School context statement

Blacktown Girls High School is an inclusive school with an enrolment of both academically selective students and local comprehensive students totalling 710. The school presents a vibrant culture of achievement, opportunity and success with the staff also delivering outstanding enrichment programs including Future Problem Solving, Robotics, Creative Arts and Sport.

All pathways to university, TAFE and work are studied and promoted. The HSC program includes vocational education and, work placements and traineeships leading to industry accreditation and certification.

The School has 4% Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students and 70% of students from a language background other than English, a significant number of whom are refugees. We embrace and celebrate cultural diversity and provide proactive programs promoting respect, tolerance and anti-bullying which together with a caring staff, allows students to feel safe, happy and committed to achieving their best. Equity programs to support Refugees, students from a language background other than English and Indigenous students are also delivered by staff and outside agencies.

In NAPLAN results, the school is now performing equal to or slightly better than “schools serving students from a statistically similar background”. In the HSC the school is seen as adding a high level of value to students. This is evident for each group of students ie the high performing the, middle performing and the low performing students.

Student information

Student enrolment profile

![Enrolments](image)

Enrolment has been steady over the previous three years with a total student enrolment in 2014 of 710 students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>92.2</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>95.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>91.4</td>
<td>89.6</td>
<td>92.4</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>85.4</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>88.6</td>
<td>90.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>83.0</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>84.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>84.7</td>
<td>84.4</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>86.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>89.6</td>
<td>81.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>89.0</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>90.2</td>
<td>89.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>89.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

State DEC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>88.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attendance has remained approximately equal to the State average and only slightly below the previous year.

Post-school destinations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-school destinations</th>
<th>Year 11</th>
<th>Year 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>seeking employment</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employment</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE entry</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>university entry</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

43% of Year 12 students were enrolled in a vocational course. These courses are delivered both at school and at local Institutes.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent Vocational educational qualification

97% of students attained an HSC or equivalent. The remaining 3% were enrolled in Year 12 but in a non HSC course. The school offers a full–time non HSC option for students in both Year 11 & 12.

Workforce information

Workforce composition
There are no Aboriginal workers at the school.

**Teacher qualifications**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Professional learning and teacher accreditation**

[Enter text here.]

**Beginning Teachers**

2 staff were accredited with Professional Competence during the year.

**Financial summary**

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

**Financial Summary for the Year Ended 31 December 2014 (Blacktown Girls High School)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014 Actual ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opening Balance</strong></td>
<td>(600,271)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
<td>(7,619,565)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriation</td>
<td>(7,357,801)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of Goods and Services</td>
<td>(18,305)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants and Contributions</td>
<td>(229,288)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Income</td>
<td>(14,171)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain and loss</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Revenue</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expenses</strong></td>
<td>7,576,846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recurrent Expenses</td>
<td>7,576,846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Related Expenses</td>
<td>7,003,014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Expenses</td>
<td>573,832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Expenses</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surplus/Deficit for the Year</strong></td>
<td>(42,719)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance Carried Forward</strong></td>
<td>(642,990)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* date source: Schools Finance - Learning and Business

**Financial Summary for the Year Ended 31 December 2014 (Blacktown Girls High School)**

A full copy of the school’s 2014 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School P&C Meeting. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

**School performance 2014**

**Academic achievements**

**NAPLAN**

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 these assessments.

Year 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)
Year 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing (NAPLAN).

Click on the link http://www.myschool.edu.au and enter the school name in the Find a school and select GO to access the school data.

NAPLAN Year 7 - Literacy

Our Year 7 students have outperformed the students from similar schools (SSG) in reading in 2014. Similar schools have recorded 20% of students in the top two bands while 27% of BGHS students appeared in these two bands. This has formed the basis for our decision to continue utilising Reading to Learn as a program in 2015.

Around 53% of our students are placed in the top three bands for writing whereas only 34% of the students in the state and 30% of the students from like schools (SSG) have been placed in these bands. Within the lower three bands BGHS has 45% of students whereas 71% of the students from like schools (SSG) and 67% of the students in the State are in these three bands, which is very pleasing result.
BGHS has performed above state average in all of three top bands. There are fewer students in lower three bands than the state average which is very positive result. The number of the students in upper bands is well above state average. The results also show that school is performing better than like schools (SSG) as more than 70% of the students have been placed in the top three bands. Throughout the state average number of student in this band is around 60%.

In Grammar and Punctuation, BGHS results are at par with the state results in the highest bands and BGHS has performed better than the state in Bands 7 and 8.

NAPLAN Year 7 – Numeracy

Year 7 Numeracy results of BGHS are very encouraging as students outperformed the students of similar schools (SSG) in band 9.

Comparing the schools average over previous years there was a significant decrease in the number of students achieving in the lowest band and a greater improvement in the students achieving in the top bands. Staff at BGHS are focusing on implementing numeracy strategies such as Newman’s prompts and Reading to Learn to support students in all aspects of numeracy. A considerable percentage of the cohort have achieved higher than the similar schools (SSG) in the top bands.

NAPLAN Year 9 - Literacy
Year 9 students of BGHS have performed above state average in this aspect of the test with 19% of our students in top two bands.

In the higher band school has performed better than the state with 42% appearing in the top three bands whereas only 30% of the state students appear in these three bands. The school has focussed on Literacy has been certainly rewarded in this aspect of writing.

Year 9 Spelling results are very encouraging with fewer students in the lower three bands in comparison to the students from similar schools. There are 30% of our students placed in top two bands whereas 19% of students from similar schools (SSG) in these two bands.

When viewing the top bands, it is evidenced that BGHS has performed better than similar schools (SSG). This also represents a significant improvement on our performance compared to the last 5 years where we
average 40% of students in the top three bands.

**NAPLAN Year 9 - Numeracy**

BGHS has performed better than the similar schools (SSG) in the top band. Comparing the schools average over previous years there was a noticeable decrease in the number of students achieving in the lower bands. Strategies being implemented throughout the school, including the Reading to Learn numeracy strategy, have supported students to improve their success in NAPLAN. It is also noted that a higher number of students are achieving in bands 8 and 9. BGHS has performed better than the similar schools (SSG) in the top bands.

**Higher School Certificate (HSC)**

In the Higher School Certificate, the performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from Performance Band 1 (lowest) to Performance Band 6 (highest). There has been a significant improvement, in the relative performance from NAPLAN Year 9, of our HSC students in 2014 in comparison to the performance of similar schools (SSG). We believe this to be a significant result and have celebrated it.
Other Achievements

Careers

2014 students at BGHS were provided with a host of opportunities to assist post school transitions over their destination plans, commensurate with their goals and ambitions. All students were encouraged to take up programs and initiatives to aid in planning for their future outside of High School. Some of the programs and initiatives offered to the students included the following:

Year 12 students participated in either a Sydney Morning Herald or Western Sydney Careers Markets/Expo’s at various locations along with a variety of guest presentations hosted in the careers room/Library.

