2008 Annual School Report
Bald Blair Public School

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

Bald Blair Public School, situated in an idyllic setting, is the focal point of a small rural community located in the Northern Tablelands area of NSW. The school is situated eleven kilometres from Guyra on the Guyra Road. Our student population is drawn from farms as well as rural, residential and rented properties in the Bald Blair and Guyra area. The community is made up of graziers and others who travel to the city of Armidale or town of Guyra to work in a variety of trades and occupations.

The school was established in 1920 and its culture is one of high expectations and educational excellence. It is a dynamic and very innovative school with excellent programs in literacy, numeracy, music, dance, band, science, HSIE (human society and its environment), sport, Japanese and technology.

The school’s central aim is for all students to attain the highest possible educational standard of which they are capable. It is the belief of the school community that this will be achieved by providing explicit teaching and learning in an environment not unlike that of the family, where trust, care, mutual support and co-operation enhance quality learning outcomes. The school continues to encourage its students to participate in and be challenged by a balanced, sequential curriculum appropriate to their stage of development.

Students

At the end of 2008 there were twenty seven students enrolled at Bald Blair Public School. There were nineteen boys and eight girls.

Staff

Staff in 2008 comprised:

1 Primary Principal 5- Mrs Julie Gittoes
1 Classroom teacher- Mrs Carolann Brown
1 Classroom teacher- Mrs Sally Purvis, (three days per week) using Release from Face to face (RFF), STLA funding and global funds.
1 Band instructor, Mr Dave Eddy for one and half hours per week and kindly funded by the P&C.
All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.
SASS (School Administrative and Support Staff):
School Administrative Manager 3 days 3 hours and 12 minutes per week. The role was shared by

Donna Davidson, Melissa Walsh and Vicki Layland.
General assistant, Mr Ted Deeks, one day per week.
No permanent staff left the school during 2008.

Significant programs and initiatives

Bald Blair Public School is constantly looking for new ways to improve the teaching and learning opportunities it offers to its students. Students have been involved in a number of initiatives including:

STLA class (student teaching learning assistance)
Reading Recovery for Small Schools
Creative Arts program – music, dance and band.
Healthy canteen- free milk every day
Highland Cluster of school’s initiative
Finlayson’s sport’s Day
Public speaking
Premier’s Sporting Challenge

Student achievement in 2008

Literacy – BST Year 3

Eight students in year 3 sat for the BST. Results were excellent however privacy protocols prevent disclosure of results.

Literacy – BST Year 5

Six students in year 5 sat for the BST. All students achieved outstanding results and all students were at or above the state average.

Numeracy – BST Year 3

Eight students in year 3 sat for the BST. Results were excellent however privacy protocols prevent disclosure of results.

Numeracy – BST Year 5

Six students in year 5 sat for the BST. All students achieved outstanding results and all students were at or above the state average.
Messages

Principal's message

The school is the focal point for the area and provides both educational and social opportunities for the community. Our student population is drawn from farms as well as rural, residential and rental properties in the Bald Blair and Guyra area.

Bald Blair Public School provides a wide range of educational experiences in the six key learning areas catering for the intellectual, physical, social and emotional development of our students. A range of innovative programs and activities provide for individual needs, capabilities and needs.

The small school environment is recognised as a special attribute of this school. It is utilised in extracurricular and cross-grade programming. This friendly, family environment is evident in the tremendous support and enthusiasm given by the school community to school activities, cultural, sporting and academic excursions and events.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Bald Blair Public School community for their commitment to the school, their support of the students and cooperation with the staff of the school.

This report is intended to highlight the school's performance in a range of academic and social areas, some specific achievements of our students and the wonderful supportive role that parents play in their children’s education. Evaluation of school programs and activities is an ongoing process, and involves all staff, children and parents.

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.

Julie Gittoes

P&C

As president of the Bald Blair P&C, and father of two pupils at the school, I could not recommend the school highly enough. The opportunities are as good as any larger school including band lessons, major excursions as well as our new multi-purpose sports court. The school is set within very strong community minded people that ensures every child is noticed and nurtured thus producing confident, happy and successful students who will carry these values with them for life.

Mr Dan McKemey
President Bald Blair P&C

Student representative's message

Bald Blair School has grown every year since I started in transition. This year the school had thirty four students enrolled, plus one child in transition.

Outside of normal class work Bald Blair School offers many fantastic opportunities. One of these is band. We had four main bands this year that Mr Dave Eddy teaches on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Every child involved thinks it is awesome. On the first Friday evening in December Bald Blair hosted the Battle of the Bands concert. All Bald Blair Bands, a band from Chandler School and Mr Eddy's band, “The Lost Boys”, performed live under the Cola whilst the P&C catered a BBQ. It was a great night.

Unfortunately Mrs Rachel Butcher, our singing teacher, has now left Bald Blair. But earlier, with her help, we won the overall trophy for recorder, singing and ensemble at the Armidale Eisteddfod for small schools.

One of the most enjoyable days at Bald Blair this year was when the Variety Bash Cars visited the school in May. Many cars arrived at the school brightly presently with very loud and strange horns. They had a magician called Super Hubert, who performed a magic show. Most of the cars had fun give-aways for us.

The Bald Blair major excursion occurs every two years. This year in September we were lucky enough to go to Lake Ainsworth Sport & Recreation Centre. The excursion to Lake Ainsworth lasted for seven days and every day was extremely fun, challenging and very enjoyable. Some activities that we did were snorkelling, rock climbing, marine studies, archery, surf skiing, cook out and bike riding. I would like to thank the P&C for helping to fund this excursion.

Five of the Yr 6 students were privileged to be able to participate in the inaugural New England Dance Camp held in Tamworth. At the three day camp we were taught hip hop contemporary ballet by very talented instructors from Sydney.

Thank you to Sue Wilkinson who kindly donated a lot of her time to Bald Blair students to guide us in making a very creative sculpture – a tower of tins – for the Waste Art Competition.

Recently Yr 6 attended the Frog Dreaming Conference at Echidna Gully. This involved Yr 6 students from all over the Armidale District. We learnt about aboriginal culture, met lots of new children, made up plays and had a fabulous time.
Thank you to Mrs Smith for organising this through the Parks & Wildlife.

And yes we did do some school work during 2008. Plenty of it! Year 3 & 5 sat for their NAPLAN and did exceptionally well.

We hosted many prac teachers, two Bhutanese teachers and two Japanese teachers this year. All students are learning to speak basic Japanese and having Japanese teachers is great for this.

Bald Blair School has been an amazing school that has given me so many different opportunities, great teachers and friendly students. I’m going to miss Bald Blair and would like to thank every one that has been involved in Bald Blair School during my time.

Thank you

Kate Moffatt

**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.

**Class sizes**

In March 2003 the Government announced its commitment to publish primary class sizes in annual school reports in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible.

The following table shows our class sizes as reported at the 2008 class size audit conducted on Tuesday 25 March 2008.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll Class</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total per Year</th>
<th>Total in Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-1-2</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-1-2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-1-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Classes continue to grow annually. The school was reclassified upwards to a P5 from a P6 in 2006. Due to student numbers composite classes are utilised within the school. Structure of classes

Bald Blair Public School students are arranged into two multi-grade classes K to 2 with nine students and years 3-6 with eighteen students. On the first three days of the week a special class is established from 9 until 1pm, to support students with identified and special learning needs. The multi-grade classes support independent and co-operative learning skills. Features include explicit teaching and learning activities sequenced and designed to cater for multi-age learning outcomes and individual programs designed for students with special literacy and numeracy needs.

There is a strong emphasis placed on literacy and numeracy with a high focus on creativity and skill development. Students take responsibility for their own learning through peer support, homework tasks, preparing for weekly public speaking tasks, home research projects and input at reviews of school rules, our code of conduct, values forum and learning programs.

**Student enrolment profile**

November the enrolment was thirty four, with twenty two boys and twelve girls. In 2009 the student population is expected to be twenty seven.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student attendance profile**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>95.6</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>92.2</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td>92.5</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>94.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Enrolment rates for central schools are for K-6.

**Note:** Attendance rates for central schools are for K-6.
**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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STLA, librarian and RFF</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Staff retention**

The highly dedicated, committed and supportive staff at Bald Blair Public School are very stable with no movement.

