

Rumbalara Environmental Education Centre



5740

Introduction

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

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School vision

Rumbalara EEC Vision

Providing authentic learning experiences in, about and for the environment that enable students to make decisions and take actions for a sustainable future.

NSW Department of Education Environmental and Zoo Education Centres' Vision

Leading environmental education to empower learners for a sustainable future.

School context

Rumbalara EEC Context

Rumbalara EEC is located in Gosford on the Central Coast near Rumbalara Reserve. The Centre has no permanent student enrolments and instead services over 8000 students from predominantly Central Coast Schools.

Rumbalara offers a variety of high quality field work and sustainability education programs for students K-12. There is a strong emphasis on student led/inquiry learning with programs offered across the curriculum. The Centre's programs are mainly delivered off site with locations including Bouddi, Brisbane Water and Wyrabalong National Parks, Katandra Reserve, Copacabana and within schools' grounds. Aboriginal Education is a major focus of the Centre with all programs including Aboriginal perspectives and there is an Aboriginal Heritage program formally approved by Central Coast Regional AECG.

Rumbalara EEC also supports teachers on the Central Coast to deliver sustainability education through the provision of high quality professional learning.

Rumbalara EEC works closely with Central Coast schools and is a member of the Erina Learning Community and the Central Coast Environmental Education Network (CCEEN). The Centre has strong partnership with the Central Coast Marine Discovery Centre and deliver a ' Wiping Out Waste Program for 'Central Coast Council to deliver and 'Future Council' (a civics and citizenship program).

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>

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

Elements	2020 School Assessment
LEARNING: Learning Culture	Excelling
LEARNING: Wellbeing	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Curriculum	Excelling
LEARNING: Assessment	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Reporting	Working towards Delivering
LEARNING: Student performance measures	Working towards Delivering
TEACHING: Effective classroom practice	Excelling
TEACHING: Data skills and use	Working towards Delivering
TEACHING: Professional standards	Sustaining and Growing
TEACHING: Learning and development	Excelling
LEADING: Educational leadership	Excelling
LEADING: School planning, implementation and reporting	Excelling
LEADING: School resources	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: Management practices and processes	Sustaining and Growing

For our new school planning cycle the Rumbalara team has identified that in the Learning Domain we could improve in Wellbeing and Assessment. In the domain of Teaching we could improve in Effective Classroom Practice, Data Skills and Use and Learning & Development. In the Leadership Domain we could improve in Management Practices & Processes. Our goals can be achieved by developing new wellbeing and leadership programs for students and developing integrated curriculum programs with a STEM design focus. We will also investigate new ways to assess our impact on student learning by collaborating with research academics (specialising in environmental sustainability education) from the University of Newcastle.

Strategic Direction 1

Empower Learners

Purpose

To develop students' environmental knowledge, skills, values and attitudes in creating environmentally literate citizens. This is accomplished through providing engaging and stimulating learning environments that empower learners to think and communicate creatively, collaboratively and critically to achieve positive environmental impact.

Major SEFV2 links

- Learning - Curriculum, Assessment
- Teaching - Effective Classroom Practice, Professional Standards, Learning and Development
- Leading- Educational Leadership, School Resources

Improvement Measures

- Increased number of schools supported to engage students in sustainability education beyond the "field work day". (Base line data 2017 is three schools)
- Student work samples demonstrate to a greater extent the creative/ critical thinking processes based on ACARA Creative & Critical Thinking Continuum. (Base line 2018)