Year 12 students participated in Western Sydney Traineeship and Apprenticeship expo with two students successfully signed into Business Administration subjects on the night.
ALL students of Years 10, 11 and 12 participated in a ‘Day of the life of a uni student’. They attended Macquarie University and University of western Sydney to experience just what University life is like.

Year 10 students participated in The Western Sydney Careers Markets/Expo’s at various locations along with a variety of guest presentations hosted in the careers room/Library.

Macquarie Mentoring Program, SIPRY and AIME program specifically catered to the needs of refugee and Indigenous/Aboriginal students.

A TOT program (TASTE OF TAFE) was also run, similar to the refugee SIPRY program with disengaged youth or rather ‘practical based learners’ of 9B attending TAFE one day a week.

Social networking via Facebook was continued after its success in 2013 with all senior students being encouraged to ‘friend and follow’ the ‘BGHS CAREERS-CORNER’ Facebook profile.

Interactive presentations on applying for both TAFE and UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS CENTRE were presented on multiple schedules, including REAL online application demonstrations.

Ongoing support and assistance was provided to all exiting students during the first four weeks of Term 1 2014, ‘tweaking’ studies or implementing back up strategies for desired post school destinations.

**Year 12 students undertaking tertiary studies, vocational or trade training**

32 students were known to have applied for University admission through UAC and indicated aspirations for 237 preferences.

Down by 3 from 2013 – but with a much smaller cohort – comparable.

32 Offers were made with 22 Students accepting offers.

Increase on previous year - especially with a much smaller cohort. University enrolment offers accepted were at UWS, Macquarie, Sydney University, UNSW and ACU that included;

Dip Hlth Science B Human Sciences, B Arts/B Ed (Sec), B Commerce/B Science, B Hlth Science (Hlth Prom), B Communication, B Comm/B Laws, B Political Economic & Soc Sc , Dip Soc Science (Policing), B Arts/M Teach (Prim), B Science (Biological Sc), B. Ed (E Chld Ed)(B-12), B Fine Arts/B Ed (Secondary), B Arts/B Ed (Sec) , B Medical Sciences , B , B Info & Comm Tech/B Bus&Com, B Arts/B Ed (Primary), B Arts/B Laws, B Crim&Comty Just/B Soc Work, B Ed (Sec:Humanities)/B Arts , B Bus and Commerce (Acc), Aust Catholic Uni, Dip in Business and Commerce, B Arts (UWSC FY), UFS (Hlth Sc & Nursing) , B Arts/B Ed (Sec), B Arts/B Ed (Primary) , B Education (Primary), B Science - Psychology ,B Arts/B Ed (Primary).

**Sports Report**

Blacktown Girls had a successful year in Sport with high levels of participation at all carnivals and keen interest in each of the sporting teams.

- **Gala Days:** Both Year 7 and Year 8 participated in the Gala Days against other schools from our Zone. They played Netball & Soccer. There was a high level of participation.

- **Sporting Teams:** We fielded Opens Teams in Volleyball, Hockey, Netball, AFL, Touch Football, Softball Soccer and Rugby Union.
• **Swimming Carnivals:** Our Swimming Carnival is always a great start to the year with many students attending Blacktown Pool for the day. Oodgeroo took out the Carnival and Reibey’s loud voices helped them gain the War Cry Trophy. 27 students attended the Zone Carnival and from here we sent 3 students to the Sydney West Carnival.

• **Cross Country Carnivals:** We held our Cross Country Carnival on School Grounds with a few modifications to the format this year. Working well in this format we sent 40 students to the Zone Cross Country in which we managed to earn 4th Place overall. Eleven of these students were selected to compete in the Sydney West Carnival with all of them running into the top 20 students of their age group. The House winner for 2014 at our School Cross Country was Chisholm.

• **Athletics Carnivals:** In our Athletics Carnival Reibey scored 1st place. Sixty five of our students attended the Zone Athletics Carnival in which we are placed 2nd Overall. Fifteen of these students competed at the Sydney West Carnival and from here Sarine Mani, Desleigh Owusu and Chloe Johnston represented Sydney West at the CHS Athletics Carnival.

• **Year 7 and 9 Swim School:** Every year the PDHPE faculty and 5 other teachers from the school take Year 7 and Year 9 to Blacktown Pool to complete a Life Saving Swim Program. This year we had record numbers in both Year groups with only 10 girls from each year not attending the program. The students participate in a range of activities to assist them in developing their Water Awareness and Water Familiarisation. These students also completed a Life Saving Award in which they are shown techniques and informed of correct rescue procedures to follow if they were ever faced with a rescue scenario. 15 students from Year 9 completed the highest level of Life Saving possible, the Bronze Medallion, for their age group. The Swim Safe Scheme is invaluable to our students many of whom have never been near or in water before the Swim School Week.

• **Student Representatives:** We were fortunate to have some students make it to high levels of representation this year. Megan Moodie and Beth Watling played Water polo representing at the Combined High Schools Tournament. Beth Watling represented at the CHS Futsul Tournament and was chosen to compete in the Australian All Schools Championships. Sarine Mani, Desleigh Owusu and Chloe Johnston represented at the CHS Athletics Carnival. Brittany Dolphin was selected in the CHS Gymnastics Team and competed in the Australian Championships in which she scored a silver medal.

• **Zone Blue Awards:** Megan Moodie, Beth Watling and Sarine Mani all received the prestigious Zone Blue Award for their continuous participation and commitment to their sports. Megan - Swimming and Waterpolo, Beth - Soccer and Swimming and Sarine - Athletics.
• **Sydney West Blue**: Megan Moodie also achieved a Sydney West Blue for her commitment to Water Polo throughout her years here at Blacktown Girls.

• **Sportswoman of the Year**: The Sportswoman of the year award is based on an accumulation of points allocated to each student based on their participation in sport at Blacktown Girls High School. The 2014 junior recipient was Brittany Dolphin and the senior recipient was Megan Moodie.

**English Report**

**Brag**

This year in BRAG we had some interesting discussions of books we have enjoyed reading. We have all tried to read more challenging books such as classics like Wuthering Heights or Pride and Prejudice.

For Literacy Week this year we have tried to encourage students to participate in the literacy competitions, which included a Short Story, Poetry and Visual representation competition. The theme was ‘Hope’ and we received some fantastic contributions. The winners of these competitions were for the short Story - Nysa-May Gagliardi (Year 11), for the poetry -Natalie Khalil (Year 7) and for the visual representation competition the winner was Majoory Jeyakumar (Year 10). The winners all received a Westfield voucher.

BRAG is currently working to create a magazine called ‘Muse’ and all the competition work will be published in this student literacy magazine. BRAG students have represented the school in many occasions by making announcements about literacy day and assisting in judging the entries and now they have made their own contributions to the magazine. They are so enthusiastic and encouraging of others. Next year a plan is to try and promote the Reading Challenge competition and try to get others involved.

**HSC Advanced English Excursion to Sydney Jewish Museum**

On 30th April, Year 12 Advanced English students travelled to the city to visit Sydney Jewish Museum (SJM) to support their study of HSC prescribed text, Mark Baker’s ‘The Fiftieth Gate'. Students were able to draw connections between their prescribed text and the poignant primary artefacts at the museum’s permanent exhibition.

Students attended two seminars following their tour of the museum. The first seminar afforded students the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity & privilege of meeting a Holocaust survivor, Eddie Jaco, an inspirational man who survived the Nazi's attempts to murder him (numerous times). Students were profoundly moved by hearing Eddie's story, particularly how his life, and love for life, had been defined by the unimaginable horrors of the Nazi regime.

The second seminar complemented their study of the prescribed text as they heard the author, Mark Baker, discuss his personal exploration of the module ‘Representations of History and Memory in Texts’ in his autobiographical memoir. Students felt that he not only cemented their understanding of his text, but also raised complex questions of the complexities of these discourses. Our students readily embraced the opportunity to meet the author, asking perceptive & insightful questions, and getting their books signed!

**UWS Young Writer’s Day**
The University of Western Sydney (UWS) Young Writers’ Day (YWD) is an annual academic and creative enrichment program for Years 10 and 11 students who are interested in writing as a career, for enjoyment or to help achieve educational goals. 10 students from the Year 11 Extension English course at Blacktown Girls High School, from both 2014 & 2015 cohorts were invited to attend this day.

The day provided students with the opportunity to:
- develop their writing skills and confidence, and their knowledge about writing and writers
- encourage and support writing aspirations
- recognise and reward the writing talents of Greater Western Sydney students and raise the profile of writing in the region
- contribute to the professional development of English teachers, and
- build and enhance relationships between UWS and GWS schools, and raise awareness of what the University can offer.

Students had the opportunity to be inspired by keynote speaker, Michael Mohammed Ahmad, published author and doctoral candidate at the UWS Sydney Writing and Society Research Centre.

Following the keynote, students had the opportunity to attend two workshops, for which they chose seminars that explored their areas of interest.

Students benefited greatly from this opportunity; not only to hear from successful writers from Western Sydney, but also to make connections between schools of students with similar aspirations and goals for their educational futures.

**Beauty and the Beast Excursion**

During Term 3, Year 7 English students completed a ‘Fractured Fairytales’ unit which was followed by a unit that focused on drama and theatre. As part of these units, students had the opportunity to attend a performance of *Beauty and the Beast* at Riverside Theatre in Parramatta early in Term 3. Here, many students saw their first live theatre performance, and were able to develop their understanding of the ways that theatre creates a different experience to film.

Students later discussed the way that live theatre allowed an audience to form a bond with the characters, as well as the ways that the film was appropriated for the stage. The excursion was a great success, with all students behaving in a way that was a credit to themselves and the school.
**Interact Program**

The Australian Business and Community Network (ABCN) provided an opportunity for our refugee students to participate in a **Mentoring Program** conducted by Citibank. This year 5 students were chosen from Year 11 through a selection process to represent our School. Students were paired with Citibank employees and participated in activities at Citibank’s Sydney CBD office. The Citibank employees gave their precious time to assist students develop various skills such as career planning advice, team building exercises, interview skills and CV writing. A variety of schools participated in this mentoring program and this has allowed the students to gain exposure on different issues.

**Aspirations Program**

Australian Business and Community Network (ABCN) provided an opportunity for our refugee students to participate in **Mentoring and Leadership Program** conducted by Citibank. Students had to go through various interview and selection criteria to be selected into this leadership development program. Year 11 students who were chosen for this program were given an opportunity to develop their leadership skills through the guidance of Citibank mentors. These students aspire to be future leaders and the Citibank mentors assist in their development of skills through providing firsthand experience in interview skills, speeches and team building exercises. Students were acknowledged by Citibank with certificates and recognition at the end of the program. Most of the students from this program are our schools leaders (Captain and Prefects).

During 2014 students participated in a range of activities to broaden their experiences and understanding in HSIE.

The girls researched, designed and led a meaningful ANZAC ceremony in which a focus was placed on women’s roles in the services throughout history. The girls invited serving women from the Army to attend and share their experiences of what ANZAC meant to them. The commemoration was a meaningful, respectful and enlightening service for all students.

In 2014, students once again participated in the annual Mock Trial competition. This is a competition where students compete against other schools in a simulation of a court room. The girls’ team performed very well, winning several of their rounds, with other rounds being a very closely fought contest. The girls reported that they enjoyed the competition, learnt a great deal about law and its practice and were looking forward to the competition in 2015.

**Science 2014**

Blacktown Girls High School participated in the “First Robotics Competition” which was held at Barker College on the 27th-29th June. For this competition, students had to design and build a robot to play in an alliance based game. In 2014, the objective of the game was to get a gym sized ball into various goals, while assisting their alliances and simultaneously blocking the opposing teams from scoring. Twenty-two students from the Year 10 selective class participated in this year’s program and entered as Team 4802 under the name of Unidentified Moving Machines. They worked on their robot every Wednesday afternoon for the duration of 2 Terms. Team 4802, worked to win 10 of their matches over the three day competition and became alliance leaders for the final rounds. They were also awarded for their tremendous effort as being one of several
rookie teams. Of note, they were the only all girls team, the youngest team and the largest team in the competition. Well done girls on your outstanding effort!!

Students benefited greatly from this opportunity; not only to have a firsthand experience, but also learn about career opportunities. The girls had an enjoyable day.

Our Year 8 students sat for the ESSA exam in 2014 and the results achieved have shown that more students are achieving in the higher levels than ever before. Five students achieved the highest band and some of the high achievers were from the ‘non-selective’ classes. Our school for the first time has achieved higher than state average in level 5 and level 6 (level 6 being the highest level). Another milestone for our ESSA results was that no student achieved the lowest band. This is a remarkable progress for our school and we have improved our performance in the region by a greater margin. Congratulations to our Year 8 students on such a fine performance.

Field Studies for Year 11 Students

On 8th April, Year 11 Biology and Senior Science travelled to Penrith Lakes to visit Penrith Lakes Education Centre to support their study of preliminary topic on The Local Ecosystem. Students were able to conduct water quality testing around the lakes.

S.R.C - "School Representative Council"

The SRC are a group of students from Years 8 to 11 elected by their peers or selected on a special recommendation by their teachers. The role of SRC is to enhance the potential of all students by providing students with a voice.

SRC initiates and coordinates activities in the aim of:
- Enhancing active citizenship within and around the school.
- Initiating and developing the values of understanding, respect and acceptance.
- Raising awareness of social justice issues in the local and global communities.
- Assisting in the leadership of the school and the P&C in achieving whole school goals.
- Developing new and bright innovative ideas to improve school environment.

Projects taken up by SRC
SRC has been very active with a busy schedule throughout the year. Just to name a few activities that took place this year by members of the SRC:
- SRC leaders were trained by an expert at Lunar Park to promote the World Vision in our School. Students fundraised at School by selling cakes and other food items. Other activities undertaken for fund-raising were - henna, face painting and lolly jar guessing competition. Our School...
raised $ 5000 this year which was a good effort from SRC students and teachers.

- **Toys & Tucker** collection for hand-me-downs from school were collected and donated to Salvation Army.
- **Fund Raising for PA system for school** was a huge success - $568 was raised through throwing a sponge at school teachers for a dollar donation.
- SRC members were given laptop to record and design Road **Safety advertisement and planning** with more opportunities in recording and designing campaign for Blacktown City Council and RTA. Students are still working on this campaign.

SRC is highly recommended for students who wish to continue developing their leadership skills and enhance their future abilities.

**Prefect Advisers’ Report for 2014**

The 2014 Prefect body was made up of a talented group of leaders who excelled in the academic, sporting and cultural arenas. They represented the school with distinction on a number of occasions.

The Prefects continued to do an excellent job of ensuring students were inside the school gate safely and on time. With the responsibility of providing late notes, there has been a greater focus on developing leadership skills among the Prefects. The new team has already shown great enthusiasm and promise with the highlight at the end of the year being a makeover of the senior toilets.

In addition to their regular duties, the Prefects are required to organise a number of projects to benefit the school and the community. The Prefects organised a fund raiser for the Children’s Hospital in Westmead. They collaborated with the SRC to hold a cake stall, lolly jar guessing competition and mufti day for the students. Another highlight working with Blacktown Boys High School to host a breakfast for the students. Students enjoyed a breakfast of freshly cooked eggs, juice and pancakes.

To finish off their tenure the Prefects raced around the city in the style of ‘The Amazing Race’. They followed clues around the city to famous monuments. They then finished with lunch at Sydney Tower.

**TAS Faculty**

It has been another busy year in the TAS department with students across our specialist subjects working hard and achieving great results. Staff has continued to professionally develop themselves with all staff members attending professional development in their specialist areas over the
duration of the year. Five out of six teachers applied for and were accepted into HSC marking, a trend that has been going on for a few years now. Four out of six teachers were able to complete HSC marking demands and brought back valuable information to the faculty.

In Textiles Technology/Textiles and Design Year 10, 11 and 12 students have worked throughout the year to create a variety of projects across many focus areas. Year 10 students finished the year creating furnishings that incorporated a variety of fabric decoration and manipulation techniques. Major Textiles projects submitted to the Board of Studies for the HSC included costumes and apparel and Year 12 students benefitted from holiday workshops run by Textiles teacher, Mrs Willis.

Food Technology has continued to be a strong specialist area in both Stage 5 and 6. Year 9 students have finished their year of studies by designing and creating a birthday party invite, menu and decorated cake. There was a high level of skill involved in some of the beautifully decorated cakes under the guidance of Ms Dowling and Ms Winslett.

Students in Year 10 went on an excursion organised by Mrs Kamel to the William Blue school of Hospitality for a tour and talk on the industry and were treated to a complimentary meal. They were also exposed to the Trade Training Centre during the unit on the food service and catering industry. Some students had the opportunity to help cater for school events throughout the year.

Students in Year 11 visited a fish monger to learn about seafood and food safety. They prepared the fresh seafood bought on the excursion in the Trade Training Centre. Students in Year 11 have also participated in many experiments throughout the year, learning about properties of food.

Exploring Early Childhood students visited Blacktown Hospital again this year to see the maternity ward and speak to a midwife. One of our teachers, Mrs Timms, built a connection with Blacktown North Primary School for Exploring Early Childhood students whereby they visited the primary school weekly for a term to help in Kindergarten and Year 1 classes.

As always, the Virtual Baby was a hit with the majority of students taking one of the virtual babies home over a weekend to simulate the experience of having a newborn. This valuable experience saw many students arrive back at school after their weekend very tired and with a new appreciation for what it takes to be a mother.

Our computing related subjects were also highly sought after. 29 students sat the ICAS computing skills exam with 3 Distinctions and 11 Credits awarded. In 2014, for the first time, Information Processes and Technology was offered as an accelerated subject in Year 10. A class of students completed their Preliminary studies under the guidance of Mrs Kaur, with very promising results. This class will combine with the current Year 11 class in 2015 and the students involved will sit the HSC in this subject at the end of 2015, a full year ahead of the rest of their subjects.

In Information and Software Technology, Year 9 students finished the year working on a multi-media project of their own choice. Mrs Kaur condensed the curriculum in order for students to pick the accelerated IPT subject as one of their 2015 Year 10 ‘electives’. We believe this model of suitable students completing a condensed curriculum in Year 9 then beginning their Preliminary
year in Year 10 for IPT will be highly successful for the students.

Finally, Hospitality students have been working hard all year to achieve a Certificate II in Hospitality under the guidance of Ms Dowling, Mrs Kamel and Ms McKenna. Upon hearing that one student from the 2013 cohort had been accepted into an apprenticeship and another into a Hospitality Management degree, the 2014 cohort worked hard in class to achieve competency. Already one student from the 2014 cohort has been accepted into an apprenticeship for 2015.

On May 21st Senator the Honourable Marise Payne visited Blacktown Girls High School to officially open the Blacktown Girls High School Hospitality Trade Training Centre. The Trade Training Centre, funded by the Federal Government, is a fully equipped commercial kitchen, service and bistro area that allows students to work towards achieving a nationally recognised Certificate II in Hospitality as a part of their senior pattern of study.

In its first official year of operation the facility was used by 50 students which gave them confidence in working within a commercial environment and with commercial quantities. VET in schools not only allow students to work towards national certification but also allow them to have that study recognised for their HSC and towards their Australian Tertiary Admission Rank. It also teaches many skills that can be transferred across a range of vocations.

Many catering opportunities have been utilised by the Hospitality students this year in the Trade Training Centre such as the Principal’s Morning Tea, Nirimba Learning Community High Tea and the P&C Mother Daughter High Tea.

Staff and students at Blacktown Girls High School are excited for the future possibilities that the Trade Training Centre will provide.

**CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ARTS**

The Creative and Performing Arts faculty has focused on embedding literacy and numeracy strategies into their classroom teaching throughout 2014, providing students with the strategies needed to achieve well in their studies. Creative thinking and problem
Dancing have also been key issues in the development of teaching programs, promoting confidence and individual means of expression for each student studying the various subject options available. This year has once again, been a busy and productive year for all staff and students involved.

**Dance**

Dance at Blacktown Girls High School in 2014 ran as a subject in Years 11 and 12 only. Year 7 taster dance lessons allowed students to experience a wide variety of dance styles including classical ballet, jazz, contemporary, poms, jazz, street and musical theatre.

The Blacktown Girls High School Dance Ensemble successfully auditioned for and performed in the Sydney West Dance Festival. The Dance Ensemble included 15 talented dance students from Years 7-12.

Year 11 Dance performed four class items in Senior Showcase ranging from contemporary and lyrical to musical theatre and jazz.

Year 12 Dance performed their HSC Core Performance work as a class item in Showcase. Many students performed their HSC solo works and Major Study works in preparation for the HSC practical examinations.