**Staff attendance**

Staff have access to leave entitlements such as sick leave and long service leave. In 2008 the average daily attendance rate for staff, was very high.

**Teacher qualifications**

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

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

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**Financial summary**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>16 365.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>3 501.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>2 218.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td><strong>131 265.10</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Expenditure**

- Teaching & learning:
  - Key learning areas: 22 676.02
  - Excursions: 8 144.53
  - Extracurricular dissections: 14 430.53
- Library: 1 536.47
- Training & development: 652.67
- Tied funds: 18 878.21
- Casual relief teachers: 563.02
- Administration & office: 9 184.49
- School-operated canteen: 0.00
- Utilities: 5 050.25
- Maintenance: 6 551.01
- Trust accounts: 2 218.20
- Capital programs: 0.00
| **Total expenditure** | **89 885.40** |

**Balance carried forward**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41 379.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

**School performance 2008**

**Achievements**

**Arts**

Bald Blair Public School provides a diverse range of opportunities for students to explore and develop a range of learning outcomes. The students have again participated in a variety of creative and performing art activities this year. It has taken a lot of commitment and hard work to prepare for such performances and events.

In 2008 our school again performed three items, under the expert guidance of Mrs Butcher, for the Small School’s Eisteddfod in Armidale. All the
Senior students competed in each of the sections, choir, ensemble and recorder and were overall winners for the National Party perpetual trophy. The audiences were truly impressed and I still meet colleagues and they are still commenting on the student’s talents. This was an outstanding achievement for our great little school.

Other highlights include students receiving one grand champion, nine firsts, eleven seconds and eight highly commended awards at the annual Guyra Show.

All students, under the expert guidance of Mrs Sue Wilkinson, helped complete a magnificent eucalyptus tree called “New England in Autumn” from recycled beetroot tins and paper mache for the North West waste art competition.

All students in year 3 to 6 have formed five bands with the help of our music teacher Mr Dave Eddy. The five bands groups have written and performed a number of different pieces during the year. All students, K to 2 and 3 to 6 did singing each week for 30 minutes with Mrs Rachel Butcher, a highly talented musician and singer for the Semester One.

In December the school hosted the augural “Band” showcase and students were invited from Chandler Public School. Our school’s four bands played a number of their own band pieces and it was a super night. The audience was truly amazed and highly entertained. Thanks to the P&C for providing a delicious barbeque meal.

The year culminated in our end of extravaganza, “A Kid’s Midsummer Night’s Dream”, a musical. This performance was truly amazing and it certainly provided the community with a showcase of our student’s drama, music and dance skills.

Sport

The daily fitness program has continued to improve motivation, confidence, fitness levels and skills outcomes for all students. This year our school employed Mrs Melissa Walsh for one day a week and she helped train and extend our students skills in all areas of sport.

Sporting achievements in 2008 include our P6 swimming relay team and athletics relay team representing at the Armidale PSSA carnival.

All students participated in our school’s intensive swimming program, our athletics training days, the Guyra swimming carnival, Guyra cross country and the Guyra athletics carnival.

The swimming squad won the Lion’s shield for overall winners at the Guyra and District Swimming carnival. Students were encouraged to attend the Finlayson Sports Days at Chandler Public School.

In March our school received some outstanding results. Kate Moffatt won the overall champion’s medal and senior champion, Erick Klabe won intermediate champion, Luke Brazier senior champion, Tom Smith junior champion and Madison Morgan minor champion. The students also won the march past, junior and senior ballgames and relay trophy.

At the Guyra and District Athletics carnival Kate Moffatt won senior champion and our school won the overall carnival.

At the Guyra Cross Country Tom Smith smashed the 9 years boy record and Kate Moffatt the 12 year old girls record.

All students participated in the Premier’s Sporting Challenge for fifteen weeks in term two and three and all students achieved a gold medal certificate.

Other

Students at Bald Blair have been achieving at a high standard in a variety of academic areas. Our school received three credits and eight participations in the Uni of NSW spelling competition and one high distinction, two credits and six participations in the Uni of NSW mathematics competition.

In May our school had the opportunity to host the “Variety Bash” and everyone had a spectacular time. The cars were decorated in a splendid array of imaginative creations and the P&C provided a delicious country luncheon. It was an exceptional day.

Each year our students raise valuable funds for worthy charitable organisations. They supported Daffodil Day, Bandage Bear Day, the MS Readathon and Stewart House.

Our transition program also provided our incoming kindergarten students with a good grounding in social and academic skills for next year.

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)
Academic
In the Basic Skills Test, the performance of students is reported in skill bands ranging from Skill Band 1 (lowest) to Skill Band 5 (highest for Year 3) or Skill Band 6 (highest for Year 5).

Due to the small cohort of students currently at Bald Blair Public School, privacy protocols prevent disclosure of specific student data. Historical trends indicate that general student strengths are in language and reading.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3
Eight students in year 3 sat for the NAPLAN. Privacy protocols prevent disclosure of results.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3
Eight students in year 3 sat for the BST. Privacy protocols prevent disclosure of results.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5
Six students in year 5 sat for the NAPLAN. Privacy protocols prevent disclosure of the results.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5
Six students in year 5 sat for the NAPLAN. Privacy protocols prevent disclosure of results

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.

In the Basic Skills Test, the performance of students is reported in skill bands ranging from Skill Band 1 (lowest) to Skill Band 5 (highest for Year 3) or Skill Band 6 (highest for Year 5).

Percentage of Year 3 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2008
Eight students in year 3 sat for the NAPLAN. Privacy protocols prevent disclosure of results.

Percentage of Year 5 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2008
Six students in year 5 sat for the NAPLAN. Privacy protocols prevent disclosure of results.

NAPLAN Test Year 3 and 5
This year eight Year 3 and six Year 5 students participated in the NAPLAN.

How did our students perform compared to the state?
Due to the small size of the Year 3 and Year 5 cohorts, specific information about NAPLAN results in literacy cannot be disclosed due to privacy protocols. However, trend information over the past five years indicates that 89% of Year 3 students have achieved results in the top two bands (Bands 4 and 5) and 89% of Year 5 students have achieved results in the top three bands (Bands 4, 5 and 6). Year 3 and Year 5 students are performing either equal to or above the state in the majority of the literacy questions attempted.

What do these results mean for the school’s literacy program?
The literacy program provided at Bald Blair Public School is achieving pleasing results. We aim to further improve the literacy standards achieved by each student through ongoing focus on English syllabus outcomes. A special emphasis will be placed on spelling, writing, grammar, vocabulary and talk and listening.

Through regular assessment, success will be measured by results in school based assessment tasks, success in Early Literacy and Language Assessment (ELLA) and improved performance by Year 3 and Year 5 students in the annual NAPLAN.

Numeracy
School Based Assessment
School based assessment includes student work samples, school and standardised tests, including Schedules of Early Number Assessment 1 and 2 (SENA), Count Me in Too (CMIT), competitions such as the Australasian Schools competition, observations, class quizzes and student participation. Students’ performances indicate progress at or above expected levels for all students.
NAPLAN Year 3 and Year 5

This year eight Year 3 students and six Year 5 students participated in the NAPLAN.

How did students perform compared to state?

Due to the small size of the Year 3 and Year 5 cohorts, specific information about this year's NAPLAN results cannot be disclosed due to privacy protocols. However, trend information over the past five years indicates that 90% of Year 3 students have achieved results in the top two bands (Bands 4 and 5) and 89% of Year 5 students have achieved results in the top three bands (Band 4, 5 and 6). Year 3 and Year 5 students are performing either equal to or above the state in the majority of numeracy questions attempted.

Significant programs and initiatives

Programs to Support Students

This year Bald Blair School received half a day a week from the highland cluster allocation of integration money to help support students with special needs. Our support program was supplemented by global funds to employ an extra member of staff to help those students diagnosed with a learning difficulty.

Aboriginal education

There are no aboriginal students currently enrolled at Bald Blair Public School. The emphasis of our Aboriginal program is on educating the students at our school about Aboriginal history, culture and contemporary Aboriginal Australia. This is integrated across all KLA's.

Multicultural education

While Bald Blair School community is not a diverse cultural group, our explicit teaching and learning programs ensure implementation of a multicultural perspective. The school strives to develop tolerance, co-operation and a belief that all people are equal. This is achieved mainly through developing class programs in human society and its environment (HSIE) that study how people around the world live.

This year our school and community hosted two Bhutanese teachers for eight days and three Japanese assistant teachers, at different times for eighteen weeks. Parents have indicated that they would like these educational programs to continue in 2009.

Drug Education

Drug education has been implemented across the curriculum. Teaching staff have attended professional development courses to ensure effective implementation of the drug education policy. All students participate in the Life Education program which reinforces appropriate attitudes towards the medicinal use of drugs and enhances the decision making skills taught through the professional development health and physical education (PDHPE) syllabus.

Respect and responsibility

Students are being explicitly taught interpersonal skills that promote Respect and Responsibility and conflict resolution. At all times teachers have expectations that students will develop as responsible and respectful students. This is an integral part of the school culture and is embedded within the implementation of key learning areas in the classroom.

The school's student welfare policy closely aligns and reflects the new Department of Education and Training (DET) Core Values in Public Schools policy which is reinforced regularly along with singing the National Anthem at the morning assembly.

The school provided the opportunity for students to celebrate and demonstrate these core values by participating in a partnership with the wider community in the Anzac Day march.

Other programs

Public Speaking and Debating

Throughout 2008, we have continued the explicit and systematic teaching of public speaking and debating so successful in 2007. There has been a strong focus on matter, manner and method and peer assessment giving the students a strong framework. A workshop was held at Armidale City Public with instructors working with students in small groups instilling confidence and awareness through games, activities and debates.

Healthy Canteen

Bald Blair Public School doesn't have a canteen however parents are encouraged to send in healthy food on a daily basis to be heated in the microwave, sandwich maker or pie oven.

In 2008 we have continued to provide students with free milk each morning at 8.55am. All students are encouraged to also eat a piece of fruit and at the present time 89% of students do this on a regular basis.
Highland Cluster Days
There have been two different activities organised this year. A Creative Arts Day organised by Black Mountain Public School and a Sport’s Day hosted by Chandler Public School. All these days were very successful educationally, culturally and socially.

Technology
Bald Blair School has eleven IBM computers, seven laptops, seven IMAC computers, a home theatre system, a digital projector and screen, two classroom printers, a scanner and a digital camera.

This has continued to allow for increased learning opportunities and the integration of technology across all KLA. This year our student’s technology skills were further enhanced by employing a computer co-ordinator, using global funds, to target explicit teaching and learning programs using technology K-6.

All members of staff have been trained in WEB services and this program should further enhance our computer program. The students are enjoying this wonderful program which enables them to communicate and explore the world outside their classroom.

All students have confidently developed skills in power point presentation and hence students are now presenting research projects using this program. All students are developing their touch typing skills and readily use word processing and access knowledge via software programs and the internet.

Targets for 2008
Target 1.
To improve students capacity to write effectively using the correct spelling, punctuation and grammar for a range of purposes.

Our achievements include:

- Majority of students achieving results at or above their stage outcome;
- most year 3 students were in band 4 or higher and all year 5 students achieved at least one band higher than in their year 3 BST.
- Classroom assessments and writing samples showed students to be more consistent using the correct spelling of words and editing their own writing.

Target 2.
To improve student capacity and confidence K-6 to have a greater understanding of place value and use successfully mental strategies when solving problems using the four operations.

Our achievements include:

- improved levels of understanding by all students;
- students could demonstrate concepts by using concrete material;
- improved results in SENA 1 and SENA 2; and
- all students achieved Band 4 or higher in the NAPLAN numeracy results.

Target 3.
To improve students capacity to read and interpret both literal and inferred meaning from a range of texts K-6.

Our achievements include

- improved student performance in reading in NAPLAN as reflected in the SMARTDATA; and
- in-school assessment data and work samples reflect improvement in reading.

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 the School Improvement Plan 2006-2008.

Educational and management practice

Background

In November students, staff and parents were asked to respond to a survey or discussion about School Improvement Plan 2006-2008. A majority of responses were positive.

Findings and conclusions

Analysis of the surveys revealed:

- All parents believed that the School’s Improvement Plan is aimed to improve the quality of learning to allow all students to achieve at their highest academic level;
• All parents believe that Bald Blair Public School has high expectations of its students and that the school is always exploring and looking for new innovative ways to extend student outcomes;

• All parents, staff and students indicated that the improvement plan was positive, flexible, well sequenced and catered for students with different abilities and learning needs. The plan helps to ensure that lessons are challenging and the learning environment is work oriented, stimulating, supportive, safe, secure and highly conducive to learning.

• All parents and staff believed that the improvement plan helps to provide explicit teaching and learning strategies for all students, professional development to extend staff skills and understanding in a number of KLA’s and careful budgeting allows an extra teacher to be employed to help the students with special needs;

• All parents and staff firmly believe that our priorities should always be literacy, numeracy and integrating technology into all key learning areas; and

• All parents would like to see our school have interactive whiteboards in all rooms.

Future directions

The school improvement plan for 2009-2011 will continue to target literacy, numeracy and technology. The main emphasis in literacy will be writing, working mathematically to solve problems and explicit teaching of literal, inferential and critical comprehension skills.

Teacher professional development will be a high priority and technology will need to be upgraded with the purchase of interactive white boards, a new photocopier and new office and classroom printers.

The school will continue to employ a third teacher for three days per week using its STLA allocation, RFF time and global funds. Band and Japanese will also continue in our next plan.

Curriculum

Band

Background

Each year the school completes an evaluation of one of the key learning areas (KLA’s) and this year band was evaluated.

The Bald Blair Public School P&C generously donates funds to employ a qualified band instructor, Mr Dave Eddy for one and a half hours each Thursday afternoon. Mr Eddy also provides private half hour lessons each Tuesday and Thursday to a number of students.

In November students, staff and parents were asked to respond to a survey or discussion about band. A majority of responses were ‘yes’. The school also did an audit on available band resources and completed a reorganisation of the equipment.

Findings and conclusions

Analysis of the surveys and discussions revealed:

All students, staff and parents strongly believe that students should have the opportunity to participate in a band for a number of reasons including:

• students have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument such as drums, guitar or bongoes;

• students can write their own songs or use well known lyrics;

• it's great fun, challenging, band ‘rocks’, bands a great opportunity;

• students work together as a team making decisions, listening to each other and praising achievements;

• students appreciate the opportunity to work and perform with their friends; and

• it helps develop students self esteem, self confidence and desire to learn and succeed.

All students, staff and parents firmly believe that should be provided with the opportunity to learn a musical instrument other than percussion or recorder and the students be given an opportunity to have private music lessons in class time at school.

The majority of those surveyed agree that students who do private music lessons in class time must catch up on the work that they have missed.
The school community also believe that it is a privilege for students to attend band and those students who misbehave or don’t complete tasks they will not participate.

**Future directions**

The Bald Blair P&C have kindly offered to continue to find this fabulous educational program in 2009. Mr Eddy will also continue to provide private music lessons to those students who wish.

The ‘Band Spectacular’ will occur again in 2009 but at an earlier date in term four so that it’s not so close to the concert. The school and P&C will explore the possibility of having finger food at this next event.

**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.

Analysis of the surveys and discussions revealed that our school has a very positive rapport with parents, students, teachers and community members.

The school is seen as welcoming of all, approachable and responsive. Families regard it as a safe, happy and challenging environment that supports its students across a wide range of quality educational practises.

Student’s performance and behaviour reflect community and teacher expectations that academic excellence, correct behaviour, respect and appropriate manners are important.

Students are the focal point of all the schools explicit teaching and learning programs and all parents and students are proud of their school.

Parents, staff and students believe that the school is continually finding ways to improve what it does and when necessary school leaders make important changes to what it does.

**Professional learning**

All staff engaged in a range of professional learning programs throughout 2008 either at Bald Blair Public School or regional professional learning venues as evidenced by:

- Small School Conference, Tamworth—Literacy with Mem Fox
- Analysing SMART data at Guyra Central School;
- Cashflow in-service at Bald Blair Public School and Black Mountain Public School for SAM and principal;
- NAPLAN writing analysis training Armidale High School;
- STLA conference at Inverell and Glen Innes;
- Principal leadership development has been ongoing throughout 2008 as evidenced by participation in:
  - highland cluster of small school collegial network;
  - ASR writing Armidale TAFE;
  - Good For Kids Good For Life
  - Covey Leadership Course
  - Smart training
  - Rollover training for SAM
  - Counting On
  - Child Protection and Anaphylaxis training
  - regular attendance at Regional, School Education and Primary Principal’s conferences; and
  - coaching a new principal.

The school spent $2635.20 on professional development in 2008.

**School development 2009 – 2011**

Staff at Bald Blair Public School endeavour to provide students with a quality education, reflecting DET priorities, individual learning needs, interests and capabilities and community values.

Students are encouraged to excel in and attempt all set tasks. Co-operation, support and teamwork are highly valued at Bald Blair Public School.

Staff at Bald Blair Public School have high expectations for all students and constantly strive to deliver high quality explicit teaching and learning programs in a safe, fair and respectful environment.

Professionalism of staff at Bald Blair Public School reflect DET policy and school culture.

In turn, it is also expected that students and parents will treat, all staff with appropriate courtesy and behaviour.

Bald Blair Public School students participate in a wide variety of community events within and beyond our local area.

**Parent and Caregiver Involvement in the School**
The school enjoys a high level of parent and community involvement. We view this involvement as an essential element in maintaining a warm, caring and supportive learning environment. The school is the focal point of the community and the P&C plays an active role in the planning and decision making of the school.

The P & C has helped to support the school this year through a major monetary contribution towards the employment of a band instructor for all students in Year 3 – 6 and they also funded our school’s major excursion to Lake Ainsworth Sport and Recreational Centre.

Targets for 2009

Target 1

1. **To improve student stage outcomes in writing through the explicit and systematic teaching of grammar and punctuation, sentence structure and the writing process.**

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Implement the “Reading to Learn” program to improve student knowledge of complex sentence structure, grammar and punctuation;
- Development of a set of expectations outlining the grammar, punctuation, planning and editing skills students should attain at the end of each year level;
- Development of a common understanding amongst staff, students and parents of the writing process;
- professional learning in criteria marking to enhance consistent teacher judgement and;
- professional development in “Reading to Learn”.

Our success will be measured by:

- writing samples marked according to set criteria will reflect improvement for all students,
- increased student engagement in the writing process as measured by teacher observation and student self-evaluation; and
- all year 3 students to be in years band 4 or higher, all year 5 students to achieve at least one band higher than in their year 3 NAPLAN.

Target 2

2. **To improve student stage outcomes in the ‘learning about reading’ outcomes through the explicit and systematic teaching of literal, inferential and critical comprehension skills**

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- development of a common understanding amongst teachers about the different levels of comprehension and how to teach them;
- teaching of literal, inferential and critical comprehension skills in all text types; and
- professional development in using higher order thinking skills to improve reading comprehension of all students.

Our success will be measured by:

- improved student results in comprehension;
- improved student engagement in reading activities as measured by teacher observation and student self-assessment; and
- all year 3 students to be in years band 4 or higher, all year 5 students to achieve at least one band higher than in their year 3 NAPLAN.

Target 3

**Improve deep understanding of mathematical concepts by ensuring students achieve stage outcomes in the working mathematically strand.**

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- development of strategies to explicitly teach working mathematical outcomes;
- professional development in practical maths strategies and the use of higher order thinking skills to increase engagement and deep understanding of mathematical knowledge; and
- use strategies from ‘Exemplary Maths’ to create a bank of meaningful assessment tasks based on quality teaching principles.

Our success will be measured by:

- growth in the number of students achieving stage outcomes,
- increased student engagement in mathematics as measured by teacher observation and student self-evaluation; and
- all year 3 students to be in years band 4 or higher, all year 5 students to achieve at least one band higher than in their year 3 NAPLAN.
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.

Mrs Julie Gittoes, Principal
Mrs Carolann Brown, classroom teacher
Mrs Sally Purvis, RFF teacher/STLA teacher
Mrs Donna Davidson, Senior Administrative Manager
Kate Moffatt, Student representatives
Mr Dan McKemey, P&C President.

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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: