

2020 Annual Report

Finigan School of Distance Education



4661

Introduction

The Annual Report for 2020 is provided to the community of Finigan 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.

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Message from the principal

2020 challenged all of us. The first few weeks of school included students losing homes as their parents defended their communities. We had staff leaving school in a hurry as they learned of threats to their homes.

Thousands of hectares of our beautiful bushland was destroyed. Thankfully, rain has since provided some respite.

These disasters were closely followed by COVID 19 and staff worked from home.

When we look back at 2020 let's focus on the positives,

- It gave us time to pause and reflect on what is important - many of us have taken the chance to slow down and focus on our friends and family.
- The value of community was highlighted, that we need to work together to make things better.
- The world paused, the air became clearer - we became more conscious of the needs of our planet.

I am incredibly proud of our learning community at Finigan School of Distance Education. Our students continued to work with very little interruption throughout the year. Our staff maintained a quality of service to their students and families.

2020 was our first year of live lessons. They have been an incredible success. Learning is a social experience and the live lessons have enabled our students to connect with their teachers and peers more effectively. Our Year 12 students consistently attended the lessons at over 72%. The lessons enabled deeper discussions about the course content and allowed for collaborative tasks such as the scaffolding of exam answers or unpacking case studies.

We know that learning through distance education can be an isolating experience. We believe these lessons have helped close the gap between students. We want to enhance these opportunities for everyone.

Our school was evaluated this year through the External Validation process. The Panel were impressed by what we have managed to achieve within our first 2 years. In fact, they determined that we are excelling in the areas of Effective classroom practice and Learning and development. We are already looking at how to make the learning experience better for each and every student over our next 4 year planning cycle.

Some of the aspects of what we want to focus on over the next 4 years includes,

- Strengthening our learning partnerships with our supervisors.
- Strengthen our student wellbeing support.
- Continue to improve our live lessons - Quality Teaching Rounds.
- Continue to improve our independent learning experiences - Learning Design Team.
- Apply the latest research to our context to improve student learning - Visible Learning.

We will continue to strive to provide exciting, immersive and collaborative learning experiences for all of our students.

The skills learned through Finigan SDE, prepare our students well for further study, the world of work and life.

School vision

Connected through Learning

At Finigan School of Distance Education we provide quality, personalised learning experiences for each of our students. We recognise the significance of the relationship between the teacher and the student and actively work to establish and maintain a learning relationship so that every student is engaged, supported and achieving success. Our teachers embody a dynamic culture of innovative shared reflective practice, collegiality and pride. We actively build strong learning partnerships with local and distance education communities.

School context

Our school continues the legacy of Walter Finigan, the first Principal of a distance education school in NSW (The Correspondence School). Finigan School of Distance Education is a purpose built K-12 distance education school committed to innovation and ensuring each and every student achieves their personal best.

Based in Queanbeyan, we acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we teach and learn, and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

We cater for a diverse student population over a broad geographical area. Student learning is supported through self-paced online lessons, real-time web lessons, collaborative online tasks, phone lessons, field visits and email discussion. Our school has state of the art facilities including 21 web lesson studios and 2 multimedia studios. Teachers are also able to conduct lessons from their desks.

2020 was our second year of operation. Our staff includes over 95 (full-time equivalent) teachers and 16 support staff.

The school has a number of dynamic and flexible learning spaces. Teachers may visit students at their home or at one of the 9 learning hubs distributed across south eastern NSW. Learning hubs are run by the school and staffed by qualified teachers.

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	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Wellbeing	Delivering
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	Delivering
TEACHING: Learning and development	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: Educational leadership	Delivering
LEADING: School planning, implementation and reporting	Delivering
LEADING: School resources	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: Management practices and processes	Sustaining and Growing

Finigan School of Distance Education completed the external validation process in November 2020. The panel determined the school is **Sustaining and Growing** in the elements of Wellbeing, Professional standards and Educational leadership. The panel also determined that the school is **Excelling** in the elements of Effective classroom practice and Learning and development.

Strategic Direction 1

Personalised Learning

Purpose

To create a whole school teaching and learning environment which allows for all learning to be personalised for the individual student, supporting student engagement and progression.

Improvement Measures

Increased staff confidence and capacity in the design and delivery of personalised learning experiences.

Increased provision and engagement with quality real-time teaching opportunities.

Improved student return rates.

Improved student achievement of learning outcomes.

Overall summary of progress

With a dedicated timetable for live lessons from Kindergarten to Year 12, we experienced:

- Real time teaching opportunities increased on average by 387.5%. This was a result of Years K to 11 being included in the program.

Combined with the quality courses that were designed, we found

- The average engagement by students with the real time opportunities was 45%.
- Student return rates increased on average by 7%.
- Student achievement of learning outcomes over the year increased on average by 6%

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Technology Support

Develop the Connected Teaching & Learning Team to strategically build the confidence and capacity of all staff to develop and deliver quality live online lessons.

Establish a Learning Design Team to research and establish best practice in the development of quality online learning experiences and resources.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>Live lessons. Live lessons were implemented across all years (K-12) - 40 minutes each week for each course. The live lessons promoted a stronger connection between teachers and peers. Both attendance and course completion rates improved across the school throughout the year.</p> <p>Quality Course Design. All new or redeveloped courses are now being designed using a school developed template for quality and consistency. The programming model backward maps each unit of work to build informative assessment. The programming model also aligns the independent eLearning content to live lessons.</p> <p>Learning Design Team. The Learning Design Team was expanded to 11 part-time writers working offsite from across NSW and QLD in their area of expertise. This was in response to the challenges of sourcing local staff with the required technology skills for online design and development. The team members underwent 3 days of intensive training onsite at Finigan SDE before working from home under the management of the Head Teacher, Teaching & Learning (Learning Design). Over the year the team wrote approximately 550 weeks of online content. These have been published on the eLearning platform.</p>	<p>Learning Design Team. 11 part-time digital resource and course developers (5.0 FTE) (Operational funds.) Three days of on-site training (Professional learning).</p> <p>DEMS (school database) Support Teacher. A full-time teacher funded between 5 distance education schools (Staff entitlement 0.2 FTE).</p> <p>eLearning Platform. Licensing (Operational funds \$20985.43).</p> <p>DEMS database. Licensing (Operational funds \$9820).</p> <p>Funding Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional learning (\$9633.85)

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

DEMS Improvements. The DEMS (Distance Education Management System) database workflow processes were improved in collaboration with Dubbo School of Distance Education to reduce the administrative burden on staff and improve data retrieval and visibility.

Process 2: Learning & Support

Head Teacher Learning & Support leads the upskilling of staff in the design and application of learning adjustments.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>Individual Education Plans. A template was developed for Individual Educational Support Plans (IESPs) across the school. Every identified student has an IESP. Every teacher is aware of students with IESPs and is equipped to apply appropriate learning adjustments and strategies.</p> <p>Professional Learning Twilights. Staff were provided with clear guidance on interpreting IESPs as well as strategies and adjustments for their implementation. Legal responsibilities were also clearly communicated.</p> <p>DEMS Improvements. The DEMS database was improved to include a learning tab for each student. The learning is designed to make the NCCD, learning needs and adjustments for each student visible and accessible to the teacher.</p> <p>Supported Learning Team. This team was established to support the 172 NCCD students (2020) requiring some form of learning adjustment. Each new full-time enrolment is assessed by the team. Testing is conducted as required. Recommendations are made to the Learning Support Team regarding appropriate placement (e.g. Middle school, Supported Learning or mainstream). The Supported Learning Team also commenced curriculum development for Stage 4 and 5 Life Skills students.</p> <p>Learning Support Team. This team was established this year and consists of the Deputy Principal (Wellbeing), Head Teacher Student Wellbeing, Head Teacher Supported Learning, the School Counsellor, the Engagement Team Leader, Head Teacher Middle School and the Learning & Wellbeing Coaches (Year Advisors). This team meets weekly to discuss support for new enrolments and students of concern.</p>	<p>Supported Learning Team established (0.5 LaST allocation from entitlement + Low level adjustment for disability).</p> <p>Head Teacher Supported Learning to establish team (unfilled vacancy + Low level adjustment for disability).</p> <p>Head Teacher Student Wellbeing (Unfilled vacancy + Socio-economic background).</p> <p>Field Trips. Impacted by COVID-19. \$7214.68 (Operational funds).</p> <p>Funding Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-economic background (\$86283.00) • Low level adjustment for disability (\$105440.00)

Process 3: Systems

Ensure learning needs are visible with details easily accessed, interpreted and applied by all teachers.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>Review Process. Designed a review process within the school's database (DEMS). Data is extracted in weeks 4 & 9 of each term. Student =<50% return rate. Each student/supervisor is contacted by the student's Learning & Wellbeing Coach to determine barriers to learning and strategies for improved engagement. Referred to the Learning Support Team for action (e.g. technology support, learning & support, wellbeing). Each at risk student is tracked across the year.</p> <p>Engagement Support Teacher. Employed to liaise with students and families with low engagement. Supportive conversation with strategies regarding re-engagement or enrolment review.</p> <p>Engagement Team. This was established in 2020. This team consist of 3 staff (total load 2.0) to visit students and families on enrolment to assist with the transition to distance education. They establish a relationship, deliver</p>	<p>Engagement Support Officer. 0.6 FTE (Staffing entitlement).</p> <p>Engagement Team. Established in Term 4. 1.8 FTE (Staffing entitlement).</p>

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

technology and provide support with routines, organisation and expectations. This team also visit students with low engagement as identified by the Learning & Support Team.

Strategic Direction 2

Connectedness

Purpose

To embed a positive school culture with a culture of high expectations where every student has a sense of belonging, is known, supported and valued, enabling every student to achieve and progress.

Improvement Measures

Students express a sense of belonging to Finigan SDE and an awareness of the support available to them.

Establish and increase community engagement through digital channels

Monitor and improve school to work outcomes.

Overall summary of progress

- 38% of students feel accepted and valued by their peers and others at our school.
- 34% of students have friends at school they can trust and who encourage them to make positive choices.
- 68% of students feel they have someone at school who consistently provides encouragement and that they can turn to for advice. (State norm 60%)
- 72% of students feel teachers are responsive to their needs and encourage independence with a democratic approach. (State norm 57%)

Our Facebook page was viewed 2933 times with 325-page likes (follows). The school Instagram account had an increase of 16.7% of activity by community members. There were 126 tweets on the school's Twitter account to help keep our community informed.

With the employment of our careers advisor, our students received targeted information about subject selection which would help with future employment. Though the number of our students who entered the workforce was limited (COVID-19 related), we still had 14% of our school leavers who found employment with the help of our careers advisor.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Student Wellbeing

The Head Teacher Student Wellbeing leads the Learning & Wellbeing Coaches to coordinate wellbeing training for teachers and support for students.

The Transition Team establishes processes to support student distance education orientation.

Appoint and embed processes for an Aboriginal Support Teacher.

Establish Middle School for Stage 4 students at Stage 3 or below.

Appoint a careers teacher to support student transitions beyond school.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>Middle School. Established in 2020. Students are supported by 3 teachers across 6 courses (English, History and Geography/Maths, Science and PDHPE).</p> <p>Learning & Support Team. Weekly meetings with Head Teacher Supported Learning, Head Teacher Wellbeing, Deputy Principal (Wellbeing), Learning & Wellbeing Coaches, Careers teacher and School Counsellor to discuss individual cases of wellbeing and learning needs. Referrals made to external agencies, Supported Learning, Middle School or Engagement Officer for follow-up.</p> <p>Student Wellbeing Team. Implemented a focused strategy for Learning &</p>	<p>Middle School. Established in 2020. 2.8 FTE (1.8 Staffing entitlement, 1.0 Operational funding). To coordinate the Middle School team an Assistant Principal was reassigned as Head Teacher Middle School.</p> <p>Head Teacher Student Wellbeing. (Staffing entitlement, topped up to head teacher from Operational funds.</p> <p>Learning and Wellbeing Coaches.</p>

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Wellbeing Coaches to follow for their students during scheduled wellbeing lessons. Topics included, *being a respectful learner* and *anti-bullying* (including cybersafety). To be communicated with all staff (common language and focus).

Engagement Officer. Established an Engagement Officer position 3 days a week to follow up students and families identified as having low attendance and engagement.

Student Leadership Team. Established to enable student voice across the school and a sense of belonging.

Careers and Transition. A careers teacher was appointed at the start of Term 3. Commenced program implementation to ensure students have a clear pathway beyond school. The development of transition to work plans has commenced. Subject selection processes from Years 10-11 have been improved.

Aboriginal Support Worker employed. Aboriginal Education Team established. NAIDOC website developed with resources, awards, student Acknowledgement of Country, student interview of Sally Scales (Aboriginal Artist). PLPs commenced.

Supported Learning. Expanded to 3.6 staff including the Head Teacher from Term 4. IESPs have been written for identified students and visible to staff on DEMS.

The school's allocated year advisor allowance topped up from operational funds at a cost of \$10046.92. The release time for all the Learning and Wellbeing Coaches was funded through our staffing entitlement at a cost of 1.6 FTE.

Head Teacher Supported Learning. (Operational funds and Equity funding).

Aboriginal Education Worker. Employed 0.8 (Aboriginal background loading + staffing).

Funding Sources:

- Aboriginal background loading (\$18154.00)

Process 2: Connected Teaching

Equip and support staff in the effective use of technology to design and deliver quality, real-time web lessons.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>Live lessons. Live lessons were implemented across all years (K-12) - 40 minutes each week for each course. The live lessons promoted a stronger connection between teachers and peers. Both attendance and course completion rates improved across the school over the course of the year.</p> <p>Connected Teaching & Learning Team. The Connected Teaching & Learning Team consists of 5 staff each with a 0.2 allocation (total 1.0), distributed across the school to provide support with the implementation of live lessons. The team is led by the Head Teacher Teaching & Learning (Instructional Leadership).</p> <p>AFTRS Professional Development. All staff participated in a full day professional development session from the Australian Film Television and Radio School on the use of voice and camera to effectively engage students in live lessons.</p> <p>Snapshot. Every second Wednesday morning, a 15 minute <i>snapshot</i> of a tool or strategy is presented by a member of staff.</p>	<p>Connected Teaching & Learning Team. 5 staff each with a 0.2 allocation to support the implementation of live lessons (1.0 Staffing entitlement).</p> <p>AFTRS (Professional learning).</p> <p>Funding Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional learning (\$27464.00)

Process 3: Digital Presence

Develop and maintain a dynamic digital presence for communication within the school community and beyond.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>School website. Updated and maintained by dedicated SASS member.</p> <p>School Profile videos. Engaged external company to create videos for</p>	<p>School Profile Videos. (Operational funding \$3400).</p>

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

distribution for social media channels and website including 1. School Profile (for advertising external positions), 2. Mini school 2020 (pre-COVID), 3. Student profile, 4. Who was Walter Finigan?

Induction Resources and Videos. These were developed in 2020 to support students and supervisors new to distance education with processes, routines and expectations. We have since employed a part-time multimedia expert to develop new materials for 2021, including subject selection videos to assist students with making informed choices.

Connect. A weekly digital newsletter was distributed to all students and supervisors.

Social Media. Facebook and Instagram sites were also used for student notices and to highlight student successes.

Staff Update. A weekly digital staff newsletter was distributed to all staff.

School magazine. Connected, the school magazine was published and distributed to all full-time students.

School Magazine. (Operational funding \$9983.65).

Strategic Direction 3

Leaders of Learning

Purpose

To establish a culture of collegiality, where all teachers are learning leaders, with the core goal of providing the best possible learning experience for every student to support their success.

Improvement Measures

Establish and build a positive staff perception of school leadership and direction.

Increased number of real-time lessons.

Increased number of school developed video resources.

Overall summary of progress

65% of teachers feel that school leaders are leading improvement and change.

69% of teachers believe that school leaders clearly communicate their strategic vision and values for the school.

Real time lessons increased on average by 387.5%. This was a result of Years K to 11 being included in the program.

The number of school developed video resources has increased by 150%. This does not include the recordings of the live lessons.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Building Leadership Capacity

Leadership training to provide the executive team with a common language and strategies for leading their teams. Leadership roles are distributed beyond the executive team to build the leadership capacity of staff across the school.