Year 12 student, Olivia Green, was short listed for “Callback 2015”, a performance of the previous year’s top HSC dance works. Her Core Performance solo and Major Study Performance solo were both included in the short list.

In Term 4, eight dance items were selected and rehearsed for Junior Showcase. With the loss of one year (100 hour) elective courses for Years 9 and 10, these items were not developed through course work as there were no junior dance classes in 2014. The rehearsal process was extensive to ensure that the items were of a high and polished standard. These items included solos and group dances. They ranged in style from jazz, contemporary, Samoan, hip hop, Bollywood, tap and street/funk.

**Music**

Music at Blacktown Girls High School under the guidance of Ms. Sue Kennedy has continued to be much sought after in the community as entertainment for a number of significant events.

Twelve students performed as part of the massed choir in the Western Sydney Region Music Festival held in the Opera House. Elective students, Mary Silang, Aisha Rose Khan, Melissa Aumua, Anita McCreadie and Hannah Roque entertained guests at a special High Tea held at the school in Term 4.

It is our Tribal Drum group however, which is achieving the most acclaim. This talented group of musicians has performed at numerous venues throughout the year. These include: Blacktown North Primary School’s Harmony Day, Multicultural Day and the opening of the Community Hub, the opening of the BGHS Trade Centre, the opening of the BGHS Learning Centre attended by Senator Nova Peris, Blacktown City Festival,
Education Week events at Blacktown, Bert Oldfield Multicultural Day, the Community Services Expo, the opening of the Woman of the Year Awards, McHappy Day and Kellyville Ridge Primary School’s anniversary celebrations. The group also conducted workshops with Blacktown North Public School.

With the introduction of one year (100 hour) elective courses for Years 9 and 10, Music and Dance teachers undertook two Showcase evenings in 2014. The senior Showcase provided valuable rehearsal experience for students undertaking practical examinations in the Higher School Certificate while the junior Showcase, held mid Term 4, introduced young, developing talent to the school community.

Many of the school-based performances would not have been possible without the continuing support of our girls in the Sound Crew who devote substantial time to ensuring that events run smoothly as well as training new students from Years 9 and 10 in basic sound system management.

**Photography**

Our Photography and Digital media classes
have had an active year. Working primarily with Photoshop Studio software, students took images, saved them appropriately and then edited and manipulated them to create unique and interesting visual statements. A trip to the city provided a change from subjects found in the school but energetic recording of special school functions also featured in their repertoire. Students have examined a cross-section of professional images to develop their appreciation of the importance of light and composition as communication tools for visual literacy.

**Visual Arts**

Visual Arts has continued to provide opportunities for our students both in and outside the classroom. All cohorts have studied two and three-dimensional art forms, investigating a range of media and practices, with some exceptional results.

Monday afternoon Master class for talented and interested students has continued to operate throughout the year, focusing on developing skills in canvas painting and printmaking. A trip to Leura and Katoomba, wandering through cottage areas provided these girls with photographic resources for the development of some exciting work.

Year 7 experienced plein air painting in the style of the French Impressionists, consistent with their classroom studies, on a full day excursion to Fagan Park at Dural.

Year 9 girls were introduced to a range of artistic styles at the Archibald Prize, Sulman and Wynne exhibitions at the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

Years 10 and 11 students visited the Art Gallery of New South Wales to see the “Pop to Popism” major exhibition before viewing more contemporary works at the Volume 1 and Primavera 2014 exhibitions in the Museum of Modern Art. While Years 11 and 12 were exposed to some of the top achieving artworks submitted for the 2013 Higher School Certificate at the annual Artexpress exhibition at the AGNSW and Armory Gallery, Homebush.

Several of our senior girls took advantage of specialist workshops; Erin Burton, Stephanie Hall and Keerthana Mohan thoroughly enjoyed their four-day intensive studio experience at the Dobell Drawing School run by the National Art School. Alysha Taylor, Nicole Pennington and Vitolina Fidow gained valuable experience at a one-day Digital Masterclass run by the UWS School of Communication Arts.
Elective Visual Arts students have worked on two external projects during the year. Year 11 created welcoming murals based on multiculturalism for the front doors of Blacktown North Primary School while a talented group of Year 10 students designed a large-scale mural for the foyer of a local business, Nilfisk.

Congratulations are also extended to Ferdos Rahmany, who was a finalist in the 2014 Design an Ad competition run by Fairfax media.

The final culmination of a year’s hard work and dedication on behalf of the students and staff in the CAPA faculty was the end of year Art and Photography/Digital Media Exhibition in December which showcased the work of our very talented students from years 7-12.

Mathematics
The mathematics department has embedded the use of Mathletics into its programs since 2011. Over this time, we have seen a major improvement in the speed and accuracy of basic computations along with a greater understanding of core course concepts across all years. This improvement was also evident in the NAPLAN value-added data for Year 9 in numeracy with the majority of students more than doubling their expected growth. The school’s average of 56.9 was also higher than the state average of 50.1.

The results in the ICAS Mathematics Competition were very impressive with the school average mark above the state average in Years 7, 8, 9 and 11 and less than 1 mark below the average for Year 10. 10 students got distinction (top 10%) and 33 students got credit (next 25%). The Australian Mathematics Competition also produced some very good results with 25 students ranking in the top 50% of the state, one of which ranked in the top 15% of the state.

Mathematics

2014 International Competitions and Assessments for Schools - results

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Significant Programs and Initiatives – Policy and Equity funding

Significant Programs and Initiatives in EAL/D and Learning Support

In 2014 the Learning Support Team at Blacktown Girls High School comprised 2.1 LaSTs, 2.6 EAL/D teachers, the School Counsellor 3 days per week, the Careers Advisor, 2.0 School Learning Support Officers, and a Youth Worker for 2 days a week. The Learning Support Team worked cooperatively with the Student Welfare team to support students and parents very effectively.
The Learning Support Team, co-ordinated by Mrs Nerida Cracknell, along with the School Learning Support Officers, Mrs Nola Meatheringham and Mrs Patricia Robinson were complemented for their regular involvement with the Itinerant Teachers, Hearing and have enjoyed considerable support from DEC personnel, especially the Support Teachers, Transition. The Support Teacher, Transition and the Learning Support Team worked particularly closely with the school’s Life Skills students in the development of their Individual Transition Plans and school exit plans.

The students with whom the Learning Support Team members specifically worked, experienced difficulties with their learning for a range of reasons, including intellectual, physical and emotional disabilities, hearing impairment, language difficulties and cultural differences, or any of these in combination. Support was provided in classrooms and also through short-term, intensive withdrawal groups designed to achieve specific learning outcomes, particularly in core KLAS. EAL/D students in the emerging stage of the EAL/D Learning Progression were supported by parallel English classes for Years 8 to 12 with Ms Ruth Clancy. In addition, these students also received in-class EAL/D support by Mrs Karin Harrison, Ms Abang Othow, Ms Jan O’Loughlin and Mrs Helene Ericksen across Key Learning Areas. Year 7 EAL/D students also received in-class support across a range of core subjects. These students have also been mapped against the literacy continuum and their progress has been closely monitored. Learning Support and EAL/D staff have also supported classroom teachers through team teaching, collaboration in program development and differentiation of assessment tasks.

BGHS Learning and Support Teachers, Mrs Nerida Cracknell, Mrs Helene Ericksen and Mrs Jenny Bloomfield played a vital role in the organisation and follow-up of the NAPLAN tests, developing individual learning plans for those students requiring additional support. They provided advice to teachers and assisted them in the development of programs, teaching and assessment materials and suitable reporting strategies to meet the specific learning needs of students experiencing difficulties in their classes, including those undertaking a Life Skills HSC. Mrs Nerida Cracknell co-ordinated the applications for Special Provisions for students at the Higher School Certificate and trained the readers and writers who provided the actual assistance to those students who needed such support.

In 2014 two ex-students were employed for one day per week to work with cultural groups within the school. This enabled the continuation of the PATHE Program for Pacific Islander students at UWS. It also included in-class support and assistance with assessments and assignments.

**Aboriginal Education**

Aboriginal students participate in the full range of cultural events organised both within the school and in the wider
community. Aboriginal perspectives are an integral part of teaching/learning programs across all Key Learning Areas. The school provides a culturally safe, supportive learning and social environment in which most Aboriginal students identify as Aboriginal with pride. On three staff development days this year all staff at BGHS were led in embedding Aboriginal pedagogy in all learning tasks through working with Maureen Wenzsler and Susan Matthews. The teaching staff was instructed in 8 ways of learning and have since been working closely with Clarence Bruinsma to create Year 8 programs that align with the strategies commensurate with this program. In June we had a visit from elder Uncle Wes who delighted the students with his stories, language and first-hand accounts of historical events. With Jordan Goddard from Oakhill College he delighted the students with a smoking ceremony to open the school’s biannual multi-cultural Carnivale.

The Learning Support Team, with the assistance of classroom teachers and in consultation with the students involved, developed and regularly reviewed Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) for Aboriginal students from Years 7 to 12.

As part of the ongoing Aboriginal Norta Norta program this year, the school provided additional tutoring in literacy and numeracy to targeted Aboriginal students, which has seen an improvement in the self-confidence, as well as academic achievement of the girls concerned. This program built on the in-class tuition programs conducted over previous years to ultimately assist in improving school retention of Aboriginal students.

Year 9, 10, 11 and 12 Indigenous students were involved in the AIME program – Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience – which uses a unique style of structured education mentoring in order to link university students in a one-on-one relationship with high school Indigenous students. AIME’ s objectives are to increase Year 10, Year 12 and university admission rates for all Indigenous students who participate in the program. The girls thoroughly enjoyed their involvement. Under the guidance of Mrs Nerida Cracknell and Mrs Jenny Bloomfield the Aboriginal students have joined with Blacktown Boys High School to create a homework centre for all Aboriginal students and their friends each Thursday afternoon in the BGHS Learning Centre.

The students from Year 9 were also part of the SIPRY/NUKARA TAFE Pathways program which enabled them to visit and participate in TAFE taster courses to better enable them to make positive decisions regarding their future educational pathway. BGHS has also forged strong links with the University of Western Sydney through their student outreach program.

**Year 12 Transition to Work Program**

In 2014 three Year 12 students participated in the Transition to Work Program with Nova Employment Agency once a fortnight in Term 1 and 2. This enabled the students to gain skills and confidence in searching for a job. These students were identified by the Learning Support Team as being suitable Lifeskills candidates and this experience became part of their school exiting plan.

**Multicultural Education**

The BGHS curriculum is inclusive of all students from non-English speaking backgrounds. It takes into account and responds in positive ways to the cultural and
linguistic backgrounds of EAL/Dg students and addresses their specific learning needs. It reflects the rights, needs and contributions of all students, while recognising and celebrating the cultural diversity of its student population. With over 70% of BGHS students coming from a background where English is not the first language, multicultural education continues to be a priority at Blacktown Girls High School. The school ethos which drives our organisational and teaching practice is that diversity should be recognised, celebrated and used productively to provide experiences that are accessible to all.

**Refugee Action Support (RAS) Program**

In 2014 Blacktown Girls High School continued to offer experiences that encourage migrant and refugee students. The EAL/D faculty again facilitated the very successful Refugee Action Support Program (RAS). This tutoring program has been an integral part of EAL/D Support since 2007 and aims to provide special support for students who have recently arrived in Australia. It is a joint program involving the Department of Education, the University of Western Sydney, the Literacy and Numeracy Foundation and selected schools. Blacktown Girls High School was again chosen because the student population includes 101 refugee students who benefit from additional support and also due to the previous success of the program at the school.

Special weekly tuition was provided by nine trained Master of Teaching students from the University of Western Sydney in Semester One and eight in Semester Two for forty refugee students, ranging from Years 9 to 12. Support and supervision was also provided by co-ordinating EAL/D teacher, Mrs Karin Harrison. UWS tutors assisted students in literacy and language development and provided additional support to prepare for assessment tasks, assignments and the development of good study habits.

Since 2007 RAS students have participated enthusiastically in the program and have demonstrated improvement in attitude, performance and increased confidence in their schoolwork, both in the classroom and at home. This program provided a positive and collaborative learning environment for the students, tutors and teachers and enhanced the achievement of learning outcomes for our refugee students. The benefit to students is considerable and BGHS will continue its involvement in 2015.

**Social Inclusion Program for Refugee Youth (SIPRY)**

In Term 2, 2014 Blacktown Girls High School again participated in the SIPRY Program. The aim of this program was to offer new experiences and opportunities for refugee students in order to assist them in the development of future pathways at school and TAFE, including career education.

This initiative was a partnership between Blacktown Girls High School and Western Sydney Institute of TAFE. Fifteen Year 10
students were selected and interviewed for inclusion in this program, which ran for one day a week for ten weeks. This program was co-ordinated by Mrs Karin Harrison, who accompanied the students to various TAFE colleges for taster lessons in order to broaden student knowledge and experiences. Students also participated in sessions including CV writing, career planning, assertiveness training, nutrition and sleep, communication skills and goal setting. A second group of fourteen Year 9 students participated in this program during Terms 3 and 4. These students were either aboriginal, coming from a refugee background or students at risk. The SIPRY program has had a positive impact on attendance and engagement as students have reported that the TAFE visits have helped them to clarify future directions and have made school more relevant to future pathways.

All students involved in the SIPRY program completed the TAFE course and were awarded a TAFE certificate. Student feedback was very positive and they all enjoyed the program and were helped by the information sessions and taster classes. All reported feeling more confident about future career decision making. BGHS hopes to continue its involvement in 2015 as the program offers considerable benefits to students with an aboriginal or refugee background and also students at risk.

