

# 2020 Annual Report

Southern Cross School of Distance Education



# Southern Cross

## SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

4659

# Introduction

The Annual Report for 2020 is provided to the community of Southern Cross School of Distance Education 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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## Message from the principal

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2020 was a very challenging year that saw many changes come through the Department of Education and schools both in the way we learn and the way we operate. Staff at SCSODE stepped up during this year to help train teachers in the rest of the state in how to deliver lessons online and from a distance, with how to engage students in learning and how to use various platforms and scaffolds to support learning from home. As a Principal, I am not only proud of the staff and their actions and time and efforts toward other schools, but also the extra time and effort they put into ensuring that our students remained focused, active and cared for. This is a credit to the staff and demonstrates the strong empathy and commitment they have to the education and wellbeing of our students. On top of the 2020 year, the school also underwent an external validation which was perfectly timed to inform the new school strategic improvement plan and situational analysis. The school looks forward to providing the information within this document to the school community and working with the community into the future.

## School vision

We are a catalyst for change, inspiring learners to reach their full potential. We support the whole child providing flexible quality teaching and learning programs that are accessible and engaging.

We build supportive relationships with our school community and develop partnerships that support learning, wellbeing and engagement.

Our staff is innovative and dynamic, working collaboratively to inspire and support our students to be lifelong learners who are active and informed citizens.

Our core values are Opportunity, Wellbeing and Engagement

## School context

Southern Cross School of Distance Education is a K-12 school committed to the wellbeing and engagement of our students, creating a dynamic learning community, and developing a culture of learning in distance education. Our school contributes to the lifelong learning of a diverse range of students and their communities with a focus on excellence and equity. Our school is built on the land of the Traditional Custodians, the Aboriginal peoples of various nations with our main campus being on the country of the Bundjalung nation, providing educational services for students south to the Coffs Harbour area, west to the Inverell area and north to the Queensland border.

The school current has 34 learning hubs, 3 campus' and a special programs unit to cater to the needs of students in various locations. Our staff are professional and dedicated to supporting students, their families and their educational needs and wellbeing.

## 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 and participated in an external validation. 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. Every five years, our school undergoes an external validation process.

During the external validation process, an independent panel consisting of a Principal School Leadership and a peer principal considered our evidence and assessment of our school's progress against the School Excellence Framework.

Our self-assessment and the external validation 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	2020 School Assessment
LEARNING: Learning Culture	Excelling
LEARNING: Wellbeing	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Curriculum	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Assessment	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Reporting	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Student performance measures	Delivering
TEACHING: Effective classroom practice	Sustaining and Growing
TEACHING: Data skills and use	Sustaining and Growing
TEACHING: Professional standards	Excelling
TEACHING: Learning and development	Excelling
LEADING: Educational leadership	Excelling
LEADING: School planning, implementation and reporting	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: School resources	Excelling
LEADING: Management practices and processes	Sustaining and Growing

An external validation process was conducted toward the end of 2020 resulting in the confirmation of the above mentioned claims. This process was a collaborative one where by community, staff, students and executive all contributed to the input and understanding of the nature of our school and where we currently stood. This situational analysis of the school was intensive and shows the commitment and dedication of not only the staff within the school, but also the support from the school community.

## Strategic Direction 1

### Wellbeing and Engagement

#### Purpose

To ensure the wellbeing of our students and staff, their engagement in the best possible educational pathway to equip students with lifelong skills to become active and informed citizens.

#### Improvement Measures

Due to the diverse nature of our students social, emotional and learning needs, their wellbeing is to be a major priority of any strategies

Evidence of the Social, Emotional and Learning needs of students embedded into teaching and learning programs

Tell Them From Me or other survey results indicate that students feel a sense of pride and belonging in their school and education by having a voice in their future direction

All student achievement is recognised.

Improved recognition of students, abilities and achievements in a variety of contexts and forums as measured by feedback on canvas and learning materials, student awards at presentation days.

A greater range of post school options are accessed by students.

Creativity, collaboration and innovation are employed to enhance student learning and wellbeing and maximise student post school career options.

Increased attendance and engagement

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

##### Process 1: Ensuring quality Teacher Professional learning and dialogue including providing support for teacher accreditation including Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher level

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
How2Learn finished after 3 years	Staff meetings and faculty meetings
HT Admin ensuring all mandatory training completed for temp and casual staff	Online courses
Staff engaged in wellbeing activities	Staff expertise

##### Process 2: Strengthening and supporting Student Leadership skills

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Students hosted presentation days well	Students as hosts
Market day cancelled due to covid-19	Students and parents organising stalls and fundraising for market day

##### Process 3: Providing wide variety of Student Opportunities to support their wellbeing and engagement

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Staff have worked tirelessly to ensure provision of opportunity, access to wellbeing needs and creation of resourcing to support welfare of students can be easily accessed and provided to all students where and when needed. this has ensured that we cover a greater amount of students where and when required at short notice. Staff go above and beyond to ensure students	

## Progress towards achieving improvement measures

needs are met.

### Process 4: Promoting student and school achievements

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Yearbook was valued by YR12 students and parents All presentations were well attended and ran adequately Students received port folio with reports awards and certificates at presentation day	Staff promotional team Student advisers Port folios, DEMS, printers <b>Funding Sources:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Location (from base school allocation) (\$5000.00)</li></ul>

### Process 5: Unused

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
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### Process 6: Unused

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
this was an unused section that could not be deleted.	

## Strategic Direction 2

### Culture of Learning

#### Purpose

Creating a stimulating teaching and learning environment for our students, underpinned by high expectation relationships. Ensuring Teaching and Learning is designed and implemented to develop successful learning outcomes for all students through quality instruction and assessment. .

#### Improvement Measures

Majority of students in Year 12 meet HSC minimum standards in Literacy and Numeracy (Reform 1 Stronger HSC Standards) (7-12)

Successful implementation of rigorous school based assessment (Reform 4 Stronger HSC Standards) (7-12)

Increased value added data of students growth in learning (K-12)

Improved academic outcomes, measured in PLAN data and primary campus assessments (K-6)

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

**Process 1:** Providing individualised support for students

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Increased value added data of students growth in learning (K-12)	

**Process 2:** Using evidence to inform teaching and learning programs, especially in numeracy and literacy

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Improved academic outcomes, measured in PLAN data and primary campus assessments (K-6)	

**Process 3:** Providing opportunities for student growth in learning

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Majority of students in Year 12 meet HSC minimum standards in Literacy and Numeracy (Reform 1 Stronger HSC Standards) (7-12)	
Successful implementation of rigorous school based assessment (Reform 4 Stronger HSC Standards) (7-12)	

**Process 4:** Creating continuity of learning K-12

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Staff have worked together to create understanding, support and provision for students in need. Many students have had additional support with cross faculty approaches being used to support the students learning progress, monitoring and connections.	Staffing K - 12 Support staff Executive staff

## Strategic Direction 3

### Dynamic Community

#### Purpose

Increase community participation with the school, learning hubs and learners to create partnerships within the school and across all our enrolment areas.

#### Improvement Measures

A larger number of Community Partners providing opportunities for students.

Increased parent and carer interaction in surveys and planning processes.

Improved community perspective of the school and our students. measured through parent/teacher interaction.

Enrolment enquiries dealt with as the need requires in a consistent and timely manner.

Weekly Articles/posts in school newsletter and Facebook promoting activities within the school

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

**Process 1:** Analyse the data from all sources to determine community satisfaction, progress toward student outcomes and general overview of community perception.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Full QDAI done with results collated and used to inform EV and new school plan. Lots of data, plus a survey conducted around the Coconut tree activities done with staff. This will also be use to inform the new school planning process. The QDAI will also be used as our situational analysis as it is far more in depth and broader coverage.	School technology and school staff, plus a team to analyse and synthesise this information.

**Process 2:** Creation of Partnerships and community Alliances, along with the continuation of current partnerships and alliances to mutually benefit the students, the community and the school..

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
We have successful worked (despite COVID) with communities, community groups and community supports to put in place new hubs to create opportunities and flexible arrangements for disengaged students. Staff have committed time and effort into the creation of these partnerships, working with communities and finding rooms, staff and time for these projects to be put together and provide a range of opportunities for students and the communities that support them.	

**Process 3:** Provision of Professional learning opportunities to ensure currency, cultural awareness and ongoing support for the wellbeing and educational pathways for students and their families.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Online methods of training being used, as well as back to some face to face training. COVID restrictions being lifted have allowed for some gatherings for training. we have ongoing training and development as we progress into the next school break and then next year. We are on track to training staff in required areas, keeping updated and maintaining requirements for the DoE and NESA. NATSIPA local NSW branch - NSW Deadly leaders alliance will become incorporated and headed up with our Principal as a founding member and on the committee. This will be very advantageous for our school as we have 27 Aboriginal staff including leadership roles and will be able to use this to guide our SLSO's, staff and exec into leadership training	



## Progress towards achieving improvement measures

and opportunities.

**Process 4:** Work practices and partnerships to create a Holistic community whereby all parties have ownership and a sense of belonging where their worth and value are recognised and acknowledged.

<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Funds Expended (Resources)</b>
<p>We have increased our vehicles for use in transportation of students and staff to students. We have created more hubs to start in in 2021 as well as new hubs for 2020. We have worked with communities to find needs, meet needs and set up services and partnerships to support students and create opportunities and flexible arrangements. new partnerships have been formed with school services teams, district offices and DELS that we have not worked with along with the new Executive Director. We are now servicing some very isolated areas that have previously missed out on opportunities which assists to meet the premiers targets as well as the DoE targets and guidelines. All students are know, valued and cared for.</p>	<p>Staffing, provision for hubs/projects, SLSO staffing, technology and vehicles.</p>

Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
<b>Aboriginal background loading</b>	Staffing - Teachers Staffing - SLSO Rooming and resources - Hubs/centres Food Activities Training Vehicles <b>Funding Sources:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aboriginal background loading (\$343 952.00)</li> </ul>	<p>Our impact on the multiple areas we access across the state is evident through the engagement of students with their teachers and the SLSO's, often with staff travelling daily to pick up and bring students to the hubs to support their learning. The day begins with food and a wellbeing talk prior to engaging in learning activities. The engagement of parents and carers with our staff is noted with the development of positive relationships and rapport across the board.</p> <p>Staff continue to be trained in the stronger smarter strategies which is having an impact both in the language we use, the relationships we develop, the culture of the school and the positive impact on students.</p> <p>Our school fosters a positive cultural atmosphere where students feel cared for, know and valued and is a safe place for all.</p>
<b>Low level adjustment for disability</b>	NDIS officer Learning and Support Teacher Resources as required. <b>Funding Sources:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low level adjustment for disability (\$229 006.00)</li> </ul>	<p>Students are receiving more support now than ever before. Support by our NDIS officer ensures that all support services available to families are known and opportunities provided to access these. The LAST provision ensures that all students are known, evaluated and the correct provision put in place to support each student.</p>
<b>Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS)</b>	DoE and training opportunities.	<p>many training and development opportunities were provided for staff as part of the larger view of the school. Many of these covered this area and staff evaluations indicate that the training were both worthwhile and successful in assisting teachers to develop learning materials and cater to the needs of students.</p>
<b>Socio-economic background</b>	Student assistance Capital works refurbishment Food and supplies (hubs and centres) Staffing Teachers Staffing SLSO's Vehicles <b>Funding Sources:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Socio-economic background (\$1 124 225.00)</li> </ul>	<p>Staff continue to work on student engagement, creation of spaces that are both culturally friendly and positive as well as appropriate for learning. Courses have been converted for use into electronic format on the CANVAS platform and staff continue to write new programs and provide learning activities for students that are tailored for the individual. Staff access students via phones, internet and face to face by travelling out to the students and engaging with them to develop rapport and create deep understanding about learning in DE and course content. SLSO's support students within the hub environments. Extra support has been supplied through the use of an NDIS officer within the school at a 0.6 (3 days a week) which has had a very positive impact on providing support and pathways for students and their families.</p>
<b>Support for beginning teachers</b>	Mentoring and Time <b>Funding Sources:</b>	<p>The inductions, although successful, will be reviewed and overhauled as required to keep up with current trends, data and training. We</p>

<b>Support for beginning teachers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for beginning teachers (\$15 000.00)</li> </ul>	do not have many new/beginning staff at present.
<b>Grants</b>	Provision of resources Provision of staffing Provision of rooming <b>Funding Sources:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (\$200 000.00)</li> </ul>	These grants make it possible to create extra opportunities for students and the communities that they live in, providing valuable spaces, and adding in staffing and resources. These have been very effective such as the Ngullingar/Midgenbul hubs, careers resourcing and staffing supplied for these.
<b>School refurbishment</b>	New Kitchen upgrade Common room, Car shed Marine shed Furniture as required. Computers <b>Funding Sources:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socio-economic background (\$70 000.00)</li> <li>• Aboriginal background loading (\$70 000.00)</li> </ul>	Our new spaces and equipment are used on a regular basis and have created spaces that students, community and staff can enjoy the use of to promote learning and a culturally competent environment. These continue to be created, along with the space to house the vehicles for protection. Vehicles are used by staff to bring students into the learning hubs and centres, travel out to work with students and access training and development opportunities.

# Student information

## Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments		
	2018	2019	2020
Boys	298	293	284
Girls	304	305	236

When reading this profile, it is important to remember that the student cohort is made up of many more students than the number indicate. These numbers are gained by turning partial numbers into full time equivalent numbers, that is 500 single subject students over 70 school sites may equate to the full time equivalent of only 200 students.

NSW student attendance data in 2020 is not comparable to previous years due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The NSW Government encouraged students to learn from home, where possible, for a seven week period from 24 March to 22 May. During this period, schools monitored engagement with learning to determine whether students were marked present. This changed the attendance measure. There was also some evidence of varied marking practices as schools adjusted to the learning from home period, with some schools recording higher attendance rates while others recording markedly lower rates.

## 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.

## Post school destinations

Proportion of students moving into post-school education, training or employment	Year 10 %	Year 11 %	Year 12 %
Seeking Employment	0	10	34
Employment	0	30	23
TAFE entry	50	20	13
University Entry	0	10	30
Other	50	0	0
Unknown	0	30	0

## Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

36.99% of Year 12 students at Southern Cross School of Distance Education undertook vocational education and training in 2020.

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

33.7% of all Year 12 students at Southern Cross School of Distance Education expected to complete Year 12 in 2020 received a Higher School Certificate or equivalent vocational education and training qualification.

# Workforce information

## Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Deputy Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	1
Head Teacher(s)	20
Classroom Teacher(s)	136.26
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	0.9
Teacher Librarian	0.94
School Administration and Support Staff	33.32
Other Positions	1

\*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, and scholarship opportunities to become a teacher and by providing a culturally safe workplace. As of 2020, 3.7% of the Department's overall workforce identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People.

## Workforce ATSI

Staff type	Benchmark <sup>1</sup>	2020 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation <sup>2</sup>
School Support	3.30%	6.30%
Teachers	3.30%	2.80%

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.

In 2020, an additional School Development Day was included at the start of Term 2 to assist school leaders, teachers and support staff to focus on the wellbeing of students and continuity of education, such as online and remote learning.

The school has a strong focus on improvement, strategies to engage students and increasing the type and use of data to inform programming and school directions. This focus leads our professional development co-ordination to ensure that our staff are best positioned to improve outcomes for students.

# Financial information

## Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020. The Principal is responsible for the financial management of the school and ensuring all school funds are managed in line with Department policy requirements.

	2020 Actual (\$)
<b>Opening Balance</b>	5,597,321
<b>Revenue</b>	21,419,369
Appropriation	20,894,178
Sale of Goods and Services	47,925
Grants and contributions	467,235
Investment income	4,794
Other revenue	5,237
<b>Expenses</b>	-20,102,334
Employee related	-17,980,897
Operating expenses	-2,121,437
<b>Surplus / deficit for the year</b>	1,317,036
<b>Closing Balance</b>	6,914,356

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

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

	2020 Approved SBA (\$)
<b>Targeted Total</b>	0
<b>Equity Total</b>	1,697,679
Equity - Aboriginal	343,952
Equity - Socio-economic	1,124,225
Equity - Language	495
Equity - Disability	229,006
<b>Base Total</b>	4,160,741
Base - Per Capita	193,125
Base - Location	6,261
Base - Other	3,961,355
<b>Other Total</b>	18,523,884
<b>Grand Total</b>	24,382,303

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.

## 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. Go to [myschool.edu.au](https://myschool.edu.au) to access the school data.

### 2020 NAPLAN

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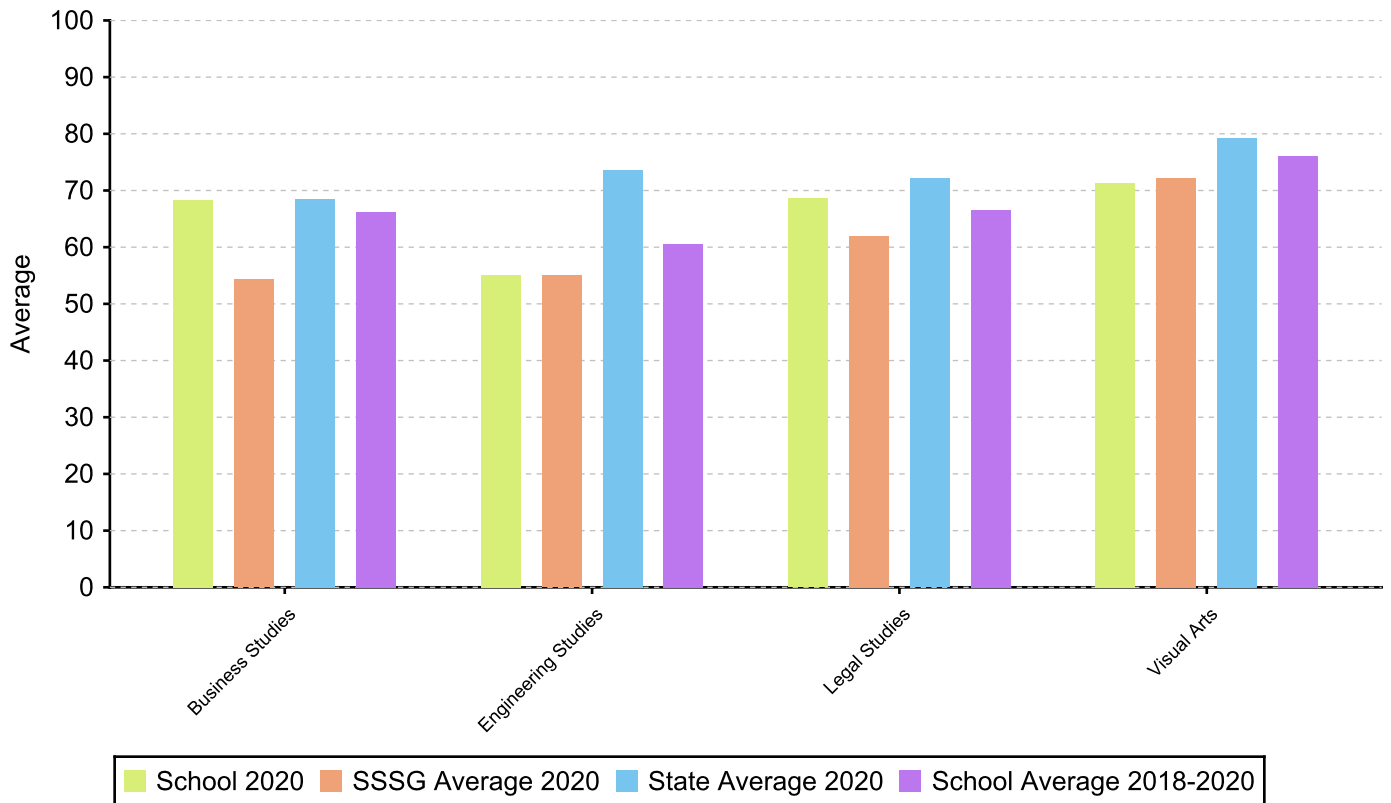
As agreed by the Education Council, the National Assessment Program (or NAPLAN) did not proceed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was to assist school leaders, teachers and support staff to focus on the wellbeing of students and continuity of education, such as online and remote learning.

The Education Council also agreed to defer the full transition to NAPLAN Online from 2021 to 2022 and the continuation of current NAPLAN governance arrangements through 2021.

## School performance - HSC

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

The information in this report must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies. Where there are fewer than 10 students in a course or subject, summary statistics or graphical representation of student performance is not available.



Subject	School 2020	SSSG	State	School Average 2018-2020
Business Studies	68.3	54.3	68.6	66.2
Engineering Studies	55.1	55.0	73.6	60.6
Legal Studies	68.6	61.9	72.1	66.6
Visual Arts	71.3	72.2	79.2	76.1

## Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Surveys conducted throughout the year included many about the upcoming external validation process along with other surveys where possible with covid-19 about our performance, how we assist students and how we relate to community, carers, parents and students in general. These have been very positive and in support of the school. Any identified issues have been addressed with processes and systems put in place to deal with the issues in a timely and consistent manner to ensure all are treated fairly. Some issues have arisen with other schools that we deal with, and as per policy and direction from Rural and Distance Education, these have been addressed with processes put in place, explained to Directors and Principals and information sent out to all our schools to ensure consistency and knowledge of processes.

# Policy requirements

## Aboriginal Education Policy

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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

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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

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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.