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Provide engaging new programs and review existing programs with a focus on critical and creative thinking.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>Analysis: Lesson plans and critical & creative continuums were developed for Stage 6 Biology, Stage 5 Geography and Stage 6 Geography. A comparison of evaluation data from visiting teachers over the three years show that there was an increase in their response to the question 'did the field work or pre and post visit resources enable students to use critical or creative thinking skills?' In 2019 79% of teachers responded with 4/5 or 5/5 and in 2020 92% of teachers responded with a 4/5 or 5/5. It also noted that due to COVID we only received 49 survey responses for the year and in 2020 we received 133 responses.</p> <p>There was a significant increase in the collection of student evaluation data. A Stage 1 survey was created for the geography unit 'Features of Place's' and 90% of students were able to show significant increase in their knowledge of habitats and animals at Rumbalara Reserve. Data was also collected through interviews of students using the STEM design process in a ten week Stage 3 unit of work on sustainable development and planning. Students interviewed were able to identify how field work delivered by REEC assisted them to create a high quality model of the features of a sustainable town. Online surveys were sent to the majority of secondary students attending geography and science field work but due to limited number of schools attending due to COVID there were no responses.</p>	Three staff relief days (\$1500)

Process 2: Strengthen support for schools beyond the field work day through project based learning and authentic assessment procedures.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Rumbalara teachers visited Woodport P.S on three occasions to meet with teachers and stage coordinators to write and develop cross curriculum programs for; Stage 1 on waste; Stage 2 on rock platforms and oceans and Stage 3 on biodiversity and local geography. Teachers used the STEM Design Process and were supported by the STEM project officer. As a result	Four staff relief days \$2000

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

students demonstrated in depth learning in their projects and all were able to communicate their learning via a presentation or Google Site.

Due to COVID the Eco School submission became difficult and not all schools were able to find time to complete the required survey. All schools in the Erina Learning Community were supported with draft applications. One school has completed all the work and it is hoped the submission for Bronze Award will be completed early in 2021.

Strategic Direction 2

Develop Teacher Capacity

Purpose

To develop the capacity of Centre staff in addition to those within our networks as learners, teachers and leaders in environmental and sustainability education. This will be achieved through participation in, and the provision of, explicit professional learning that improves teaching practice, resulting in the development of environmental citizens.

Major SEFV2 links

- Learning - Wellbeing, Curriculum, Assessment
- Teaching - Effective Classroom Practice, Professional Standards, Learning and Development
- Leading- Educational Leadership, School Resources, Management Practices and Processes

Improvement Measures

- Increase in the number and type of professional learning opportunities offered to Central Coast teachers tracked through MyPL. (Baseline Data 2017 MyPL is 3 courses).
- 50% of main K-6 programs include adjustments to teaching and learning for students with specific learning needs.(Based on ten main primary programs)

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Embed practices that focus on supporting students with specific learning needs.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>Three social stories were developed for secondary students, these were: Stage 4 Landforms & Landscapes Stage 5 Environmental Change & Management and Stage 6 Ecosystems at Risk (Avoca Lagoon). Due to limited field work opportunities for students with specific needs after the development of the resource there is limited data to show if students used the resource.</p> <p>Our surveys of visiting teachers have showed a continuous improvement in how teachers perceive REEC's support for students with specific learning needs. In 2018 70% of teachers scored 5/5 for our question 'how well did REEC support students with specific learning needs' in 2019 71% scored 5/5 and in 2020 86% scored 5/5.</p>	<p>Resources developed during allocated office days.</p>

Process 2: Further strengthen opportunities to collaborate and participate in professional learning with other EZEC staff.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>EZEC Conference</p> <p>REEC teachers attended the Annual EZEC Conference from 4-7 February. Two staff particularly appreciated and learnt from Pasi Sahlberg's (Professor of Education Policy) presentation on 'How can Environmental Educators stay relevant and effective in this rapidly changing world? His research on the benefits of 'Eat First -Play Later' was shared at Wiping Out Waste professional learning with Central Coast schools. Three REEC teachers were able to share lesson ideas from REEC with fellow EZEC teachers. Some of these were implemented by other centres.</p> <p>On Line EZEC Meetings</p> <p>During field work restrictions in the COVID, principals and teachers of the EZEC Network met in a virtual space (between 3 and 5 times per week) to investigate ways to continue to support schools. This resulted in on-line</p>	<p>Funding from Catalyst Lab project.</p> <p>Professional Learning \$2000</p>

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

meetings and training to support teachers in the creation of Google sites. All REEC teachers have successfully created their own Google Sites for their allocated excursion.

