2008 Annual School Report
Toormina High School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
Our school at a glance

Students

Enrolments have declined in 2008 in line with the small decline in numbers in feeder primary schools. In 2008 there were 1005 students, 506 boys and 499 girls. On average, 86% of junior students and 90% of seniors attended school each day. These figures indicate a marginal decrease for juniors and an improvement in senior attendance. Retention rates to year 12 remained at a solid 46%. Of last years HSC graduates we estimate that approximately 50% went on to continue their studies at university or TAFE Colleges in NSW or Qld.

Staff

The school had 79.5 teaching positions allocated in 2008. This included 14 executive staff and 64.5 class room/specialist teachers. The teaching staffs were supported by 17 administrative and support staff.

In 2007 the average daily attendance rate for staff was 94%.

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Significant programs and initiatives

The school ran a number of significant programs in 2008 to give students extra educational support to meet the needs of all students at the various levels of academic participation. These included:

- Student Leadership;
- Vocational Education;
- Peer Tutoring;
- Girls’ Education;
- Aboriginal Education;
- 10% on Top Club;
- The Homework Centre;
- V Tracks and Deadly Days;
- SLIKK;
- DREAM;
- Rock and Water;
- Love Bites;
- Personal Learning Plans;
- Work experience;

Student achievement in 2008

In 2008, the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) replaced ELLA. Its purpose is to assess the literacy and numeracy learning of students in all Australian schools at years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN is designed to provide information on student performance across a number of levels of achievement.

Please read the Academic Achievements section for a more detailed coverage of each of the following areas.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7

Students performed very strongly in the proficiency levels of bands 6 and 7, well above state average. In all components of the tests, our students achieved higher results than the Local Schools Group (LSG).

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7

A total of 74% of students achieved in the proficient to high bands, with excellent representation in Bands 8 and 9. Results in NAPLAN 2008 displayed a significant improvement over the results in the previous year’s SNAP test.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9

Overall literacy results show that 69.5% of students achieved in the proficient or high bands. Representation in Bands 9 and 10 exceeded regional averages and the results in Year 9 NAPLAN for 2008 represent a strong Student Growth from the ELLA and SNAP results from 2006.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9

Students performed very strongly in Bands 8, 9 and 10 (High Proficiency). The results represent a major improvement in the numeracy results for boys. Numeracy results for Indigenous students also showed high representation in Bands 8 and 10.

School Certificate

174 Year 10 students sat for the School Certificate in 2008. They performed very strongly in all areas, reaching or bettering State averages in Bands 5 and 6, and maintaining the excellent achievements of recent years.

Higher School Certificate

Students exceeded Local School Group (LSG) averages in many areas. Students also exceeded State averages in Standard English, General Mathematics, Legal Studies, PDHPE, Business Studies, Design and Technology and Drama.
Messages

Principal's message

2008 marked a time of change for Toormina High School. With the acquisition of three new Head Teachers, we were able to move the school forward and outward. We have been able to undertake detailed analysis of our existing programs and curriculum and we have planned to improve how and what we teach and to make sure that all our students reach the appropriate benchmarks in their learning, especially at the School Certificate and the Higher School Certificate examinations.

Community participation and connectedness have flourished. Students are engaged with fundraising events throughout the community and they have become involved more deeply with the local service clubs which have provided much support financially, as motivators and as educators. The Rotary Club of Sawtell, the Lions Club of Bonville-Sawtell and the Zonta Club of Coffs Harbour have supported our students and have given them opportunities as never before and we are deeply appreciative.

Once again, the Parents and Citizens' Association was a mainstay of our school in 2008 under the expert guidance of President Christine Cummings and we thank them for their unfailing support.

We acknowledge all staff and parents for the opportunities they have provided for our students to learn and to succeed. We appreciate the transport to school socials, sporting, debating, chess and excursions that you have arranged and provided.

Thanks go to Mr Greg Detering for the many hours of time he has devoted to preparing this Annual School Report. Please read it and enjoy the information contained within it.

I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous school self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school's achievements and areas for development.

Elizabeth Donnan, Principal

P&C and/or School Council message

THS Parents & Citizens Association plays an important role in the operation of the school. It is a venue where parents can have input into certain aspects of decision making with regards to their children's education and consult with the Principal on school issues.

As a parent body we have the ability to initiate change. The P&C does not only operate at a local level but at a state, regional and federal level, where the Executive has the ear of the Minister for Education.

