2009 Annual School Report
Riverside Girls High School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
Messages
Principal's message

I am proud to have been the principal of Riverside Girls High School at Gladesville for the last 16 years.

Riverside was established in 1934 and since then the school has attracted young women across four generations from all over the inner west of Sydney. Girls travel from Parramatta and its surrounding suburbs in the west to Millers Point, Glebe and Ultimo in the inner city. Many cultural and language groups work and learn side by side every day at Riverside.

We have a strong focus on high academic achievement and this is reflected in our excellent HSC results. In 2009, 85 out of 116 Year 12 girls who applied for university entrance gained a university place.

There is also a strong focus on technology in learning, student leadership and school and community service. The students have many opportunities to participate in sports and the creative and performing arts, including dance, drama, choir, band and musical ensembles.

Students can now access the school intranet from home. Our wireless capacity has expanded significantly in the last three years. Year 9 students were issued with their individual federally funded laptops in 2009.

We believe that all students should be given the opportunity to develop their potential, regardless of their abilities, ambitions or interests. As a public comprehensive high school we cater for the full range of students, including very capable students and those in need of learning support.

We are especially proud of our E.S.L. programs for recent arrivals and for international students from China, Thailand, Korea and Vietnam. Their considerable achievements in only a short time continue to inspire us.

Our extension classes in Years 7, 8 and 9 provide advanced academic and leadership opportunities for the most capable students.

We encourage the students to become independent, responsible and successful learners. Our student leadership programs have a strong social justice focus. We celebrate cultural diversity and the rights and responsibilities of effective citizenship.

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.

Judith King

P&C message

Riverside Girls High P&C continues to encourage communication and participation between parents/caregivers and the school in various aspects of school life. There are approximately 900 families in the school community, many of which are from non-English speaking backgrounds.

The P&C met on the second Wednesday of each month, providing a valuable forum for parent opinion and discussion, with attendance numbers wide ranging, but building. A consistent core of active and interested parents supported the P&C by assisting on Open day with a BBQ and on information tables, year 7 orientation day in the clothing pool and selling book packs and transport information, and a working bee to tidy and replenish gardens ready for the annual Open Day. The P&C again provided supper for the highly successful school musical ‘Alice in Wonderland’, serving approximately 700 parents and friends in intermission. The music sub-committee again organized a successful “Riverside Swings” evening to provide additional funds for the school band development program.

An information evening was again held early in the year, particularly for year 7 parents, where head teachers from each faculty outlined the year 7 courses and the expectations of both the teacher and of the student. At other P&C meetings short presentations were made by the Maths, English and Science head teachers on various aspects of their faculties along with an introduction to the federal government’s laptop initiative for Year 9.

Three parent teacher evenings were conducted in 2009, with each one catering for two different years. These evenings provide opportunities for parents to discuss the progress of each student directly with the teachers of their daughters.

At various times, individuals from the P&C were members of selection panels for staff selection during 2009 including the H.T. English appointment.

During 2009 the P&C committed over $13,500 for special projects and $21,500 for the library towards the operation of Riverside programs.

Funds were provided for:

- BATH Day (Better Attitudes To Health)
- Year 12 graduation prizes
- Artist in Residence program
- “Mathletics”, the online maths learning system
• two garden seats and a storage shed for environmental activities and P&C garden implements
• materials for a lunchtime program to support student self esteem and improve a sense of belonging for students at risk
• eight talented students who had been selected in their chosen discipline at a state or national level
• the student assistance scheme, to assist disadvantaged students with uniforms and other school expenses including excursions
• a Library grant to update resources and provide additional learning aids

The number of parents receiving P&C information by email is steadily increasing. P&C information and meeting summaries have also been included regularly in the school newsletter and on the P&C link on the school website.

Cheryl Osborne
P and C President 2009

Student leader's message

In 2009 the Riverside Student Representative Council proved itself, yet again, to be a well-organised, productive and successful part of the school body. Not only were many fundraising initiatives undertaken, but throughout the year the SRC encouraged involvement and provided a voice to the student population.

Each term one of the Riverside Sport Houses hosted an event, allowing everyone in the SRC to participate. Coen held Coen Carnival Day, dedicated to raising awareness of heart health. While there were many events such as face painting, rings toss, clowns (drama students) and aerobics classes, the highlight of the day was no doubt the 'teacher dunking machine'. For over four hours various teachers dedicated their bodies and their pride to the National Heart Foundation. The other houses raised money for a variety of charities including the Rwandan Orphans, the Starlight foundation and Youth Beyond Blue.

Throughout the year the SRC continued to demonstrate its commitment to social justice, responding quickly to the devastating bushfires in Victoria and running World Vision's 40 hour famine for the third year in a row. Each year the event inspires the school population and reveals Riverside's ability to make a difference. All together we raised well over $50 000 for the charity, an impressive achievement.

Finally, in term four the SRC launched a new initiative “All Rise Riverside”, dedicated to encouraging school spirit, participation, and pride in the school. The slogan underpinned all our events for the final term, including the surprise “Mr Teece Day”, to farewell the much loved Mr Teece in style. Overall 2009 was another exceedingly successful year and hopefully 2010 will continue to demonstrate the ability and benefits of the SRC.

Kartia Zappavigna
School Captain for 2010

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
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<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>980</td>
<td>1022</td>
<td>1008</td>
<td>1019</td>
<td>1014</td>
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</table>

1009 FTE students were enrolled at the commencement of 2009 slightly lower than in 2008. Student mobility remained significant in 2009. New enrolments came from a variety of sources including overseas international students and both private and public schools. Leavers included families relocating, students gaining employment and students choosing to transfer to other schools.
Management of non-attendance

Monitoring student attendance remained a fundamental priority in 2009 based on the high correlation between high achievement and high rates of attendance. The school’s attendance rates in 2009 continued their upward trend and remained very close to regional levels and above state attendance rates.

Class sizes

The following information shows our class sizes as reported at the 2009 class size audit conducted on Wednesday 18 March 2009.

There were seven classes in each years for 7, 8 and 9 and six classes in Year 10. The average size of classes in core subjects was between 25 and 30. Year 7 and 8 ICT classes have a maximum of 20 students. In the senior school, class sizes vary considerably. English classes varied in size between 15 and 23 students, depending on which English course was being studied.

Structure of classes

In each year from 7 to 10 there was one upper band extension class with an additional upper band class in core subjects in years 9 and 10. The remaining classes in each year were mixed ability. In each year there is one ESL English class. In years 9 and 10 students selected three electives which were all mixed ability classes.
which they have elected to complete their HSC over a number of years.

Staff information

Staff establishment

In 2009 Riverside staffing entitlement was 67.1 teachers, including 2 deputy principals and 11 head teachers. The school has a very experienced staff balanced by the appointment of early career teachers. Three beginning teachers completed accreditation with the NSW Institute of Teachers in 2009.

<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>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(SASS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whilst the Riverside community supports the National Education Agreement, we report that in 2009 there were no Indigenous Australians employed at Riverside Girls High School.

Teacher qualifications

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Financial summary

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

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<th>Date of financial summary:</th>
<th>30/11/2009</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>762,857.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>498,587.59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>443,423.65</td>
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<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>812,020.47</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>39,578.90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>180,719.35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>2,737,187.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expenditure

Teaching & learning

| Key learning areas          | 210,838.50 |
|                             |           |
| Excurisons                  | 92,684.96  |
| Extracurricular dissections | 356,753.77 |
| Library                     | 33,266.95  |
| Training & development      | 0.00       |
| Tied funds                  | 435,573.81 |
| Casual relief teachers      | 57,987.47  |
| Administration & office     | 251,854.01 |
| School-operated canteen     | 0.00       |
| Utilities                   | 89,915.96  |
| Maintenance                 | 189,477.87 |
| Trust accounts              | 103,710.72 |
| Capital programs            | 122,760.38 |
| Total expenditure            | 1,944,824.40 |
| Balance carried forward      | 792,363.31 |

A full copy of the school’s 2009 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the P and C. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2009

Achievements

Visual Arts

Dance in PDHPE

During Years 7 -10 dance units are programmed and taught through the PDHPE program. All students participate in a series of dance lessons every year. In 2009 a specialist dance teacher, Ms Jeanette Webb (a qualified DET teacher) conducted five ‘Salsa dance lessons with each class in Year 10 and the PE Class teachers assisted in the implementation of the program. The implementation of the Salsa program to all
Year 10 students continues to build enthusiasm and interest in the art of dance.

**Dance as an extra-curricular activity at the school**

**Senior and Junior ‘Show Groups’ 2009 – Performance dance groups**

Dance as an extra-curricular activity continues to be extremely popular with the students. Throughout 2009 a number of extra-curricular dance activities were conducted during lunch breaks or after school hours. Approximately 90 students auditioned for the Senior ‘Show group’ (SG), which is a group of more experienced dancers who perform at shows and festivals throughout the year. ‘Show group’ involved regular weekly and occasional weekend and school holiday rehearsals. Members of Senior SG were asked to pay a one off fee of $180 for 2009 to subsidise the cost of teaching tuition, costumes and some bus trips to auditions.

Ms Tamara Mitchell who is studying a Bachelor Arts (Dance) at The University of NSW organised the Senior SG in 2009 and was paid for her work as Choreographer/Dance Teacher. She is an experienced and respected dance teacher who is well known throughout the school community as a former school captain. During the school year Ms Mitchell also decided on the technical aspects of the dance performances and designed the costumes with the help of parents and students. Members of this group continue to respond well to Tamara’s teaching style and improvements continue to be gained in their technical and performance abilities. This is the second year that we have been able to employ Ms Mitchell to assist in training students in dance. The dancers in this group enjoyed learning new and technically challenging items throughout 2009. The group was successful in gaining entry into the Sydney North Dance Festival and The Ryde Schools Spectacular. Twelve students were successful in gaining roles in the Combined Dance Section of the 2009 Schools Spectacular.

A Year 12 student, Natasha Velkou organised a Junior group of dancers at Riverside Girls’ High and were called the Junior ‘Show group’. Dancers belonging to this group comprised mainly of students in Years 7 – 9 who had not had much dance performance experience. Natasha choreographed the dance item, taught the routine to the group and organised costumes. The group was successful in qualifying and performing for the Sydney North Dance Festival.

Throughout 2009 Ms Iverach directed both groups throughout their rehearsals, auditions, meetings and performances. A total of 24 students was selected in both performing groups. During Term 4 the Senior Show group of dancers performed on special assemblies and during a number of presentation assemblies. During the year the dancers performed well and their behaviour was, at all times, exemplary. The students thoroughly enjoyed being performers on the stage and we received many complimentary comments about their performances. DVD copies of all of these performances are available from the PDHPE archives collection.

**Schools Spectacular 2009**

Twelve students were selected to be involved in this event. This is the fourth consecutive year that the school has been successful in gaining entry into the combined dance section. A total of 3000 students took part in the event.

**Dance Camps 2009**

Throughout the year a number of dance camp placements were offered to our students. Three students attended the State Junior Dance Camp. Several students attended the Sydney North Regional dance Camp. At camp the students were provided with instruction on a variety of dance styles and techniques. They were also given training on dance performance. Professional dancers and choreographers tutored the students during the camps. Students who attended the camps in 2009 report their experiences as very worthwhile and enjoyable.

During 2010 we will continue to offer two performing groups to the students which will operate as an extra-curricular activity. PE programs will continue to implement dance units during PE programs and the Salsa unit will continue to run for all Year 10 classes.
School Production of Alice in Wonderland

Lewis Carroll’s classic story of the loss of childhood innocence came alive in an original stage adaptation which was produced in 2009 as a whole school musical.

Driven by the Drama teachers and in particular, Ms Cockburn and Ms Lidman the production became a collaboration between Drama and TAS, Visual Arts and Music departments who provided their particular expertise.

Over 60 students from Years 7 – 12 participated in the production, as well as parents who assisted with lighting and other production roles. Students worked together in various roles ranging from advertising and promoting the event to stage production, lighting and sound, music and singing.

Performances were held in June 2009 after many months of auditions, rehearsals, production of sets and costumes. Students, staff and parents are to be commended for their perseverance, determination and hard work in seeing the project through and for the high quality of the production.

Sport

The school swimming carnival at Drummoyne Pool was held early in Term 1 and the winner was Coen and the runner up was McKenzie House. At the Zone carnival, Riverside won the overall school standings for the third year in a row. Laura Crockart, Beth and Tara Chilcott competed at State Age National Swimming Championship. The school cross country was held in March at Tarban Creek. Coen was the overall winner with Mackenzie runner up. Riverside finished 4th at the Zone carnival. Moya Johansson was selected to attend NSW CHS cross country carnival.

The school athletics carnival was held at the Olympic Stadium at Homebush. Coen won this carnival with O’Harris house runner up. Over 100 students represented Riverside at the zone carnival where we were placed 4th.

Triathlon results this year indicate a growing popularity of the sport and over 28 students participated. Once again, Moya Johansson proved to be Riverside’s pre-eminent triathlete representing New South Wales at the Australian Championship.

Team sport representation this year was highlighted by Beth Chilcott, Yr 9 in achieving selection the Sydney North Netball team.

Each year Riverside Girls High School awards the Sportswoman of the Year at the Annual Sports Assembly. This year’s winner was Beth Chilcott Year 9. Other award winners were Moya Johansson Year 11– Senior Sportswoman, Tara Chilcott Year 9– Junior Sportswoman and Sophie Taylor Year 7– Sub Junior Sportswoman.

The annual Year 9 ski trip to Mt Hotham and Falls Creek was held in July with 56 students and eight staff and parents attending. Once again students progressed quickly in developing their skiing skills.

An outdoor education camp was also held in February for year 11 students from the PDHPE and Sport, Lifestyle Recreation course. The camp was held on the north coast at Seal Rocks where students learnt camping and surfing skills.

All Year 7 and 8 students competed at the zone games day in Term 3 while Year 9 competed in interschool grade sport during Terms 2 and 3. Year 7 also successfully completed five days of swimming and lifesaving skills in term 4. Activities included dry rescue skills and basic resuscitation in addition to swimming technique practice.
Academic

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

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

Yr 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)
Yr 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

and/or

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

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7

Literacy is comprised of four elements: writing, reading, grammar and spelling. Overall, Riverside girls performed extremely well in all four aspects of the literacy tests.

74% of students achieved a band 7 or higher in writing. 76% percent of students achieved a band 7 or higher in reading. 73% percent of students achieved a band 7 or higher in grammar and punctuation. 83% of students achieved a band 7 or higher in spelling. On average our students performed twenty-five percent above the state average in literacy.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7
72% of students achieved a band 7 or higher in numeracy.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9
Performance on the reading component of the test was very sound with 71% of students achieving a band 7 or higher. Our performance in the writing and grammar elements while substantial, suggests this is an area for development and improvement. 53% of students achieved a band 7 or higher. As a result of the data analysis a sustained writing project for years 7 and 8 students will commence in 2010.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9

73% of students achieved a band 7 or higher in numeracy. This was 24% higher than the state average.

Progress in literacy

Our performance in reading has improved for students across bands eight and nine but this is not reflected in the writing aspects of literacy. As a result a sustained writing project will be initiated in years 7 and 8 in 2010 to address student performance in this area. The performance however, in bands 6 and 7, has significantly improved over this time.

School Certificate

Overall our students performed very well on all six School Certificate test. On average, we performed 18% higher than the state average across bands 4 to 6 in all compulsory tests.

93% of students achieved band 4 or higher in the School Certificate English literacy.

62% of students achieved band 4 or higher in the School Certificate Mathematics test.

81% of students achieved band 4 or higher in the School Certificate Science test.
67% of students achieved band 4 or higher in the School Certificate Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship test.

69% of students achieved band 4 or higher in the School Certificate Australian History, Civics and Citizenship test.

79% of students were highly competent in the School Certificate computing skills test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% R.G.H.S.</th>
<th>% N.S.W.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outstanding results were achieved in the following Year 10 electives for the School Certificate. Design and Technology 50% grade A at school, (18% state), Information Technology Software 27% grade A at school (12% state) and Food Technology, 40% grade A at school (13% state).

Rachel Velo and Katrina Diamante each gained the maximum of 9 grade As in the School Certificate. Victoria King, Patricia Lor and Florence Yuan gained 8 grade As while Hannah Finlay, Bronte Blundell-Gray, Vanessa Lam and Mithulaa Shivakkumar gained 7 grade As.


In the English literacy test, 89 students gained either band 5 or 6 (the 2 highest bands) representing 55.27% of the candidature (as against 40.59% state). In the Mathematics test, 45 gained either band 5 or 6 (27.94% school, 19.92% state), in the Science test 73 students gained band 5 or 6 (45.05% school, 36.20% state), in the History test 30 students gained the 2 top bands (18.51% school, 23.00% state) and in the Geography test 41 students (25.30% school, 27.66% state).

78.26% of the students were designated “highly competent” in the Computing Skills test as against 61.91% who gained this designation across the state.

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

1. The low performance band includes students in Bands 1, 2 and 3, on average, in the School Certificate. The middle band includes students in Band 4, the high band includes students in Bands 5 and 6.
2. By definition, state average value-added is zero.
3. The school and school average columns are not shown if fewer than ten course results are available.
4. Residual data is based on HSC marks converted to the UAI common scale.

* LSG (Like School Group) refers to a comparison between Riverside Girls High School and other comprehensive girls’ single sex high schools, within Sydney North Region

Higher School Certificate

The class of 2009 continued Riverside’s strong tradition of outstanding H.S.C. results. 116 girls applied for University entrance and 85 of them gained a University place. An additional 30 students completed the H.S.C. but they did not apply for university entrance because they studied a non U.A.I. combination of subjects including TAFE courses. A total of 23 students received a U.A.I. over 90, which represents 20.00% of the students eligible for a U.A.I. This was a higher number than the 17 (15.30%) in 2008 and lower than the 27 (25%) in 2007

Lauren Joo was dux of the school with an ATAR of 99.30. Ana Andronikashvili gained second place with an ATAR of 97.30 and Lizhen Yu was third in the year with an ATAR of 97.05. Riverside received 60 band 6 in the 2009 merit lists (8.68% of the total candidature). There were also 256 band 5 (80-89%) results across all subjects, which made a significant contribution to the large number of students gaining university entrance in 2009.

Riverside was listed 188 in the top 200 schools in N.S.W., lower than the 86th rank in 2007 (with 13.56% band 6) but very similar to its 185 ranking with 8.71% band 6 across all subjects in 2008.

Outstanding HSC results in 2009 included several subjects above 45% of candidature for bands 5 and 6; Chinese B.S. 78%, Advanced English 60%, Textiles and Design 66%, Hospitality (VET) 62%, Visual Arts 50%, Legal Studies 48% and both Modern and Ancient History 47%, ESL English and Biology listed 46% for students gaining bands 5 and 6. The best performing Extension Courses were Extension I Maths (30% gained E4 = band 6) and Extension 2 English (36% gained E4 = band 6). The most outstanding results against the state
averages for band 6 (90-100%) were Design and Technology (school 13% and state 8%), ESL English (school 14%, state 3%), Extension 2 English (school 36%, state 28%), Legal Studies (school 17%, state 12%), Textiles and Design (school 33% and state 13%) and Chinese B.S. (school 29%, state 9%)

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 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage of Year 7 students achieving at and above minimum standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>98.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>99.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>98.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of Year 9 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at and above minimum standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>96.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>94.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>97.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>97.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>98.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

Riverside proudly flies the Aboriginal flag along side our national flag in the schools main quadrangle for all formal occasions and special events.

The flag symbolises our commitment to reconciliation with all Aboriginal Australians. Students are encouraged to value and appreciate Aboriginal history and culture as a significant part of Australia’s heritage.

The mandatory courses, Australian History and Geography in Years 7-10 provide all students with an opportunity to study Aboriginal history and gain a wider understanding of the issues relating to Aboriginal heritage.

The regional Aboriginal liaison officers have also visited the school to support students and their families in a variety of contexts, especially in relation to individual learning plans.

Three students in Year 8 were members of the regional Student Equity group. Ms Daly from the HSIE faculty and the three students were part of a planning group for regional activities and
programs to provide opportunities for student leadership. Several other students participated in Macquarie University seminars which outlined post school opportunities for indigenous students.

**Multicultural Education**

Riverside has a rich and culturally diverse school community with over 50% of the students coming from Language Backgrounds Other Than English. Students and teachers are encouraged to value, appreciate and embrace the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity to sustain a harmonious and inclusive school environment.

To ensure the school’s commitment to our rich diversity and to anti-racism, an Anti-Racism Contact Officer is trained each year and it is that teacher’s role to educate, act as a mediator and mentor and promote acceptance and the peaceful resolution of conflict. The ARCO’s role is promoted within the school with posters and TV screens which identify the ARCO and where he or she can be found within the school.

At the end of 2009, in term 4, the school’s ARCO addressed all year 9 students during their Personal Development, Health and Physical Education classes as part of their unit on “Diversity”. In addition to the ARCO explaining their role, the school’s anti-racism policy and commitment to harmony, there was lots of constructive discussion about strategies students can use to break down barriers and learn more about each other’s cultures, thoughts and feelings in the context of a richly diverse school community. The ARCO will endeavour to repeat these visits to year 9 PDHPE in 2010.

As part of the school’s commitment to our “Belonging” program for all students, the presentation named “Many Spheres” which was delivered by the two ESL teachers at the School’s Welfare Conference in 2008 was again delivered in term 1, 2009, at the Executive Conference and to teachers at the term 2 Professional Learning Day. The presentation was about the culturally diverse demographic of our students. The focus was raising awareness and creating an inclusive environment for our culturally and linguistically diverse students. This ensures that all students in our community feel a strong sense of belonging to their school community.

English as a Second Language (ESL) is essential learning support at Riverside due the large percentage of LBOTE (Language Backgrounds Other Than English) students including a significant number of international students from countries such as China, Hong Kong and Korea. ESL parallel classes operate in the junior year in English (7-10) and the English ESL Preliminary and HSC courses are offered in years 11 and 12 for those students who are eligible. In addition to these English classes, the ESL students (years 7-12) are supported where possible in language dense subjects across the curriculum such as junior History and Science, and senior Business Studies. Seniors are also able to attend tutorials where students work in small groups or independently to further consolidate, revise and practise their English language skills.

The progress of ESL students is monitored by three ESL teachers to determine the levels of assistance required through diagnostic testing. Students are actively encouraged to seek assistance from ESL staff for any area of difficulty they might be experiencing in English and across the curriculum.

Multicultural education is a focus in the English curriculum where the issues of migration, the Stolen Generation, cultural, language and religious diversity are explored through a wide variety of texts in both the junior and senior school with texts such as “Immigrant Chronicle” by Peter Skrzynecki, “Swallow the Air” by Tara June Winch, “Beneath Clouds” directed by Ivan Sen, “Parvana” by Deborah Ellis, the poetry of Jack Davis, “Whale Rider” directed by Niki Caro and various Multicultural book boxes.

**Respect and responsibility**

**“Sort It” a conflict resolution program for students**

Our school expects the qualities of courtesy and cooperation at all times. “Sort It” is a school developed program which forms part of our AB Project. “Sort It” enables students to assess social behaviours and empowers them to deal with mean behaviour, conflict and harassment in an independent manner within a supportive environment, enhancing student resilience and well being. It moves students on from assuming that all forms of mean behaviour can be defined as “bullying”. We aim to ensure all teachers are confident to support students to use the processes involved in “Sort It”.

Surveys and team meetings provided us with the following feedback:

- most students arrive at Riverside assuming that unpleasant and antisocial behaviours can be classified as bullying.
- whilst teachers are aware of the overall aims of and processes involved in “Sort It” some do not feel confident to assist students to work through the processes.
Teachers are willing to be involved in assisting students to work through “Sort It”. Year Advisers confidently assist students to use “Sort It”.

- students experience a sense of achievement and well being when they use “Sort It” and this is greatly enhanced when they use it independently with their peers.
- some of the processes in “Sort It” require further clarification to assist students to use it independently.
- we need to assist parents to understand the philosophy behind and processes of “Sort It” to ensure they support the progress of students.

In 2010 we will:

- provide professional learning for all teachers to enable them to facilitate and support student use of “Sort It”
- evaluate the support materials used by student to implement “Sort It”
- inform the parent community of the aim and processes involved in “Sort It”
- continue to train students to use “Sort It” in years 7, 8 and 9 as required.

**Other Programs**

**GATS Yr 7 / 8 Project Day**

A special project day was held for our year 7 and 8 extension classes on 19 September. The day was organised by Ms Daniels as part of the school’s Extension Program. The focus of the day was to develop deep knowledge and understanding in Science and Maths, Linguistics and History.

Physicists from Macquarie University gave girls a ‘guided tour’ of the universe in the mobile planetarium which they set up in the school hall. Student knowledge of our solar system, galaxy and known universe was greatly enhanced by the expertise of the scientists from the university. The igloo shaped mobile planetarium was a source of enjoyment for the girls who had never seen a planetarium before. Applying their knowledge of gravity, electro-magnetism and of other forces of nature, Mr Moran, Mr Russell and Mr James then taught students to make rockets which they discharged on the school oval. Finally, students made compasses in order to demonstrate their knowledge of navigation methods.

In Mathematics, Ms Udell and Mr Bragg along with senior HSC Extension Mathematics students worked with the girls on problem solving skills and a maths problem solving relay was held in the school quad.

English and History and languages teachers Ms Trimble, Ms Kenny and Ms Crocco delivered a workshop on the significance of culture and context in the development of language.

Student evaluations of the day were exceptionally high. Not only did they gain immense enjoyment in participating in the activities throughout the day, but students also indicated an interest in pursuing further study in these areas when back in their usual classes.

** Debating and Public Speaking**

Public speaking was a highlight in 2009 for Riverside. Most notably, Greer Brennan competed at the State Final in the Legacy Junior Public Speaking Competition at the Art Gallery of NSW. This is a very prestigious competition open to all students in both public and private schools, with all 10 regions in the state being represented. Each region hosted Inter-District and Regional Finals, with the two semi-finals being held in Sydney for the top students. Greer had won her state semi-final at Parliament House and participated in the prestigious final with seven other students.

Riverside participated in five debating competitions in 2009 and hosted an Inter-district final, as well as a regional heat for Public Speaking. Students represented the school in debating at inter-district level, with the Year 8 team winning their zone and progressing to the regional semi-finals.

In 2009, teams were chosen from a pool of students who regularly attended a weekly “Debating Club”, where students would learn skills in public speaking and debating, peer assessment and adjudication. They also attended various regional and state events. Participation in this club was unprecedented in 2009 with more than 40 students auditioning for various teams, and more than 20 students attending weekly meetings.

**School to Work Program**

Throughout 2009 the School to Work Program was delivered through Year 10 English by Ms Wearne who developed the program which focuses on assisting the girls to develop work related skills and assist them with goal setting to prepare them for successful futures. Further support was provided by Mr Blundell, our Careers Adviser who also liaised with TAFE so that the girls were able to access short vocational courses.

As part of the program, students learnt how to successfully write resumes and work letters. They also participated in regional two day ‘Bridging the Gap’ workshops held at Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club where they met people from a variety of
industry areas, who gave advice about different career options available.

One successful aspect of the program involved a series of role plays in job applications and interview techniques where girls were required to wear outfits appropriate for a mock work interview.

Another important component of the program was the unit of work on developing and delivering good presentations which assists the girls to develop ICT and oral speaking skills which will support them in senior high school and later in life. Girls developed presentations which were engaging, interesting and interactive.

In this Year 10 course, girls also participated in a ‘Building Confidence Workshop’ involving a presentation about appreciating and loving themselves for who they are, and to be confident within themselves. A hair, makeup and etiquette expert taught students how to present themselves for different occasions. This was a ‘hands on’ workshop with every girl in the class participating. They were given individual advice on makeup application and hair styling techniques. This helped the girls to build confidence and to develop a more positive self image.

Progress on 2009 targets

Target 1 – Engaging and meeting the learning needs of all students using the QT Framework

Our achievements include:

- accommodations are evident for identified support needs students
- successful accommodations are evident for ESL students
- the development of differentiated programs for 7B, 8T, 9T across all KLAs incorporating problem solving and critical thinking skills.
- maintenance of excellent HSC results
- analysis of NAPLAN results led to sustained writing for Years 7 and 8 being a priority for 2010

Target 2 – Creating a learning community that is engaged, fulfilled and solutions focussed with a positive, strengths & solutions approach underpinning all aspects of school life

Our achievements include:

- the welfare team uses a strengths and solutions approach in their dealing with students
- TARS processes demonstrating respect for the work of teachers by using a positive, solutions- focussed approach
- across faculty involvement in staff welfare initiatives
- gratitude is a regular feature of school life for year 7
- individual strengths are recognised and discussed openly amongst students and staff

Target 3 – Using Technology to enhance student achievement

Our achievements include:

- an increase in the number of staff and students logging into the school Intranet from home
- assessment tasks 10 – 12 are accessible via the Intranet for staff and students
- all science teachers using the electronic whiteboard and video conferencing facilities on a regular basis
- increased embedding of technology into curriculum throughout years 9 and 10

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 2009 our school carried out evaluations of:

Key Evaluation –

Educational and management practice
Communication across the Riverside Community

Background

Streamlined processes of communication have a great impact on the optimal functioning of an organisation and well being of members of a community. Communication is a priority at Riverside. We have developed communication tools to support processes, ensure equitable access to information, reduce printing, ensure our communication systems are secure, easy to use and support the work of our teachers.

Findings and conclusions

- the student intranet is a valued tool used consistently by students, in particular those in years 10 – 12, to locate calendars, daily notices, timetables, policies, schedules, proformas and files.
- the publication of student daily notices on the TV screens located around the school
is a valuable communication tool, appreciated by staff and students, ensuring ease of access, saving paper and reducing paper waste and litter.

- staff access to enter data into student daily notices via the staff intranet is a valued timesaving initiative.
- the staff intranet allows staff to access commonly used data and information in a timely and efficient manner, reduces the need to print material, saves on filing and enables version control.
- the non electronic staff daily notices on the “white board” remains a significant communication tool for all staff.
- availability of daily organisation via Intranet and the ability to access archives is a valuable tool.
- the ability to alter the links on the staff and student intranets in a timely fashion allows each intranet to reflect priorities and highlight current focus areas.
- parents have highlighted the need for increased access to information relating to daily organisation and events.

**Future directions**

In 2010 we will:

- investigate increasing the use of STAN the online program as a communication tool between teachers.
- continue to develop the school website to enable parents to log onto the school intranet allowing them to access pertinent information in a timely fashion.
- trial the use of a electronic version of “staff daily notices” in addition to the current processes, allowing all staff to add notices via the staff intranet.
- publish Riverside Currents on the 15th of each month and making it available to all parents and students via the parent portal in a secure on-line environment
- investigate secure on-line fee payments and uniform purchases
- continue to devise innovative uses for the TV screens as a communication tool.
- alter the physical arrangement of the staff common room allowing staff to meet in small groups to facilitate communication.

**Curriculum Sustained Writing Program**

**Background**

In 2009 we gathered information about the writing performance of our Year 7 students to find ways to strengthen our students writing skills. Through using a number of strategies including surveys, writing diary, school reports and NAPLAN analysis we were able to identify the writing support needs of students across KLAs. In order to assist our students to develop competent writing skills and support them to be able to articulate their understandings and ideas in meaningful ways we planned a writing program which would be delivered across all subject areas in Years 7 and 8.

**Findings and conclusions**

A steering committee was established and after a series of meetings an action plan including an implementation timeline was developed and presented to staff. Staff feedback allowed a professional development plan to be developed.

**Future directions**

The Sustained Writing Program will commence at the beginning of 2010 and extend over a two year period. A number of whole school strategies were identified for implementation into all Year 7 and 8 teaching programs. The program will also involve faculty support from a regional literacy and teaching and learning consultant.

**Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction**

In 2009 the school sought the opinions of parents about the school’s policies regarding the use of technology and the impact of technology and cyberspace on student life at home.

Their responses are presented below.

90% of parents of year 12 indicated an awareness of the school’s various policies regarding responsible use of the internet and technology at school. By comparison, 37% of parents of year 7 students were familiar with the same policies.

All respondents reported access to home computers with internet connection. Other highly ranked technological devices such as ipods and mobile phones were being utilised at home.

Year 7 respondents further reported 17% of computer use at home on an average of 2 hours per day, whilst Year 12 students use was stated at 43% which was significantly higher.

Parents reported that 57% of Year 12 students spent more than 50% of their time actively engaged in school work. This compared to 14% of Year 7 students in the study.
Other responses in the survey highlighted the prevalence of Facebook and MSN as social networking vehicles. Despite the significant amount of time spent on line, few parents reported incidents of harassment.

One significant finding related to parental monitoring of online activity and the benefit of locating home computers in shared living areas within the home. Parents who encouraged open dialogue with their children were able to develop trust and confidence in their daughters’ responsible use of technology.

**Professional learning**

In 2009 56 staff members (including 6 office staff) participated in professional learning activities. The focus of professional learning included:

Early career teachers  
Use of technology for teaching and learning  
Quality teaching  
Syllabus Implementation and curriculum differentiation.  
Leadership and Career Development  
Student Welfare and Equity

All teaching staff also participated in five school development days at the beginning of Terms 1, 2, 3 and at the end of Term 4 2009 and another on BATH Day (Better Attitudes Towards Health Day) in Term 2.

In 2009 the induction, support, guidance and development of our three early career teachers was a significant focus of our professional development plan. Another major focus was the professional development of teachers in the use of technology in order to implement the introduction of the laptops for learning program.

**School development 2009 – 2011**

**Targets for 2010**

**Target 1 – Using Technology to enhance learning in years 9 and 10**

In 2010 we aim to expand the use of information communication technologies to engage all students and teachers in quality teaching and learning. This will enable us to create learning environments that are relevant and engaging and that prepare students, in all their diversity, to succeed in the modern world. This will involve developing skills in the innovative use of technology in classrooms, incorporating Laptops for Learning (L4L) and Connected Classroom programs to meet the learning needs of our students.

**Strategies to achieve this target include:**

- encouraging and supporting teachers to take risks in the classroom using technology to support learning.
- provision of a wide range of professional learning opportunities within the school environment to support teachers to integrate technology into years 9 and 10 teaching programs, assessment and reporting.
- creating opportunities for teachers to share best practice, engage in self reflection, reflect on how technology can best enhance student learning.
- encourage staff to participate in professional learning opportunities provided outside the school community.
- staff will work with the regional consultants enabling them to develop skills in using technology in the classroom.
- redesign of the year 7 and 8 ICT to ensure it supports students to develop skills to use the software available to them throughout years 9 to 12.
- the provision of hardware in classrooms to support the use of technology within learning environments.

**Our success will be measured by:**

- surveys which measure the skill development of teachers over a twelve month period.
- the degree of integration of technology evident in classrooms.

**Target 2 – Development of sustained writing skills**

Our school-based professional learning program will increase teachers’ capacity to identify and address students’ literacy learning needs and support students in Years 7 & 8 to develop competent sustained writing skills in all KLA's. By extending the professional knowledge and practice of all teachers will ensure we meet the learning needs of the full range of students within our mixed ability and upper classes. Quality teaching, learning and assessment will be evident and feature learner centred learning, higher order thinking, problem solving and high expectations whilst ensuring the concept of personal best is embedded in the school culture.
Strategies to achieve this target include:

- professional learning opportunities which focus on enabling students to develop writing skills across word, sentence, paragraph and whole text levels.
- professional learning opportunities which focus on identifying writing demands in each subject, strategies to enhance writing and using technology to support sustained writing.
- faculties will work to incorporate writing into teaching programs, learning activities, assessment and reporting.
- two faculty teams will work with the regional literacy consultant enabling them to model best practice.
- creating opportunities for teachers to share best practice, engage in self reflection, reflect on what quality work looks like in subject specific contexts and ensuring students receive quality feedback as natural part of the learning process.

Our success will be measured by:

- staff feedback via surveys.
- evidence of student work presented by faculties.
- assessment tasks which assess student progress in writing will be designed and reviewed at faculty level.
- all faculties will report on student progress in writing in semester 2 reports of all year 7 and 8 students

About this report

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

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