers, teachers of hearing disabilities and learning support teachers. Thirteen support staff were also employed to service school community and student needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>47.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>1.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff retention

This year, due to declining student numbers, two staffing positions were lost. One position was in PDHPE and one in History. No staff were transferred or retired.

Staff attendance

Staff have access to leave entitlements such as sick leave. In 2008 the average daily attendance rate for staff, as determined by the Department, was 95.6%

Teacher qualifications

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>5</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.

Date of financial summary: 30/11/2008

<table>
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<th>Income</th>
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<td>Balance brought forward</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>213 403.89</td>
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<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>19 755.38</td>
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<td>Trust receipts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>933 688.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>102 286.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>45 602.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>114 637.37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>20 581.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>7 580.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>234 379.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>52 081.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>134 947.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>96 571.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>58 944.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>31 274.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>12 596.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
<td>911 483.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Balance carried forward 232 601.18

A full copy of the school's 2008 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

Achievements

Arts

The senior visual arts students continued to excel in 2008 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.

Monica Renn in Year 11 was accepted into the Intensive Studio Practice Course (Board endorsed visual arts extension course) at the National Art School out of 500 applicants. The National Art School is the oldest continuous art school in Australia. Monica's chosen discipline was painting and she received a band 6 mark of 47 out of 50. This studio-based methodology of learning assists in informing students' future artistic practice and their studies of HSC visual arts.
Jana Cruz of Year 11 was nominated for the 2008 Arts Education Foundation Trust Creative and Performing Arts Scholarship. This involved putting together a digital portfolio of her artworks, however, there were many applicants and Jana was unsuccessful in attaining the scholarship.

Year 11 and 12 photography students entered their photographs into the Ingleburn Alive Festival Photographic Competition. The theme for this year’s competition was Planet Earth, in recognition of the United Nations Association of Australia declaring 2008 as the International Year of Planet Earth. Mitchell McNally won the Year 11 High School Category and was also Highly Commended. Nathan Bass won the Year 12 High School Category and was Highly Commended. Amanda Neloska of Year 12 was Runner-Up, and Amy Lowes of Year 12 was presented with the Encouragement Award. This is the third year running that students from Robert Townson High School have won prizes in this competition.

A number of students from Years 8 to 10 were selected to attend a range of gifted and talented visual arts workshops throughout the year. Year 10 students Jasmeet Flora and Kate O'Flaherty attended the ArtSmart gifted and talented workshop. Jasmeet's artwork was displayed at Campbelltown Arts Centre and was also selected for the Director's Choice Exhibition at Homebush. Holly Craig and Sian Kuru in Year 8 attended the Hot House Regional Visual Arts Workshop. The aim of the workshop is to expose talented art students in the middle years to new and challenging experiences that they would not normally have in the school situation with assistance from professional practicing artists. Holly and Sian attended Mt. Annan Botanical Gardens for inspiration, before completing their work over three days. Their work was then exhibited at Campbelltown Arts Centre. Holly’s ceramic piece was also selected for the Director’s Choice Exhibition.

Our junior visual arts students also worked on a range of projects for the greater school throughout the year. A Year 8 visual arts class completed 10 murals for the library to enhance the space as well as to promote literacy and reading.

A qualified aerosol artist provided Year 9 visual arts and photography and design students with the resources and support to develop their skills with the aerosol art medium.

Year 10 student Alisha Clarkson was accepted to participate in the debut season of “Fast and Fresh Dance”, presented by Western Sydney Dance Action at the Riverside Theatre, Parramatta. This was a dance performance and choreography competition for young Sydney dance artists aged between 16 and 21. This festival provides the opportunity for Australia’s young choreographers and dancers to perform their work and display their talents and also inspires and educates young performers to strive for their own artistic excellence. Alisha was also accepted into the Westbound Work Experience Program with Western Sydney Dance Action. Westbound is a unique work experience program that provides selected students with an opportunity to work in a dance company situation for a week, facilitated by professional dance artists. Prior to this, Alisha was accepted into the NSW Public Schools Senior State Dance Camp. This camp provides an opportunity for talented students to be involved in a challenging and stimulating dance education program.

The music department administered a range of performing arts activities in 2008. Year 12 music students performed at the HSC visual arts exhibition night, and some acted as tutors for our junior students.

Year 12 student Mitchell Bradley, successfully produced and co-ordinated “The Entertainers”, a musical and dance performance involving over 50 students from Years 7 to 12, as well as students from Robert Townson Primary School. The production included acts from various well-known musicals and was performed as a dress rehearsal for the primary school, before being performed in the evening in front of over 300 audience members. This was a completely student run production from auditions, to choreography, rehearsals, sound, props, backdrops, lighting and lighting. Mitchell has now gone on to study theatre production at a tertiary level.

Besides on stage performance ensembles, Robert Townson High School has an experienced and loyal group of students who form the sound, lighting and stage crew. This technical crew formed the backbone of all presentations, and also assisted Robert Townson Primary School with their sound and lighting requirements for their various performances.

Sport

Students at Robert Townson High School participate in sport from Year 7 through to Year 12. Students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of sporting activities. All students have the opportunity to represent the school in NSWCHS knockout competitions.

The school has entered the following knockout competitions:

**Boys:** Touch, soccer, AFL, hockey, volleyball, cricket, triathlon, netball and rugby league.

**Girls:** Cricket, triathlon, soccer, hockey, touch, volleyball and netball.
We have also sent a number of students to Zone, Area and State carnivals in swimming, cross country and athletics. Mr Kelava took six teams to the NSW Futsal competition and made the finals with two of the teams. Students in Years Seven to Eleven are given the chance to play in a grade sport team, competing against other schools in the Macarthur Zone.

The school had two teams in the West Cup Rugby Round Robin Competition: the U13s, who made the grand final and the U15s who participated consistently during the competition. Mr Child coached both teams, with the assistance of parents. Ms Martin took eight teams to the annual Macarthur Netball Gala Day and each team participated to the best of their ability. Students also helped out at PSSA Gala Days, acting as referees and officials. The major sporting awards for 2008 were:

Sportsman of the Year: Sam Aukusitino
Sportswomen of the Year: Breanna Collier
Mitchell Beks Award: Taryn Etcel.

NSWCHS Reps
Saeed Colley – Futsal
Fifty percent scored Band 4 and

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

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7
The following graph demonstrates the school’s performance in reading compared with other students across the state. There is a general trend away from the bottom bands however student performance in the top bands remains below that of the state. This same trend is found across all areas of year 7 literacy

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7
A similar trend to our student's performance in Literacy can been seen in numeracy. The significant difference however is a larger number of students in the lower bands.
Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9

Year 9 literacy results across all areas are similar to the following reading results graph.

![Percentage of students in bands: Year 9 reading](image)

A larger number of students however achieved results in the lower bands in writing, spelling and punctuation and grammar.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9

Student performance in numeracy displayed a similar trend to literacy.

![Percentage of students in bands: Year 9 numeracy](image)

Results were achieved across all bands with a strong weighting towards the bottom.

School Certificate

In the School Certificate the performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from performance band 1 (lowest) to performance band 6 (highest).

English Literacy

Literacy Test results showed a similar pattern to the last few years. While we had no students scoring band 6, 18 students scored in band 5 (11.18%). This was a smaller percentage than last year. band 4 was the most frequently scored band (46.58%), followed by band 3 (36.64%). This follows the state pattern, although we have a significantly higher proportion scoring in band 3. A very small number of students scored in bands 1 and 2. This was a noticeably better result than for these two bands last year. Far more students scored band 5 (11.18%) than band 2 (3.72%), continuing the clear trend of recent years. While our top band results are lower than state average, our low band results are above state average.

The top mark was scored by two boys and one girl equally, and the lowest band results were scored by boys.

The English faculty has developed a specifically targeted Literacy program aimed at years 7 and 8 which is intended to improve the areas of weakness brought into focus by the NAPLAN results this year.

Mathematics

One hundred and fifty six students sat the School Certificate mathematics examination with 18 students achieving a band 5 or 6. This represents a slight percentage increase compared with 2007. Nineteen students achieved a band 4 and 60 students a band 3. Fifty seven students scored a band 2 and 6 students scored a band 6.

Compared with their performance in the BST, students showed improvement compared to previous years in the upper and lower bands.

Science

One hundred and sixty one students sat for the science School Certificate examination in 2008. Generally, student performance was similar to the previous year, although the candidature was slightly larger.

Two students achieved band 6 and 22 students achieved band 5. This was a total of fifteen percent of the total candidature. Forty nine students achieved a band 4. This was 31 percent of the school total which is similar to the state’s results.

The total number of band 3 students was significantly greater than the state average. Forty
six percent of students were in bands 4 to 6 which is lower than the state’s average of 53 percent. Sixty one percent of the students achieved a band 3 or 4 which is significantly higher than the state value of 54 percent. Compared to last year’s results there were more students this year achieving bands 5 and 6 and a lower number of students achieving bands 3 and 4.

The majority of the students demonstrated state expected growth compared to their Year 5 achievement in the BST.

**Australian History, Civics and Citizenship**

One hundred and fifty nine students sat the School Certificate examination in Australian History, Civics and Citizenship in 2008. Nearly 48% of students received a Band 3 compared to the state average of 32%. There was improvement in the value added data for students who achieved in the lower performance bands on the BST. Specially designed literacy based resources used in the classroom over the last two years seem to have had a positive impact on the students who performed in Bands 1-3 on the BST.

No band 6 results were achieved. The pattern of achievement was less than the state pattern for higher and middle performance bands. Just over 19 percent of students scored a band 4 to 6 result compared to just over 50 percent of the state. The faculty will now focus on trying to improve the middle and higher performing students’ results from the BST.

**Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship**

One hundred and fifty nine students sat the School Certificate examination in Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship. Just over 37 percent of students achieved a band 3 compared to the state average of nearly 24 percent. Two students scored a band 6. Unlike 2007, students who performed in the middle performance band for the BST did value add in the School Certificate for this subject in 2008.

Students who scored in the lower and higher performance bands in the BST did not value add. Just over 11 percent of students scored a band 5 or 6 result compared to 28 percent of the state. Just over 17 percent of students scored a band 1 or 2 result compared to 9 percent of the state. In 2009 the faculty will be focused on trying to improve value added data by promoting more external competitions and connected learning experiences in the classroom to enhance student engagement. It will also produce more literacy based lessons for the lower ability students so that they gain a better understanding of the course.

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

![Graph showing School Certificate: Relative growth from Year 5 (value-added)](image)

**Higher School Certificate**

**English**

Students in all three English subjects scored below the overall state average result, but not significantly below. Students in Extension 1 scored significantly better than in this course last year. In Advanced English four of the thirteen candidates achieved band 5 and the other nine achieved band 4 results. Boys achieved three of the four band 5 results. Only 13 marks separated the top and bottom students. No students scored in the lowest bands in either of these courses.

In Standard English one student scored a Band 5, which no student did in 2007. Fewer students scored in band 4, and scores in other bands were similar to those scored last year. Our band 2 results were fractionally better than the State average, but this year we had two students score in band 1. All but one of these results were scored by boys.

HSC markers from this faculty are able to bring that expertise back into classrooms to prepare students well for what faces them in these exams.

**Mathematics**

Students sat for General Mathematics (84 students), Mathematics (11 students), Extension 1 Mathematics (2 students) and Extension 2 Mathematics (1 student). We also had a group of students who selected to study the Board Endorsed Course of Applied Mathematics.
In the General Mathematics course 24 percent of our students scored bands 4 and 5, slightly less than half the state average. Sixty-one percent of our students scored bands 2 and 3 which was slightly higher than the state average. When compared with their School Certificate data many students have shown significant growth.

Our students who studied Mathematics (2 unit) achieved one band 6, with 6 of our students achieving bands 4 and 5.

The two Extension 1 students performed extremely well. One student achieved a band E4 (the highest band) and the other student scored a band E3 (second highest band). These results were above the state average.

Our Extension 2 student also scored the highest band, E4.

**Science**

Thirty three students sat for the HSC in science in 2008 which was a slight decrease in students compared to the 2007 HSC candidature. Six sat for physics, nine sat for chemistry and eighteen sat for biology.

Biology students achieved results from bands 3 to 6. Two students achieved bands 5 or 6. Seventy two percent of students achieved bands 4 or higher which is significantly higher than the state average of sixty four percent. Over five percent of students achieved a band six compared to the state average of seven percent.

Chemistry students achieved results from bands 2 to 5. Eighty eight percent of students achieved bands 3 and higher. Thirty three percent of students achieved band 3 which is slightly higher than the state average.

Physics students achieved results from bands 2 to 5. Seventeen percent of candidates achieved a band 5 compared to 25 percent for the state. Fifty percent of students achieved band 3 or higher.

Compared to their performance in the school certificate, the majority of biology, chemistry and physics students achieved the minimum state expected growth. A significant number of biology students performed better than the state expected growth.

**History**

Students sat for examinations in Ancient History (41), Modern History (21), History Extension (3) and Studies of Religion II (24).

In Extension History one student achieved a band 3, one a band 2 and the last student a band 1 result. In 2009 the faculty will be hoping to reverse this trend by improving the class activities on the case study and readings.

Modern History results were, on average, below the state average. For the first time no student scored a band 6 or 5. Just over 19 percent of students achieved a band 4 (below the state average of 35.41 percent, nearly 62 percent a Band 3 (just over four times the state average) and 19 percent a Band 2 result (above the state average of 4.93 percent. It was encouraging that there was significant value added growth in this subject for students who achieved bands 2 or 3 in the School Certificate examination. The faculty will now concentrate on improving its overall value added data from the School Certificate.

The results for Ancient History improved slightly in 2008. Two students achieved a band 6 result. There was a reduction in the number of band 1 and 2 results from 46 percent of students in 2007 to nearly 22 percent of students in 2008. Just over 29 percent of students received a band 4 result which was above the state average. Staff will now focus on improving teaching and learning programs and try to incorporate connected learning lessons in a bid to boost student engagement.

For the first time the faculty had students completing the Studies of Religion II course. It was pleasing to see one student achieve a band 6 and two a band 5. Just over 29 percent of students also achieved a band 4 result which was only just under the state average of 31 percent. Despite these results the students as a whole performed below the state average.

**Technology and Applied Studies**

Students sat for examinations in four subjects; Community and Family Studies (14 students), Engineering Studies (12 students), Industrial Technology-Timber (12 students) and Software Design and Development (12 students).

Community and Family Studies students achieved results across performance bands 2 to 5. One student achieved a band 2 and the remaining (13 students) were evenly spread throughout bands 2, 3, 4 and 5. The value added data indicated the overall class performance was slightly above the average state growth pattern.

Engineering Studies students achieved results across performance bands 1 to 5 with 83 percent of the students achieving band 3 or lower. The value added performance was at a level significantly below the average state growth patterns.
Industrial Technology-Timber students achieved results across performance bands 1 to 5, with 75 percent of candidates scoring either band 3 or lower. The value added results for this group of students was significantly lower than the average state growth pattern.

Software Design and Development students achieved results across performance bands 2 to 5 with 50 percent of students gaining either bands 4 or 5. The value added performance was a level slightly below the average state growth patterns.

To improve the overall standard of the results of students in the TAS faculty, there will be closer mentoring of early career teachers. The teaching staff are committed to raising expectations of the students and will continue their professional development in the delivery of the course content and in the management of students.

**Social Sciences**

Students sat for examinations in Legal Studies (20) and Business Studies (23). All students achieved and developed the skills in achieving the relevant course outcomes.

In Business Studies 23 students completed the HSC with students being awarded bands 2 to 5. Ten percent of students achieved band 5 and fifty percent of students achieved band 4, 50 percent achieved band 3 and 10 percent achieved band. Though students’ average value added was below the state average, the majority of students performed well in completing classroom assessed course competencies which will be of value to the students in their post HSC careers. Staff this year will continue to develop student business report writing skills and continue to make students aware of the level of expertise required for report writing to achieve in the HSC.

In Legal Studies twenty students completed the HSC. They were awarded bands 3 to 5. Students results were: 10 percent achieved band 5, 40 percent achieved band 4 and 50 percent achieved band 3. The Legal Studies group achieved above the state average. Staff will continue to be inserviced and develop student written legal brief responses to further assist student development of outcome responses.

**Creative and Performing Arts**

Twenty three students sat for examinations in two subjects, Visual Arts (15) and Music 1 (8). Results in Creative and Performing Arts subjects were consistent with state trends, with all students but two achieving a state determined growth, and all achieving bands 4 or 5.

In Visual Arts, 45 percent of candidates achieved a result not less than band 5, equal with the state result. No student achieved less than band 4. All students but one who completed Visual Arts in Stage 5 received a band 5, while all students but one who did not study Stage 5 Visual Arts, received a Band 4. With the exception of one student, all students met a minimum state determined growth, with five students demonstrating growth well above the stage. For each student, the Visual Arts mark was their highest subject mark in the Higher School Certificate, except for one student whose highest mark was Music, followed by Visual Arts. One third of the Visual Arts class has now gone on to study the arts at a tertiary level. The faculty will look into how to better prepare senior students who have not completed the visual arts course in Stage 5, as this seems to be affecting final results. The area of artmaking is of particular concern as this is a skills based outcome that takes time to practise and develop. 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 Visual Arts students.

In Music 1, all students achieved band 4 or 5. Every student but one achieved a state determined growth.

**Vocational Education and Training**

Four students elected to sit for the business services examination. Two scored band 4 and two band 3.

Nine students elected to sit for the hospitality examination. Three scored band 4, three band 3 and three scored Band 2.

Ten students elected to sit for the Information Technology examination. Eight percent scored band 5, 42 percent scored band 4, 33 percent scored band 3 and 17 percent scored band 2.

Four students elected to sit for the Metal and Engineering examination. One scored band 5, two scored band 4 and one scored band 3.

Two students elected to sit the Retail Operations examination. One scored Band 4 and one scored Band 3.

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.
PDHPE

There were 21 students who sat for the 2 unit PDHPE examination. Forty percent of candidates achieved a band 4 or higher. Five candidates received a band 5. Most students did better in this subject than in most other subjects within the school. Students achieved just below the state average.

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

Minimum standards

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

The performance of the students in our school in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy is compared to these minimum standards. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these standards are reported below.

Percentage of Year 7 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2008

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 7 students achieving at and above minimum standard</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
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<td>Spelling</td>
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<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
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<td>Numeracy</td>
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Percentage of Year 9 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2008

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<th>Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at and above minimum standard</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
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<td>Spelling</td>
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<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
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<td>Numeracy</td>
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Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

The main focus for indigenous education has centred on improving numeracy and literacy skills, linking student interests with career aspirations and engaging students in curriculum. Indigenous students have been involved in a number of school and community based activities.

From the NAPLAN testing results, our indigenous students are, for the majority, above state averages in literacy and numeracy. Students currently experiencing difficulties in these areas have been linked with tutors and other specific resources within the school (Numeracy/Reading roll call classes). Over one third of our students accessed external tutoring available to students in years nine to twelve. This tutoring centres on maths, English and science.

Individual Education Plans (IEP) were developed and are currently being implemented for all indigenous students in the school. These plans cater for the interests and needs of each student, identifying areas of concerns and establishing appropriate steps to overcome these concerns as well as providing opportunities for further growth.

During March students in Year 8 were immersed in Aboriginal culture during “Harmony Day” celebrations which were conducted at Mt Annan Botanic Gardens. The students completed the Reconciliation Walk, learnt and attempted Aboriginal Art, had a great BBQ lunch and played traditional indigenous games in the afternoon. A fun and educational day was had by all.

Breanna and Jessica Collier have again excelled in sport. In 2008 Breanna and Jessica were members of the successful NSW Cricket Team that won the Imparja Cup. Both girls also received Southwest Sydney Region Awards for Excellence in Sport. Jessica also participated in the Vocal Identification Team for SWS Region.
Other significant events for the indigenous students included: the Federal government’s apology to the Aboriginal nation, Learning to Wrestle, NAIDOC Week celebrations, Macquarie Fields Police Aboriginal Consultative Committee, Debutante Ball and subscription to the National Indigenous Times newspaper.

**Significant programs and initiatives**

**Multicultural Education**

Various programs operated in 2008 as part of our Multicultural Education Program.

As part of our school’s participation in Harmony Day our students were involved in individual programs to develop groups of children within our school. These include:

- Muslim Mentoring. One period per week, two of our former school captains – Ummu Mathews and Zunaid Moosa – run a mentoring lesson for Islamic students who attend on a voluntary basis. This adds to the scripture offered by other faiths, and provides an opportunity for both Muslims and those with questions about the Islamic faith to further their knowledge and understanding. It has proved popular with students.

- Pacific Islander programs (see below)

As well as targeted support programs our students are supported through a three day per week English as a Second Language teacher who supports them in their day to day learning programs.

**Respect and responsibility**

**Rock and Water**

New Zealand and Pacific Islander students were chosen as a target group to attend the Rock and Water program that ran one hour a week over six weeks. These students were targeted by the Welfare team because they wanted them to engage more in school and were causing concerns with their behaviour. The Rock and Water Program aims to apply a physical/social approach to assist boys in their development to adulthood by increasing their self-realisation, self-confidence, self-respect, boundary awareness, self-awareness and intuition. A specific goal for the course is teaching boys to deal with power, strength and powerlessness.

As part of our school’s welfare policy we have identified that respect needs to be explicitly taught. As such, we will be incorporating this topic into students’ learning programs in 2009.

**Other Programs**

**Hearing Impaired Unit**

The Hearing Impaired Unit at Robert Townson High School has been operating now for 20 years. In 2008, we catered for the needs of 17 Deaf and Hearing-Impaired students from years 7 to 12. The unit has three teachers of the Deaf and five full-time teacher’s aid specials (sign interpreters).

Our unit designs its programs around the needs of each student. Our aim is to maximise the potential of every student within the Hearing Impaired Unit. Our programs include: Integration, community access and participation, work experience and job coaching, VET courses and travel training programs.

In 2008, three students were awarded the School Certificate and one student received his Higher School Certificate. Thirteen students were integrated successfully into classes such as English, maths, science, HSIE, PDHPE and other elective subjects. Nine students have been involved in work experience, some in the coffee shop and some at external work places. Two students completed VET courses and three students were travel trained.

**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 a 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 (UAI) if the student undertakes the Higher School Certificate examination.

Kayla James in Year 11 was selected as VET student of the year at RTHS for studying hospitality. She was awarded a prize by Macarthur Workplace Learning Program for her efforts over the year.

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 placements were 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 ten students attended a Macarthur Area Careers Expo where they were able to talk to industry representatives and representatives from TAFE, university and...
private providers. Students were able to participate in a variety of activities and network with students from other schools.

Five students were successful in winning awards and prizes at the South Western Sydney Regional VET evening. Students won awards in the following frameworks: Ben Sawtell – Business Services, Lianna Young – Hospitality, Benjamin Mandic – Information Technology, Mark Arjaans – Metal & Engineering and Courtney Bates – Retail. Mark Arjaans was then nominated for the Vocational School Student of the Year for the NSW State Training Awards.

Progress on 2008 targets

Target 1
Our students are to meet regional targets in Literacy and Numeracy.
Our achievements include:
Students participated in a Year 8 numeracy tutoring program operated by trained Year 9/10 mathematics mentors with a focus on key concepts including number, space, patterns and algebra.

As Year 7 students are at high school for only three months before their Year 7 NAPLan test we shared literacy and numeracy data with our feeder primary schools. This enabled the primary schools to adjust teaching programs to accommodate for any areas for further development.

Literacy and Numeracy Improvement programs were implemented for targeted Year 7 students. These students all recorded literacy and or numeracy results below an expected level of growth.

A high performing Year 10 mathematics tutorial group was formed to support them in their School Certificate preparation particularly with non-calculator skills and multiple choice questions.

Target 2
Improve Aboriginal and Multicultural Education.
Our achievements include:

Of the 28 identified Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander (ATSI) students all have had an individual education program (IEP) commenced. Each IEP is in a different stage of development with the goal in 2009 to complete a detailed program for all students.

ATSI students have participated in extra curricula programs from the areas of performing arts, sport and leadership as well as undertaking tutorial programs to strengthen academic understanding.

All ATSI students exceeded state patterns of ATSI achievement in the eight areas tested in the state NAPLan test in Literacy and Numeracy with the exception of nine year nine students in one area of numeracy.

Target 3
Improve General School Culture
Our achievements include:

To ensure whole school continuity we conducted at the beginning of each week a staff communication session identifying ongoing issues and informed staff of variations for the week ahead.

The school community was surveyed as to the effectiveness of existing welfare programs and policies. Accordingly, modifications were made to accommodate these requirements.

The school participated in the commonwealth’s government’s “Staff Matters” program, an area of the “MindMatters” program. Staff and community members gained expertise and accreditation in this area and surveyed staff on their changing needs and ways to support them.

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 2008 our school carried out evaluations of school culture and numeracy.

Educational and management practice–Culture

Background
The major transition and/or exit points in secondary education occur when students complete Year 10 and Year 12. The school senior executive determined, in terms of best practice, that obtaining feedback from parents, as one of the key clients in educational service delivery, was vital for the school. It enables the school to determine future directions in education and management practice. Parents were surveyed for their responses to a number of key issues including academic needs and standards, school reporting systems, curriculum, and subject offerings, commitment by staff and teaching standards, student welfare and discipline systems and the physical condition of the buildings and grounds. Both quantitative and qualitative data were sought through the surveys to provide reliability, validity and correlation of data obtained.

Findings and conclusions
Approximately five percent of the total surveys sent out to Year 12 parents were returned while 40 percent of the Year 10 parents returned surveys for analysis. Year 12 surveys were posted home while Year 10 parents had the opportunity to complete the surveys at the graduation ceremony in December 2008. More females than males completed the surveys for both years. All parents or caregivers were from English speaking backgrounds except for two. This may indicate a need to provide surveys for parents in languages other than English in the future.

In general terms, most parents felt that the school was well managed with the grounds improvement being the most noted comment with respect to garden development around the school. One such comment was “grounds and buildings well maintained”. Other comments indicated that the recent presence of graffiti detracted from the overall excellent presentation of the school.

In terms of curriculum and subject offerings, parents expressed satisfaction with the broad range of subjects available with particular reference to the VET subjects. Parents stated that they felt the VET subjects were worthy selections for students as they provided students with a solid skills and knowledge base for the school to work transition.

The majority of parents felt that the school was providing a safe and secure environment for learning as well as caring for students in a welfare context to a satisfactory level. The standard of work expected by teachers ranged from being “good” to “could be better”. Parents commented on the need for frequent contact with teachers where students are failing to meet assessment and academic requirements. Parents also requested that homework is regularly set, marked and followed up by teachers.

Quality teaching is an area where parents expressed a need for further development and improvement. Comments centred around teachers needing to provide for all students’ learning needs, not only high and low achieving students. The need for more emphasis on active learning that is transferable to real life situations was another area noted for improvement. Parents indicated that such active learning as opposed to textbook learning supports students in making the transition from school to work or tertiary learning. Collection and regular marking of student notebooks was another area that parents believed teachers could improve to ensure that students understand course content.

Parental involvement in schooling was an area where the majority of parents felt a need and desire to engage more but work commitments made it difficult for them to do so. Comments included the need for more newsletters from the school to the use of student diaries so that communication between school and home might improve.

**Future directions**

The challenge for the school is to use the survey data and feedback and determine areas for action and targets for improvement in educational and management practice such as quality teaching, student management and parental involvement.

**Educational and management practice**

**Curriculum - Numeracy**

**Background**

Numeracy has been introduced as a state wide priority learning area for students. State wide testing in the area of numeracy is carried out in Years 7 and 9 to evaluate student levels of achievement and appropriate numeracy growth from Year 7 to 9. Evaluation of our results over the last few years continues to demonstrate that students enter our school with generally poorer numeracy skills compared with state averages. The gap between our students in Year 7 and the state average generally grows for our low achieving students as they move to Year 9. Accordingly we at RTHS will re-evaluate our current programs and resourcing with a view to reducing this gap.

**Findings and conclusions**

To teach numeracy effectively we needed to assess students’ current levels of understanding and teacher skills and knowledge across the school. A survey tool was designed and distributed to all teaching staff and all Year 7 students. Fifty five percent of staff participated in the survey. This tool was designed to evaluate their level of understanding of current numeracy/strategies and what they currently deliver. Responses were obtained from every key learning area.

Fifteen percent of staff felt that numeracy should be delivered solely by the mathematics department. When asked to identify current numeracy teaching strategies only two responses included everyday teaching and learning programs. All other responses list whole school intervention programs.

Staff were able to identify areas of numeracy that were being taught in their classrooms without
understanding their connection to the school’s numeracy priority.

Seventy-two percent of respondents felt equipped to teach numeracy with thirteen feeling that they lacked the necessary skills.

All Year 7 students were surveyed as to their levels of skill and understanding of numeracy. Students were able to identify many numeracy strategies taught within their various subjects as well as support and extension programs operating across the school.

Students were asked to prioritise the areas of numeracy were they felt they needed the most support. Students identified needs across all areas in all subjects.

Last year’s NAPlan results for Year 7 showed they lacked skills and knowledge in all areas but most strongly in the areas of Measurement and Data.

Future directions
All teaching staff will be shown a summary of staff and student survey results. NAPlan data will be examined in detail. A special numeracy group will be formed to prioritise numeracy programming, resources and staff training and development.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction
In 2008 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. This took the form of surveyed responses, informal and formal meetings, community meetings and written requests. Their responses are presented below.

- Grounds and buildings well maintained – three cheers to GA’s.
- Plenty of opportunities already; not all can take part because of work etc, even though they would like to.
- Very happy with staff and school – our children’s teachers have been inspirational and are to be highly commended.
- Robert Townson High School has been an excellent school in teaching all of my children – thank you.
- I believe your teachers do expect high standards to try and support kids.
- More emphasis on active learning versus textbook so that kids can apply what they learn to practice in real world.
- School has improved over the years; could do better – teachers and students need motivation.
- Teachers need to earn respect as kids do.
- Students do not get enough homework.
- Commendable re survey and parent feedback sought. Challenge will be to put feedback into practice for improvement in student welfare.

Professional learning
As the school management plan is revised and updated, staff are given continual access to a wide range of Professional Learning opportunities. In 2008 expenditure breakdowns are as follows:

- Beginning Teachers 3.4%
- ICT 3.5%
- Literacy/Numeracy 3.2%
- Quality Teacher 32.3%
- Syllabus Implementation 5.0%
- Career Development 42.9%
- Welfare and Equity 9.7%

Average annual expenditure was $317 for teaching staff.

The major expenditure in Career Development is due to experienced staff seeking updated training and promotion expertise. The school continues to support staff development in quality teaching practices which offset lowest expenditure in Beginning Teachers, ICT and Literacy/Numeracy. The school continues to adjust budgets to match staff and school needs each year.

School development 2009 – 2011
The end of 2008 saw the completion of the school’s first mandatory three year plan and the formation and establishment of the plan to take the school through the next three years. The state government set the minimum requirements to plan for to include; Literacy and Numeracy improvement, Student Retention and Engagement, improving learning for Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander students, Connected Learning and Teacher Quality. After consultation with the school community through staff meetings and discussions with the school’s parental body, two further areas were added; Improving School Systems and Enhancing Community Partnerships.

Targets for 2009

Target 1

Attendance
Over the last few years students’ patterns of attendance have fallen. This has taken the form of lateness, fractional truancy and general leave. Students will meet state expected patterns of attendance in Years 7-12. This will be achieved over three years. Each year attendance patterns will increase until they meet state expectation.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Informing the school community of school and government requirements on the updated changes to attendance at school. This will be done through newsletters and community meetings.
- Meeting with students and their families when student attendance becomes a concern.
- Allocating school resources to employ a teacher to monitor student attendance, communicate any concerns with parents and compile appropriate documentation for students causing concern.

Our success will be measured by:
- A reduction in absenteeism figures across all years.

**Target 2**

**Numeracy**

Students entering high school in Year 7 are on average below the state expected level of numeracy development. When assessed again in Year 7 and 9 this gap has increased further for many students. Student numeracy results will increase to state determined levels of growth over three years.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Operation of numeracy mentor groups each day.
- Specific KLA developed teaching and learning programs which target numeracy and raise students’ awareness and understanding of numeracy.
- Detailed analysis of student numeracy skills to determine areas for further development.

Our success will be measured by:
- Improved numeracy results over three years.
- Effective numeracy programs operating.

**Target 3**

**Culture - PBIS**

There is a general feeling that student commitment to learning and societal values has deteriorated over the last few years. Accordingly future whole school surveys will show that students value learning and act in a way that shows respect for themselves and the school.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Determine from the school community what areas of student behaviour and efforts needs to be addressed.
- Explicitly teach students appropriate behaviours and act as appropriate role models.
- Reward appropriate behaviours and promote successes.

Our success will be measured by:
- Future surveys will show an increase in student, staff and community satisfaction.
- Student negative behaviours will decrease.
- Incidents of punishment will decrease.

**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)
Kim Chapman (Deputy Principal)
Robert Morrow (Deputy Principal)
The school executive team and program coordinators

**School contact information**

Robert Townson High School
Thunderbolt Drv Raby 2566
Ph: 98247777
Fax: 98202921
Email: roberttown-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Web: http://www.roberttown-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
School Code: 8575

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