The Handbook for P&C Associations says that:

“Parents, as partners in the education process, have a right and a responsibility to play an active role in the education of their children.”

And the object of the P&C association is to:

“Promote the interests of the school by bringing parents, citizens, pupils and teaching staff into close co-operation; and assist in providing facilities and equipment for the school”

We had a great team in 2008 who were very constructive and a lot of fun. Some of the things we achieved were:

• Setting up the P&C Constitution and bylaws.
• Successful Funding applications submitted which provided shade sails over the Special Ed Unit rest area
• Provided financial assistance for students’ travel to represent THS in sport at Regional, State and National levels.
• Commenced an investigation into seatbelts in buses which will be presented to the Minister
• Had Input into Canteen Foods
• Meetings and liaison with the SRC
• Involved in Teacher Recruitment
• Set up an outline for future fundraising activities
• Identified some equipment needs i.e. more lockers for students

There is a great team on board again for 2009 who I am sure will move even further ahead. Thank you for your support this year.

Christine Cummings

Student representative's message

The year of 2008 was an eventful and successful year for the SRC. As fundraising is a vital part of Toormina High School’s community efforts, many of our biggest events were yet again on the agenda. “Shave for a Cure” saw countless students shave their heads, wax their legs or colour their hair to raise much needed funds for the Leukaemia Foundation. One of our greatest and most worthy fundraisers, “Relay for Life” once again was a massive success, this time almost doubling the number of our participants and the money that we raised as a school. Through the efforts of 200 students, a number which we were limited to due to massive popularity, we were able to raise over $7000 for the Cancer Council of Australia.
2008 was yet another great year in the tradition of mufti-days, school socials and BBQ’s. Through the money raised by these events, the SRC were able to purchase more lockers for students and raised much needed funds for sportsmen and women within the school community, helping them to achieve at an elite level.

The SRC also continued the support of our “sponsor-a-child” student, George. He lives in Kenya and due to our sponsorship is able to attend year 10 at school which ensures that his education enhances his opportunities for the future.

As members of the SRC, we are representatives of the student body and therefore need to learn how to represent the students with a strong and confident voice. Various conferences and leadership workshops were held throughout the year to help improve the skills necessary for a good leader within the school community. For some, this was their first time in a leadership role and the workshops and training days were a helpful way for these students to learn how the SRC actually operates. However, these days were also a great opportunity to get to know fellow SRC members and share individual ideas.

In 2009, we hope to further build upon the great foundations we have already created from our previous leadership efforts in past years.

Rebecca Pryce and Brandon Sparke
(SRC Joint Presidents)

School context

Student information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Student enrolment profile

There has been a reduction in numbers over the past four years from 1053 in 2005 to 1005 in 2008. The distribution of male to female students was even with 506 to 499 respectively.

Student attendance profile

There was an improvement in our Years 7 to 10 Attendance Rates in 2008 following the commencement of a three year program to significantly improve attendance across all years. In particular, our aim by the end of the three years is for our attendance rate for both senior and junior students to be better than the regional average. In working towards this outcome a variety of measures will be pursued, namely:

- Closer monitoring of attendance rates by the school executive,
- Prompt parental contact for those students who have a number of significant unexplained and/or explained absences,
- Positive rewards for both individuals and groups to recognise high rates of attendance,
- Meetings with parent groups to reinforce the fundamental importance of attendance for learning,
- Daily notification to parents via SMS of a student absence,
- Weekly written notification to parents for unexplained absences.
Retention to Year 12

The retention of students from the SC to the HSC increased steadily over the past four years and in 2008 it has remained at a solid 46%.

Post-school destinations

Year 10: Of the 204 students who enrolled in Year 10 in 2007, 40 students left school to take up full time work, including traineeships and apprenticeships, part time work and study at TAFE. Only a very small % appears to be unemployed.

Year 11: From the 125 students who commenced Year 11 in 2008, 26 % left school during the Year 11 course to undertake full time work or further training at TAFE. A further 11% left school for similar reasons prior to the commencement of school in 2009.

Year 12: 82 students commenced the HSC in 2008 with less than 3% not completing the HSC. Destinations for those who completed the HSC are still being compiled. Early indications are that the significant majority of those who did not pursue full time study have gained full or part time employment. Data on University offers has not been received at this point. We estimate that close to 50% of students would have matriculated to University in NSW and Queensland. Typically 96% of these students receive offers to university in both states. Take up of offers has not been finalised. Similarly, take up of positions at TAFE and other training providers have not been determined.

Staff information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Staff establishment

The total of 79.5 full-time staff in 2008 has decreased from the 83.5 staff in 2006 and this reflects the decrease in numbers from 1062 to 1005 students in the same period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Mild Intellectual Disabilities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Moderate Intellectual Disabilities</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Severe Intellectual Disabilities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Staff retention
In 2008, three staff transferred in; two retired; two were made Super-numerary; and one teacher was promoted out. As a result, Toormina High School gained three new Head Teachers and there were six new scheme teachers on staff.

Staff attendance
Staff have access to leave entitlements such as sick leave. In 2008 the average daily attendance rate for staff, as determined by the Department, was 94%.

Teacher qualifications
All teaching staff met the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools. Many staff have attained a Bachelor degree and subsequently completed a Teaching diploma and/or other qualification, whilst others have completed a Bachelor of Education or similar degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>40%</td>
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</table>

Financial summary
This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary:</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>196,501.37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>729,194.33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>327,216.41</td>
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<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>238,755.27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>20,555.18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>61,345.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>1,573,567.76</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Balance carried forward | 305,646.22 |

A full copy of the school's 2008 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2008

Achievements

Arts
The CAPA faculty at Toormina High once again performed outstandingly in 2008. High standards were achieved in Music, Visual Arts, Photography and Digital Media and Drama in both the junior and senior classes.

School Certificate and H.S.C results continue to reflect a high standard and are a result of the hard work and dedication the Creative and Performing Arts staff embody.

The North Coast Creative Arts Council ran a Talent Identification Program which was a three day workshop for talented soloists and small vocal groups, aimed at increasing student confidence and skill in vocal performance. Students received advice and practical assistance to prepare them
for future audition and public performance. Eleven schools auditioned for selection from Newcastle to the Queensland border and the twenty eight students’ positions available. Three talented students were successful from Toormina High and participated in the workshop which culminated in a superb evening concert for distinguished guests from the North Coast.

Secondly, two of the three were also recognized by the prestigious ‘The Stars of the Future’ program hosted in Sydney. They were accepted after auditions into the Talent Development Project. Such stars as Delta Goodman and Human Nature were groomed by this project so it is exciting to see North Coast entries accepted.

Thirdly, both girls were also accepted for ‘Call back’ auditions for the 2008 school spectacular. This is a show that is an exhilarating exhibition of excellence and exceptional talent nurtured in New South Wales Public Schools. Quite simply, there is no show to equal it anywhere in the world, in terms of sheer size, scale and scope. It is an inspirational showcase for the talents of 3,000 performers from schools across the state. A much-anticipated annual feature on Sydney’s entertainment calendar, the Schools Spectacular has been the launch pad for a host of popular entertainers and introduces the stars of the future to annual audiences of more than 30,000.

The Dramatic Arts continue to achieve outstanding results which are reflected in their grades and in the trophies they earn at the Eisteddfods.

The Visual Arts continues to be one of the most popular electives with students able to select from a wide range of exciting courses including Photography and Digital Media, Ceramics, Drawing and Painting, Cartoon Design & Graphics and Mixed Media. The scope and diversity that these electives have offered helped to maintain the great results across the junior school in their school Certificate.

Sport

This year Toormina high had a very successful year on the sporting fields with both individual and team success. Individually we had students at Australian All School Athletics and Swimming. Medallists at CHS Athletics, Swimming and Cross country, three CHS representatives in touch and North Coast representatives in a wide variety of sports.

Toormina high was second in the touch football state championships and won gold at CHS Swimming in relay. Two students competed at the National Pacific School Games in Canberra. Two students received Regional Blues and two students received Regional Recognition awards.

Other

Excursions

Year 7

The end of year excursion to The Great Aussie Bush Camp at Tea Gardens saw sixty-five enthusiastic students and four teachers, tackle challenging activities over the three day period. High ropes, mud, giant swings, flying foxes and kayaking were some of the activities undertaken by students and staff.

The students were encouraged to leave their comfort zones and challenge themselves over various demanding, and at times exhilarating activities. As a result students left the camp understanding their own abilities and potential so much better, with many of them succeeding in accomplishing feats they never dreamt they were capable of even attempting. Much fun was had by both students and teachers on an extremely memorable excursion.

Year 8

The Year 8 End of Year Reward Excursion saw 131 excited students, 7 adventurous teachers and 3 buses venture up the Pacific Hwy to Movie World on the Gold Coast. The weather held off until everyone had just entered the theme park and then the heavens opened. While soaking the students, it did not dampen their enthusiasm. The students soon explored every corner of the theme park, noting their favourite rides and exhibits, with many students revisiting them continuously. The teachers also were bitten by the theme park bug, with many of them rising to student challenges and undertaking the most adventurous of the thrill seeking rides.
Seven hours after entering the theme park the group of extremely happy, slightly moist, adrenalin fuelled students and teachers exited Warner Bros Movie World after a very successful visit. The students were extremely well behaved with no incidents of note. All feedback from the excursion was extremely positive.

**Year 9**

On the 26th of November, 2008, nearly one hundred Year Nine students travelled to “Wet n Wild” aquatic theme park on the Gold Coast for the end of year reward excursion. We all prayed the torrential rain would stop SOMETIME on the trip up the coast, but it continued to pour for most of the day. We lost count of how many times somebody said “Well, it’s lucky we’re going to be in our swimmers anyway…”

The students made the most of the day and went on all the fantastic attractions. The time seemed to just fly and before we knew it, it was 4pm and back on the buses we went. Many members of the public and the bus company we travelled with were completely awed by the students’ excellent behaviour - well done everyone!! A huge thank you must go to the accompanying staff and to the students who made it such a terrific day.

**Year 10**

In November 2008 approx 100 year 10 students participated in an end of year excursion to Dreamworld. We left early in the morning for the 4 hour trip to the Gold Coast. Our arrival at Dreamworld coincided with a downpour that meant that the busiest person around was the guy selling ponchos. Even though it was raining the students rushed off to all corners of the park to enjoy themselves. All rides were well patronized as well as the waterslides in White Water World. A few of the students were quite amazed at the weird effect when, on the Giant Drop, the rain droplets appeared to stand still as they fell at the same rate as the ride. At the end of the day there was an “all Toormina” ride on “The Claw” which capped off a great day.

The students were chaperoned on the day by Ms Hollier, Miss Shields, Mr Cameron and Mr Driscoll who all agreed that they were an absolute pleasure on the day and a credit to Toormina High School.

**Politics Faculty**

2008 has seen some significant changes in the History faculty. Mr Shane Verran commenced duties as an Ancient History specialist. Mr Stephen Elsley commenced duty as Head Teacher of History.

A major priority of the History faculty in 2008 was to increase student interest in History and improve student outcomes in the higher bands of the SC and the HSC.

Vietnam veterans visited the school on two occasions to talk to Year 10 and World War II veterans also visited the school to talk to Year 9.

Year 7 had a medieval afternoon in Term 3, where a visiting group performed a show for the students, displaying weapons, costumes, music and customs of the period.

Overall, it has been a challenging but rewarding year.

**LOTE Faculty**

An innovation this year was A Taste of LOTE – whereby all students in each of the seven LOTE classes across Spanish, French and Japanese prepared and cooked a meal chosen by their teacher. The meals ranged from fajitas to cabbage omelettes to chocolate tarts. Students had a fantastic experience and it was great to see a number of parents attending. It is intended to repeat the experience in 2009.

The standard of bookwork is improving across all languages indicating a greater sense of pride in their work. Book vouchers were again awarded to the student with the best book in each of the seven classes.

The use of computers is playing an increasing role in LOTE with more lessons being held in a computer room. Training has been undertaken by the HT LOTE and one teacher in the use of interactive whiteboards. A number of classes will be timetabled in rooms next year which contain interactive white boards.

**PDHPE Faculty**

PDHPE HSC results have been above the STATE AVERAGE for the last Twelve years. 2008 was
7.45% above the STATE AVERAGE, which included three band 6's and 11 band 5's out of 23 students.

Stage 5 Elective PDHPE continues to remain very popular with students. Stage 5 PDHPE students will now qualify for 200 hours in the school certificate due to increased hours.

Social Science

The Social Science Faculty worked effectively to maintain excellent HSC results in 2008. Senior students completed the HSC in Economics, Legal Studies, Business Studies, Geography and Society and Culture. Students in all courses achieved results that have been a credit to themselves, family, school and the community.

The School Certificate results from the external examination continued the outstanding results achieved in Geography, Civics and Citizenship in previous years.

Mandatory fieldwork opportunities were provided to the Year 8, Year 10, Year 11 and Year 12 Geography classes. These proved to be every enjoyable and successful days for students who increased their awareness of the spatial and ecological dimensions in the study of Geography.

The Commerce and Economics classes again participated in the Australian Stock Exchange “Sharemarket Game”. They invested their imaginary funds to experience first hand the highs and lows associated with trading on the sharemarket.

Students from the Year 11 and Year 12 VET Retail classes were very successful in completing their work placements where they practised many of the skills that they had learned in the classroom. Our host employers were pleased with our students’ level of professionalism and competency.

The Social Science staff have been involved in numerous professional development activities to improve the quality of their teaching and ensure students results and outcomes are maximised.

TAS Faculty

The Home Science and Industrial Arts faculties continued to focus on ways of improving HSC results and providing a diverse range of opportunities for senior students. This centred on a flexible approach to student learning outcomes that were in line with industry standards and expectations.

School certificate results were also pleasing with a considerable number of students achieving above average results in most electives: including Food Technology, Wood Technics, Power Mechanics, Multi Media and Electronics. A highlight of 2008 was the overwhelming response from students in year 10 to continue studies in Electronics in year 11 during 2009. This will be the first year this course will be offered at Toormina and it will provide students with a number of pathways for future employment or University options.

Technology Mandatory subjects in years 7 and 8 continue to be very popular with students, providing them with a range of both practical and computer based technology subjects. A number of teachers delivering these courses were involved in ongoing professional development activities which ensure students receive a range of educational learning outcomes in line with current technologies.

Academic

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 the assessments.

Yr 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)
Yr 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)
Yr 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)
Yr 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

In the School Certificate the performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from Performance Band 1 (lowest) to Performance Band 6 (highest).

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7

The following four graphs show Year 7 student performance in NAPLAN.

Students performed very strongly in the proficiency levels of bands 6 and 7 (30%), well above state average (25.5%), at the expense of the lower bands (12%). The results indicate that 76% of students performed in the proficient or high bands.

Results in the strands of Grammar and Punctuation were very pleasing, as were the overall Literacy achievements for boys.

Results from the Year 7 NAPLAN tests have been shared with the Primary Schools in the Bongil Bongil Community of Schools, and have been used to inform teaching and learning program development.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7

The following graph shows Year 7 student performance in NAPLAN Numeracy in 2008. The number of students achieving in the proficient
bands has increased by 3% in 2008. This is 5.1% higher than the state average – up from 1% higher in 2006.

A total of 74% of students achieved in the proficient to high bands, with excellent representation in Bands 8 and 9 when measured against both Regional and State averages.

Results in NAPLAN 2008 displayed a significant improvement over the results in the previous year’s SNAP test, and are indicative of the success of the shared assessment data between the Bongil Bongil Community of Schools.

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9**

The following four graphs show Year 9 student performance in NAPLAN. Overall literacy results show that 69.5% of students achieved in the proficient or high bands in comparison to a 74.8% state average. Representation in Bands 9 and 120 exceeded Regional averages.

The results in Year 9 NAPLAN for 2008 represent a strong Student Growth from the ELLA and SNAP results from 2006, and reflect the extra effort made in using data analysis to inform teaching and learning programs.

These graphs also show the strength of Toormina High School’s Year 9 NAPLAN results against those of the comparative Local Schools Group (LSG), especially in Bands 9 and 10.
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9

The following graph shows Year 9 student performance in NAPLAN Numeracy in comparison with the Local Schools Group (LSG) and State Averages.

Students performed very strongly in Bands 8, 9 and 10 (High Proficiency) against LSG averages, and creditably against State Averages.

The results represent a significant Student Growth from the SNAP test in 2006, and a major improvement in the numeracy results for boys. Numeracy results for Indigenous students also showed high representation in Bands 8 and 10.

Progress in literacy

Literacy is a major priority at Toormina High School, and is supported by the following programs: THS Literacy Team, Bongil Bongil Community of Schools Self-Nominated project in Middle-Years Literacy, and Aboriginal Literacy Tutors. As a result, students demonstrate a strong growth in Literacy achievement between NAPLAN in Year 7, NAPLAN in Year 9 and the School Certificate in Year 10.

Progress in numeracy

Numeracy is also a major priority at Toormina High School, and is supported by a District-wide development program led by our Head Teacher Mathematics, Craig Holden. Students are also supported in all KLAS through a Bongil Bongil Community of Schools Self-Nominated project in Middle-Years Numeracy.
School Certificate

The following four graphs show Year 10 student performance at the School Certificate in 2008. Students performed very strongly in all areas, reaching or bettering State averages in Bands 5 and 6, and maintaining the excellent achievements of recent years as reflected in the School Average 2004-8. The staff and students are to be congratulated on their tremendous efforts.
**School Certificate relative performance comparison to Year 5 (value-adding)**

The graph below shows relative School Certificate Performance when compared to Year 5 BST scores.

Toormina High Has performed strongly in English, Science and Australian Geography Civics and Citizenship, which achieved at or above State averages.

All areas achieved at a higher level that the Local Schools Group (LSG).

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**Higher School Certificate**

The following four graphs show Year 12 student performance at the Higher School Certificate in 2008.

Students performed very strongly, exceeding Local School Group (LSG) averages in English, Mathematics, Legal Studies, PDHPE, Business Studies, Design and Technology, and Drama.

Students also exceeded State averages in Standard English, General Mathematics, Legal Studies, PDHPE, Business Studies, Design and Technology and Drama.

Students and staff are to be congratulated for their excellent efforts.
At each level, Toormina High School has achieved at a higher level than the LSG.

Minimum standards

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards for reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy for years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

The performance of the students in our school in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy is compared to these minimum standards. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these standards are reported below.

Percentage of Year 7 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2008

Over 90% of our Year 7 students achieved at or above the minimum standard in 2008, with very strong results in Numeracy and Reading.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>94.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>90.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>91.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>90.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>97.4</td>
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</table>
Percentage of Year 9 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2008.

The graph below shows the percentage of Year 9 students achieving the minimum standards in 2008, with greater than 85% of students reaching the benchmark in all areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at and above minimum standard</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
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Significant programs and initiatives

**Aboriginal Education**

The response to the Prime Minister’s “Sorry Day” speech was admirably delivered by Kenneth McIntosh. Kenneth’s composure and dignity set the stage for some exciting developments in 2008.

Volunteer teachers, the relieving Aboriginal Education Officer, Judith Peen, an Indigenous teacher and two Teachers Aides from the Indigenous community formed an Indigenous Education Team.

The 10% on Top Club was launched at a morning tea attended by proud parents / carers and community representatives. Outstanding Indigenous students committed to raising all their marks by 10%, assisted by a mentor for assignments, organisation and goal setting.

The NAIDOC celebration assembly was run entirely by Indigenous students, with Alison Page, an inspiring keynote speaker.

Scholarships were won by Sienna McDonald and Grace Casey (cultural visit to Sasebo), Nathan Smith (two University Science Schools) and Kenneth McIntosh (trip to the ANZAC service in Gallipoli).

The Homework Centre, run by Judith Peen and Marcia O’Sullivan, increased the homework returns & engagement of students in learning.

Students in Y7 and Y8, needing support, were assisted by an “In Class” tutor and an attendance mentor.

TAFE NSW delivered a “Committee Management” course to aspiring students.

V Tracks and Deadly Days ensured post school options were explored and SLIKK students ably participated on the school SRC.

**Multicultural education**

Toormina High School has an Anti-Racism policy that promotes tolerance and respect for students of all ethnic and indigenous backgrounds. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are encouraged to participate in the SLIKK program to develop their leadership skills. Boys are involved in the DREAM program to develop their pride and assertiveness as young indigenous men.

There are a small number of students from other countries such as the Sudan, and they are encouraged to share their cultural heritage. They are also encouraged to report any racist behaviour displayed towards them. These students were part of an ESL programme in their first year at this school.

**Respect and responsibility**

Respectful behaviour by students towards each other, parents, teachers, the school and the community are important values promoted at this school. Citizenship and leadership programs are put in place through formal structures such as the Student Representative Council and the Prefects.

Regular fund raising activities for charities are conducted.

Rock and Water for boys and Love Bites for Year 10 students are examples of programs that actively promote healthy respectful relationships.

The welfare team has identified that our school must continue to actively target bullying behaviours as a major part of any welfare program. The introduction of a whole school bullying leaflet, written in easy to access language, aims to assist both victims and perpetrators in understanding the schools bullying procedures.

In term one, guest speaker John Coutis was brought in as another tool in our push against bullying. He spoke at length about anti-bullying, over coming challenges and getting the best out of life. All year 8 - 12 students were focussed and interested for the lengthy interactive speech.

**Other programs**

“ROCK AND WATER” is about learning social skills including communication, anger management and raising self esteem.

During the weekly sessions, these skills are learned through a range of fun, competitive and action oriented physical exercises. Students explore issues such as standing strong (mentally and physically), conflict resolution, body language, body awareness, boundaries (self and other), breath strength, stress management, using inner focus (goal setting, problem solving), and how to self reflect before taking action.
These acquired skills are linked to improved academic performance, positive peer interactions and act as buffers against mental health problems such as depression and anxiety. Students from years 7, 8 and 9 participated in this program in 2008.

Most students enjoyed participating and were able to transfer the skills taught in the program to classroom and real life situations.

**Learning Support**

Support for students with a variety of needs was managed by a strong support team.

Mainstream students, supported through a range of funding initiatives, were assisted to make academic gains through intensive programs, teachers’ aides special support and by careful monitoring and management of their programs of study.

Personal Learning Plans (PLP’s) were developed collaboratively with parents/carers, outside agencies and service providers. These were regularly reviewed according to student need.

**Support Classes**

With a strong focus on teaching and learning and high expectations, students responded to systematic and explicit teaching by making measurable gains across the key learning areas.

Students participated in a range of school events both independently and with support. Students in Support Classes attended socials, school camps, mainstream excursions, carnivals and a range of other activities in the community and the workplace.

Two students were active participants on the Student Representative Council and others had roles and responsibilities within the school.

Strong parent/carer support and interagency collaboration enabled students to achieve the targets identified in their PLPs.

Students stayed on to achieve the HSC and participated in, and successfully completed, VET courses. A strong commitment, to ensure the integrity of work experience programs, enabled students to engage in a range of occupations and environments across the employment sector. Strong ties, forged with the community, enhanced this program.

In 2007 all students exited Year 12 to employment, training or community participation programs as set out in their individual transition plans. We gratefully acknowledge the donation of an electronic keyboard from a Year 8 student’s family.

**Progress on 2007 targets**

**Target 1 - New Head Teacher Induction**

Our achievements include:

- The selection and appointment of three new Head Teachers whose skills and experience have well equipped them for their promotions to these positions.
- Successful induction and supervision model implemented.
- Strong faculty leadership implemented in Student Welfare, Mathematics and History.

**Target 2 - Building Student Participation**

Our achievements include:

- Stronger consultative roles for Student Representative Council and for Prefects and Captains in planning decisions.
- Development of 2009-11 school plan including feedback from students.

**Target 3 - Development of Executive Leadership Skills**

Our achievements include:

- Implementation of research into teacher quality and quality teaching at faculty level.
- Applications for self-nominating projects in literacy and numeracy to Region.
- Stronger curriculum goals for the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate in English and Mathematics.

**Key evaluations**

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2008 our school carried out evaluations of.

**Educational and management practice**

**Background**

Student attendance continues to be a concern for a significant number of students. Some students are school-refusers, some do not attend every day that they are well and able. For some students, there is a culture that it is acceptable to arrive late to school or to take the day off for minor matters.

School data were examined to determine the extent of this interruption to learning and support was given through the regional Attendance...
Project which assisted our efforts to increase attendance.

Findings and conclusions
It was found that letters and SMS texts to parents were not effective in all cases in achieving satisfactory attendance. It was also found that there was a serious delay in the processing of student leavers which was inflating our absence data. New legislation leading to prosecution of parents who habitually do not send their children to school has been enacted and meetings by the Home School Liaison Officer, police and school with these parents and students have been implemented.

Future directions
In addition to the pre-existing attendance strategies, attendance is monitored by three Head Teachers who are responsible for a Stage. They interview absent students, make calls directly to parents and make referrals to the HSLO. Prosecutions may occur for those who do not comply with the legislation. In addition, continued improvements in learning and teaching strategies to create a climate of support for all students as learners have been implemented.

Curriculum
Background
The curriculum team continues to refine and improve the timetable structure in the school, aiming to improve learning outcomes for students.

Findings and conclusions
In 2008, students in years nine and ten had increased opportunities to choose their preferred electives which were spread over three lines of the timetable. The transition from years ten into eleven was a focus area, with students having opportunities to select subjects and attend information sessions in term two. This ensured that by early term three, students had made choices and overwhelmingly decided to stay at Toormina High School for years 11-12.

Future directions
The curriculum team investigated and will be introducing Work Education as an elective choice for year 10 in 2009. This will ensure that additional support will be provided for students at risk of leaving school in years nine and ten.

The collegiate of high schools in the Coffs Harbour area had several meetings to discuss opportunities for stage six students. A project officer investigated various models for the delivery of subjects across schools. These challenges are still being considered by school Principals.

Other evaluations
Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction
In 2008 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.
Their responses are presented below.
The THS Parents & Citizens Association has provided input into school issues and, through consultation with the school executive, influenced decisions made in the running of THS. Some areas of concern which were identified as requiring attention, such as amenities, have or are being addressed by the P&C demonstrating that there is overall satisfaction with the school at a parental level.

In the regular staff meetings, teachers express concerns for various issues and, where necessary, these issues are addressed in the appropriate forum such as through the welfare department.
The student voice, heard through the Student Representative Council, indicates that students feel that they exist in an environment which supports their interests, challenges them educationally and places great importance on a safe environment. Many students participate in various community and sporting endeavours supported by the school which demonstrates a positive school spirit.

Professional learning
All teachers at Toormina High participated in professional learning activities in 2008. The total amount of money spent on training and development was $49237. The area of greatest expenditure was on implementation of Quality Teaching practices which accounted for $11527 of the budget.

Four teachers attended the second North Coast Region Quality Teaching Conference at Opal Cove in May and then took responsibility for sharing this information with colleagues by planning and running the Term 3 Professional Development Day.

Ms Anna McAuley, Head Teacher Creative and Performing Arts, continued in her role as Mentor for beginning teachers at a regional level and Mrs Erica Lyne, Head Teacher Science, presented the course for New Scheme teachers at Toormina High. Two teachers gained their Accreditation through the Institute of Teachers and four more teachers will achieve this in Term One, 2009.

Five Executive members participated as interviewers for the graduate Recruitment Program during the July vacation. This gave them increased knowledge of the Institute of Teachers
framework and allowed them to make a significant contribution to the renewal of the profession.

The school had its Connected Classroom installed in Term 4 and a team of five staff received two and a half days intensive training in the use of Interactive whiteboards and video conferencing.

Mr Greg Detering attended the NSW Indonesian teacher’s conference in Bali during the school vacation in July.

School development 2009 – 2011

A three year plan has been developed which was contributed to by members of all stakeholder groups. Literacy, Numeracy, Aboriginal Education, Teacher Quality, student Engagement and Retention and Connected Learning are the focus areas for the plan.

Targets for 2009

Target 1 - Promotion of the Bongil Bongil Community of Schools (CoS)

Communities of Schools are favoured in applications for commonwealth, state and regional funding. Our school has strong links with our feeder primary schools of Boambee, Bonville, Crossmaglen, Toormina and William Bayldon, particularly at transition between primary and secondary schools. We are working within this community of schools on numeracy and literacy strategies and we will be creating increasingly more opportunities for primary students to access our secondary resources and teacher expertise, especially in specialist practical areas, such as Science and Technology and Applied Studies. We are seeking the community to recognise us as part of a learning community so that they identify us as part of a continuum of learning for their children.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Seeking marketing assistance from School promotions.
- Building stronger links within the schools through enhanced curriculum development.
- Engaging in activities together.

Our success will be measured by:

- Increased participation of students, staff and parents across the CoS.
- Retention for the primary schools of students from Stage 2.
- Successful transitioning of all students to our secondary setting.

Target 2 - Developing Teacher Capacity in Mathematics

We are mindful of the need to rejuvenate the secondary teaching of Mathematics across the central network of schools. We recognise the importance of Mathematics education for all students and wish to develop our practices appropriately.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Regional support to initiate the project.
- Commitment of all Principals and Mathematics staff.
- The establishment of a project team to plan and assist the project across the three networks of secondary schools.

Our success will be measured by:

- Students achieving success in Mathematics.
- Students achieving state average or better at the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate by 2011.
- Staff adopting the Quality Teaching model for Mathematics teaching.

Target 3 – School Development

Extensive funding is available for self-nominating projects, Computers in Schools, Connected Classrooms, School Pride, Special Education, Aboriginal Education and Trade Training Centres, to name some. We aim to apply for whatever funding is available in order to support students as learners, to develop and maintain school buildings and grounds and to keep our school competitive.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Submission writing by the Executive to seek a share of funds on offer, in alignment with our School Plan.
- Implementation of approved submissions by the due date.
- Fulfilling the accountability frameworks around each set of funds.

Our success will be measured by:

- Acquiring and expending funds.
- Improved quality of learning through programs, resources and the improved school environment.
About this report
In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school's practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school's future development.

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Stafford Cameron, Deputy Principal
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Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at: