Messages

Principal’s message
This has been a somewhat stressful year for Somerton Public School. We started the year with fewer students than we needed to maintain two teachers, causing anxiety and grief in the school and community. Despite the organisational changes that had to be made, the students settled into the new routine of the school very quickly. Throughout this process we have maintained the focus on student learning and all our students continue to be pushed to reach their full potential. We are very proud of the academic opportunities we provide and of the progress made by all students at Somerton. An integral part of our school community is our P&C. I would like to thank them for providing the resources, transport and financial assistance which enables the school to continue to offer our students such a wide range of activities and programs. To conclude, I would like to pay tribute to the great team of people who staff Somerton Public School. Their commitment to the students is outstanding. Thank you.

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.

Karen Turner

P & C message
Thank you to everyone who has came along to meetings and to everyone who has helped raise funds for the school this year. The money made from the fund raising efforts have helped the children from Somerton attend an excursion to Green Valley Farm; subsidised the Swim School which starts on the 2nd December; and bought items that the students or the school needs during the year. We appreciate the dedication of those parents who have given up their free time so the children of Somerton Public School can enjoy these activities.

Thank you to Karen Turner, Karen George and to Pam Cupples for all their hard work during the year. Thank you also to Helen Schumann for all her work in ensuring the school office operates so smoothly.

As this is my last year at Somerton Public School, I would like to thank all the staff and parents who have made us feel so welcome.

Donna Tunbridge

Student representative’s message
The SRC held a variety of fund raising events in 2011 and had a very successful year raising $367. We appreciate the way the school community supported all our activities. I would like to thank my fellow SRC representatives for their help throughout the year:

Kindergarten - Luke Mudd
Year 1 - Tayla Yates
Year 3 - Andrew Harrison
Year 4 - Peter Rule
Year 6 - Logan Tunbridge
Breanna Taylor (Year 5)
**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**

At 23, the school enrolment fell below the number needed to maintain a second teacher at the beginning of 2011. A number of families moved from the area, 5 students went on to High School and our kindergarten enrolment was 3. Losing our second full time teacher, and more families moving, has since impacted on enrolments with 16 students currently attending Somerton PS.

**Student attendance profile**

Somerton PS continues to have a very high level of student attendance across all year groups. Partial attendances still occur however, as parents pick students up early or drop them off late due to appointments in one of our larger service towns or cities.

**Management of non-attendance**

Somerton Public School follows the Attendance policy and procedures provided by the Department of Education and Community.

Parents notify the school by letter or telephone if their child has been or is going to be absent. If the school does not receive this notification, a note is sent home requesting parents provide justification for their child's absence.
### Class sizes

Primary class sizes are included in the annual school report in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible. The following table shows our class sizes as reported at the 2011 Class Size Audit conducted on Monday 21 March 2011.

<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>LOWER</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOWER</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPPER</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPPER</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPPER</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPPER</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Structure of classes

We currently have two separate multi-stage classes for Literacy, Numeracy, Science and HSIE. The lower division class is currently made up of 8 students from Kindergarten, Year One and Year Two, while the upper division class has 8 students from Year Three to Year Six. These classes are combined for three afternoons a week for Creative and Practical Arts, Personal Development, Health, Assemblies and Sport.

In both classes, the continued focus is on explicit and systematic teaching, enabling students to access stage appropriate learning outcomes. Because there are so few students in each year group, each child has his or her own Individual Learning Plan for Literacy and Numeracy.

### Staff information

Because the school enrolment fell below the number needed to maintain a second teacher at the beginning of 2011, there have been changes to staffing. It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Somerton Public School currently has a teaching principal and one full time temporary teacher (supplemented by regional and school funds) also responsible for library and the release from face to face teaching component. We have a Senior Administration Manager (SAM) for five days a fortnight and a General Assistant (GA) one day a week. The school had access to the services of a School Counsellor for six days in 2011, and allocated funds from the school budget to employ a School Learning Support Officer (SLSO) for nine hours a week.

### Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Time Teacher</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Teacher RFF</td>
<td>0.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small School Supplementation</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative Manager</td>
<td>0.496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Assistant</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.326</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on Indigenous composition of their workforce. The temporary teacher employed at Somerton from term two of 2011 is of Aboriginal heritage.

### Staff retention

The principal, SAM, GA, and SLSO have remained the same throughout this year, although the SAM’s hours have been reduced by one day a week. At the end of term one the school dropped a full time classroom teaching position and the teacher librarian hours were reduced, as were the Part-Time and RFF entitlements.
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>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A large part of our extracurricular expenditure was the employment of a Learning Support Officer to work with students in the classroom for sixteen hours a week in term one and nine hours per week from term two. The temporary teacher was also partially funded through the school’s teaching principal’s release budget as a casual relief teacher.

A tied grant of $20,000 was received from the Premier’s Sporting Challenge to upgrade our sporting facilities and was used to erect a cover over the fixed equipment. The school also received an advance of $5,000 from the 2012 National Partnerships Low SES funds to enable staff to complete a situational analysis and prepare school improvement plans for 2012.

A full copy of the school’s 2011 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

Financial summary

Date of financial summary: 30/11/2011

Income $
Balance brought forward 10923.97
Global funds 42126.37
Tied funds 36626.50
School & community sources 6727.57
Interest 1216.19
Trust receipts 252.50
Canteen 0.00
Total income 97873.10

Expenditure
Teaching & learning
Key learning areas 3024.29
Excursions 5702.39
Extracurricular dissections 12156.80
Library 664.86
Training & development 72.72
Tied funds 31893.41
Casual relief teachers 5860.73
Administration & office 15238.85
School-operated canteen 0.00
Utilities 7903.34
Maintenance 4200.94
Trust accounts 252.50
Capital programs 0.00
Total expenditure 86970.83
Balance carried forward 10902.27
School performance 2011

Achievements

Arts
During the year students participated in a range of events designed to showcase their talents. Our activities in this area included:

- Performing dances and songs for the CWA Country of Study Luncheon and Christmas Luncheon.
- Entering artworks in the Currabubula Small Schools art competition where students secured a number of awards.
- Taking part in the group bush dance Waves of Bondi at the New England Performing Arts showcase CAPERS.
- Performing music, drama and dance items for the Somerton community at our annual Presentation Night.

Sport
Sport is an integral part of school life at Somerton, fostering health and wellbeing through participation in physical activity and developing the skills necessary to play a wide range of sports. Our success is reflected in the positive attitude of students towards sport. Our achievements include:

- Students were successful at our Bective Small Schools Carnivals - Thomas Armstrong was Senior Boys Athletics Champion.
- Katie Swain and Thomas Armstrong representing our school at the Zone Swimming Carnival with Thomas going on the represent the Region at the State Carnival in Homebush.
- Peter Rule and Thomas Armstrong representing our school at the Zone Athletics Carnival with Thomas also going on the represent the Region at the State Athletics Carnival.

Other

- Somerton hosted a group of small schools for the Questacon Science Circus at the end of term one.
- We joined Pilliga PS and Carroll PS at Lake Keepit Sport and Recreation camp for a day of archery, low ropes activities and rock climbing in term two.
- Our Year 6 boys came fourth in the Tamworth Chess Competition, competing against teams from much larger primary schools.
Academic

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3 and 5 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 these 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)

Because results cannot be reported in a manner which enables the results of individual students to be identified; percentage in band will not be reported as each cohort has less than 10 students.

Literacy and Numeracy –

NAPLAN Year 3

The number of students in Year 3 completing the National Assessment Program was too small to guarantee that students could not be individually identified through comments on the results of these tests.

Literacy and Numeracy –

NAPLAN Year 5

The number of students in Year 5 completing the National Assessment Program was too small to guarantee that students could not be individually identified through comments on the results of these tests.

Progress in literacy & numeracy

The number of students in Year 5 completing the National Assessment Program was too small to guarantee that students could not be individually identified through comments on the results of these tests.

Minimum standards

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

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Significant programs and initiatives**

**Aboriginal education**
Somerton Public School provides programs which educate all students about Aboriginal history, culture and contemporary Aboriginal Australia. Aboriginal education is embedded in classroom programs and practices.

This year students were once again involved in the study of Aboriginal culture. The senior class researched significant Aboriginals, learned about the stolen generation, and studied the traditional heritage of Aboriginal Australians.

We combined with another local small school, Carroll PS, to celebrate NAIDOC week where students had the opportunity to handle Aboriginal weapons, and taste native meats such as crocodile, kangaroo and emu.

**Multicultural education**
Somerton Public School continues to maintain a focus on multicultural education. In all areas of the curriculum we provide programs which develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for a diverse society.

**National partnership programs**
Somerton Public School will receive National Partnership funding in 2012 to support students from a low SES community. During Term 4 the school community conducted a situational analysis to determine the most effective way to use this funding.

**Other programs**

**Our Excursions**
This year all students took part in two small excursions. In Term 3, as part of our unit on Transport we travelled to Werris Creek and back on the train. The students particularly loved visiting the driver and blowing the whistle.

In Term 4 we took an overnight excursion to Green Valley Farm. The water slide was the highlight for all age groups, but the animals, the museum and the other play equipment were also very popular.

**Drama**
Mr Joaquin Povea, the Drama teacher from our local secondary school, Peel High School, visited Somerton PS every Wednesday in Term 1 this year. He presented a range of enjoyable lessons for the senior class where students learned some basic drama skills, as well as having the opportunity to learn to juggle.
Progress on 2011 targets

These targets are directly related to those in our School Improvement Plan 2009-2011, which has been developed in consultation with the school community. The School Improvement Plan can be viewed by contacting the school principal.

Target 1
All students will demonstrate an improvement in spelling, and language conventions in all aspects of their work.

Our achievements include:
- Both year 3 and year 5 students were above state level for writing in NAPLAN.
- Student work samples demonstrate improved ability to recognize incorrect spelling and grammar in written text.
- Teachers continue to implement Accelerated Literacy teaching practices with a focus on spelling, punctuation and grammar through good literature.
- Best Start assessment data is used to inform teaching and track student progress in Early Stage 1 and Stage 1.
- Employing a School Learning Support Officer for nine hours a week to support all forms of literacy in the classroom.
- Placing an emphasis on the correct use of language conventions in all aspects of student work.

Target 2
All students will demonstrate improved oral presentation skills.

Our achievements include:
- Teachers focusing on speaking and listening outcomes in both classrooms.
- Best Start assessment data used to inform teaching and track student progress in Early Stage 1 and Stage 1.
- Employing a School Learning Support Officer for nine hours a week to support all forms of literacy in both classrooms.
- Giving students opportunities for oral speaking on a regular basis, with an emphasis on organization and clarity.
- Combining with other small schools so students have the opportunity to speak to a wider audience.
- Making short films and presentations that require students to clearly articulate a concept or a process.
- An increased number of students have the confidence to speak in public.
- Student work samples demonstrate an improvement in confidence, clarity and cohesion.
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 2011 our school carried out evaluations of Teaching and Learning and Writing.

Educational and management practice

Teaching and Learning

Background

Parents, students and staff were surveyed in Term 3, 2011 as part of our situational analysis for National Partnerships. The survey assessed the degree to which the respondents felt that teaching and learning was the priority at Somerton PS. All staff and students took part in the survey, and 75% of families took the opportunity to respond to the written survey.

Findings and conclusions:

- Respondents overwhelmingly felt the school valued their help and interest; they were comfortable talking to staff about their child’s learning; and the school provided valuable information about their child’s progress.
- Only 22% of respondents rated high expectations of students as Strongly Agree compared to 67% who rated it as Agree and 11% who didn’t know.
- Half of the respondents also rated sharing the education of their child lower (from Strongly Agree to Agree).

Future directions

- Encourage greater community involvement in school planning and policy development
- Consult more widely with the community on matters relating to teaching and learning
- Develop a strong partnership with the local AECG
- Work in with local schools to access specialist maths/music staff
- Use video conferencing to access specialist teacher's who are unable to travel
- Provide students with opportunities to travel to other schools to access specialist learning opportunities

Writing

Background

Parents, students and staff were surveyed in Term 3, 2011 as part of our situational analysis for National Partnerships. The survey assessed the degree to which the respondents felt that the teaching of writing was successful at Somerton PS. All staff and students took part in the survey, and 75% of families took the opportunity to respond to the written survey.
Findings and conclusions

- All of the families who responded strongly agreed students were given good access to technology resources and programs.

- Responding families felt writing was an important subject and that their child was developing new skills in grammar, punctuation, writing and spelling.

- Families who responded were interested in being more involved in the teaching and learning of their child’s writing.

- The majority of the students surveyed recognized the importance of improving their skills in writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Future directions

- Individual learning plans for all students targeting identified areas for improvement

- Provide teacher training in teaching and learning strategies to improve outcomes of all students

- Employ a School Learning Support Officer to support quality teaching strategies in the classroom

- Incorporate teaching strategies from SMART data for identified outcomes into teaching and learning programs

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

Parents, students and staff were surveyed in Term 3, 2011 as part of our situational analysis for National Partnerships. The survey assessed the degree to which the respondents felt satisfied with Somerton PS. All staff and students took part in the survey, and 75% of families took the opportunity to respond to the written survey.

Respondents felt that the school made them feel welcome, valued their input and cared about them and their child.

Parents are satisfied with the way the teaching staff and school culture cater for the needs of their children, and recognize the unique opportunities the school presents for all students.

Professional learning

- Staff at Somerton Public School took part professional learning activities throughout 2010 including:

  - School development days in terms 1 and 4 where all teachers took part in professional learning activities including Child Protection, Emergency Care and Resuscitation, Asthma and First Aid.

  - New England Region Small Schools Conference in Moree at the beginning of Term 3, where staff learned about new digital technologies including film making and iPod use in the classroom.
School planning 2012—2014

The school planning policy provides direction for the preparation and implementation of school plans including the identification of priority areas, intended outcomes and targets that are consistent with the NSW State Plan and the Department’s planning documents.

School priority 1

Outcome for 2012–2014

Improve student writing by improving their spelling, grammar and punctuation skills.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- Increase the school average percentage of year 3 students in bands 5 & 6 for spelling by 10% in 2010-2012 compared to 2008-2010.
- Increase the school average percentage of year 3 students in band 6 for grammar & punctuation by 10% in 2010-2012 compared to 2008-2010.
- Improve the average progress in spelling for year 5 students by 10 points in 2010-2012 compared to 2008-2010.
- Improve the average progress in grammar and punctuation for year 5 students by 10 points in 2010-2012 compared to 2008-2010.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Train principal, teacher & SLSO in the teaching of grammar and punctuation through literature, and in understanding student achievement standards to align with implementation of the National Curriculum in 2013.
- Employ SLSO to support classroom practice in the school’s multi stage context.
- Identify target students in need of support from the SLSO.
- Ensure all Aboriginal students and students at risk have a Personalised Learning Plan which is developed with parents and/or caregivers and is updated each term.
- Provide parent/carer workshops in spelling, grammar and punctuation to raise their knowledge of expected outcomes for students in writing and how to support student writing at home.

School priority 2

Outcome for 2012–2014

Improve student ability to work mathematically and problem solve.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- Increase the school average percentage of year 3 students in band 6 for numeracy by 10% in 2010-2012 compared to 2008-2010.
- Increase the school average percentage of year 5 students in band 8 for numeracy by 10% in 2010-2012 compared to 2008-2010.
- Improve the average progress in numeracy for year 5 students by 10 points in 2010-2012 compared to 2008-2010.
Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Train principal, teacher & SLSO in the teaching of problem solving using NEALS Analysis strategies, and in understanding student achievement standards to align with implementation of the National Curriculum in 2013.
- Purchase working mathematically and problem solving resources as needed.
- Employ SLSO to support classroom practice in the school’s multi stage context.
- Identify target students in need of support from the SLSO.
- Ensure all Aboriginal students and students at risk have a Personalised Learning Plan which is developed with parents and/or caregivers and is updated each term.
- Provide parent/carer workshops in Mathematics to raise their knowledge of expected outcomes for students and how to support students at home in Mathematics.

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.

Karen Turner - Principal
Karen George - Classroom Teacher
Helen Schumann - SAM
Donna Tunbridge - P&C Rep
Breanna Taylor - SRC

School contact information

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Fax: 02 67697400
Email: somerton-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au
School Code: 3079

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: