

# Sydney Distance Education High School

## Annual Report



2016



8587

## Introduction

The Annual Report for **2016** is provided to the community of **Sydney Distance Education High School** as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the school plan. It outlines the findings from self-assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.

Please note that, due to this year's Annual Report template restrictions, the school was not able to influence creatively the design and layout of this report, as in previous years.

Mark Piddington

Principal

## School contact details

Sydney Distance Education High School

Forbes St

Woolloomooloo, 2011

[www.sydneyh-d.schools.nsw.edu.au](http://www.sydneyh-d.schools.nsw.edu.au)

[Sydneyh-d.School@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:Sydneyh-d.School@det.nsw.edu.au)

9383 0200

## School background

### School vision statement

We provide flexible blended learning opportunities for quality individualised education, ensuring excellence and equity. We lead to support and challenge both students and staff to achieve personal success with high expectations. We inspire creative and engaged learning with strong student and teacher connections. We work in partnership with our wider school and distance education communities.

### School context

Sydney Distance Education High School is a public school committed to excellence and equity in distance education. We are the largest school provider of flexible blended learning programs in NSW, serving students from areas north of Wollongong, south of Newcastle, and west to the Blue Mountains. Close to the central business district of Sydney, we work on the land of the Traditional Custodians, the Cadigal People of Eora Country.

Students who meet specific enrolment requirements attend our school because they are not able to attend another school on a fulltime basis. We teach courses for fulltime and part program students, who include students with medical conditions and those with additional support needs. We also teach students studying single courses which they are not able to access at their home schools. We offer 11 courses in each of Years 7 and 8, 28 courses across Years 9 and 10, and more than 40 courses for Years 11 and 12. The school's middle school program, in Years 7 to 10, provides a further 20 courses for students who need additional literacy and numeracy support.

During 2016, our maximum enrolments were 1515 students including fulltime, part program and single course students, with a fulltime equivalent of 729 students. We are entitled to over 151 teachers with almost 24 support staff and now employ more than 240 fulltime and part time staff.

We provide flexible blended learning opportunities for quality individualised education. Students may learn in many ways, using written materials and online technologies. We teach over the telephone, by email and on the internet through lessons developed using online learning management systems. We engage students through webconferencing, videoconferencing, study days, open days, excursions, peer support activities and teacher visits to schools and homes.

Engagement with creative, challenging and blended learning opportunities is supplemented by inclusive student wellbeing programs and the school's partnerships with communities, families and other schools. We encourage students to take advantage of these opportunities to enhance their learning and sense of connection to their peers, their teachers and their school. Our high expectations are supported by a caring and nurturing environment with strong commitments to sustainability and social justice.

Distance education helps build independence and self discipline. We are proud of our students who have been placed first, second or third in the state in Higher School Certificate courses and whose work has been selected for a range of prestigious exhibitions and performances. We are equally proud of all students whose courage and commitment is reflected in their determination to do their best.

Our website is for communication, collaboration and the celebration of student achievement. It features films made by SDEHS Productions which showcase so much of the spirit and success of our school community. We inspire students to learn and to live their dreams.

# Self-assessment and school achievement

## Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

This year, our school undertook self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework and participated in an external validation. The framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading. During the external validation process, an independent panel of peer principals considered our evidence and assessment of the school's progress, aligned with the standards articulated in the School Excellence Framework.

### Learning Domain

In the School Excellence Framework domain of Learning we have made the judgement that SDEHS is *Sustaining and Growing*. Given that the school's historical and carefully planned approaches to support cognitive, emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing are the very essence of our support for students, we have made the judgement we are *Excelling* in the Wellbeing Element.

The school is proud of its Learning Culture which is so responsive to the changing needs of students. We have embedded policies and practices, such as our *Know Your Students* focus, to ensure students and their learning are central to all decision making. We continue to strengthen school learning priorities as reflected by our three Learning Hubs (Blue Mountains, Central Coast and Western Sydney). The hubs have resulted in enhanced student engagement with hub students saying they feel a greater sense of belonging to the school community. Learning success is celebrated in many ways including the highlighting of students' achievements. This is evident in teachers' daily contact with students and through school newsletters, website films, the school magazine and the annual report which all showcase the diversity of learning opportunities and students' successes. Student Wellbeing is at the heart of our unique school with positive and respectful relationships so important for learning success.

The Student Wellbeing Team supports all our students with Deputy Principals, Head Teachers, Year Advisers, and Supervisors of Girls, Boys, Pregnant Girls, Young Mums and students in Out of Home Care. Our School Counsellor, Aboriginal Education Coordinator and Transition Coordinators are also part of the team that reaches out to students and families across our diverse school community. The school database DELTA includes records for students in each of their courses. It contains comments from each teacher contact with students and their families so wellbeing needs are understood as we work for each student to achieve personal success.

Curriculum and Learning is supported through detailed teacher feedback and students' access to the elearning website where they may engage in online learning, reflect on their progress and plan for improvements in their learning. For additional support, students may also access messages and home student announcements. DELTA contains welfare tabs where teachers are alerted to any issues so they can more effectively address the learning needs of individual students including adjusted curriculum. The individual learning needs of students may also be supported by the Learning and Support Faculty and the Middle School Faculty, and through individualised and personalised learning plans.

*Sustaining and Growing* for Assessment and Reporting and Student Performance Measures is well reflected in the school's detailed analysis of student results and student engagement, including HSC results analysis procedures and monitoring the implementation of improvement strategies.

### Teaching Domain

In the School Excellence Framework domain of Teaching we have made the judgement that SDEHS is *Sustaining and Growing*.

Effective Classroom Practice is demonstrated in teachers' identification, understanding and implementation of a rich blend of teaching practices. We have quite extraordinary opportunities in distance education to teach students in many engaging ways. As indicated in the School Context, we teach with written materials, over the telephone, by email and on the internet through lessons developed using online learning management systems. We engage students through web lessons, videoconferencing, study days, open days, excursions, peer support activities and teacher visits to schools and homes. Our Moving Online project is an ambitious strategy to enhance opportunities for Stage 5 students to engage even more effectively with their learning. While we believe the school is *Excelling* when measured against each indicator for Effective Classroom Practice, we have made the overall judgement that we are *Sustaining and Growing* because we are excited about future possibilities.

The school has a strong tradition of being highly rigorous in Data Skills and Use as we collect, analyse and act on data. Teachers have developed and implemented explicit processes to analyse external performance data including HSC, NAPLAN and Tell Them From Me surveys. Teachers are empowered to use the data not only to plan for improving



student learning outcomes but also to improve their own classroom practice and effectiveness. Internal performance monitoring includes highly structured student engagement review processes. Data analysis underpins decision making about the school's future directions to support and enhance learning.

Learning and Development to support Collaborative Practice is our priority when developing connected teaching strategies. We support the enhancement of teacher confidence and capacity to design, develop and deliver engaging flexible blended learning programs using print, elearning and online technologies. The implementation of the flexible learning projects initiative enables teachers to develop publication standard print and online learning materials. The school's middle school and learning and support faculties work on a daily basis with teachers across the school. Teachers' professional learning includes collaborative technologies such as Google Docs and the webconferencing tool Adobe Connect. Professional learning is central for teachers' collaborative practice in collegial networks across the NSW distance education community of schools.

Professional Standards are supported through rigorous teacher performance and development, induction, and accreditation policy and procedures. There is a high level of trust as teachers observe each other's teaching practices and collaborate on planning improvements. Teachers new to the school and early career teachers are well supported through planned induction programs which include coaching for teachers preparing for formal accreditation.

## Leading Domain

In the School Excellence Framework domain of Leading we have made the judgement that SDEHS is *Excelling*.

Leadership excellence has been recognised at school, community of schools, principal network, Ultimo Office Directorate, state and national contexts. School leadership teams support a culture of high expectations and community engagement resulting in sustained improvements. A major focus has been on strengthening innovative and creative leadership with formal leadership programs central to school capacity building. The implementation of the Enhancing Leadership Capability Program, Blended Learning in an Online Environment, Growth Coaching and enhanced teacher induction programs has supported a significant number of staff in leadership roles within and beyond the school. Student leadership programs such as the SRC and school open days have also been successfully implemented.

The school is *Excelling* with School Planning, Implementation and Reporting. Innovative thinking drives school improvement as reflected in the School Plan, Milestones and Annual Report. Collaborative processes are embedded into school practices to support teachers to articulate, monitor and evaluate the school's strategic directions. Parents, families and school community members are encouraged to have a voice in deciding the school's key priorities and future directions. Work has already started on developing a school vision for 2020 and ideas for the School Plan 2018–2020. We have made a website film, *Honouring the Past: Imagining the Future* which invites our school community to be part of our imagining.

Excelling in School Resources and Management Practices and Processes is essential to support excellence in school leadership. Our school is the largest public education high school in NSW with significant staffing and financial resources that must be carefully allocated to support student, staff and community learning. *The Budget Papers 2016* includes trends over past years and reflects the sophisticated use of resources to support current successes and drive further improvements.

Our self-assessment and the external validation process will assist the school to refine the strategic priorities in our School Plan, leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

For more information about the School Excellence Framework:

<http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/about-the-department/our-reforms/school-excellence-framework>

## Strategic Direction 1

### Personalised Learning

#### Purpose

To enhance student engagement and personal success with strong academic and wellbeing support.

#### Overall summary of progress

We implemented the processes outlined in our School Plan to baseline student engagement and student–teacher contact rates for Years 10 and 12. This will now enable the school to measure improvements during 2017, in particular positive correlation between these two measures.

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
<b>Year 10: Student Engagement</b>  From Term 3 2015 (40% of students completed 75% or more of their weekly coursework) to Term 3 2017 (60% of students complete 75% or more of their weekly coursework).	38% of students completed 75% or more of their expected weekly coursework.	School staffing entitlement: teachers
<b>Year 10: Student Teacher Contact Rate</b>  From Term 3 2015 (54% of students had contact at least once a fortnight in addition to teacher feedback on their work) to Term 3 2017 (100% of students have contact at least once a fortnight in addition to teacher feedback on their work).	76% of students experienced contact at least once a fortnight in addition to teacher feedback on their work.	School staffing entitlement: teachers
<b>Year 12: Student Engagement</b>  From Term 1 2015 (40% of students completed 75% or more of their expected weekly coursework) to Term 1 2017 (75% of students complete 75% or more of their expected weekly coursework).	57% of students completed 75% or more of their expected weekly coursework, an increase of 17%.	School staffing entitlement: teachers
<b>Year 12: Student Teacher Contact Rate</b>  From Term 1 2015 (128% ie on average Year 12 students experienced contact more than once a fortnight in addition to teacher feedback on their work) to Term 1 2017 (sustain or grow percentage of Year 12 students who experience contact more than once a fortnight in addition to teacher feedback on their work).	The percentage of Year 12 students who experienced contact more than once a fortnight in addition to teacher feedback on their work compared to 2015 increased by 44% to 172%.	School staffing entitlement: teachers

## Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
<b>Intellectual Engagement</b>  From Term 1 2015 (above average for all total schools participating in the <i>Tell them From Me</i> Survey) to Term 1 2017 (maintain above average).	Maintained above average 2015 responses when compared to all schools participating the <i>Tell Them From Me</i> Survey. In 2016 Term 1, the measures for Intellectual Engagement were School 68%, State 42% compared to 2015 measures of School 52%, State 43%. This is an increase of 16% for the school and 26% above the state average in 2016.	School staffing entitlement: teachers
<b>Positive Teacher Student Relations</b>  From Term 1 2015 (above average for all total schools participating in the <i>Tell them From Me</i> Survey) to Term 1 2017 (maintain above average).	Maintained above average 2015 responses when compared to all schools participating the <i>Tell Them From Me</i> Survey. In 2016 Term 1, the measures for positive teacher–student relations were School 78%, State 59% compared to 2015 measures of School 74%, State 56%. This is an increase of 4% for the school and 19% above the state average in 2016.	School staffing entitlement: teachers

## Next Steps

Our School Plan for 2017 includes clearly defined Improvement Measures to ensure our 3 year plan remains on track to provide high quality educational outcomes. An important priority is increased learning connections between students and teachers with a focus on return of work and student–teacher contact rate.

- Year 10 Student Engagement:** From Term 3 2016 (38% of students completed 75% or more of their weekly coursework) to Term 3 2017 (60% of students complete 75% or more of their weekly coursework).
- Year 10 Student Teacher Contact Rate:** From Term 3 2016 (76% of students had contact at least once a fortnight in addition to teacher feedback on their work) to Term 3 2017 (100% of students have contact at least once a fortnight in addition to teacher feedback on their work).
- Year 12 Student Engagement:** From Term 1 2016 (57% of students completed 75% or more of their weekly coursework) to Term 1, 2017 (75% of students complete 75% or more of their weekly coursework).
- Year 12 Student Teacher Contact Rate:** From Term 1 2016 (172% – ie on average Year 12 students experienced contact more than once a fortnight in addition to teacher feedback on their work) to Term 1 2017 (sustain or grow percentage of Year 12 students who experience contact more than once a fortnight in addition to teacher feedback on their work).

The next steps required for 2017 to ensure Strategic Direction 1 is successfully implemented are outlined in our 2017 School Plan. Our priority is to enhance communication and connections among students, teachers, parents and supervisors to improve student engagement with inspiring, supportive and challenging flexible blended learning programs.

Our work to increase learning connections between teachers and students is done in the time allocated for teaching.

In distance education individual teachers are usually allocated students from different years. If a teacher taught only Years 11 and 12 they would have about 30–35 students. If a teacher taught only Years 7–10 they would have between 50 and 60 students. Most teachers have a mix of junior and senior students and so teach between 40 and 50 students each week.

These allocations mean teachers have approximately 40 to 50 minutes a week for each student, within regular school hours, for developing and refining learning materials and teaching students, including communicating with their students and responding to student work. This does not include other responsibilities such as attending faculty, team, staff and executive meetings, participating in professional learning, and the implementation of a range of school priorities.

## Strategic Direction 2

### Connected Teaching

#### Purpose

To improve teacher capacity to develop and teach engaging flexible blended learning programs.

#### Overall summary of progress

We were extremely pleased that the majority of teachers' responses to the *Focus on Learning Teacher* Survey ranked above the state norms, as indicated below. Also as indicated below, the baselining of print template consistency and elearning units was started in 2015 and will be completed in 2017.

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
The majority of each faculty's Stage 5 learning materials are online by end of Term 3 2017	Each faculty developed a minimum of one new elearning unit of work. 209 new elearning units were developed and published over 13 faculties an average of 16 per faculty.	School staffing entitlement: teachers and support staff
Teachers' positive responses to the DEC <i>Focus on Learning Teacher</i> Survey rank above state responses.	Teacher's positive responses to the Teacher Survey 2016 ranked above or equal to the State average for all drivers of student learning with the School measure for inclusive school equalling the State average of 82%.	School staffing entitlement: teachers

#### Next Steps

Our School Plan for 2017 includes clearly defined Improvement Measures to ensure our 3 year plan remains on track to provide high quality educational outcomes as follows.

Publication of improved elearning materials, with focus on NESA syllabus priorities.

- The majority of each faculty's Stage 5 learning materials are online by end of Term 3 2017
- All faculties participate in Adobe Connect web lessons by end of Term 3 2017





## Strategic Direction 3

### Inspiring Leadership

#### Purpose

To strengthen innovative and creative student and staff leadership.

#### Overall summary of progress

We were extremely pleased with the significant increase from 2014 to 2016 of staff perceptions of increased executive leadership and support. This reflected the success of a number of school programs including the Enhancing Leadership Capability Program, Head Teacher Administration Support positions and staff's many opportunities to relieve in executive positions.

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
Staff responses to <i>School Teacher Survey</i> reflect staff who experience increased executive leadership and support compared to 2014–2016 responses to Department <i>Focus on Learning Teacher Survey</i> – from 66% Term 3 2014 to 72% Term 3 2015 to 72% Term 3 2016 to 80% Term 3 2017.	Staff responses to the <i>Focus on Learning Teacher Survey</i> 2016 reflected staff experienced a constant level of executive leadership and support, remaining steady at 72%, 1% above the state average of 71%.	School staffing entitlement: teachers

#### Next Steps

Our School Plan for 2017 includes clearly defined Improvement Measures to ensure our 3 year plan remains on track to provide high quality educational outcomes. The next steps required for 2017 to ensure Strategic Direction 3 is successfully implemented are outlined in our 2017 School Plan as follows.

- Staff responses to *School Teacher Survey* reflect staff who experience increased executive leadership and support compared to 2014–2016 responses to Department *Focus on Learning Teacher Survey* – from 66% Term 3 2014 to 72% Term 3 2015 to 72% Term 3 2016 to 80% Term 3 2017.



Key Initiatives	Impact achieved this year	Resources (annual)
<b>Aboriginal background loading</b>	<p>PLPs reviewed and updated (Total: 20)</p> <p>Students tutored: 20</p> <p>Teachers and tutors supported with professional learning</p> <p>Title Page return benchmarked</p> <p>– Average number of Title Pages returned (Term 1 – Term 3): 46.5</p> <p>– Average 36.8% increase in the number of Title Pages returned (Term 1 – Term 3)</p>	<p>Tutoring: \$23,848</p> <p>Travel costs to support Aboriginal students individual sponsorship Terms 1–3: \$10,855</p> <p>Resources: \$2,937</p> <p>Professional learning: \$2,205</p> <p>\$39,845 – 105% of budget used</p>
<b>English language proficiency</b>	Identified student(s) supported	<p>Casual teachers expenditure: \$474</p> <p>\$1,194 – 40% of budget used</p>
<b>Low level adjustment for disability</b>	<p>Casual teacher and support staff days provided to create and adjust learning materials</p> <p>Title Pages (weeks of work) for Life Skills Stages 4, 5 and 6: 68 Title Pages</p> <p>Title Pages (weeks of work) for adjusted mainstream work: 10 Title Pages</p>	<p>School staffing entitlement: teachers</p> <p>Casual relief expenditure: 5 days: \$2,095</p> <p>Support staff expenditure: 1 days: \$300</p> <p>\$20,000 – 12% of budget used because staffing entitlement provided support required</p>
<b>Socio-economic background</b>	<p>Field Service Visits by staff (Terms 1–3 2016)</p> <p>– Central Coast: 9</p> <p>– South Western Sydney: 32</p> <p>– Lower Blue Mountain (Terms 2– 3): 18</p> <p>Total 59. This compares to the 2015 total of 47. This is a 26% increase.</p> <p>Faculty Workshop Days (Terms 1–3 2016)</p> <p>– Central Coast: 9</p> <p>– South Western Sydney: 9</p> <p>– Lower Blue Mountain: (Terms 2–3): 6</p> <p>Total 24. This compares to the 2015 total of 18. This is a 25% increase.</p> <p>Student attendance measured as baseline for Central Coast and South Western Sydney from start of Term 1 2016 to end of Term 3 2016 and Lower Blue Mountains from start of Term 2 2016 to end of Term 3 2016.</p> <p>– Central Coast: number of visits 336, number of students 52. Visits increased by 24%.</p>	<p>School staffing entitlement: teachers (approximately \$66, 880)</p> <p>Monthly room hire</p> <p>Provide hospitalities</p> <p>Staff/faculty Field Service Visits funded from school global budget</p> <p>\$28,646 – 90% of budget used</p>

<b>Socio-economic background</b>	<p>Number of individual students visiting has remained stable.</p> <p>– South Western Sydney: number of visits 230, number of students 44. Visits increased by 20%. Number of individual students visiting increased 30%.</p> <p>– Lower Blue Mountains: number of visits 160, number of students 42.</p> <p>Student engagement measured as baseline for Central Coast and South Western Sydney based on average number of Title Pages completed in English, Maths, Science in Terms 1–3 2015 compared to Terms 1–3 2016.</p> <p>– Central Coast: Terms 1–3 2015, 27 Title Pages; Terms 1–3 2016, 48 Title Pages. Title Pages completed and submitted increased 48%. Engagement increased 24%.</p> <p>– South Western Sydney: Terms 1–3 2015, 59 Title Pages; Terms 1–3 2016, 87 Title Pages. Title Pages completed and submitted increased 32%. Engagement increased 10%.</p>	<p>School staffing entitlement: teachers (approximately \$66, 880)</p> <p>Monthly room hire</p> <p>Provide hospitalities</p> <p>Staff/faculty Field Service Visits funded from school global budget</p> <p>\$28,646 – 90% of budget used</p>
<b>Support for beginning teachers</b>	<p>All beginning teachers were supported with induction, mentoring and supervision and support in gaining accreditation at Proficient Teacher level with NESA. All teachers evaluated the program.</p>	<p>Casual teacher relief: \$46,085</p> <p>Program Leader (DP3) coordination: \$10,000</p> <p>\$4,900 – 96% of budget used</p>

# Student information

## Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2013	2014	2015	2016
Boys	281	267	245	204
Girls	385	398	348	333

State attendance data does not contain information about students of Sydney Distance Education High School because of the nature of distance education. Attendance and non-attendance (that is, insufficient engagement in distance education) at this school are monitored in a number of ways, including records of student engagement in learning activities, student reviews, and regular contact between students and subject teachers including roll call. This contact also gives teachers regular opportunities to address any issues relating to a student's engagement in coursework. Weekly return of schoolwork is a requirement for enrolment in distance education.

## Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

A total of 50 home students completed the Higher School Certificate in 2016. 58% of these students were undertaking vocational or trade training with the view to continuing the courses at TAFE. 24% of these students continued on to study at a TAFE college or a private provider.

## Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational education qualification

91 home students commenced the HSC in 2016 and of these 50 completed the HSC in 2016. A high proportion of students went on to a pathway program with a view to completing the HSC in 2017.

The students who were enrolled in a vocational course attained a Certificate qualification.

## Post-school destinations

Proportion of students moving into post-school education, training or employment	Year 10%	Year 11%	Year 12%
Seeking Employment	20	19	10
Employment	6	4	16
TAFE entry	34	50	12
University Entry	0	0	48
Other	32	12	12
Unknown	8	16	2

In 2016 there was a significant increase in the number of students who gained university entry in various courses. The majority of students were offered their first choice of course. 28% of Year 12 students will undertake a combination of work and TAFE. A small number of students are taking a gap year to focus on their wellbeing with the view to continuing their studies in the future.

The number of students who left at the end of Year 10 commenced TAFE courses in their area of interest. A number of students across all years withdrew from their studies upon turning 17.



## Workforce information

### Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	2
Head Teacher(s)	25
Classroom Teacher(s)	133.1
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	0.6
Teacher Librarian	0
School Administration & Support Staff	23.77
Other Positions	0

\*Full Time Equivalent

Approximately 2.6 per cent of staff at Sydney Distance Education High School identify as Aboriginal. This includes members of both teaching and support staff.

### Teacher qualifications

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

### Teacher qualifications

Qualifications	% of staff
Undergraduate degree or diploma	100
Postgraduate degree	25

### Professional learning and teacher accreditation

In 2016 professional learning programs and events were provided for almost 200 fulltime, part time permanent and temporary teachers as well as all school administrative and support staff. Staff applied for 371 professional learning events including workshops, forums, webinars, online courses and conferences. These events were all linked to the *School Plan* targets and to one or more of the following Department teacher professional learning priorities: beginning teachers, career development, ICT for teaching and learning, literacy and numeracy, quality teaching, syllabus implementation and welfare and equity.

The structure and focus of school development days were designed to include whole school inter-faculty activities to promote the sharing of ideas and cross-school collegiality. A number of the school development days focused on technology for learning and discussions around future directions.

The Professional Learning Spotlight was initiated as a dynamic, visually engaging hub for curated professional learning resources and events specific to our school's unique context. The site is continually updated with professional learning opportunities, professional articles, research and educational resources. The site is public and can be found at <https://spark.adobe.com/page/Hbuy0/>

The school invested significant resources to provide Growth Coaching training for all executive staff and the Student Wellbeing Team. Growth Coaching is a research supported approach designed to foster a solution focused work environment of continual improvement, personal responsibility and goal setting. The school's executive team have embedded Growth Coaching techniques to enrich the teacher Professional Development Plan process. The Student Wellbeing Team uses Growth Coaching techniques to engage students through personal goal setting.

Eleven New Scheme Teachers achieved Proficient Teacher accreditation from BOSTES, while four others are continuing to work towards this accreditation. Seven teachers maintained Proficiency, 55 teachers are working towards maintenance at Proficient Teacher. No teachers are currently seeking or maintaining accreditation at the voluntary accreditation levels of Highly Accomplished Teacher or Lead Teacher. Eight new teachers in the school successfully completed nine sessions of the mentoring component of the New Teacher Induction Program.

## Financial information (for schools using OASIS for the whole year)

### Financial information

This summary financial information covers funds for operating costs 30/11/2016 and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

Income	\$
<b>Balance brought forward</b>	<b>934 693.10</b>
Global funds	1 443 445.65
Tied funds	484 493.63
School & community sources	175 720.83
Interest	21 537.20
Trust receipts	244 328.55
Canteen	0.00
<b>Total income</b>	<b>3 304 218.96</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	195 487.95
Excursions	1 480.50
Extracurricular dissections	56 709.33
Library	5 055.46
Training & development	0.00
Tied funds	451 696.03
Short term relief	463 720.81
Administration & office	346 754.09
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	81 263.33
Maintenance	90 755.24
Trust accounts	411 478.18
Capital programs	156 354.61
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>2 260 755.53</b>
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>1 043 463.43</b>

A full copy of the school's financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent and/or community groups. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

## School performance

### NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10. The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

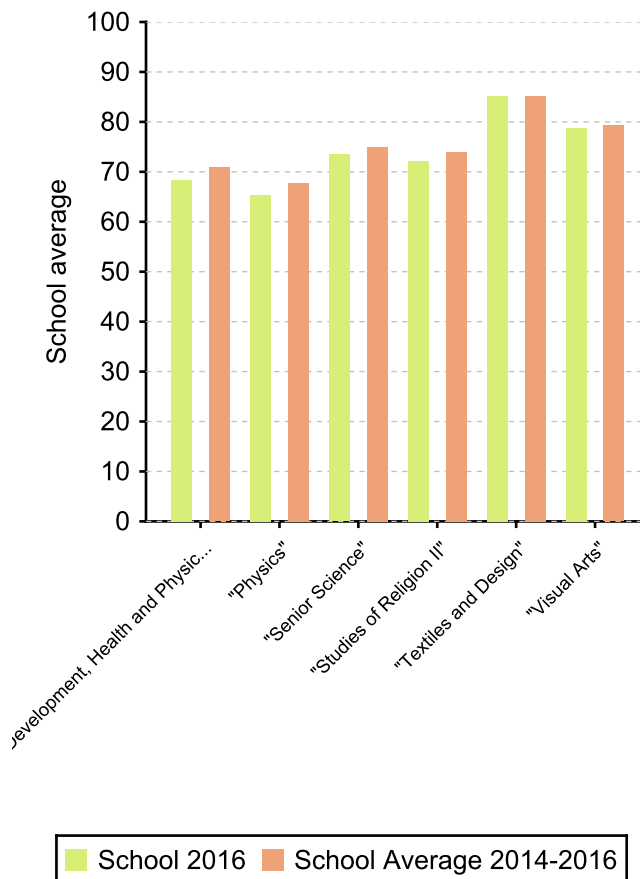
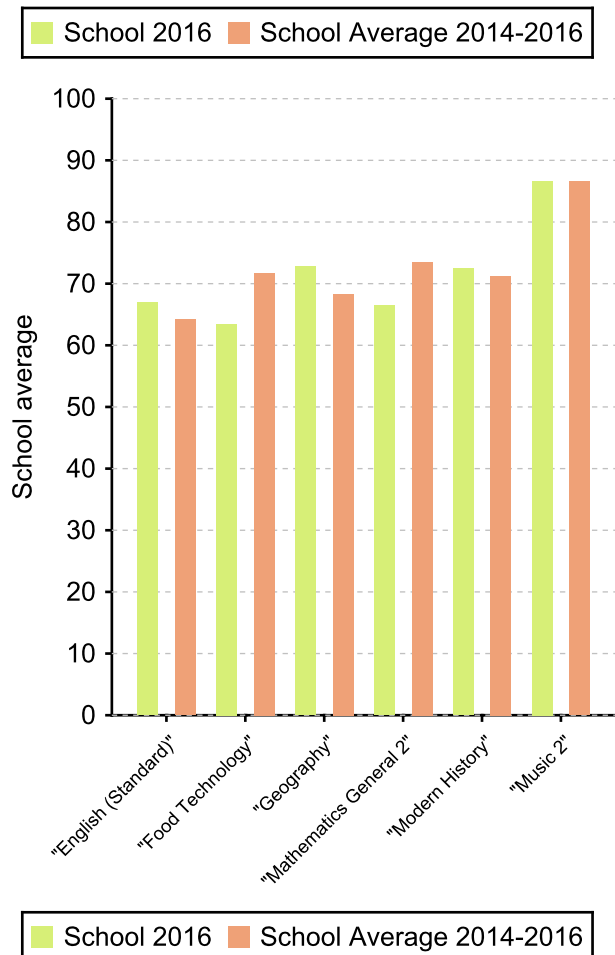
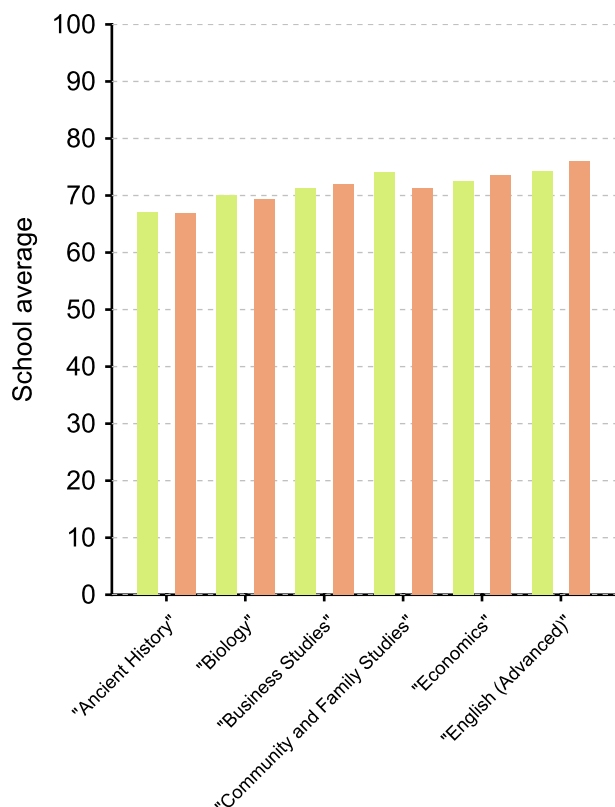
The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing. Click on the link *My School* field and insert the school name in the *Find a school* and select GO to access the school data.

In addition, for 2016, in accordance with the *Premier's priorities: Improving education results*, schools are required to report on their student performance for the top two NAPLAN bands in Reading and Numeracy. At our school in 2016, in Year 7 50% of students performed in the top 2 bands in Reading and 25% in Numeracy. The average overall in the top 2 bands in both Reading and Numeracy was 37.5% compared to the state average 30.5%. In Year 9, 38% of students performed in the top 2 bands in reading and 27% in numeracy with an average overall in top 2 bands 32.5% compared to the state average 26%. Another reporting requirement from the *State priorities: Better services – Improving Aboriginal education outcomes* is for schools with significant numbers of Aboriginal students (ten or more in a NAPLAN cohort) to report the percentage of Aboriginal students in the top two NAPLAN bands. Our school had fewer than 10 Aboriginal students complete each of the Year 7 and Year 9 NAPLAN tests in 2016.



## Higher School Certificate (HSC)

The performance of students in the HSC is reported in bands ranging from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest).



Our school's HSC results included outstanding individual successes, and a number of students received excellent Australian Tertiary Admission Ranks (ATARs), which have resulted in successful university admissions.

Congratulations to the five students placed in the top ten in the state in three courses including one first in state for Textiles and Design.

- Annabelle Bowman – 1st in Textiles and Design
- David James Barnott-Clement – 2nd in Earth and Environmental Science
- Miela Lily Malyon – 7th in Textiles and Design
- Jerry Leung – 8th in Information Processes and Technology
- Lisa Cavagnino – 9th in Textiles and Design

Congratulations also to a total of 14 Sydney Distance Education High School students who achieved a result in the highest band (Band 6 or Band E4) for one or more courses on the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) Distinguished Achievers List.

The above graphs include 18 courses with 10 public school students or more, out of the 41 courses we taught for 399 students. These students included students enrolled at this school and single course students in both public and non-government schools. We were particularly pleased that there were 203 (36%) Band 5 and Band 6 results awarded to our students for the 2016 HSC.

## Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

In 2016 the school received a significant amount of correspondence reflecting a high degree of student and parent appreciation as reflected by some of the following comments.

*A special thanks to all the staff who have supported me though my time at SDEHS and who have helped me achieve my HSC. I have definitely loved every moment of being a student here and will cherish the great moments. Also a special thanks to the school administrative staff and to my wonderful, dedicated and hard working teachers. I wish the SDEHS family all the best for the future!*

*This year I have left distance ed and am moving to a face to face school. I wanted to thank everyone at distance ed who have help me through the last 3 years and who have given me so much support through my schooling and personal life too. I have learnt so much as a person and everyone at distance ed has help me into who I am today. I would not have been able to get through the last years without my teachers.*

*We would like to thank you all on behalf of our daughter for the care and assistance you gave her during her time with SDEHS. Her time with your school allowed our daughter to learn and grow. It enabled her to begin to discover her interests and the direction she wanted her life to take. Without the support and encouragement from SDEHS, our daughter may not have been able to make the transition from school to work. Thank you for helping her establish the foundations from which to start building her life! We will be forever grateful.*

*We would like to thank all the teachers who were involved with our son. Due to its unique educational nature and the dedication, motivation, understanding and professionalism of your teachers, SDEHS gave our son the chance to continue growing emotionally and socially at his rate. Our son was challenged both emotionally and socially in a safe and understanding environment which in turn allowed him to continue to develop his confidence and reliance on himself. The opportunities of being involved in Days In, excursions, school camp, SRC, the Volunteering Program and the Habits of Mind course were the perfect balance for our son to extend himself. We are forever grateful to SDEHS as this journey has given our son time to mature emotionally, feel confident socially and to seek out independence. Our son told me the other day, "I am at the peak of my happiness." Thank you!*

During 2016, 52 students, 107 parents and 131 teachers took part in three *Tell Them From Me* surveys with nearly 600 participating schools.

From our students' perspective, our school scored above the state norm in all areas of school factors associated with student engagement, including quality instruction, teacher student relations, learning climate and expectations for success. Of particular note are the following responses.

- 90% of SDEHS students surveyed believe that education will benefit them personally and economically, and will have a strong bearing on their future. Across the state 66% of students agreed.
- 68% of our students felt intellectually engaged compared to a state average of 42%.
- 78% of students surveyed at our school felt that teachers were responsive to their needs and encouraged independence with a democratic approach compared to 57% of students state-wide.

From our parents' perspective, 78% of SDEHS parents surveyed felt that the teachers at the school support their child's learning and encourage success compared to 72% of parents state-wide.

From our teachers' perspective, we scored above the state norm or equal to state norm in almost all areas driving student learning including leadership, collaboration, learning culture, data informs practice, teaching strategies, technology and parent involvement. 78% of our teachers felt that they used technology effectively to engage their students with learning compared with 67% of teachers state-wide. 81% of our surveyed teachers felt that they provided quality feedback to their students and received quality constructive feedback from their peers compared with 73% of teachers state-wide.

In this school, we gather as much data as possible to identify what we do well and to help us to do even better. Sometimes, however, a simple question can be used to identify the essence of what is most important. In each of the *Tell Them From Me* surveys, we asked, *How good is this school?*

The question allows space for each individual to bring their own understanding and their own wisdom to an answer. The possible answers were Excellent, Very good, Good, OK and No good.

### Student Responses (52)

- Excellent, Very good, Good – 89%. Add in OK – 97%

### Parent Responses (107)

- Excellent, Very good, Good – 94%. Add in OK – 98.3%

### Teacher Responses (131)

- Excellent, Very good, Good – 95.4%. Add in OK – 100%

We were extremely pleased with this high level of satisfaction from across our school community.



# Policy requirements

## Aboriginal education

In 2016, SDEHS continuously encouraged all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) home enrolled young people to achieve their full learning potential. Enrolments varied from 35 to 43 ATSI students.

- The school's senior leadership team actively evaluated the implementation of the Aboriginal Education and Training Policy and the spending of RAM funding on ATSI students.
- In semester 2 2016, it was evident that there was a need to enhance ATSI tutoring processes that underpin the professional effectiveness of the ATSI Tutoring Program. This new ATSI Tutoring Program will be introduced in 2017.
- Consistent with the Aboriginal Education and Training Policy the school encouraged ATSI students to take responsibility for their ongoing learning.
- Supporting staff including subject teachers, head teachers, counsellors, learning support, welfare head teachers, girls' and boys' supervisors, roll call teachers, year advisers, learning hub staff and the ATSI coordinator regularly contacted teachers with ATSI students and their supervisors and worked with external support professionals to provide academic and emotional guidance and support for students to progress with their studies and make sound educational decisions.
- Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) were developed, continually reviewed and updated by the ATSI coordinator and then communicated to all staff.
- Student assessment data, in particular ATSI student engagement rates based on title page (weeks of work) submission rates were regularly used school-wide to identify student achievements and progress.

In 2016 the school received RAM funding to provide individual tutoring to ATSI students in Years 7 to 10. Individual Sponsorship Funding provided individual tuition, mentoring and coaching to the ATSI students in Years 11 to 12. As a result of the ATSI Tutoring Program, many students made significant progress and increased the return rate of title pages. Six ATSI students regularly attended SDEHS learning hubs and these students made significant progress academically and also gained social confidence making new friendships. Our Resource Allocation Model (RAM) Equity Loading has been critical funding for our ATSI students and has provided learning materials, conferencing, home visits and mentoring support.

ATSI tutors were provided with professional learning opportunities to increase their knowledge and understanding of the histories, cultures and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Peoples of Australia. ATSI tutors attended professional development courses at the Redbank Conference.

## Multicultural and anti-racism education

Sydney Distance Education High School students are encouraged to understand and appreciate the similarities and differences that contribute to the richness of our diverse community. The school has students and staff from a wide variety of cultural and religious backgrounds. Students communicate in forums by way of the school's elearning processes where they can engage and discuss issues freely and equitably in supervised conditions. On study days students interact in an atmosphere of inclusion and understanding. A number of events throughout the year foster awareness of social justice issues and the importance of global citizenship.

## Other school programs

SDEHS has always celebrated a range of other school programs in newsletters and school magazines, published on our website with other achievements including videos @ *SDEHS Productions*. This recognition has included student leadership, vocational education programs, environmental education and sustainability, family and community programs, and achievements in the arts and sports. Our Annual Report links directly to our website where you may experience the spirit and success of our school community. [www.sydneyh-d.schools.nsw.edu.au/](http://www.sydneyh-d.schools.nsw.edu.au/)