


Ayr State High School

 <p>Motto: "We Strive for Better Things" Est: 1937</p>	PO address	P O Box 961, Ayr QLD 4807
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Principal's foreword

Introduction

Ayr State High School has had a long tradition and a proud history since it was first established in 1937. After the retirement of long serving Principal Mr Jim Wright due to ill health there have been a number of Acting Principals prior to the appointment of Ms Kyle McCutcheon from July 2006 until her sudden departure in November 2008. I, Mr Bill Sperring, a Principal of State High Schools for 22 years was asked to come out of retirement and be Acting Principal for Semester I 2009 to help and assist the school refocus on learning in a safe, orderly and organized environment. I do not have the benefit of a 2007 School Annual Report and this Report for 2008 is written within a context of local level issues and lack of information. It is important to note that within the first 6 months of 2009 the school has moved forward to regain its traditional position and community reputation. Because of an empowered staff and clear directions, progress will continue as the school moves ahead under the stewardship of Jeff Capell, Acting Principal for Semester II and in line with the school motto: "We Strive for Better Things".

Future outlook

As an Acting Principal for the first 6 months of 2009 I can only gauge the past by comparison with the present. The past context of 2008 with a future 2009 outlook is made even more challenging as the past Principal and Acting Deputy Principal departed in the latter part of the 2008 school year. The long serving Deputy Principal is currently overseas on Long Service Leave and the Business Services Manager was appointed in late 2007, and was then not an integral part of the Senior Administration team.

It is evident that the school focus in 2008 was one of change because of a changing population profile in the wider community. For a variety of reasons, as provided to me this year, the school leadership and school as a whole was unable to develop a whole school comprehensive strategy for change and change processes. From my perspective the school needed a clear and articulated philosophy, a consistent, persistent and collaborative approach to meet the needs of the growing diverse community.

During Semester I, 2009 much has been accomplished in relation to staff, students and community and the direction is now set to ensure the great majority of quality students can learn in an orderly and safe environment. The staff has been empowered and as a result the restored faith in their own ability is helping the school to attain its traditional position within the community. Again an energetic younger Principal, Mr Jeff Capell, with the capacity to lead the staff and continue the recovery has been appointed Acting Principal for Semester II, 2009.

Our school at a glance

School Profile

Total student enrolments for this school: 549

Year levels offered: Year 8 – Year 12

Coeducational or single sex: Coeducational

Curriculum offerings

Our distinctive curriculum offerings

- Our distinctive curriculum offerings currently provide a range of pathways with the aim of involving the range of students in the processes of schooling. As the direct relationship between learning and behaviour and associated school practices fractured in 2008 the focus in 2009 has been to strengthen teaching and learning within a context of high expectations, and at the same time focus on responsible behaviour and achievement. A number of programs have been put in place to recognize and celebrate achievement. Curriculum offerings are under review to ensure the learning options for students are more relevant and better cater for wider interests and abilities. To facilitate the curriculum a more flexible timetable will be implemented around a 4-period day to improve pedagogical practices and minimise the loss of learning time through having less class transition time. The academic and vocational curriculum and the operation and extension of SAT's as well as TAFE/other modules of learning are under review.

Extra curricula activities

- Extra curricular activities are part of the social curriculum and complement the academic and vocational learning to build community and active and informed citizens for the future. All students are encouraged to be learners and leaders and this is articulated by:
- A focus on caring for self, others, property and environment through the theme "There is No Excuse for Abuse".
- A comprehensive leadership program where a School Council is comprised of representatives from each year level, a LIP program and which includes Indigenous Vice Captains in 2009.
- A continuing Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme supporter by an active staff and student participation.
- Citizenship activities such as Anzac Day, Charity fundraising and Blood Bank donations.
- Music, Drama, Arts participation and performances.
- A variety of competitions and camps/excursions for students across the KLA's.
- Recognition and celebration of different cultures and with a focus on Indigenous cultures.
- A School Chaplaincy program in part funded by the P & C in 2009.
- Intra-school and inter-school sport as well as sport in the community.

How computers are used to assist learning

Computers are used to assist classroom learning in a variety of active ways. Teachers use computers to prepare, organise and store learning materials to enable a better and more relevant classroom learning context. The active e-learning classroom areas link teacher laptops with data projectors for more effective and relevant learning. As part of this the school has purchased "Clickview" and a P & C expenditure focus has been on the installation of more data projectors in classrooms. The website is currently being completely revamped and will progressively be used as a learning tool.

Our school at a glance

Social climate

The social climate and fabric of the school improved towards the end of 2008 and has improved further in 2009. As a result of the school climate and negative community perception the Year 8 enrolment for 2009 was less than the historically anticipated number. Staff morale and cohesiveness has progressively improved in 2009 and there are clear expectations and consequences for inappropriate student behaviour. The active challenging of Bullying and the associated focus on Harmony and the visible and collective "Harmony Wall of Hands" from Semester I, 2009 has greatly assisted in this process.

The great majority of students continue to learn, be engaged and achieve personal success through a range of school and extra curricular offerings. The school community believes there is "No Excuse for Abuse" and has developed programs which encourage positive behaviours of this sort. Ayr State High School's philosophy is that our school community exists to prepare all students for tomorrow's society as responsible, valued and informed citizens. Our school is a learning place where all members of the community are expected to contribute to a tolerant and safe school environment, where socially, culturally and educationally inclusive opportunities provide learning outcomes for all.

Involving parents in their child's education.

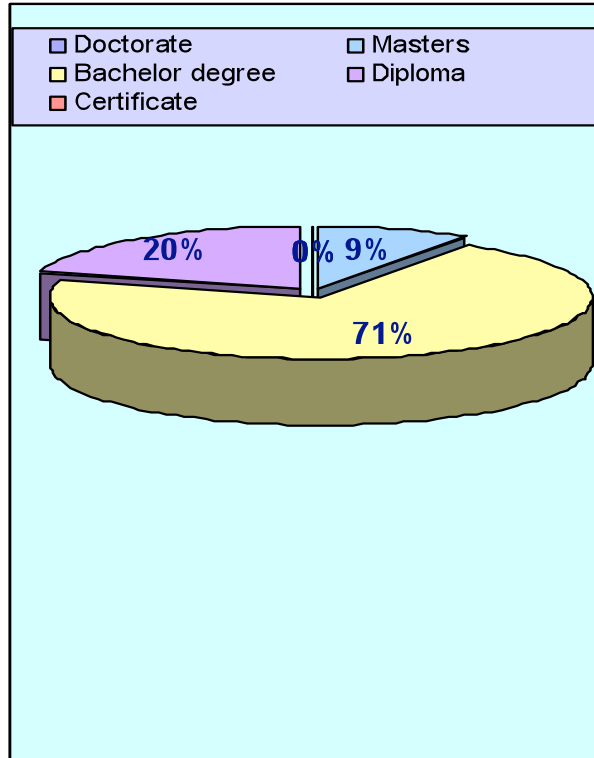
Involving parents as an integral part of the learning partnership is a priority to improve the culture and climate of the school. Within this rural community it is paramount that the school becomes part of the community and likewise the community becomes part of the school. For this status to be achieved it is important that the community perception be matched with the reality. This positive image comes through publicity but more importantly through parents/community members linking with the students/staff in a two-way process.

The school encourages parents into the school through a range of academic and social practices. The Parents and Citizens Association, the official voice of the parents in the school, encourages participation through monthly meetings, Canteen and Music Support Group. A variety of school functions, excursions and sport also assist in involving parents in the school and are in addition to academic reports, parent interviews and direct contact by phone, email or interview. A fortnightly school Newsletter (Ayring) has been enhanced and in 2009 more effectively recognises student participation and achievement. An additional publication Message Lu (stick with a noise) is published and posted to Indigenous parents each term beginning Semester I, 2009. The rebuilding of the school website in 2009 is a further means of involving parents in their child's education. In 2009, additional involvement and communication has been added through the Commendation Award Scheme, letters home to parents recognising Excellent and Very Good Interim Reports. There has been discussion around the involvement of Indigenous parents during the school day and encouragement to parents/caregivers to provide formal or informal feedback to the school.

Our staff profile

Qualifications of all teachers.

Highest level of attainment	Number of classroom teachers and school leaders at the school
Doctorate	0
Masters	4
Bachelor degree	31
Diploma	9
Certificate	0



Expenditure on and teacher participation in professional development.

- The total funds expended on teacher professional development in 2008 was \$25229.19
- The professional development initiatives were a mix of the following:
 - Professional Reading materials for staff reference.
 - Computer Hire Agreement funding for classroom e-learning enhancements.
 - Professional Development in a range of areas involving QTAC and QSA programs, First Aid, Education for Renewal, QCAR and QCAT information sessions, Global learning, Certificate IV in Training and Assessment etc.
- The involvement of the teaching staff in professional development activities during 2008 was 85%.

Average staff attendance

- For permanent and temporary staff and school leaders the staff attendance rate was 97% in 2008.

Proportion of staff retained from the previous school year.

- From the end of the 2007 school year, 87% of staff were retained by the school for the entire 2008 school year.

Performance of our students

Student attendance

The average attendance rate as a percentage in 2008 was 89%.

Key outcomes

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results - our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

Domain	Measures	Yr 9
Reading	Average score for the school	556
	Average score for Queensland	568.2
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	2008 94 %
Writing	Average score for the school	542
	Average score for Queensland	555.3
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	2008 83 %
Spelling	Average score for the school	564
	Average score for Queensland	567.8
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	2008 92 %
Grammar and Punctuation	Average score for the school	550
	Average score for Queensland	563.2
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	2008 82 %
Numeracy	Average score for the school	563
	Average score for Queensland	570.7
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	2008 92 %

Apparent retention rates Year 10 to Year 12.

Year 12 student enrolment as a percentage of the Year 10 student cohort.

64%

Performance of our students

Outcomes for our Year 12 cohort of 2008

Number of students awarded a Senior Statement.	68
Number of students awarded a Queensland Certificate Individual Achievement (QCIA).	0
Number of students awarded a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) at the end of Year 12.	48
Number of students awarded an International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD).	0
Number of students awarded one or more Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications.	27
Number of students who are completing or completed a School-based Apprenticeship or Traineeship (SAT).	10
Number of students receiving an Overall Position (OP).	31
Percentage of OP/ IBD eligible students with OP 1-15 or an IBD.	74%
Percentage of Year 12 students who are completing or completed a SAT or were awarded one or more of the following: QCE, IBD, VET qualification.	79%
Percentage of Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) applicants receiving a tertiary offer.	96%

Post-school destination information

At the time of publishing this School Annual Report, the results of the 2008 Year 12 post-school destinations survey, Next Step – Student Destination Report for the school were not available. Information about these post-school destinations of our students will be incorporated into this Report in September.

Value added

In partnership with the community the large majority of quality students achieve and enter the community to contribute and be employed, informed and active citizens.

From the partnership, students obtain local employment and apprenticeships to keep their communities very viable. A range of vocational pathways at school assists the value adding process.

One of the more significant challenges is to progressively include indigenous students and households and also progressively add more value to the local wider community. A number of initiatives have begun in 2009 and these need to be progressively built on in the future to further add value.

Performance of our students

Parent, student and teacher satisfaction with the school

Parent Satisfaction

Parent responses indicated they were satisfied with the subject offerings, the teaching methodology, the climate of the school, learning environment and relationships. The responses to the level of resources in the school was significantly above the average for the state and like schools. The official data was collated from around half of parent responses and may or may not be a true reflection of the status quo. Given the significant events later in the 2008 school year it is more likely that the limited number of responses was not a true representative sampling of parents.

Student Satisfaction

Overall student satisfaction reflects the state average, in the two areas of Curriculum and Resources. Students generally believe Ayr State High School has a good range of subject offerings and good access to resources. In the areas of "Learning" and "School Climate" students were least satisfied, and much has been done in 2009 to improve these areas.

Staff Satisfaction

Given the context of 2008, it is no surprise that overall staff responses are below the state average in all areas except the single area of Support Resources and Training. In the two critical areas of "Staff Morale" and "Relationships" the data is measurably lower than the Like Schools Benchmarks. This clearly indicates that there is much work to be done around the area of "Relationships" for all staff in the school and to value their work, and this should then be reflected in an improvement in "Staff Morale".

Much planning and work effort has gone into this area in Semester I, 2009 and survey results should reflect a change in the 2009 data.

General Comment

Given the earlier time of data collection in 2008 and the points of crisis reached in November 2008 I am confident from my experiences in Semester I, 2009 that the data did not reflect the reality. Much current verbal and written data from each of the three groups indicates that the current satisfaction for all is much, much better. As the changes in direction of the school continue and are enhanced in Semester II, 2009 the official data for the 2009 School Annual Report should be much improved.

Mr William (Bill) Sperring

A/Principal – Semester I, 2009