HT Admin School Improvement & Reporting to establish processes for school Self-Assessment and data mapping to inform strategies and actions.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>Executive Professional Development. Covey - 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. 5 x 2 hours face-to-face training x 22 executive and online all access pass.</p> <p>Growth Coaching. The entire executive team completed a 360 survey supported by 3 online coaching sessions.</p> <p>Step Up. A selected member of staff participated in the regional Step Up program to develop leadership capacity. The member of staff implemented their own leadership initiative (the school's new student leadership program).</p> <p>Women in Leadership (NESLI). Three identified members of staff participated in the Women in Leadership Program. Each participant developed and implemented their own leadership initiative.</p> <p>Teacher Expert Network. An executive member was selected to be part of the Teacher Expert Network (TENs), to work with NESA on the implementation of the NESA Curriculum review. This provides distance education a voice in the process.</p>	<p>Growth Coaching. Costs transferred to 2021 as commenced late in the year.</p> <p>Covey PD. (Professional learning \$12650).</p> <p>NESLI PD. (Professional learning \$1039.81)</p> <p>Funding Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional learning (\$13689.81)

Process 2: Professional Learning

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 2:

All staff are actively engaged in reflective practice and professional learning to build their confidence and capacity as a well-rounded distance education teacher.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>Staff Development Days and Professional Learning Twilights. Topics included 1. Quality live lessons - sharing of successes, 2. Faculty activities - guided analysis of course quality, 3. Australian Film Television & Radio School (AFTRS) - online presentation skills for live lessons, 4. Programming/backward mapping activity in faculties.</p> <p>Quality Teaching Rounds. A further 23 staff (+7 in 2019) engaged in Quality Teaching Rounds. This program has gained momentum and provides an objective framework for lesson observations, collegial discussions and shared practice. A further 15 teachers will engage in the program in 2021.</p>	<p>Quality Teaching Rounds. (Professional learning \$10,000).</p> <p>Funding Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional learning (\$10000.00)

Process 3: Networks

Establish collaborative networks with schools in the local community, universities, the NSW distance education schools and Australasian distance education schools

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>A number of opportunities were postponed due to COVID-19. Some of these moved to a limited online format or were delayed until 2021 including a visit to Capricornia School of Distance Education to examine their live lessons, Middle School and wellbeing programs, the NSW Distance Education Leaders Meetings (x2), a joint AADES (Australasian Association of Distance Education Schools) Project with Open Access College Adelaide, focusing on effective online teaching and engagement strategies and the NSW Distance Education Symposium.</p>	<p>AADES school membership. (Operational funds \$400)</p>

Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
Aboriginal background loading	Funding Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal background loading (\$18 154.00) 	<p>Aboriginal Education Worker engaged from Term 4. (0.8 from Aboriginal background loading and staffing).</p> <p>Commenced writing Personalised Learning Pathways (PLPs) for each Aboriginal student. Integrated process with the Supported Learning Team.</p> <p>Created NAIDOC Week website with learning activities for all students, including a student interview with Aboriginal artist, Sally Scales.</p>
Low level adjustment for disability	Funding Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low level adjustment for disability (\$105 440.00) 	<p>Supported Learning Team established in 2020 to design and deliver individualised curriculum for students performing at well-below Stage level. Commenced writing of Individual Education Support Plans (IESPs) for 172 NCCD identified students. Commenced writing online 7-10 Life Skills curriculum.</p> <p>Middle School program established to support Year 7-10 students performing at below stage level. Cross-curricular delivery (one teacher for English, Geography and History and one teacher for Maths, Science and PDHPE). Integrated literacy and numeracy strategies with the goal to transition back to mainstream.</p>
Socio-economic background	Funding Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socio-economic background (\$86 283.00) 	<p>Head Teacher Student Wellbeing appointed. Supports the Learning and Wellbeing Coaches (year advisors). Implementation of wellbeing programs including school values, being a respectful learner, middle school and anti-bullying (including cyber-bullying).</p> <p>Learning hubs. 9 learning hubs located in Albury (established 2020), Batemans Bay, Bega, Cootamundra, Eden-Marine, Kanahooka, Temora, Ulladulla, Wagga Wagga. Each operates 3 days a week (5.4 of staffing above entitlement). Learning hubs provide face to face support for distance education students (with internalising behaviours) within their local community.</p>

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments	
	2019	2020
Boys	164	141
Girls	193	155

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	0	17
Employment	13	15	14
TAFE entry	33	31	10
University Entry	0	0	31
Other	0	0	0
Unknown	53	54	31

It should be noted that the reason for the sizable percentage of unknown post school destinations, is because most of these students have returned to a face-to-face school on leaving Finigan School of Distance Education.

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

4.00% of Year 12 students at Finigan School of Distance Education undertook vocational education and training in 2020.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational education qualification

42.2% of all Year 12 students at Finigan 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)	2
Head Teacher(s)	13
Classroom Teacher(s)	78.19
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	0.5
Teacher Librarian	0.17
School Counsellor	2
School Administration and Support Staff	17.97

*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 ¹	2020 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation ²
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.

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 (\$)
Opening Balance	3,426,013
Revenue	14,057,065
Appropriation	13,950,196
Sale of Goods and Services	37,832
Grants and contributions	62,915
Investment income	1,122
Other revenue	5,000
Expenses	-14,307,025
Employee related	-13,174,148
Operating expenses	-1,132,877
Surplus / deficit for the year	-249,960
Closing Balance	3,176,052

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.

The above closing balance does not reflect the actual amount which rolled over from 2020-2021. It was reduced by \$450,000, due to a reduction in enrolments and staffing entitlement. In 2020, the school was impacted by COVID-19 as Finigan SDE caters for NSW families travelling around Australia and overseas. The remainder of the closing balance has been allocated to significant digital content creation projects over the next 3 years. It has also been allocated to a whole staff professional development program in partnership with Corwin Education focused on John Hattie's Visible Learning research.

Financial summary - Equity loadings

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

	2020 Approved SBA (\$)
Targeted Total	0
Equity Total	210,277
Equity - Aboriginal	18,154
Equity - Socio-economic	86,283
Equity - Language	400
Equity - Disability	105,440
Base Total	922,877
Base - Per Capita	143,821
Base - Location	0
Base - Other	779,055
Other Total	12,910,542
Grand Total	14,043,696

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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 to access the school data.

2020 NAPLAN

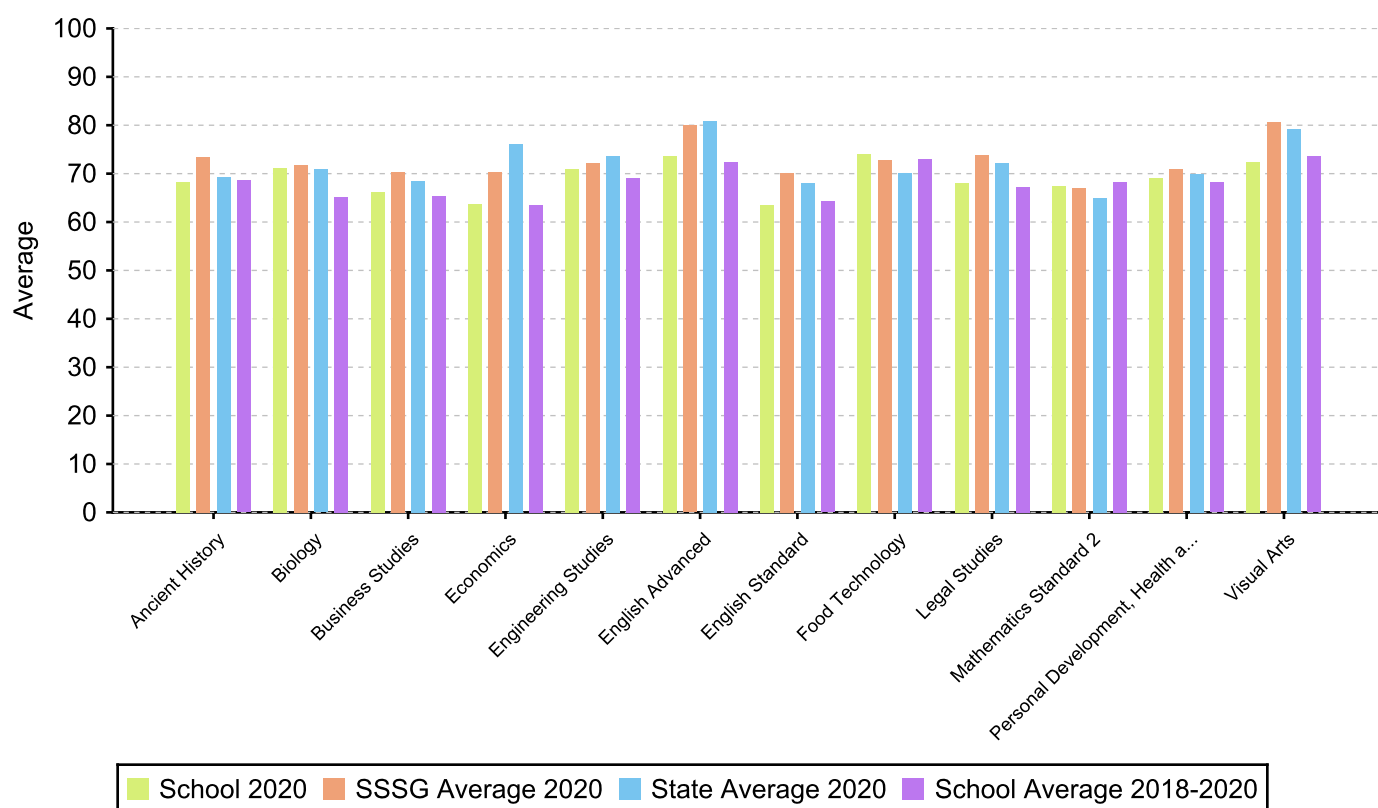
As agreed by the Education Council, the National Assessment Program (or NAPLAN) did not proceed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was to assist school leaders, teachers and support staff to focus on the wellbeing of students and continuity of education, such as online and remote learning.

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
Ancient History	68.3	73.5	69.4	68.6
Biology	71.2	71.8	70.8	65.1
Business Studies	66.2	70.3	68.6	65.3
Economics	63.8	70.4	76.1	63.6
Engineering Studies	71.0	72.2	73.6	69.1
English Advanced	73.6	80.0	80.8	72.4
English Standard	63.5	70.1	68.1	64.2
Food Technology	74.0	72.8	70.2	72.9
Legal Studies	68.1	73.9	72.1	67.3
Mathematics Standard 2	67.5	67.0	64.9	68.3
Personal Development, Health and Physical Education	69.1	70.9	69.9	68.2
Visual Arts	72.4	80.6	79.2	73.5

The above data does not include the results of single course students from non-government schools.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Each year schools are required to seek the opinions of students, parents and staff. This year our school sought the opinions of students and parents regarding the quality of lessons, feedback and student engagement. Both students and parents participated in online surveys. The opinions of all stakeholders are outlined below.

Students

Student responses included

- 38% of students feel accepted and valued by their peers and others at our school.
- 34% of students have friends at school they can trust and who encourage them to make positive choices.
- 59% of students believe schooling is useful in their everyday life and will have a strong bearing on their future.
- 52% of students are intellectually engaged and find learning interesting, enjoyable and relevant (State norm 46%).
- 45% of students try hard to succeed in their learning.
- 72% of students feel classroom instruction is well organised, with a clear purpose, and with immediate feedback that helps them (State norm 64%).
- 68% of students feel they have someone at school who consistently provides encouragement and that they can turn to for advice (State norm 60%).
- 72% of students feel teachers are responsive to their needs and encourage independence with a democratic approach (State norm 57%).
- 76% of students feel staff emphasise academic skills and hold high expectations for all students to succeed.

Parents

Parent responses included

- 63% of parents indicated they had talked to their child's teacher more than 3 times in 2020 about their child's learning.
- 88% of parents would recommend Finigan School of Distance Education to other school students.
- 87% of parents are satisfied with the general communication from the school.
- Parents believed email and phone contact were the most effective types of communication used by the school (email 88%, phone 69%).
- 83% of parents agreed that the school provided good support for students learning at home.
- 61% of parents agreed the school provided enough resources to help students with disabilities or special needs.

Teachers

Teacher responses included

- 95% of teachers feel that the school is well maintained.
- 71% of teachers feel that students focus on their learning.
- 93% of teachers support effective teaching practices.
- 63% of teachers feel that the school gives students a sense of belonging.
- 65% of teachers feel that school leaders are leading improvement and change
- 69% of teachers believe that school leaders clearly communicate their strategic vision and values for the school.
- 92% of teachers feel that they were prepared for the experience of working from home (COVID-19).
- 92% of teachers feel that while working from home they were supported by the school.
- 73% of teachers feel that they were connected to school while working from home.
- 83% of teachers feel that they set high expectations for student learning (State norm 75%).

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.