EZEC Principal Conference

REEC principal attended a two day online EZEC principal conference. The second day was also open to REEC teachers and was focused on school planning and the Situational Analysis. The PSL that organised the learning organised further workshops and has helped plan and advise for REEC's School Plan. The conference also involved the Sustainable Schools Infrastructure team for DoE. The presentation on the Sustainable Schools Grant was shared to Central Coast schools in an online Kitchen Gardens workshop. REEC principal continued to have further conversations with the team and the EZEC network contributed to a survey to assist the directions of the Sustainability Unit.

Process 3: Deliver a range of professional learning opportunities with a focus on integrating sustainability education to teachers K-12 across all KLA's.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>Analysis: REEC was involved in the delivery and organisation of four professional learning events for schools.</p> <p>The Annual Sustainability Leaders Forum was held with Eighteen (18) teachers participating in the Forum Presentations included - Support for schools through Council's Water Education Team, Case Studies and sharing from schools, Central Coast Waste Strategy, Wiping our Waste program. Eight (8) participants completed an evaluation after the day. On average, 91% of responses rated the sessions as either "Excellent" or "Good" and there were very positive responses.</p> <p>REEC principal delivered a session on 'Virtual Field Work- the next best thing to being there' at the EDUTECH Conference. The session was pre recorded but teachers were able to ask questions via Microsoft Teams after the presentation. Over 150 teachers registered for the session. Positive feedback was left at the end of the session in Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>Rumbalara principal met with Central Coast Health to discuss ideas for the online Kitchen Garden Workshop Conference. It was decided to present on the Sustainable Schools Grant and provide a case study of Point Clares' P.S 2020 experience with the grant. REEC supported Point Clare P.S to conduct a waste audit, the school agreed to share their experience. After the conference three attending schools contacted REEC for further advice on developing a successful application for the Sustainable Schools Grant. One school also became involved in our Wiping Out Waste program for 2021.</p>	<p>2 Relief days to prepare resources \$1000 Other PD costs \$1500</p>

Strategic Direction 3

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.

Major SEFV2 links

- Learning - Curriculum
- Teaching - Effective Classroom Practice
- Leading- Educational Leadership

Improvement Measures

- Increase in the number and quality of programs developed in collaboration with the EZEC Community of Schools and implemented by REEC. (Base line data 2017 is one collaborative program. Quality will be measured through Centre based survey to schools with an aim of 10% increase in high to very high responses for curriculum, values and engagement questions).
- Increase in the number of schools engaged in community learning projects. (Base line data 2017 is thirteen schools)

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Work collaboratively with EZEC and other relevant community organisations to develop engaging community learning projects with a Citizen Science Focus.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>A REEC teacher attended the EZEC Collaboration meeting in February and discussed the results from the 'Design Sprints' for the Catalyst Lab project. Two more on-line meetings to discuss Catalyst Lab were also attended by the same REEC teacher with the final product including a "wellbeing" focus that will be discussed as a joint EZEC, strategic direction for the next four year planning cycle. Due to the regular EZEC meetings that occurred during COVID the Collaborative Practice team did not need to meet as regularly as in previous years.</p> <p>Three REEC staff attended the three biodiversity meetings held throughout the year to discuss a local biodiversity project with an education focus. All partners shared previous education projects, A 'Kids Teaching Kids Conference' with a biodiversity theme was discussed as the collaborative project for all partners to support. Funding was sought for the conference but was unsuccessful and a new collaborative project will be discussed for 2021.</p>	<p>Planning time during allocated office days</p>

Process 2: Implement a whole school approach to build stronger links with the community and engage the community with Rumbalara EEC programs and sustainability initiatives.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>Due to COVID restrictions only two Central Coast Environmental Education Network (CCEEN) events were able to be held in 2020- other activities such as a kayak trip were cancelled. The first informal gathering of members and included general discussion about education and community activities in the region. The second event was hosted by Kariong Eco Garden and included a garden tour. There was also a discussion about the exhibited Central Coast draft Resource Recovery Strategy.</p> <p>At the beginning of Term 4 the Wiping Out Waste (WOW) budget and project concept were discussed with Central Coast Council (CCC) and confirmed for 2020/21. By the end of Term 4, the Wiping Out Waste program had engaged</p>	<p>WOW program funded through Central Coast Council \$27,000</p>

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

with seven schools. Five schools completed a waste audit and desktop audit of waste bills. The same five schools also started an action plan that was tailored to their school needs.

Unfortunately our 'Future Council' joint project with Central Coast Council was cancelled due to COVID restrictions.

Student information

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.

In 2020 Rumbalara EEC conducted field work programs for 3647 students. Of these 2790 were primary and 857 were secondary. Our most popular primary programs in order of highest percentage were Stage 1 Living World, Stage 3 Factors That Shape Places, Stage 1 Features of Places. Our most popular secondary programs in order of highest percentage were Stage 5 Environmental Change and Management (Geography) , Stage 4 Landscapes & Landforms (Geography) and Stage 6 Local Ecosystems (Science).

An additional 2508 students were also involved in special programs delivered with Central Coast Council. Pre service students from Ourimbah University (80) were trained in Sustainability Education with Rumbalara EEC.

Our field work numbers were slightly lower than previous years due to the impacts of COVID 19. To support learning from home Google sites were created for three secondary and ten primary REEC programs. These were shared on Facebook through the EZEC and Rumbalara network, Geography Teachers Association and DoE Science Teachers meetings. By the end of 2020 we tracked that over 1000 users had visited our sites. Collectively the EZEC team won a DoE Secretary Award for an Outstanding School Initiative.

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
Classroom Teacher(s)	1
School Administration and Support Staff	1.19

*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.

Rumbalara Staff participated in a number of professional learning opportunities during 2020. Some of these are listed below

- Annual EZEC teachers Conference and Principal Conference
- EZEC on-line Learning for Creating a Google site
- Welcome to Country Workshop
- Sustainable Schools on-line Conference
- Excellence in Action (school planning)
- Excellence in Resourcing (school planning)

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	57,651
Revenue	490,197
Appropriation	439,248
Grants and contributions	50,718
Investment income	232
Expenses	-514,801
Employee related	-475,088
Operating expenses	-39,713
Surplus / deficit for the year	-24,604
Closing Balance	33,047

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.

	2020 Approved SBA (\$)
Targeted Total	0
Equity Total	0
Equity - Aboriginal	0
Equity - Socio-economic	0
Equity - Language	0
Equity - Disability	0
Base Total	422,888
Base - Per Capita	14,430
Base - Location	324
Base - Other	408,133
Other Total	8,061
Grand Total	430,949

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

Throughout 2020 we assessed visiting school teacher's perceptions of our field work programs. The responses are outlined below.

- Creating a Positive Learning Environment 89.% scored 5/5, 11% scored 4/5
- Rumbalara Staff demonstrate high learning expectations 95% scored 5/5, 5% scored 4/5
- Relevance of field work programs to curriculum 84% scored 5/5, 14% scored 4/5
- Staff Knowledge of topics 87% scored 5/5, 11% scored 4/5

Below are some responses from our teacher surveys

Short sharp activities were engaging, instruction was clear, environment safe and exciting

The students were actively engaged throughout the entire day. The activities encouraged them to think critically and ask interesting questions. Thank you for a great excursion.

Program was successfully adapted for the younger students and they gained a lot from it.

My students were very excited and loved the hands-on activities.

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.

Most of the Centre's programs include an Aboriginal perspective and content that reflect local "on country" learning.

The Centre always engages in ongoing conversations with Tuggerah DoE District Office Aboriginal Learning and Well Being Team and Regional AECG. At the end of 2020 Rumbalara met with members of the Aboriginal Community to develop a Reconciliation Plan and the development and implementation of this plan has become a key initiative in our 2021-2024 School Improvement Plan.

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.