Macquarie Mentoring Program

In 2014 Blacktown Girls High School was given the opportunity to participate again in the Macquarie Mentoring Program. Seven Year 11 and nine Year 12 refugee students, who expressed an interest in tertiary education with the hope of attending university in the future, participated in this joint DEC and Macquarie University (Social Inclusion) program during Semester 1. Volunteer university mentors worked with students to raise aspirations for further study, build confidence, set goals, improve study and research skills, broaden career information and ICT skills and increase parent and community understanding of Australian tertiary pathways. This culminated in a campus visit at the end of the semester to increase understanding of university expectations and campus life. Students participated very enthusiastically in this program and reported great benefits to their career research and decision making. This program was co-ordinated by Mrs Karin Harrison and will continue in 2015.

Refugee Transition Program (RTP) and Targeted Support for Refugee Students

Blacktown Girls High School again received funding in 2014 to facilitate the RTP. This program aimed to support refugee students in transition from intensive English programs into mainstream high school. The focus of the program in 2014 was to help sixteen Year 10, 11 and 12 students transition into senior
study and beyond and to develop an awareness of senior school culture and expectations. The RTP was successfully facilitated by Ms Abang Othow and later by Ms Jan O’Loughlin.

**Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership.**

We have worked very hard as a team and have demonstrated experience in leading the implementation of whole school literacy programs. A team of passionate advocates of literacy has mentored teachers across all KLAs, where all involved found this a valuable learning experience for both the mentors and the teachers training in the pedagogy. This mentoring process has involved a number of initiatives, including: developing teacher confidence with the Literacy Continuum, designing ‘Reading 2 Learn’ (R2L) lesson sequences to align with student needs and foster student performance.

The Literacy team at Blacktown Girls High School have had the responsibility of leading numerous staff development sessions for a number of Literacy initiatives, including PEEL paragraphs (point, explain, example, link), which has been implemented across all KLAS, establishing a common language, approach and shared understanding, the implementation of which has resulted in outstanding improvement in students’ structure of formal, analytical compositions across faculties. Introduction of other initiatives such as the ‘highlighter test’ and the explicit use of the R2L pedagogy have also been incorporated in classrooms across KLAs to establish shared understanding and high expectations, for both staff and students.

The literacy team has effectively led a number of Executive staff professional learning days, which assisted members of the executive in developing confidence in embedding literacy into their KLAs and a deeper understanding and knowledge of the literacy requirements of external examinations.

The literacy team has collated work samples of all Year 7 and 8 students, developing tracking records to assess students and supported our staff in using these samples to assess students against the markers of the Literacy continuum. Furthermore, all teachers have been supported in the testing of all Year 8 and 9 students using a standardised test to target the critical aspects of Reading and Comprehension. This test involved individually testing students, listening to them read a text aloud (to assess their reading ability against the continuum markers) and responding to a series of comprehension questions. The combination of both the testing and work samples provided data from a range of tasks in order to accurately assess students against the Literacy Continuum markers.

The literacy team also developed student tracking sheets and class spread sheets to collate Literacy Continuum data in a meaningful and accessible way for teachers to assist teachers in monitoring and tracking the development of their students. The formatting of the data analysis has allowed for teachers to track student performance; access work samples collected over time and quickly assess the student’s strengths and weaknesses.

This data collation has allowed for the assessment of the effectiveness of the R2L pedagogy and has exemplified the strengths of this approach in lifting the academic achievements of our students; the implementation of R2L often assisting
students to improve by two clusters from their original pre-test, within one semester.

Analysis of NAPLAN data and Literacy Continuum mapping has provided the team with the opportunity to professionally develop staff on how best to evaluate and apply this data to address the learning needs of their students through streamlined assessment tasks, backward mapping based on model student samples and integrating R2L sequences to meet stage-and-age appropriate student outcomes and continuum markers.

Staff development sessions have also been run on how to use literacy continuum data across KLAs to incorporate target markers, and critical aspects, into teaching and learning through classroom activities, programs and assessment marking criteria.

Trialled in the targeted classes for the ILNNP (Improving Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership), the significance of pre-testing students has been exemplified. It has proven a vital step in targeting the learning needs of our students through tailoring our teaching and learning programs to meet the needs of individual students. Streamlining this process throughout the school will provide teachers with the data necessary to identify key performance markers in the Literacy Continuum, and outcomes within their syllabi that need to be targeted to ensure student performance is lifted.

We have developed numerous approaches to embedding the literacy continuum in a meaningful way to ensure we are meeting the diverse literacy needs of each of our students. The role of the continuum, within our school, is to provide teachers with a way to assess students against a continuum of learning to allow them to target their teaching and learning programs in order to meet the individual needs of their students.

In response to data analysis of student performance in literacy testing and their placement on the continuum at clusters 10 and 11 for Year 9, we implemented an intensive literacy session with targeted students. This program involved working with targeted students, with stage-and-age appropriate texts and using explicit literacy strategies to develop their confidence and literacy skills.

Some faculties have embedded the literacy continuum markers into their teaching and learning programs to ensure relevant skills are developed in their students and to empower students to perform to their potential. Teachers have also embedded markers as ‘objectives’ for each lesson to develop student awareness of their learning and the skills we are targeting through our teaching and learning programs.

We have demonstrated commitment to the development of networks and working across schools to build the capacity of secondary teachers to integrate literacy across the curriculum. To do this we have worked with literacy and numeracy consultants to develop professional learning sessions that we ran in conjunction with our Community of Schools, this involved but was not limited to, working with over 60 teachers from across 9 schools (including staff from the Intensive English Centre) to develop teaching and learning programs reflective of the Literacy Continuum.

We have also worked with partner primary school executive at executive conferences in late 2013 and early 2014 and in one to one sessions to help develop a deeper understanding of the literacy continuum markers and how to apply them in lesson programs and with marking guidelines.
The literacy team will continue to develop and deliver crucial communications about literacy in a secondary context, aiming to establish a platform for curriculum leadership and whole school change.

**School planning and evaluation 2012—2014**

**School evaluation processes**

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used include:

- Staff Surveys
- Data Analysis
- Professional Development Analysis

**School planning 2012-2014:**

**School priority 1**

BGHS will empower students to successfully engage in 21st century employment and life including the development of relevant skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT.

**Outcomes from 2012–2014**

- To decrease the percentage of year 9 students at or below minimum standards in 2014 NAPLAN Literacy compared to their corresponding year 7 results and to increase the % of students achieving in the top two bands in 2014 compared to their Year 7 results in 2012

- To decrease the percentage of year 9 students at or below minimum standards in 2014 NAPLAN Numeracy compared to their corresponding year 7 results and to increase the percentage of students achieving in the top two bands in 2014 compared to their Year 7 results in 2012

**Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:**

- 6 staff trained in R2L

- R2L focus on three School Development Days
- Literacy and numeracy focus within Staff Meetings.
- 6 Literacy Instructional Leaders and 1 numeracy instructional Leader appointed for the year.
- Continuing high level of growth achieved in all areas of NAPLAN.
- High and significant value added data for the HSC.

**Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014**

- Staff using SMART tools/Continuum to target areas of weakness using the recommended teaching strategies by ACARA shared at faculty meetings and year 8 team meetings term 1
- Mathletics (including literacy component) is integrated into Stage 4 and 5 teaching and learning programs in Maths and English
- Integration of R2L/literacy strategies, Newman’s Analysis, continuum analysis recommendations in T/L programs across the curriculum
- TARS/EARS process includes evidence of strategies implemented to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes

**School priority 2**

BGHS will develop young women who are independent, self-directed and inherently motivated learners.

**Outcomes from 2012–2014**

- Enhanced student engagement in their learning thereby improving the value students place on their learning and transferring this to improved student performance.
- Improved value added data for both Year 9 NAPLAN and the HSC.
• Students provided with enhanced opportunities to succeed as leaders

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2014:

• NAPLAN Growth Data for the school.

The % of Year 9 Students achieving Greater Than or Equal to their Expected Growth

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<th>Year</th>
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<td>71</td>
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NB State wide the writing results for 2014 were lower than 2013. The schools result was above both state and the local network average.

• HSC Value Added data which shows that all three groups of students improved or grew in their performance in year 12 compared to Year 9. His was much higher than the like schools and for all three groups above state average.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

• Leadership opportunities for students were reviewed and expanded.

• The employment of a teacher to take responsibility for mentoring HSC Students as well as AIME and Macquarie Mentoring.

• The integration of ‘8 Ways of learning’ into KLAs by embedding the principles into one Stage 4 program. For some faculties, ‘8 Ways’ has logically been linked closely with QT21 strategies and therefore integrated more successfully and more authentically into unit(s) of work. The degree to which ‘8 Ways’ has become part of faculty planning includes the use of learning maps by individual teachers, change of format to faculty programs to include ‘8 Ways’ and QT21 strategies and restructuring assessment tasks accordingly.

• A QT21 team with membership from each faculty was formed. Staff worked on assignments and assessments in stages 4 or stage 5 which were shared with their faculty. Feedback was given and the tasks were modified to suit the needs of all the students. The completed tasks were shared with the whole staff and feedback given.

School priority 3

BGHS will empower staff to promote a culture of high expectations in an environment of professionalism, collegiality and support

Outcomes from 2012–2014

• Staff aware of the literacy continuum and are experienced in using it to inform teaching and learning practice

• Staff are using ‘Reading to Learn’ and incorporating it into teaching and learning practice

The number of Leadership programs operating in 2014 with Student feedback determining that they were of significant value.
• Staff participated in peer observations of teaching practice and reflective discussion.
• Consistency is being achieved in educational pedagogy eg: R2L, Newman’s analysis (across whole school), PEL, continuum terminology and application
• A culture is developing where teachers are able to support and enhance classroom practices irrespective of KLA background

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:
• Data analysis of literacy continuum pre and post testing reflect improvement in student outcomes
• Significant increased in the number of staff participating in peer observations.
• Feedback received from Instructional Leaders regarding the amount and quality of peer observations that occurred throughout the year.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:
• Professional development was delivered which focused on creation and use of student literacy and numeracy continuum profiles
• Staff were trained in R2L, Aboriginal Pedagogies (8 Ways of Learning), Peer Observations and Feedback and and the alignment of these to the QT 21 Framework as part of the whole school professional development program.
• Teachers were encouraged to make cross curricular links through Project-based Learning and Rich Tasks.
• Data analysis of focus points used to stimulate professional dialogue to inform change in professional development amongst staff

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction
In 2014, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.
Their responses are presented below.
In the area of communication, particularly with parents and care givers responses were sought regarding the effectiveness of the school in this area.

An additional parent Teacher evening was added to the calendar for Year 12 students and it was agreed that an additional evening was a good idea it was not required to restrict it to Year 12 only.
A positive reaction was also received with the introduction of on-line bookings for Parent teacher evenings. Parents agreed that the program was easy to use preferred it to the system previously used with students approaching teachers for booking times.
Parents and students indicated that they appreciated and saw value in the school’s Facebook page which they agreed was updated regularly and appropriately. It was agreed that this was a very useful form of communication
The ‘Skoolbag’ App was also introduced during the year and parents indicated that this was a preferred method of communication as it was both and convenient and effective. They appreciated the content of the information being uploaded and felt the school should continue with its use.
It was agreed that the use of SMS for delivering messages was not as relevant as it was in previous years due to Skoolbag and Facebook. However parents appreciated its daily use regarding attendance.
The overall opinion of parents and caregivers was that communication on the part of the school was extremely sound and that this was appreciated.

**Future Directions**

**2015-2017 School Plan**

NSW DEC is implementing a new school planning process for 2015-17. The new plan will be published on the school’s website from the beginning of Term 2 2015.

**Vision Statement 2015 – 2017**

Blacktown Girls High School will deliver an inclusive education for both our academically selective and local comprehensive students by focusing on quality teaching in preparing students for life and employment in the 21st Century.

The school will provide opportunities for individualised learning and achievement by embodying current research and practices in Girls Education strategies.

We embrace and celebrate our cultural diversity and provide proactive programs promoting a culture of care, respect and tolerance, allowing students to feel safe, happy and committed to achieving their best.

**The Schools Planning Process**

The schools Vision Statement, Context and Strategic Directions were developed collaboratively by the school staff and the school executive with parental and student input. These were then confirmed by the school’s Parents and Citizens Association and the student prefect body. The key improvement measures and 5P planning process for each strategic direction have been collaboratively developed by the whole school staff and executive. These have also been presented to the school’s Parents and Citizens Assoc.

The document has been continually presented to staff and parents throughout its development at Staff Meetings, Faculty Meetings and Staff Development Days. It has been presented for comment at three P&C Meetings and at three Parent Information Evenings.

The Three Endorsed Strategic Directions are:

**Strategic direction 1:** BGHS will empower students to successfully engage in 21st century employment and life including the development of relevant skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT.

The Purpose of this is to:

BGHS believes it is necessary to empower students to ensure they understand that success is attainable. By moving in this direction our students will be given the best possible chance to participate in their contemporary society through increased opportunities and choices available to them as individuals. This will allow their education to be contextualised to their changing world and they will be prepared with the skills that will be required in future occupational and life situations.

**Strategic Direction No 2:**

BGHS will develop young women who are independent, self-directed and inherently motivated learners.

The Purpose of this is to:

BGHS will promote the self-worth and resilience needed to empower young women to thrive in the face of future challenges. This will enable students to graduate as productive and valuable citizens who will be able to confidently navigate the wider community in their future life. Rapid changes in society rely on the development of these skills for success and emotional wellbeing.

**Strategic Direction No 3:**

BGHS will empower staff to promote a culture of high expectations in an
environment of professionalism, collegiality and support

The Purpose of this is to:

BGHS believes that purposeful, strategic and directed staff development within a professional and collegial environment will ensure teacher quality and high productivity. This in turn will lead to strengthened personal aspirations and enhanced learning for both students and staff.

About this report

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school’s practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school’s future development.

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Parents can find more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the report and have the opportunity to provide feedback about the report at: