

# Cascade Environmental Education Centre

## 2019 Annual Report



## Introduction

The Annual Report for 2019 is provided to the community of Cascade Environmental Education Centre 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.

### School contact details

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## School background

### School vision statement

Cascade EEC aims to provide educational experiences and opportunities that will engage and motivate all students to learn, discover, critically analyse their knowledge and to experience success. That every student that participates in a Cascade program has the opportunity to achieve their personal best through engaged, active learning in a safe, respectful and supportive environment. That every student that participates in our programs is excited to do so, safe when participating, interested in the activity and what will result from it, engaged in a practical and hands on way and inspired to make real change in their local community.

### School context

Cascade Environmental Education Centre (EEC) is located in 250 million year old rainforest on the Dorrigo Plateau. Cascade is one of 23 environmental and zoo education centres in NSW. The EEC is both a local school and a regional resource that supports schools to meet their fieldwork requirements, grow as sustainability hubs within their communities, to develop student and staff knowledge and develop knowledge about and a relationship with the natural environment. As part of a collaborative team of EEC's, schools, government and non-government organisations, Cascade provides a broad range of experiences at a number of locations within the Tamworth Group. The Centre continues to support schools in their implementation of the curriculum and the Environmental Education Policy and to provide essential natural and sustainability based experiences both in and outside of the classroom. We aim is to provide quality experiences that enhance student engagement and learning outcomes and to empower students and their communities to become confident and empowered environmental citizens.

## Self-assessment and school achievement

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 is a statement of what is valued as excellence for NSW public schools, both now and into the future. 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.

Each year, we assess our practice against the Framework to inform our school plan and annual report.

Our self-assessment process will assist the school to refine 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/school-excellence>

### Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

Elements	2019 School Assessment
LEARNING: Learning Culture	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Wellbeing	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Curriculum	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Assessment	Working towards Delivering
LEARNING: Reporting	Working towards Delivering
LEARNING: Student performance measures	Working towards Delivering
TEACHING: Effective classroom practice	Sustaining and Growing
TEACHING: Data skills and use	Delivering
TEACHING: Professional standards	Sustaining and Growing
TEACHING: Learning and development	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: Educational leadership	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: School planning, implementation and reporting	Excelling
LEADING: School resources	Excelling
LEADING: Management practices and processes	Sustaining and Growing

## Strategic Direction 1

### Empowering Learners

#### Purpose

To develop students environmental knowledge, skills, values and attributes and create environmentally active and literate citizens.

Provide engaging and stimulating learning environments and programs that empower learners to think and communicate creatively, collaboratively and critically, to grow as individuals, community members and learners and achieve positive environmental impact.

Develop the capacity of Centre staff and those within our networks as learners, teachers and leaders in environmental and sustainability education. Through participation in, and the provision of, explicit, planned and incidental professional learning that improves teaching knowledge, skills and practice and results in the development of environmental citizens who are life long learners.

#### Improvement Measures

Students and teachers that attend camps rate them as high quality learning experiences.

Cascade staff effectively collaborate with a range of partners to develop programs and resources to be utilised with K-12 School groups.

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

**Process 1:** School programs are developed with partner schools, marketed and booked into school calendar. Programs are evaluated by participating and conducting staff.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
A YEC is conducted. Depth study is evaluated, modified as required and delivered.	Cascade staff.
Low ropes course is practices and resource are improved.	Funds from principal support.

**Process 2:** Cascade staff attend high quality professional learning aligned to the curriculum and needs of students, visiting schools, staff members, Centre objectives and the DoE strategic Plan.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Cascade EEC staff attend :  1. State EZEC conference. (Jo Cunningham to complete)  How many staff. 2, principal and SAM. Casuals did attend some PD.  What was learnt at the conferences?  Principal  The conferences were a great opportunity to present Cascade EEC's best practice programs to other Centres, to collaborate with other EEC's, to experience and develop new programs via shared presentations.  SAM  Cascade has had a difficult year with our long term SAM passing. Wew have invested in PD for the current temporary SAM to empower her to effectively manage the administrative requirements of an EEC.  What are the implications for this learning?	Cascade EEC funds.

## Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Both the principal and the SAM have developed knowledge and skills that will transfer to our Centres programs and be of great benefit for the students and teachers that attend our programs.

### 2. Incidental Learning

Often attending a PD activity results in large amounts of partnership, development, collaborative opportunities and other incidental situations. This year we have been lucky enough to be exposed to the book "Dark Emu", which has inspired our staff to explore the development of secondary geography programs.

Another great incidental learning opportunity was created via a meeting with the HT Aboriginal Studies at ASC. This opportunity resulted in Cascade providing programs for around 800 students and the development of a long term relationship with the school.

## Strategic Direction 2

### Strengthen Partnerships

#### Purpose

To extend and strengthen partnerships with our networks and communities through effective communication and a culture of collaboration.

The impact of these relationships drives the provision of authentic, relevant and unique experiences, which enable students to be confident and creative environmental citizens.

To utilise and create positive, stimulating and innovative learning environments.

#### Improvement Measures

Facilities at Cascade are improved so that they enhance student learning and result in high quality learning experiences.

Cascade effectively collaborates with program stakeholders (schools, EZEC community, external agencies etc) to strengthen students and teachers ability to deliver a broad range of sustainability education experiences.

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

**Process 1:** Develop partnerships with schools and their local communities to enhance environmental education programs and student wellbeing.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Through Cascade EEC's programs and contacts made this year (2019). A path is laid out for further professional development and program development in 2020.	Cascade EC resources.  Local Aboriginal Elders from the Dungutti, Gumbayngirr, Anaiwan, Wiradjeri and Gamillaroi people.

**Process 2:** Enhance resource suitability, quality and availability to ensure a high quality of experience for students.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Wi Fi in Centre is upgraded.  Reverse cycle air conditioners are installed into dorms.  Storage at Cascade is improved.	Cascade EEC Centre funds.

### Management of non-attendance

Attendance at school has a big impact on longer term outcomes for children and young people. When a child is not at school they miss important opportunities to learn, build friendships and develop their skills through play. Regular attendance at school is a shared responsibility between schools and parents. By working together we can have a positive effect on supporting our children and young people to regularly attend school.

Our teachers promote and monitor regular attendance at school and all our schools have effective measures in place to record attendance and follow up student absences promptly. They are guided by the School Attendance policy which details the management of non-attendance.



## Workforce information

### Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
School Administration and Support Staff	1.03

\*Full Time Equivalent

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce composition

The Department actively supports the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees through the use of identified positions, scholarship opportunities to become a teacher and by providing a culturally safe workplace. As of 2019, 3.9% of the Department's workforce identify as Aboriginal people.

### Workforce ATSI

Staff type	Benchmark <sup>1</sup>	2019 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation <sup>2</sup>
School Support	3.30%	7.20%
Teachers	3.30%	2.90%

Note 1 – The NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2014–17 introduced an aspirational target of 1.8% by 2021 for each of the sector's salary bands. If the aspirational target of 1.8% is achieved in salary bands not currently at or above 1.8%, the cumulative representation of Aboriginal employees in the sector is expected to reach 3.3%.

Note 2 – Representation of diversity groups are calculated as the estimated number of staff in each group divided by the total number of staff. These statistics have been weighted to estimate the representation of diversity groups in the workforce, where diversity survey response rates were less than 100 per cent. The total number of staff is based on a headcount of permanent and temporary employees.

### Teacher qualifications

All casual, temporary and permanent teachers in NSW public schools must hold a NSW Department of Education approval to teach. Teachers with approval to teach must be accredited with the NSW Education Standards Authority, and hold a recognised teaching degree. All NSW teachers must hold a valid NSW Working With Children Check clearance.

### Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Professional learning is core to enabling staff to improve their practice.

Professional learning includes five student-free School Development Days and induction programs for staff new to our school and/or system. These days are used to improve the capacity of teaching and non-teaching staff in line with school and departmental priorities.

## Financial information

### Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019. The Principal is responsible for the financial management of the school and ensuring all school funds are managed in line with Department policy requirements.

	2019 <b>Actual</b> (\$)
<b>Opening Balance</b>	120,569
<b>Revenue</b>	394,897
Appropriation	293,926
Grants and contributions	99,576
Investment income	1,395
<b>Expenses</b>	-372,794
Employee related	-305,002
Operating expenses	-67,792
<b>Surplus / deficit for the year</b>	22,104

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.

## Financial summary - Equity loadings

The equity loading data is the main component of the 'Appropriation' line item of the financial summary above.

	2019 <b>Approved SBA</b> (\$)
<b>Targeted Total</b>	0
<b>Equity Total</b>	0
Equity - Aboriginal	0
Equity - Socio-economic	0
Equity - Language	0
Equity - Disability	0
<b>Base Total</b>	278,932
Base - Per Capita	7,039
Base - Location	647
Base - Other	271,246
<b>Other Total</b>	6,940
<b>Grand Total</b>	285,873

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.

## Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Student and Teacher satisfaction with Cascade products and services was sought via evaluations, observations, discussions and sharing sessions.

Satisfaction with our programs remains very high.

# Policy requirements

## Aboriginal Education Policy

The responsibility for enacting the Aboriginal Education Policy rests with all Departmental staff. The policy should underpin and inform planning, teaching practice and approaches to educational leadership in all educational settings.

Evidence of effective implementation of the policy included:

- Establishing, building and strengthening relationships with the Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Aboriginal people and communities.
- Providing, in partnership with Aboriginal people and communities, education which promotes quality teaching, is engaging, and is culturally appropriate and relevant.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will match or better the outcomes of the broader student population.
- Implementation of Personalised Learning Pathways for all Aboriginal students in a school culture of high expectations.

## Anti-Racism Policy

All teachers are responsible for supporting students to develop an understanding of racism and discrimination and the impact these may have on individuals and the broader community. Principals are responsible for examining school practices and procedures to ensure they are consistent with the policy. All schools have an Anti-Racism Contact Officer who is trained to respond to concerns in relation to racism.

## Multicultural Education Policy

Teachers address the specific learning and wellbeing needs of students from culturally diverse backgrounds through their teaching and learning programs. Principals are responsible for ensuring that school policies, programs and practices respond to the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of the school community, and provide opportunities that enable all students to achieve equitable education and social outcomes.