

George Bass School Annual Report



2018



5767

Introduction

The Annual Report for **2018** is provided to the community as an account of George Bass School and 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 also outlines how George Bass School has been able to work towards each of its strategic directions to support teaching, assess students' achievements and work with our community.

This has been the first year working towards our strategic directions in our three year plan. I have been pleased with our progress in consolidating our work in always providing our students with a quality education and maintaining effective and authentic relationships within our entire community. This year our school has worked solidly to provide the foundations for all of our directions. Teams have researched best practice and assessed projects to ensure that the interventions that we use are the most effective for the students and the school context.

This has all occurred alongside continued provision of high quality education for student achievement. Students have all worked towards their individual learning programs and have achieved significant gains throughout the year. I have been particularly pleased to see a number of our students work towards the achievement of significant milestones, in particular new students entering school life and students who have graduated school and are entering post-school life. Congratulations to all of our students for their achievements and to the educators and support staff at George Bass School for their significant and tireless efforts. These efforts have been in partnership with our families and community who have made these achievements possible.

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School background

School vision statement

At George Bass School we provide innovative, quality learning programs that cater for each student's individual needs and celebrate their achievements. We are committed to supporting students through partnerships with our diverse community.

School context

George Bass School is a School for Specific Purposes that caters for students from Kindergarten to Year 12 with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities and complex needs. George Bass School provides innovative, quality learning programs that cater for each student's individual needs and celebrates their achievements. This is assisted through innovative technology, highly dedicated staff and quality teaching practices across the whole school. We offer remarkable learning opportunities through programs which include community access, hydrotherapy, individual communication programs and integration. We maintain strong links with families, external agencies and paraprofessionals such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists and speech therapists to ensure a collaborative sharing of information and strategies in relation to a student's needs. George Bass School is committed to supporting students through partnerships with the diverse community which links closely to the school motto 'Support, Community, Independence'.

Self-assessment and school achievement

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

This section of the Annual Report outlines the findings from self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework, school achievements and the next steps to be pursued.

This year, our school undertook self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework. 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.

Learning

Innovation and Mentoring– The school identified individual teacher expertise and utilised their skills through peer collaboration to support the professional development of others. Identified needs within the school included Positive Behaviour for Learning, differentiation, sensory integration, technology and communication. Teachers shared ideas with others, developed resources and adjusted learning programs within classrooms.

Teaching

Attention Autism– The school began implementation of the Attention Autism program. The program aims to develop natural and spontaneous communication through the use of visually based and highly motivating activities. This program will be built upon in 2019 through continued peer collaboration and with targeted support from an instructional leader.

Leading

Aspiring Leaders– The school is constantly working towards developing the leadership capabilities of all staff. In 2018 interested teachers were given the opportunity to collaborate more closely with executive staff around whole school planning. Feedback from this initiative suggests that aspiring leaders were given valuable insight into the logistics of school planning.

Leadership Coaching– Several members of the leadership team completed a leadership coaching and development course through International Growth Coaching. Skills learnt are now being used to support colleagues in implementing effective classroom programs, school plan development and teacher professional development goals.

Our self-assessment process will assist the school in refining our school plan, leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

For more information about the School Excellence Framework:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/school-excellence-and-accountability/sef-evidence-guide>

Strategic Direction 1

Differentiation

Purpose

The purpose of Strategic Direction 1 is to support staff to develop and implement high quality, consistent teaching programs which focus on high expectations of student performance and enriched learning experiences which show a high level of differentiation across all Key Learning Areas for all students throughout the school.

Overall summary of progress

Strategic Direction 1 focuses on the development and implementation of high-quality differentiated programs throughout George Bass School. This year the strategic direction 1 team have extensively surveyed and evaluated current programming and differentiation practices throughout the school as a baseline from which to build high quality school-wide practice throughout 2019 and 2020.

Consistent programming proformas which are based on ongoing evaluation and reflection are implemented by all educators school-wide

Current programming proformas at George Bass School were surveyed through the collection of program examples. These program examples were reviewed by the strategic direction 1 team with a focus on determining how ongoing evaluation and reflection is used to improve student learning. Strategic Direction 1 team members identified elements of high quality evaluation and reflection practices evident in the examples with a view to incorporating these into a new programming proforma that can be used across the school. A draft programming proforma is under development for trial in Semester 2 2019.

High quality programs are evident school-wide based on whole staff understanding of specific and measurable criteria

Current programming practices at George Bass School were surveyed through the collection and analysis of literacy and numeracy programs. These programs were reviewed by the strategic direction 1 team with a focus on collating information about current high quality programming practices that can be utilised to develop specific and measurable criteria for class programs. The strategic direction team are currently working to determine what the specific and measurable criteria for school-wide literacy and numeracy programs will be.

A whole school understanding of the individual educational needs of all students is reflected through the delivery of curriculum-based content in a differentiated manner.

Differentiated practices and strategies currently being used at George Bass School have been surveyed and analysed by the Strategic Direction 1 team. Teaching staff throughout the school completed a survey on differentiated practice and this data has been collated and analysed by the team. Learning Walks involving each member of the strategic direction team and every class throughout the school occurred in Term 2 to collect further information and enhance an understanding of high quality differentiated practice. Notes on differentiated practices observed were taken and a debrief session occurred after each learning walk with staff in pairs. External observations were undertaken to identify differentiated practices being used in other schools and team members shared their learning with the team afterwards. Key high quality differentiation strategies have been compiled with photo examples where applicable to create a bank of differentiation strategies for use by staff throughout the school.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Established high quality literacy programs across the school which demonstrate differentiation	Teacher professional learning sessions x 2 TPL sessions x 3 TPL session x 3	Observations of high quality teaching and learning across other settings. Identified need of an Instructional Leader to support teaching and learning in 2019. A bank of differentiation strategies has been collected. Program proforma is being developed.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Established high quality numeracy programs across the school which demonstrate differentiation	Teacher professional learning sessions x 2 TPL sessions x 3 TPL session x 3	<p>Observations of high quality teaching and learning across other settings.</p> <p>Identified need of an Instructional Leader to support teaching and learning in 2019.</p> <p>A bank of differentiation strategies has been collected.</p> <p>Program proforma is being developed.</p>
Demonstrated differentiated lesson implementation is of high quality	10 teacher Days	<p>Innovation mentoring program supported high quality lesson differentiation.</p> <p>Overall evaluation to occur in 2020.</p>

Next Steps

- To finalise the development of draft school-wide programming proformas for trial in 2019.
- To develop a specific and measurable criteria for high quality differentiated programs in literacy and numeracy.
- To finalise and share a bank of differentiation strategies with staff throughout the school through TPL sessions about high quality differentiated practice in the classroom.



Strategic Direction 2

Assessment

Purpose

The purpose of Strategic Direction 2 is to develop school wide consistent systems for assessing students in literacy and numeracy, to support consistent teacher judgement by developing an assessment criteria and to use this trackable data to plan for future teaching and learning programs.

Overall summary of progress

Collaboration, discussion, research and trials have been conducted throughout the year to achieve set milestones in assessment practices. Current reporting assessment criteria has been reviewed and used to determine what should be included in a rubric. Other schools have been contacted to find out what assessment tools are used to ensure the most relevant elements are collated.

A survey was distributed to teachers based on current assessment and data collection systems. Survey results were discussed and fed back to staff. This will be used to determine staff knowledge and ability in use of assessment and data collection systems so the most appropriate level of support is provided when the tool is up and running.

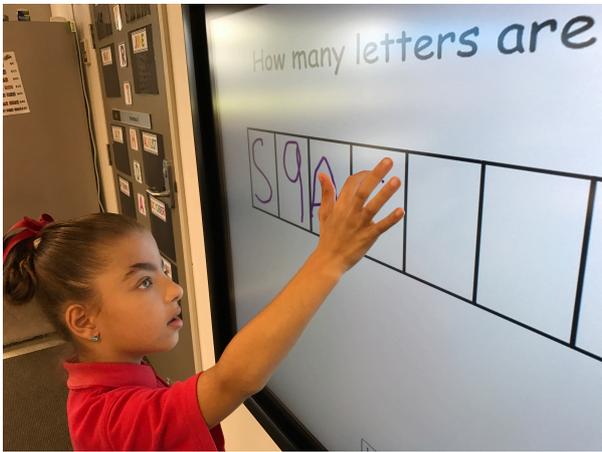
A member of the team attended the Inspire, Innovate conference to source a design company. Investigations into the contracting of an appropriate design company are ongoing.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Educator judgement of student performance and learning is more consistent across the school.	Teacher professional learning sessions x 2	Introduced guided staff discussions concerning consistent teacher judgement in relation to student assessment. Formal evaluation to occur in 2020.
Student assessment is used to measure the effectiveness of numeracy programs.	Teacher professional learning sessions x 2 TPL sessions x 3 TPL session x 3	Reviewed and modified school's current use of assessment tools and school reports. Research of best practice in the use of assessment tools in other settings and online.
Student assessment is used to measure the effectiveness of literacy programs.	Teacher professional learning sessions x 2 TPL sessions x 3 TPL session x 3	Reviewed and modified school's current use of assessment tools and school reports. Research of best practice in the use of assessment tools in other settings and online.

Next Steps

- To finalise beta assessment tool in one strand of English – Speaking and Listening.
- To trial beta assessment tool with 8 selected and diverse students across the school.
- To adjust assessment tool to ensure its effectiveness and apply it to other strands of the English curriculum.



Strategic Direction 3

Community

Purpose

The purpose of Strategic Direction 3 is to provide enhanced opportunities for community participation, collaboration and engagement in student learning through developing online communication systems and building a bank of community resources that support generalisation of student learning.

Overall summary of progress

Strategic Direction 3 focuses on building sustainable partnerships with our diverse community to provide opportunities that are mutually beneficial to the school, students, families and the wider community.

Staff access the community resource to enhance student learning based on authentic community experiences and the curriculum.

The team collected, collated and reviewed current resources relating to community access programs already being implemented within the school. An initial database was established using the existing resources. The database is accessible to all staff when planning future community access programs. New resources will continue to be added to the database.

Families and communities are utilising online communication systems giving them an increased awareness of school programs.

The team used current data based on parent/community surveys (2017) to select and launch a school-wide app to communicate with families (Skoolbag). Data collection and consultation with families will be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of the App. A trial was undertaken to evaluate different platforms for classroom communication (Class Dojo and Seesaw) effectiveness and ease of use for both staff and families. Further trials are planned.

Families and communities are regularly involved in supporting school programs by following clear guidelines in accordance with a school engagement policy

The team collected and reviewed all Department of Education policies regarding family and community engagement within schools. Compulsory requirements and recommendations were extracted and used as a template for designing a George Bass School specific policy. Further consultation with staff, families and community to gather relevant data regarding positive school engagement and involvement will be undertaken to further enhance guidelines and policies.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

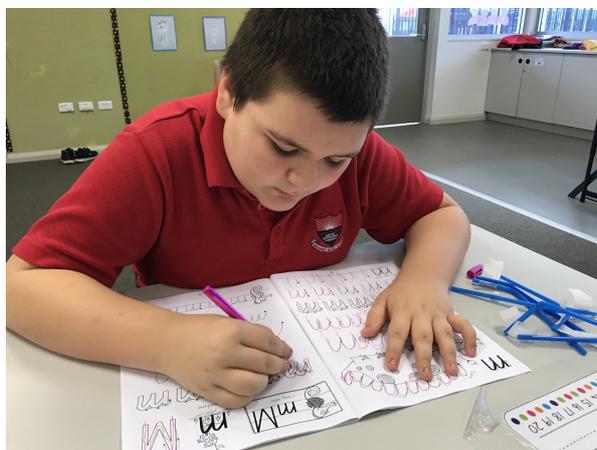
Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
A wider range of opportunities exist for students to access community based programs.	Assistant Principal release allocation . Teacher days Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS) (\$450.00)	Database of appropriate community based learning activities is underway.
An increased number of families are actively involved in student learning programs.	Teacher release days Allocation of funds to support community events	Community Engagement Policy is under development. Promotion of annual events has resulted in strong community participation. Events included Harmony Day, Annual School Concert, Presentation Day and the Family BBQ night.
Families report an increased awareness of student progress, school programs and learning.	Teacher release days Subscription to Skoolbag.	Launch of Skoolbag App. Data indicates that the community have been logging on.

Next Steps

- Reviewing communication apps – staff, family and community members.
- Survey parents in regards to involvement in school activities.
- Gather information from other schools around ideas for community access programs.



Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
Aboriginal background loading	\$2,200	Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) are designed and delivered to support each of our students individual leaning needs. Strategies continue to include using the '8–ways of Learning' throughout curriculum to support Indigenous and non–Indigenous students. Ongoing support is provided for Indigenous students to take up leadership opportunities at school throughout the year.
English language proficiency	Ongoing teacher allocation per team to support additional face to face and in class supervision. • English language proficiency (\$10 000.00)	Ongoing fortnightly evaluation at executive meetings based on use of communication systems.
Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS)	.2 teacher QTSS	Across school assessment strategies trialled in learning groups of students K–12.
Socio–economic background	6 teacher allocation • Socio–economic background (\$20 000.00)	Learning support team referrals, minutes and follow up indicate an increased level of support. An increased number of students are engaged through the learning support time, outside of those that require a meeting. 2018 data was compared to 2017 to determine this impact.
Support for beginning teachers	\$13,786	Mentoring structures and collaborative practices supported beginning teachers within the school in 2018. Beginning teachers had access to targeted professional learning that focused on classroom and behaviour management strategies to build student engagement and collaborative professional practices within the school. Beginning teachers also participated in an induction program that built upon their understanding of the policies and practices of the Department and the school.



Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2015	2016	2017	2018
Boys	56	71	73	77
Girls	19	26	29	28

George Bass School saw the graduation of 7 students at the end of last year and the enrolment of 7 new students in 2018 to maintain a school-wide enrolment of 102 students with moderate to severe intellectual disability. Our enrolment of students in the primary school continue to form the majority of classes with 12 primary school and 5 high school classes established in 2018.

In 2018, 6% of our students were from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background and 81% of students came from a language background other than English.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Deputy Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	4
Classroom Teacher(s)	14.9
Teacher Librarian	0.6
School Counsellor	1
School Administration and Support Staff	21.11

*Full Time Equivalent

No staff member identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background in 2018.

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	63

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Professional learning in 2018 was heavily focused on developing our 2018–2020 School Plan, working toward strategic directions, innovation/mentoring and wellbeing. In addition to this, all teachers and School Learning Support Officers attended the Special Education Principal and Leader's Association (SEPLA) conference on the staff development day in Term 3.

A series of school based professional learning events were based on our School Plan. Strategic Direction Teams were established and all staff were involved in the collaborative development of the 2018–2020 School Plan strategic directions and milestones. Strategic Direction Teams were established and allocated time to work collaboratively toward the achievement of milestones.

An innovation and mentoring program was established where teachers worked with a partner/mentor to research a specific area of special education practice and innovative ideas that could be shared school-wide. Teachers were allocated time to engage in research and learning which they developed into a teacher professional learning session to be shared with colleagues throughout the school. This invaluable program professionally developed staff in the areas of technology for learning, Positive Behaviour for Learning, communication programs, sensory processing and differentiation.

Teachers and School Learning Support Officers were all trained in the Management of Actual or Potential Aggression (MAPA) by fully qualified trainers with a focus on crisis prevention and management strategies to effectively deal with escalating behaviour in a professional and safe manner.

All mandatory training was completed by staff in addition to specialised training required to effectively support students with medical conditions and those who require health care procedures.

ACCREDITATION

In 2018 4 teachers completed the accreditation process at the proficient level.

Financial information

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018.

	2018 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	162,288
Revenue	5,036,365
Appropriation	4,889,847
Sale of Goods and Services	8,423
Grants and Contributions	133,600
Gain and Loss	0
Other Revenue	1,596
Investment Income	2,898
Expenses	-4,653,363
Recurrent Expenses	-4,653,363
Employee Related	-4,346,707
Operating Expenses	-306,657
Capital Expenses	0
Employee Related	0
Operating Expenses	0
SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	383,002
Balance Carried Forward	545,290

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 December 2017 to 31 December 2018.

The school budget is allocated to meet the running costs of the school and to meet the strategic directions of the school.

The school leadership team and the school administrative manager develop and monitor the budget.

The balance carried forward does not reflect significant outstanding payments such as salaries and other committed funds after 31 December 2018.

The surplus will fund the planned strategic directions of the school in 2019. Funds have also been allocated for contingency planning.

Financial summary equity funding

The equity funding data is the main component of the

'Appropriation' section of the financial summary above.

	2018 Actual (\$)
Base Total	807,224
Base Per Capita	43,984
Base Location	0
Other Base	763,240
Equity Total	165,945
Equity Aboriginal	2,257
Equity Socio economic	106,261
Equity Language	57,427
Equity Disability	0
Targeted Total	3,319,627
Other Total	199,412
Grand Total	4,492,209

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

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.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Each year parents are surveyed as part of the school's assessment and evaluation process. The survey allows parents to give input towards the school's delivery of high quality educational programs and learning environments. Evaluation of the surveys indicated that parents felt that relationships between the school and community are positive. Parents agreed that they are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning, feel as though they belong and are a part of the school community. Parents strongly agreed that teachers and staff collaborate and communicate well with them. They are regularly informed of their child's progress by classroom teachers through formal and informal conversations and student communication books. Social media platforms such as the school's Facebook page and website, were not as helpful in keeping parents updated about their child or ongoing school activities. The school continues to evaluate and streamline its use of social media platforms in order to better inform our school community. Parent comments about programs being taught to their children were positive. They like that programs are customised for students and that multiple programs are being taught across the school.

Student satisfaction was assessed through students' participation in classroom programs, social interactions

and participation in school wide activities. Relationships between students and teachers across the school are well developed and positive. A large percentage of the student population are active and enthusiastic learners who participate happily in classroom lessons and programs. This is evidenced through student reports, work samples and digital media. Students participated in whole school events across all Key Learning Areas. These included the Colour Run, NAIDOC week, the Starr's Planetarium, Annual School Concert, Move-a-thon, Book Week activities and parade, Opera Australia, super hero day, Life Education, Soccer Gala Day, athletics and swimming carnivals. Evidence of student engagement, participation and satisfaction is captured on digital media taken by staff and parents during these events.

Staff satisfaction was assessed through formal and informal conversations throughout the year and whole school staff surveys. Data from the staff surveys showed that collegial support systems within the school were strong. Strategies implemented by the school executive based on staff feedback included two 'Wellbeing' professional learning sessions delivered by the school counsellors. The learning sessions focused on self-care strategies and staff wellbeing.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

Aboriginal Education at George Bass School is embedded in all programs. The history and values of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' are acknowledged and respected through teaching and learning programs that reflect their culture and provide meaning and relevance. Culturally inclusive approaches to the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills are used to improve engagement and achievement.

All students in Years 7 and 8 study Aboriginal languages as part of the mandatory syllabus which supports their understanding of Aboriginal cultures and encourages an appreciation of the interdependence of land, language, culture and identity. Indigenous students read an Acknowledgement of Country at each assembly and at significant events and one student prepared and presented the Acknowledgement of Country at this year's Principal's Awards Ceremony.

NAIDOC week was celebrated by all students in collaboration with the Aboriginal Education Officer, Aunty Carol. This provided students with an Aboriginal perspective and an opportunity to develop an understanding of Aboriginal histories.

Multicultural and anti-racism education

George Bass School has an ongoing focus on Multicultural Education due to the nature of our local community and student body. Throughout 2018 we celebrated and supported diversity within our community through active engagement in learning programs and special events. These events included

Harmony Day, NAIDOC week, cultural celebrations along with acknowledgement and celebration of significant cultural events. It is pleasing to note that parents and community members strongly supported these events and participated in celebrations and activities through provision of resources, supplying a range of diverse foods and attendance during special assemblies and activity days.