2009 Annual School Report
Towamba Public School

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

Towamba Public School is an inclusive, welcoming and friendly school, supported by a close-knit community where students receive a dynamic education and are provided with opportunities to foster individual talents and interests. It is a small rural school located on the Far South Coast of New South Wales, servicing the towns of Towamba, Burrage and Pericoe.

Our talented, motivated and caring staff inspire children to have a love of learning using innovative and challenging educational programs including; a comprehensive creative and performing arts program, community radio, technology, garden and cooking clubs and specialized physical education.

Strong emphasis is placed on the skills of literacy and numeracy with advanced technology used as an integral part of all subjects.

We pride ourselves on developing social conscience in students in partnership with a vibrant and forward thinking Parents and Citizens Association and local community groups.

Towamba Public School contains extensive grounds incorporating a multipurpose court, fixed play equipment, covered outdoor learning area, student garden, multi-functional school hall and comprehensive library and technology resources including a computer for every child and Interactive White Boards in every classroom.

School infrastructure to support the learning needs of students, particularly in the area of technology has been boosted with the installation of over 20 new computers and 2 Interactive White Boards. The school has also enjoyed the completion of a number of minor capital works, funded through the National School Pride program.

The further development of programs such as Towamba Valley Radio, the Garden Club, Art and Craft Day, combined excursions and sports days, NAIDOC celebrations, Peer Support and a number of charity fundraisers has contributed to the holistic education of students at Towamba and continued to be strongly supported by the P&C.

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.

Gareth Hockings - Principal

Messages

Principal's message

2009 is a year to be proud of for all those involved with Towamba Public School. A number of achievements, across all areas of school life, can be attributed to the hard work and dedication of high quality teachers and support staff; the valuable, vibrant contribution of parents and the wider community; and the positive attitude of students towards their school and personal learning.

P&C message

The P&C has been well supported by both parents and community members throughout 2009 and maintained a positive and proactive role within the school.

This year the P&C contributed funding towards an interactive whiteboard which is currently being used in the K12 classroom. P&C also purchased a new keyboard and bass guitar in support of the school’s popular music program. Under the guidance of Sam Martin, the music teacher, Towamba had its first school band which performed at school assemblies and as part of the SCLC performance at Eden High.

The garden and cooking program run by parents has continued to flourish, encouraging children to make healthy lifestyle choices, and grow and cook their own food. Parent involvement has remained strong with support in the classroom, canteen, and at fundraising and sporting events. The major fundraiser for this year was catering for the zone athletics carnival – a considerable achievement for a small school.

In 2010 P&C is aiming to continue to foster its close links with the school and local community to achieve positive outcomes for our children and promote public education.

Ruth Hamilton – P&C President

Student representative’s message

In 2009 the school had a student parliament for the first time. It was made up with Stage 3 students and each person had a special ministerial role. We organised and helped with
many activities including Jeans for Genes Day, UNICEF Cup, technology days, Art and Craft Day and visiting performances.

This year the Stage 3 kids went to Canberra for the main excursion and next year we are all looking forward to the Sport and Rec Camp.

We enjoyed school this year and we look forward to more fun learning experiences next year.

Wally Samuels-Connell and Douglas Caldwell

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 2009 class size audit conducted on Wednesday 18 March 2009.

<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>2-6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-1</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structure of classes

Classes have been structured to maximize the educational opportunities for all students.

Early Stage 1/Stage 1 Kinder/1
Stage 1/Stage 2/Stage3 Years 2/3/4/5/6

Student enrolment profile

Student attendance profile

Management of non-attendance

Towamba Public School enjoys a high level of student engagement and attendance. Non-attendance is handled as per the school policy, requiring parents to provide a valid reason for student absentees. If necessary, students can be referred to the Home School Liaison Officer for further support.

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>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>Part Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>Part Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>Part Time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Towamba Public School does not have any indigenous staff members.

Teacher qualifications
All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.
100% of teachers have appropriate teaching qualifications.

Financial summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary:</th>
<th>30/11/2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>195,893.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>59,980.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>48,899.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>4,112.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>8,721.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>3,045.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>320,652.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expenditure**            |            |
| Teaching & learning        |            |
| Key learning areas         | 5,965.70   |
| Excursions                 | 0.00       |
| Extracurricular dissections| 4,649.58   |
| Library                    | 1,938.87   |
| Training & development     | 1,028.39   |
| Tied funds                 | 161,885.81 |
| Casual relief teachers     | 3,207.11   |
| Administration & office    | 16,942.11  |
| School-operated canteen    | 0.00       |
| Utilities                  | 4,152.06   |
| Maintenance                | 11,866.81  |
| Trust accounts             | 3,045.55   |
| Capital programs           | 0.00       |
| **Total expenditure**      | 214,681.99 |
| **Balance carried forward**| 105,970.93 |

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

Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

**School performance 2009**

**Achievements – Arts**

Towamba Public School places great emphasis on the creative and performing arts. All students participate in a whole school music program including singing, guitar and keyboard instruction as well as having the opportunity to be part of the school choir.

Students developed confidence in performing in front of an audience and student engagement continued to improve.

Opportunities to display the school’s growing strengths in creative and performing arts included:

- Art and craft day where teachers, parents and community members instructed students in the art of woodwork, copper work, mosaics, tie-dying and ceramics;
- Choir and musical performances both in and out of school, including the inaugural Sapphire Coast Learning Community Performing Arts Festival;
- School musical performed in front of large community gathering;
- State-wide visual arts competitions and displays, including the Golden Paw Awards in which Towamba Students excelled.

**Sport**

Sport and Physical Education is a highly valued component of the curriculum and is supported by a daily fitness program. Throughout the year, students had the opportunity to participate in a variety of sporting events. Our major sporting event was the CAP Cluster Athletics Carnival in which our student achievement was considerable.
Student achievement in 2009 – Academic

In the National Assessment Program, the results across Years 3 and 5 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 8.

The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in the assessments.

Yr 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest)
Yr 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest)

The reporting of information must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies. Ten or more students must complete NAPLAN for individual school skill band data to be publicly reported.

At Towamba Public School eight Year 3 and five Year 5 students sat the NAPLAN assessment tests in 2009. Therefore their results cannot be provided in this report. All parents have been advised of their child’s achievements.

Should parents require more information about their child’s performance they are again urged to contact the school.

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 cannot be reported in this report, due to confidentiality surrounding the small number of cohorts in those year levels.

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

At Towamba Public School programs are delivered to raise awareness, understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal culture, history and contemporary Aboriginal Australia including Acknowledgment of Country at all assemblies and formal gatherings.

Celebrations were held during NAIDOC Week which included the NPWS and Bournda EEC as well as participation in a “Sorry Day” assembly and a talk from a local Aboriginal Elder.

Multicultural education

As part of the cultural diversity and community relations policy, the school recognises the need to focus on multicultural education as part of all curriculum areas. Students study and learn about other countries and cultures from around the world.

Respect and responsibility

Towamba Public School is respected by its community for providing a learning environment that is both safe and caring. This culture of respect for self and others has developed through the further development of the school welfare policy and philosophy, which encourages all school personnel to recognise the necessity to value others; stay focused and on task; learn with a sense of fun; and make appropriate choices.

The implementation of a peer support program and School Parliament also promote group work, resilience and respect.

Country Areas Program (CAP)

Country Areas Program (CAP) is part of the Equity Directorate. Its objective is to help schools and school communities improve the educational outcomes and opportunities of students who are educationally disadvantaged because of geographical isolation.


As a direct result of our participation in CAP the school has achieved the following outcomes:

- An improved school culture;
- More effective use of technology across all curriculum areas;
- A consistent approach to quality teaching and learning.
Progress on 2009 targets - Target 1

*Increased levels of literacy achievement for every student in line with the State Plan targets*

Our achievements include:

- Teachers received training in SMART data analysis
- Teachers evaluated school and individual student performance in reading using NAPLAN results, BEST START and class assessments; identify areas of need and programmed accordingly and collaboratively
- Purchase of resources to assist in compilation to teaching programs to address identified areas of need
- Utilisation of Teacher Aide to assist identified students raise literacy outcomes
- Purchase of new reading material for students with a focus on different text types
- Purchase of new resources aimed at improving spelling outcomes K-6
- Sharing of assessment tasks for Literacy K-6
- Streamed literacy groups utilising explicit teaching strategies
- Access to CAP and regional professional learning

Target 2

*Increased levels of numeracy achievement for every student in line with the State Plan targets*

Our achievements include:

- Numerous professional learning and up skilling in numeracy for all teaching staff
- Revision of assessment procedures, including the development of assessment rubrics
- Integration of technology into maths lessons
- Purchase of appropriate resources to support concept of problem solving lessons

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 2009 our school carried out evaluations of Numeracy and Leadership.

Curriculum – Background

A rigorous and comprehensive school situational analysis was conducted, involving staff, students and the wider school community. Data was collated from a number of sources including NAPLAN, forums and interviews.

Findings and conclusions

- NAPLAN Data could be used more thoroughly to identify needs and support teaching
- Assessment practices across the school in numeracy are inconsistent
- Current Numeracy programs are having a positive impact on school performance
- Parents identified a lack of knowledge of how to support their children at home with numeracy

Future directions

- Whole school SMART Data training
- Identify outcomes where students have performed above/below state average
- Identify teaching and learning strategies to improve outcomes of students
- The teaching staff with STLA develop numeracy assessment scope and sequence to map appropriate tasks across K-6
- Further develop model of explicit teaching strategies delivered to stage appropriate groups
- Offer parent education classes on family numeracy
- Provide information through newsletters

Educational and management practice

Background

A rigorous and comprehensive school situational analysis was conducted, involving staff, students and the wider school community. Data was collated from a number of sources including NAPLAN, forums and interviews.

Findings and conclusions

- School leadership could be enhanced with further professional development
- Not all staff aware of the implications and importance of the school plan and target

Future directions

- School leaders undergo professional development through study and exposure to best practice environments
• Staff to revisit the school plan each term
• School Targets to be included in teaching programs and become an integral part of the TARS process

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction
In 2009 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented below.
• Most responses were positive and reflected the confidence the parental community has in the school and the school’s personnel
• There was a general feeling that teaching staff work in collaboration with each other and include parents and broader community where appropriate
• The school is able to provide individualised care and education
• Parents receive information about education from a combination of newsletters, reports and speaking with their children. This is an area which could be improved

Professional learning
Towamba Public School staff were involved in quality professional learning activities during 2009. They attended opportunities provided by the Department of Education, Country Areas Program and TAFE NSW. They ranged from technology to Makaton Sign Language to literacy and numeracy.

School development days were utilised to provide planning for the school year, and attend a combined Sapphire Coast Learning Community day.

School development 2009 – 2011
Towamba students will grow in literacy and numeracy. They will experience quality teaching that incorporates technology to support learning while the staff has the opportunity to develop teaching and leadership skills through real projects. The school will be safe, environmentally sustainable and offer new student support structures.

Targets for 2010 – Target 1

Increased levels of literacy achievement for every student in line with the State Plan targets

Strategies to achieve this target include:
• Engage students in a school reading program, tracking and monitoring progress
• Explicit teaching strategies to meet appropriate syllabus outcomes in writing
• Review scope and sequence of spelling in reference to teaching 4 areas of spelling based on NAPLAN results
• Engage students in a school spelling program, tracking and monitoring progress
• Streamed literacy groups utilising explicit teaching strategies
• Access professional learning (CAP, DET & Other)
• Purchase appropriate and specific resources to support literacy targets
• Investigate implementation of Sentence a Day Program
• Develop and implement Assessment Scope and Sequence to guide teaching programs
• Utilise NAPLAN teaching strategies for students in Year 2-6
• SLST allocation is utilised to support identified students in aspects of literacy

Our success will be measured by:
• NAPLAN analysis indicates an increase in the percentage of students achieving above a minimal level of growth in literacy
  o Reading (2009 baseline 75% of students grew by more than the minimal level)
  o Writing (2009 baseline 0% of students grew by more than the minimal level)
• Students display growth in standard semester reports K-6
• Pre- and Post-Test school data demonstrates improvement K-6

Target 2

Increased levels of numeracy achievement for every student in line with the State Plan targets

Strategies to achieve this target include:
• Utilise existing resources to collate and share rich assessment tasks in numeracy
• Access Professional Learning (CAP, DET, TOWN, etc.)
• Individualised maths programs utilising explicit teaching strategies
• Analyse Year 7 Numeracy NAPLAN data for students transitioning to feeder high school
• SLST time allocated on a 50:50 basis with literacy in supporting numeracy
• Dedicated staff and network meetings to discuss the teaching of numeracy
• Release teachers to implement literacy and numeracy goals – Quality teaching journey – access to planning time
• Parent information sessions to build knowledge of how to support children with numeracy at home

Our success will be measured by:
• NAPLAN analysis indicates an increase in the percentage of students achieving above a minimal level of growth in numeracy (2009 baseline 50%)
• Students display growth in standard semester reports K-6
• Pre- and Post-Test school data demonstrates improvement K-6
• Staff accessing professional learning in line with school targets to improve student learning outcomes

Art and Craft Day
• Due to the high level of commitment from local community members, the Art and Craft Day was extremely successful.
• Students produced a variety of interesting pieces of art/craft including; wall hangings, mosaic designs, tye dyed shirts, wooden chairs, pottery pieces, lino prints and felting.
• All students, community members and staff enjoyed the interactive day.

Community Involvement
The school’s local community continues to support all school programs. Due to the strong partnership that exists between school and community all initiatives continue to be successful.

Special Celebrations
Students engaged in a number of successful special activities in 2009.

Easter Parade
• In 2009, aspects of Easter were celebrated with a hat parade, which captured the imagination of the students.
• Parents and the wider community enjoyed an assembly which included the singing group, followed by the hat parade. After sharing their creative talents at the parade, the students enjoyed the sausage sizzle which was provided by the P & C.

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.

Gareth Hockings  Principal
Trish Castillo  School Admin Manager
Ruth Hamilton  P&C President

School contact information
Towamba Public School
Towamba St, Towamba, NSW 2550
Ph: 02 6495 7159
Fax: 02 6495 7059
Email: towamba-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au
School Code: 3252

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: http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/asr