2010 Annual School Report
Casuarina School

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

Students
Casuarina School provides intensive behavioural and educational programs for students with significant social, emotional and/or behavioural support needs.

Staff
Casuarina School is fortunate to have staff with extensive experience in many areas of education. All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Significant programs and initiatives
In 2010 we demonstrated our commitment to the continual improvement of our policies, practices and programs to meet the needs of our changing student population.

Messages

Principal’s message
Casuarina School continues to provide our students with opportunities to learn the skills and abilities that will assist them to participate successfully in a school setting. These skills and abilities are those they will require to be active and successful members of the community for the rest of their lives. For this reason, our school motto was revised this year to better reflect the school’s goals, purpose and programs. Our revised school motto is “Learning for Life”.

The 2010 school year was a busy one, and thanks to our professional and dedicated staff, a highly successful one. The progress every student makes whilst enrolled at our school is reflective of the quality of our educational and behavioural programs and the intensive support provided to our students and their parents/carers.

On behalf of staff I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank our wider school community for their on-going support.

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.

Kylee Thorson

School context

Casuarina School is a short-term behavioural intervention strategy offering students personalised access to the curriculum whilst learning the skills, strategies, knowledge and values necessary to manage the expectations of a mainstream school setting.

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
Enrolments are limited to twenty-eight students at any time. Students maintain a shared enrolment status between their mainstream school and Casuarina throughout placement.

Student attendance profile
Students are required to attend school full-time. Regular school attendance is important as it aids in the development of good work habits and a commitment to lifelong learning. Attendance patterns throughout a student’s placement may vary depending on individual student need and program stage.

Management of non-attendance
Students’ non-attendance at school is managed according to the school’s Attendance Policy and Procedures which were revised in 2010. The revised procedures include a number of strategies to support regular student attendance and a number of procedures that are followed to manage non-attendance. Some of the strategies to manage non-attendance at school include personal and telephone contact, formal letters of concern to the parent/carer and referral to the region’s Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO). As students’ enrolments are shared across settings, student attendance information is communicated between schools.

Class sizes
In March 2003 the Government announced its commitment to publish primary class sizes in annual school reports in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible.

There are four classes that have up to seven students in each class. Classes are taught by a Classroom Teacher and supported by a School Learning Support Officer (SLSO).
Structure of classes

Our classes are structured according to anticipated or actual group dynamics to promote a safe and secure learning environment for students. This structure can result in classes consisting of students in years 5, 6, 7 and 8 which is supported by a whole school approach to planning and programming teaching and learning activities. The whole school program allows staff to work collaboratively and provides classroom teachers with the time to adjust and modify the whole school program to meet the individual learning needs of the students.

Staff information

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

All permanent teaching and non-teaching staff from 2009 were retained in 2010. Non-teaching staff remained unchanged throughout 2010 and teaching staff remained unchanged except for the last 6 weeks of Term 4 when our assistant principal relieved as in the principal role at another school.

Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Emotional Disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Careers Advisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Time Teacher</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher RFF</td>
<td>0.336</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-Total</td>
<td>6.872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>5.176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12.048</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on the indigenous composition of their workforce.

Casuarina School employed one indigenous person on staff in 2010.

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>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
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Financial summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary:</th>
<th>30/11/2010</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>78 883.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>71 813.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>42 007.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>2 907.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>3 228.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>790.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>199 628.00</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>17 047.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>3 365.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>223.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>1 982.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>39 865.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>7 035.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>24 158.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>17 961.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>12 664.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>790.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>11 196.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
<td>136 286.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance carried forward</strong></td>
<td>63 342.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

A full copy of the school’s 2010 financial statement is available from the school and further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

Student achievement 2010

All Casuarina students in years 5 and 7 participate in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) and ESSA. Students participating in a mainstream school reintegration program and are attending their integration setting 3 or more days each week are registered to participate through the integration setting.
In 2010, only 3 students were registered for NAPLAN through Casuarina. Due to the small number of students, individual student and school performance on these test measures cannot be reported for privacy reasons.

All Casuarina students participate in school-based testing. A range of tests are used to measure individual student progress and achievement in literacy and numeracy.

Data collected from participating students in 2010 showed:

- Reading age levels improved by an average of 6 ½ months
- Spelling age levels improved by an average of 7 ½ months
- Computational skill levels improved as follows:
  - Addition: 13.4 months
  - Subtraction: 17.4 months
  - Multiplication: 10.7 months
  - Division: 9.8 months

School performance 2010

As a learning community, we are dedicated to relentlessly seeking quality and improvement. Following is a brief outline of just some of our 2010 achievements.

Achievements

Arts

Students participated in teaching and learning activities focusing on a variety of areas within Creative Arts.

Throughout 2010, students made sculptures, participated in readers’ theatre, body percussion and dance.

Sport

A healthy, active and safe lifestyle was the focus of our sport and physical education programs this year. Students learned about the components of fitness and participated in tests such as the beep test and the 60 m sprint to assess and monitor their fitness levels. Students learned skills and strategies relating to a variety of ‘invasion’ games such as Basketball, Volleyball, Soccer, and Touch Football and relating to a variety of ‘striking’ games such as Cricket, Rounders, Tennis, and Softball.

Information Communication Technology

Casuarina School utilises technology to enhance student engagement in learning levels and to provide quality learning experiences for students.

Our students access a number of on-line learning programs including Raz Kids, Spelling City, Class Scoop, Mathletics and Maths-on-line.

Raz Kids is a reading program that provides age-appropriate and engaging texts for students. It enables teachers to select reading levels according to individual student need and involves the student in reading independently, reading with support and reading for understanding.

Spelling City is an interactive site that provides students with fun spelling activities. The classroom teacher enters students’ spelling lists according to individual need and the program creates learning activities based on the words entered.

Class Scoop is a program that uses the Sun Herald newspaper as the basis of literacy based activities.

Mathletics and Maths-on-line are numeracy based programs that allow the classroom teacher to select activities that support the numeracy strands being taught in the classroom and according to the individual needs of students.

Interactive white boards, digital cameras and various software programs are other technologies incorporated across teaching and learning programs.

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

Throughout the 2010 school year we focused on improving the placement outcomes of our Aboriginal students. One of the strategies we used is to develop a better awareness and
understanding among our non-Aboriginal students of Aboriginal history and culture and its relationship and influence on the lives of all Australians. In addition, all staff participated in professional learning activities to improve their awareness and understanding of the differing needs of Aboriginal students and on effectively incorporating Aboriginal perspectives into all teaching and learning activities.

**Multicultural education**

Casuarina School promotes harmony, understanding and the celebration of differences and commonalities among cultures. Our school respects and celebrates multiculturalism. We strive to ensure every student feels that their cultural background is significant.

In 2010 we celebrated Harmony Day and students participated in a variety of activities that recognized and celebrated different cultures. Throughout 2010 all staff participated in professional learning activities aimed at developing their awareness and understanding of different cultures.

**Respect and responsibility**

Casuarina School promotes the NSW Education and Training’s core rules and the values that represent the aspirations and beliefs of the Australian community as a whole, including integrity, excellence, respect, responsibility, cooperation, participation, care, fairness and democracy.

An extensive consultation process throughout 2010 resulted in the identification of four behavioural expectations. The behavioural expectations of cooperation, assertive communication, responsible behaviour and engagement in learning best reflected the school’s goals and purposes and the values of the wider school community.

The teaching and learning of values permeates every aspect of school life at Casuarina as we continuously strive to develop positive interpersonal relationships which promote respect and responsibility.

**Living Skills**

Throughout 2010, we implemented a Living Skills Program aimed at teaching students a variety of life skills and strategies.

The living skills program involved students in a variety of activities including the re-establishment, maintenance and nurturing of a fruit and vegetable garden. Students worked as a team to renovate a pre-existing garden area, plant and harvest a variety of fruits and vegetables. Students designed and made the required fencing and signage for the plot and created a shady rest area in which they could take-a-break whilst tending to the garden if needed.

Students then used the fruits and vegetables they grew in other school programs including the Cooking Program. Students participated in a variety of cooking activities whilst they learned about basic kitchen hygiene and working safely in a kitchen environment as well as the basic elements of cooking and food presentation. Students cooked soups, sauces and a variety of items made from eggs and flour before moving to more complex recipes that included some Asian and Mexican dishes.

As part of the school’s positive reinforcement program, all staff and students attended a Recognition and Reward Lunch on Fridays. Students designed a menu within a set budget, prepared ingredient and utensil lists before preparing and serving lunch to staff and to their peers.

In the classroom, an Environmental Education
Program complemented the living skills program. Students learned about native plants and the basics of agriculture.

A Healthy Living Program also complemented the Living Skills Program in the classroom. Students learned about personal hygiene, nutrition and the benefits of living an active, healthy and safe lifestyle. Safe living activities helped students identify potential hazards in everyday situations such as safety in the home, pedestrian and bike safety, water safety and others.

**Workshop Program - Science**

The Science workshop involved students in safe and fun science-based activities. The program included hands-on activities and involved students in learning about chemistry, physics and biology. Students were able to take some of the projects home to share their learning with the members of their respective families.

**Workshop Program – Woodwork**

The woodwork program emphasised safe practices in a workshop environment, the design process and use of tools and woodworking techniques appropriate for the various projects undertaken. Students designed and made a number of projects including a planters’ box, a skill game, a coat-rack, stool, a coffee table, a doghouse, a scooter ramp, a bookshelf and a jewellery box.

**Workshop Program - Cycling**

The cycling workshop had a theoretical and a practical component. The theoretical component involved students in learning repair and maintenance skills, the advantages and disadvantages of cycling, safety equipment, road rules, and safe riding techniques. After satisfactory completion of the theoretical component students were involved in practical learning activities including bicycle cleaning and basic bicycle repair and maintenance, stopping and manoeuvring safely, the different techniques used in ascent and descent riding and the challenge of performing laps and time trials on a designated course.

**Workshop Program - Information Communication Technology (ICT)**

In 2010 students participated in an ICT workshop. Students developed skills in the use of computer software programs such as Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Publisher. Students completed projects in digital animation using Stop Motion Pro and a web-cam. Students completed Cyber(smart), an on-line, self-paced program designed to develop student’s skills and knowledge relating to the safe and responsible use of technology.

**Progress on 2010 targets**

As outlined in the schools’ strategic improvement plan, the following, the following five areas were targeted for improvement in 2010.

**Target 1**

*Deliver quality learning and teaching programs to improve student learning outcomes in all KLAs with an emphasis on literacy and numeracy*

Our achievements include:

- 100% of students’ programs include age / stage appropriate learning outcomes
- 100% of students’ school based assessment results indicating improved literacy and numeracy skills
- 100% of students’ school-based assessment results indicating progressively higher Reading and Computational Skill levels throughout placement

**Target 2**

*Improve student placement and transition outcomes*

Our achievements include:
- 100% of year 6 students participating in a structured and negotiated transition 6 -7 program
- Regional approval to implement a 4-day reintegration to mainstream school in 2011
- On-going implementation of a whole school curriculum planning and programming model, providing students with a seamless transition from the primary school curriculum to the secondary school curriculum

**Target 3**

*Improve student behaviour and level of self-control and improved school/parent/carer relationships*

Our achievements include:
- Improved individual student attendance
- Student welfare and discipline data showing a significant decrease in ‘time lost at school’ due to serious behaviour issues or concerns
- 100% of parents/carers working collaboratively with staff in support of students’ programs

**Target 4**

*No gap between placement outcomes for Aboriginal students and all students*

Our achievements include:
- All Aboriginal students with a Personalised Learning Plan (PLP)
- The number of Aboriginal students reintegrating to mainstream school matched all students
- Student welfare and discipline data showing progress toward decreasing ‘time lost at school’ due to serious behaviour issues or concerns

**Target 5**

*Improve student engagement in learning levels and ICT incorporated effectively into teaching and learning programs*

Our achievements include:
- All students participated in on-line learning activities e.g. Matheletics, Spell City
- All staff participated in school-based professional learning activities and successfully incorporated ICT in to teaching and learning programs
- 100% of students demonstrating progressively improved engagement in learning levels

**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 2010 our school carried out evaluations of Enter text here

**Educational and management practice**

**School Culture**

**Background**

School culture has an impact on student learning, i.e. when the culture of the school is positive, students will enjoy learning, want to learn and contribute to the learning of each other.

**Findings and conclusions**

The evaluation showed the majority of students believe ‘learning is fun’, want to do their ‘best’ and that they have an understanding that the harder they work, the more success they will have at school. It also showed the majority of students believe they keep trying when having difficulty learning something new. The majority of students feel they are in charge of what they learn, feel it is important to come to school each day and pay attention and help each other to learn.

**Future directions**

The information gathered suggests a school culture focused on student learning and on enhancing student’s engagement in learning levels. In the future we will maintain the current culture of learning and strive to move the measure of students indicated above from the ‘majority’ of students to ‘all’.
Curriculum
Information Communication Technology

Background
Access to technology in education can both motivate and enhance student learning in the classroom. We conducted an evaluation to determine the student’s level of access to technology at the school, how technology was being utilised and its’ impact on student learning.

Findings and conclusions
The evaluation showed Technology is incorporated across learning areas, 90% of students accessed these computers for class preparation or study on a daily basis and 10% every 2-5 days. Although 100% of students have access to a computer in the classroom there is a strong belief that there are not enough computers for students in the school. 80% of students agreed or strongly agreed that computers make schoolwork more interesting and 80% of students either agreed or strongly agreed that computers help them do better with their schoolwork. 100% of students rated their computer abilities as average.

Future directions
The information gathered suggests students are accessing technology and technology is being utilised to motivate and enhance student learning. In the future we will purchase more computers and technologies and implement programs to improve students’ computer skills and abilities.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction
In 2010 the school continued to seek and value the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Observation and feedback from students and parents indicated overwhelming satisfaction and support for the school and our programs.

All staff members have indicated to the Principal an on-going and high level of satisfaction with their roles and with the programs and services the school offers.

Professional learning
In 2010 staff demonstrated a commitment to on-going professional learning through participation in school and non-school-based professional learning activities.

Non-school based professional learning included:
- Positive Behaviour for Learning
- Anti-Racism Training
- Non Violent Crisis Intervention Training
- SASS NSR School Learning Support Officer Conference
- The Conference for Women SASSPA
- LMBR Seminar
- Literacy Assessment
- Save Your Sanity
- Working with Drawings in Grief
- New Scheme Teacher
- Moving Forward: SASS Staff Development Day
- NSW SSP Principal Network Conference
- Western Sydney Annual Counsellor Conference
- Occupational Health Safety Training

School-based professional learning focused on behavior management, understanding and managing challenging behavior and quality teaching. A culture of sharing learning ensured all staff contributed to the professional learning of their colleagues.

School development 2009 – 2011
The 2010 school year was another busy and successful as reflected throughout this report.

Targets for 2011
Target 1
Improved literacy and numeracy achievement for every student

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Review of the school’s Literacy and Numeracy Plans to include the use of the SMART2 package
- On-going implementation of the school’s Assessment for Learning Policy and Program
- Investigation of evidence-based programs and implement if appropriate i.e. MultiLit

Our success will be measured by:
- Teachers analyzing data and using SMART2 to inform planning and programming
- Literacy and Numeracy embedded into whole school programs and practice
Progressive improvement in school-based literacy and numeracy assessment results

**Target 2**

*Improved engagement in learning levels and enhanced social and emotional resilience levels for all students*

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- On-going improvement and implementation of the Workshop Program
- Implementation of the SenseAbility Program
- Implementation of the revised behavior management and reward systems

Our success will be measured by:

- Higher levels of awareness and understanding of the concepts of student health and well-being
- Improved attendance data and reduced number of school days lost due to behaviour

**Target 3**

*Increased percentage of Aboriginal students who match or better the outcomes of the broader student population at time of program exit*

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Review Personalised Learning Plan format and implement revised plan
- Engage the services of an Aboriginal Mentor for Aboriginal students
- Staff professional learning including Aboriginal cultural experiences

Our success will be measured by:

- Data indicating Aboriginal students Literacy, Numeracy integration and transition outcomes match or better those of all students
- Data indicating all Aboriginal students feel their learning activities are relevant and culturally engaging

**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.

Kylee Thorson  Principal
Ian Hancock  Assistant Principal
Helene Bartley  School Administration Manager
Louise Mulligan  Classroom Teacher
Tricia Young  Community Representative

**School contact information**

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Web: www.casuarina-schools.nsw.edu.au
School Code: 5574

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: