Messages

Principal's message
Dubbo School of Distance Education (DSODE) offers a diverse curriculum for students from Early Childhood Preschool to Year 12 (Stage 6).

In 2008 and 2009 the school’s hostel accommodation was extended. This will provide better facilities and increased opportunities for students and their families to engage in face to face learning. The DSODE community greatly appreciates the tireless work of Mrs Alison Campbell, who actively and successfully sought funding for the hostel extension. Mrs Campbell was recognised in Western Region as 2008 Parent of the Year.

Access to Stages 5 and 6 curricula enables single course students to meet Higher School Certificate (HSC) requirements whilst undertaking the larger portion of their course studies in their home school. Student learning is supported through phone and online lessons, videoconferencing, email, teacher visits to students and student visits to school, including residential camps.

Students are supported in their learning through the provision of high quality learning materials that include printed materials, internet learning and digital audio and video resources.

An important dimension of the students’ learning experiences through DSODE is the support of their home supervisor, or in the case of single course students, their supervisor in their home school. DSODE recognises the benefits of developing strong learning partnerships with all supervisors and staff in the home schools of students studying single courses through DSODE.

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.

Christine Mason

P&C and/or School Council message
Dubbo School of Distance Education Primary Parent Forum meets face to face during the primary camp weeks and 2008 saw meetings well supported by preschool, primary and secondary parents. Primary Principal, Trish Farley represented the school at every meeting informing parents and answering all questions and we thank her for this.

The parent forum was involved in the review of the Dubbo and Broken Hill distance education preschool facilities. A large number of preschool families completed the survey and attended a meeting during term 3 camp week to discuss the current preschool facility and its role in educating isolated preschoolers into the future.

The Parent Forum in 2008 was focused on securing funding for the hostel extension, after disappointingly missing out on federal money from the Investing in Our Schools Program in 2007. It was pleasing when the state mini budget in October announced part funding of our hostel. The extensions are due to happen over the summer holidays adding two more dormitories and two more parent rooms to the current building. The hostel is an important facility for drawing students and parents together during camp weeks and in doing so absorb some of the isolation in which they live and study.

Jill Lawsen undertook merit selection training and is the new parent representative on the selection panel. We farewelled Louise Smart after many years as secretary on the parent forum and thank her for her dedication and passion for distance education during her 14 year apprenticeship as a supervisor.

The end of year christmas raffle at Muster Day was our only fundraiser for the year and in what seems to have become a tradition, was again won by a member of the school staff. The primary students finished the year with an afternoon at the Dubbo Aquatic Centre after the Muster Day celebrations with the water slide booked and hired by the Primary Parent Forum, it was a great way for both students and parents to end the year.

Alison Campbell (President)

Student representative's message
In 2008 the student forum ran several events which were once again well supported. The ‘Jelly Bean Guessing’ competition, the ‘Red Nose Day’ and our ‘Bulbs Direct’ bulb sales attracted strong interest. Hopefully all those who purchased bulbs had a colourful garden display throughout Spring and Summer.

On the social side, a K - Year 10 fancy dress dance was held in Term 2 with a favourite singer/genre theme. This was enjoyed by all i.e. students, parents and staff.

In 2008 the student forum leadership camp was opened up to all students in Year 5 to Year 10 who attended the Term 2 NAPLAN camp. Participants participated in leadership activities at the Lake Burrendong Sport and Recreation Centre. Student comments strongly indicated that this was a very successful event.

Amy Smart (President)
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

DSODE is a distance education school providing educational opportunities for students across New South Wales (NSW) and for a small number of overseas students. In 2008 the school enrolled 395 full time, 56 pathways and 599 single course students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Teachers</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Teachers</td>
<td>63.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>89.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff retention

DSODE has a relatively stable staff and experiences high retention levels. There were four permanent and two casual teachers who left DSODE during or at the end of 2008. Eight permanent teachers joined DSODE in 2008 and a further three at the beginning of 2009.

Staff attendance

Staff have access to leave entitlements such as sick leave. In 2008 the average daily attendance rate for staff, as determined by the Department, was 97.4%.

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>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Financial summary

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

Date of financial summary: 30/11/2008

Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>660,241.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>640,268.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>340,208.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>224,918.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>55,842.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>173,546.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,095,025.75</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>354,072.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>86,059.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>38,758.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>16,387.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>79,682.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>265,036.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>21,043.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>223,526.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>46,381.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>35,224.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>172,474.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>252,091.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,590,736.28</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance carried forward</td>
<td><strong>504,287.47</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A full copy of the school’s 2008 financial statement is available at the annual general meetings of the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2008

Achievements

Arts

Primary

Geographically isolated students in Years K-6 received lessons in Visual Arts and Music via the satellite. These were taught in stage groups. Music students were given the opportunity to explore beat, rhythm, pitch and tempo whilst learning and performing contemporary songs, appropriate to their stage outcomes. In Visual Arts, students worked as artists using a range of media and materials to explore, manipulate and experiment. Stage 3 students were encouraged to keep a Visual Arts Diary to record their work, as they focussed on tints, tones and drawing 3D objects. A selection of students’ works from Preschool – Year 6 was displayed as part of Presentation Day. These were well received by parents and community members and reflected the diversity of lessons offered to the students via satellite, leaflets, at camps and during home visits.

Secondary

Year 7 and 8 students who attended residential camps participated in workshops on clay and computer animation, multimedia and drawing techniques. Working in groups they produced short films and a variety of art works.

Students Years 9 to 12 had the opportunity to participate in workshops that focussed on photography, sculpture, print-making, painting and mixed-media techniques.

A large number of students were visited as part of the field service program. During these visits teachers focussed on art making and completing practical work. This approach was successfully used with 4 HSC Visual Arts students.

At the end of the year Visual Arts teaching programs in Stage 4 were reviewed. After receiving feedback from students and supervisors, rewriting of learning materials was undertaken and plans were put in place to write programs for Visual Design which will be offered in 2010.

Two Visual Arts students entered the ‘Waste to Art’ Competition in Dubbo, with Year 11 student Natasha O’Sullivan winning first prize in the secondary category three dimensional art.

Sport

Primary

At the Dubbo Small Schools Swimming Carnival, DSODE students performed admirably, achieving the overall ‘Champion School Award’. Two students, Josie Heslop and Patrick Weston, achieved recognition as age champions and three students, Georgia Salter, Henry Weston and Laura Adams were runners-up age champions. Five swimmers qualified to swim at the Dubbo District Carnival.

In Athletics seven students were selected for the Dubbo District Carnival. Patrick Weston was successful in the Senior Boys shot put and subsequently qualified for both Western Region and State finals where he finished a credible 11th place.
At DSODE students are encouraged to explore a range of skills and sports at camps, during satellite lessons and within their local communities to develop their gross and fine motor skills, fitness, and social skills.

**Secondary**

In 2008 DSODE continued providing opportunities for students to increase their fitness and to participate in team and individual sports. During camps the school athletics carnival and first swimming carnival was held. The students participated in house teams, which the student forum helped form, and age champions were identified and recognised. This gave the students a greater sense of belonging by being connected to the school and their peers.

Eunice Stiboy represented the school at the Combined High School swimming carnival. Eunice was the first secondary student to compete at this carnival for DSODE. A number of students also competed successfully in the Coonabarabran horse Expo.

In 2008, Mick and Peter Lambley represented NSW in the Under 17 National Softball team.

The personal Development, Health & Physical Education (PDHPE) faculty developed many visual resources to assist students with developing their skills in specialised sports.

**Other**

**Science and Engineering Challenge**

The Science and Engineering Challenge is an annual project jointly organised by Dubbo South Rotary and the University of Newcastle. The project seeks to involve students in a fun day of practical and challenging scientific and engineering pursuits. Two Stage 3 DSODE students attended the challenge and participated with great enthusiasm and enjoyment in the hands-on activities provided.

**‘Where’s Collie?’ Competition**

‘Where’s Collie?’ is a Country Areas’ Program interactive on-line competition, which incorporates team work and problem solving for primary students. The competition focuses on the Human Society in its Environment and/or Science and Technology key learning areas. DSODE entered students from stages 1 to 3 in the competition, under the guidance of teacher Jenny Ballhausen. Students completed the required research and work during satellite lessons. They performed admirably in each stage; achieving 42nd position out of 248 schools in Stage 2 and 40th position out of 109 schools involved in Stage 1.

**Murder under the Microscope**

Murder under the Microscope is a practical interactive competition which incorporates team work and problem solving. It is a state-wide competition focusing on environmental education.

Students from Year 5 to Year 8 worked under the guidance of teacher, Mr Gerard Hart. During satellite lessons they entered the competition as the ‘Outback Club’ to detect villains and victims. They achieved a Completion Certificate for the Catchment Management Plan which they devised during the competition.

**Academic**

In the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10.

The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in the assessments. Different year group results span these Bands as follows.

Yr 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest)
Yr 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest)
Yr 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest)
Yr 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest)

NAPLAN results are not to be reported in a manner which enables the results of individual students to be identified. Accordingly, percentage in band, three-year school average, and average growth information are not reported whenever the results are available for less than 10 students.

In the School Certificate the performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from Performance Band 1 (lowest) to Performance Band 6 (highest).

**Literacy – Year 3 NAPLAN**

In 2008, eight students in Year 3 presented for the NAPLAN in Literacy.

The majority of these Year 3 students performed at or above regional average, achieving Bands 4, 5 and 6. Students achieved slightly higher results in the areas of reading and writing than in the areas of spelling, grammar and punctuation.

No graphs or tables are provided as the cohort tested was less than ten students.
**Numeracy – Year 3 NAPLAN**

In 2008, eight students in Year 3 presented for the NAPLAN in Numeracy.

The majority of these Year 3 students performed at or just below regional average achieving Bands 4, 5 and 6. Students achieved slightly higher results in the areas of number, patterns and algebra than in the areas of measurement, data, space and geometry and numeracy.

No graphs or tables are provided as the cohort tested was less than ten students.

**Literacy – Year 5 NAPLAN**

In 2008, six students in Year 5 presented for the NAPLAN in Literacy.

The majority of DSODE Year 5 students performed at, or just below, regional average, achieving Bands 5, 6 and 7. Students achieved slightly higher results in the areas of reading, writing, punctuation and grammar than in the area of spelling.

No graphs or tables are provided as the cohort tested was less than ten students.

Areas in literacy identified for improvement in 2009 include spelling and grammar.

In reading, students had difficulties with the more complex comprehension questions. Specifically students need practice in locating information indirectly from the text and also through inference. Refer to target 1 for 2009.

**Numeracy – Year 5 NAPLAN**

In 2008, six students in Year 5 presented for the NAPLAN in Numeracy.

The majority of DSODE Year 5 students performed at or just below regional average achieving Bands 5, 6 and 7. Students achieved similar results in all areas of numeracy. Two students in Year 5 did not achieve the national minimum standard and these students have been targeted to receive support lessons to improve their performances in identified areas of weakness.

No graphs or tables are provided as the cohort tested was less than ten students.

Areas in numeracy identified for improvement in 2009 include:

- The four basic operations with numbers
- order of operations
- use of these operations in context to solve problems
- probability for Year 3 students
- flip, slide and turn in space and geometry.

Refer to target 2 for 2009.

**NAPLAN progress in literacy - Year 5**

Data has been analysed for four students who have been tracked since 2006. Considerable improvement was made in both the areas of language and reading.

This is reflective of the focus of the students’ individual teaching and learning programs. Three students achieved growth of one band, which met one of the school's targets for this year. In the area of writing not as much growth could be seen with 3 out of the 4 students. Programs and teaching strategies will include an increased focus on improving student performance in writing.

No graphs or tables are provided as the cohort tested was less than ten students.

**NAPLAN progress in numeracy - Year 5**

Data has been analysed for four students who have been tracked since 2006. In the area of numeracy three out of the four children achieved growth of at least one band width, with the school achieving a growth rate above the regional and state averages. One student did not achieve the expected growth and this student's teaching and learning program will focus on providing assistance in identified areas of weakness.

No graphs or tables are provided as the cohort tested was less than ten students.

**Literacy – Year 7 NAPLAN**

In 2008, 12 Year 7 students completed the NAPLAN literacy assessment. Results were provided to parents or carers for individual student performances in reading, writing, spelling and grammar.

DSODE will focus on both individual and group strategies to improve the literacy skills of these students.

Those students, whose results are in Bands 4 and 5, will be targeted to receive additional support.

Refer to Target 1 for 2009.

**Numeracy – Year 7 NAPLAN**

In 2008, 12 students completed the NAPLAN numeracy assessment. Results were provided to parents or carers for individual student performances in number, patterns, algebra, measurement, data, space and geometry.

DSODE will focus on both individual and group strategies to improve the literacy skills of these students.

Those students whose numeracy results are in Bands 4 and 5 will be targeted to receive additional support.

Refer to Target 2 for 2009.
NAPLAN progress in literacy - Year 7
Data was analysed for seven Year 7 students, who had been tracked since 2006. Four of these students had been enrolled in DSODE for more than 12 months.
All students demonstrated growth in reading, writing and overall literacy performance.
In reading, three students achieved growth greater than two bandwidths and two students achieved growth greater than one bandwidth. In writing, five students achieved growth greater than two bandwidths. These students exceeded both the school’s 2008 Target 1 and the state average.
Spelling, grammar and punctuation are targeted as areas for improvement in 2009. Students identified for additional support will be offered individual learning programs.

NAPLAN progress in numeracy - Year 7
Data was analysed for eight Year 7 students, who had been tracked since 2006. Four of these students had been enrolled in DSODE for greater than 12 months.
Three students achieved growth greater than two bandwidths and two students achieved growth greater than one bandwidth. The school achieved a growth rate above the regional and state averages.
Students identified for additional support will be offered individual learning programs.

Literacy – Year 9 NAPLAN
In 2008, 26 students completed the NAPLAN literacy assessment. Of these students 46% were enrolled in DSODE for less than six months prior to the NAPLAN tests and another 15% were enrolled for less than 12 months. Results were provided to parents or carers for individual students in reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation.
DSODE will focus on both individual and group strategies to improve the literacy skills of all students. Students with results in Bands 5 and 6 will be targeted to receive additional support.
Refer to Target 1 for 2009.

Numeracy – Year 9 NAPLAN
In 2008, 26 students completed the NAPLAN numeracy assessment. Of these students 46% were enrolled in DSODE for less than six months prior to the NAPLAN tests and another 15% were enrolled for less than 12 months. Results for individual students were provided to parents or carers in number, patterns, algebra, measurement, data, space and geometry. These results are expressed in this report as an overall numeracy result.
DSODE will focus on both individual and group strategies to improve the literacy skills of these students. Students whose results are in Bands 5 and 6 will be targeted to receive additional support.
Refer to Target 2 for 2009.
NAPLAN progress in literacy - Year 9

Data was analysed for 13 Year 9 students, who have been tracked since 2006. Seven of these students had been enrolled in DSODE for more than 18 months. The majority of these achieved the growth target of one bandwidth, with four students exceeding the average state growth rate in literacy.

NAPLAN progress in numeracy - Year 9

Data was analysed for 13 Year 9 students, who have been tracked since 2006. Seven of these students had been enrolled in DSODE for more than 18 months. In numeracy, five of the eight children achieved growth of at least one bandwidth, with the school achieving a growth rate above the regional and state averages.
School Certificate

The number of students who sat for the various School Certificate tests ranged from 43 to 46. There were 51 full-time enrolments in Year 10 in 2008. Of these students 17% were enrolled with DSODE for 6 months or less; 44% were enrolled for 12 months or less; and 67% were enrolled for 18 months or less before sitting for the School Certificate tests. A significant proportion of these students were at serious risk of disengaging from education before enrolling in DSODE. For all students, who have faced or are facing disadvantage, achieving a School Certificate is a great achievement.
The number of students who sat for the various School Certificate tests ranged from 43 to 46. There were 51 full-time enrolments in Year 10 in 2008. Of these students 17% were enrolled with DSODE for 6 months or less; 44% were enrolled for 12 months or less; and 67% were enrolled for 18 months or less before sitting for the School Certificate tests. A significant proportion of these students were at serious risk of disengaging from education before enrolling in DSODE. For all students, who have faced or are facing disadvantage, achieving a School Certificate is a great achievement.
Higher School Certificate
In 2008, 19 fulltime and five pathways students sat for HSC examinations.
In addition, there were 198 single course enrolments from 105 schools who sat their HSC examination in one or more courses.
Across courses students achieved the following results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>Number of students - 2007</th>
<th>Number of students - 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only courses which have a candidature of ten or more are reported in the graphs on the following pages.
Eleven courses had a candidature of 10 or more and hence the graphs of these courses are included in this report.
Higher School Certificate relative performance comparison to School Certificate (value-adding)

As DSODE students participating in HSC examinations include single course students in addition to full-time and pathways students the value added data provided is meaningless.

Minimum standards

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards for reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy for years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

The performance of the students in our school in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy is compared to these minimum standards. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these standards are reported below when the cohort is larger than 10 students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>84.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>84.6</td>
<td>84.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>84.6</td>
<td>84.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>88.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

Our Aboriginal enrolments continued to grow in 2008. DSODE had 41 fulltime enrolments: 6 in Preschool to Year 6 and 35 in Years 7 - 12. There were also 5 Pathways students and 34 Single course enrolments.

Personalised Learning Plans were created for 76% of the students enrolled in fulltime and Pathways categories.

Multicultural education

The school included focuses on multiculturalism in teaching and learning practices and learning materials created by DSODE school staff.

Respect and responsibility

These essential values are promoted prominently during the residential camps held during each school term, contributing to the active implementation of the school welfare policy. Each camp commenced with a whole group workshop led by the year advisers and Deputy Principal. The activities and discussions established the underlying tone of the residential camp. With a highly diverse enrolment, respect for difference and individual talents contributed to enthusiastic participation by all students attending camps. Students were instructed in the principles of responsibility. Residential camps supported the school values and the systemic values embedded in syllabus documents.
Boys’ education

In 2008 boys’ education remained a focus area within school planning and welfare. As part of the transition program, strategies were developed and implemented to address the specific needs of targeted students. These strategies assisted boys to achieve better educational outcomes.

Field service visits to students and involvement of local community based support agencies continued to enhance educational opportunities for many boys. Western Student Connections delivered one in-school workshop for targeted students. An outreach program operated in partnership with the Broken Hill Skills Centre, providing expanded opportunities for five students. Increased personal contact with targeted students allowed a more flexible delivery of learning, increased engagement, improved submission of completed course work and contact with teachers.

Teacher professional learning funds resulted in the completion of ‘Rock and Water’ training at a school development day by 30 staff. This program helps individuals to judge when to stand firm and when to go with the flow.

Boys Education will continue to be a major component of transition programs in 2009. Specific workshops are planned for groups of boys across the DSODE drawing area. These workshops will focus on building educational engagement and will be delivered by school staff in partnership with local agencies.

Additional strategies, aimed at increasing resilience and self esteem, have been programmed to occur during residential camps in 2009.

Distance Education Shared Delivery Program

This program was established to present a full curriculum program for students in Years 11 and 12 at three central schools; Ashford, Bundarra and Emmaville (ABE) thereby addressing inequities arising from geographic isolation.

In 2008 the ABE program continued to deliver quality educational opportunities for an increased number of students through:

- Student attendance and participation in residential schools at Dubbo in Term 2 and 3
- Field service visits by teams of teachers in Terms 1 and 4 to deliver workshops to students in ABE students
- VET field service visits to contribute to work placement
- Post school destinations for 2008 HSC students included five accepting university places, four undertaking apprenticeships and six engaging in full time employment.

Longer term benefits of the program include:

- Increased retention of ABE students in education through to the HSC
- Increased professional learning opportunities for ABE teachers in stage 6 curriculum delivery through team teaching and expanded collegial practices
- Increased Stage 6 enrolment at DSODE and ABE
- Educational programs catering for the broadest range of student abilities.

The ABE program has continued to be successful in meeting the needs of senior students and their communities by providing access to a diverse high quality Stage 6 curriculum.

Vocational Education Program

In 2008, 57 students studied one or more Vocational Education Training (VET) courses in nine frameworks. In many courses, teachers have developed or upgraded learning materials and activities to meet new syllabus requirements and to provide improved delivery. Assessments were conducted in a variety of contexts to address individual student’s situations.

There were 38 students who sat the HSC examinations in their elected VET courses. HSC examinations for Business Services and Primary Industries all achieved Band 4. In Information Technology all students achieved Band 4 or higher. Band 6 results were achieved in the Entertainment framework. 75% of students in Retail Operations gained a Band 4 or higher.

Young Parent Program

In 2008, 29 young parents were enrolled in DSODE during the year. Five young parents sat for HSC examinations. Pathways (part-time) HSC enrolment continues to provide young parents with the flexibility they need to continue their education.

The number of local students enrolled was reduced in 2008, making it less viable to conduct young parent workshops as young parents and their children find the travel to Dubbo difficult. However the crèche has continued to operate one day per week, allowing local young parents to have regular access to teachers and school technologies.

The enrolments this year have been spread across a range of districts and not in clusters as has been the case in previous years. As a result the focus was on home visits rather than area workshops to work with and support young parents.
Partnerships with local and regional schools have increased in 2009 with an increase in students being referred to DSODE with the intention of returning to their local schools when they are ready. Two students returned to their local school after 12 months with DSODE and three more are anticipated to return in 2009.

Country Areas Program

The Country Areas Program (CAP) improves equity for students who are educationally disadvantaged by location. Three DSODE programs accessed funding through CAP in 2008.

Online course modules were developed using the school’s Moodle facility. Professional learning of teachers and school administration staff was enhanced through the provision of workshops. Training in podcasting and the use of an interactive program called Kahooz were included. These areas will be further developed in 2009.

Quality teaching dimensions provided a framework for parent and teacher workshops. A workshop for parents was held, presented by Judith McFadden, equipping parents with ideas and strategies to support their specialised role as supervisors of their children engaged in learning through distance education.

Two staff members attended training sessions in the Western Region’s ‘Reading to Learn’ program. The skills developed at these workshops will be utilised to help improve students’ reading for meaning strategies. Three more teachers will access this training in 2009 and implementation of the teaching and learning strategies will commence across the school.

Technology Program

DSODE provided computers to a number of students in 2008 to allow them to complete their studies. A small number of students were loaned laptop computers when a stay in hospital was required. More isolated secondary students have had computers installed as part of the satellite computer program. No additional satellite computer classes were delivered in 2008 as the new program to deliver satellite lessons is still to be tested and approved by the NSW Department of Education.

We look forward to education revolution funding to provide laptop computers for students in Years 9–12 in 2009. Staff training is continuing in order to allow the best use of these computers when they are delivered.

Online learning modules delivered via the school Moodle server have increased our offering particularly in Information Technology, Visual Arts and Music courses. Students take a keen interest in the alternate mode of learning and engage in the collaboration experiences that this mode provides.

The new schools’ website service we have been waiting for has not been delivered at this point but we do look forward to its introduction in 2009. This will allow us to more easily provide timely communication to our student and parent communities as well as the wider community.

With the change in the mix of delivery modes staff have continuously sought to solve challenges that present. More students have been provided with regular timetabled lessons for the week and extensive consideration has been given to striking the balance between direct contact and independent work that students require. Planning will always be required to address this balance particularly as new and exciting technologies evolve and are introduced at DSODE.

With the introduction of the Laptop for Learning program and new delivery technologies DSODE will need to develop new modes of providing information and coursework to students. Like the demise of the floppy disk, the CD-Rom will become rarer and we will need to develop new delivery mechanisms in 2009.

Student leadership

In 2008 the Student Leadership team was formed to provide opportunities for more students to participate in team building and leadership development. Students at the NAPLAN residential camp participated in an initiatives course run by Department of Sport and Recreation at Lake Burrendong. This program was evaluated by students as being very successful in building team skills and individual confidence.

The DSODE Student Forum, which was established in 2000, continues to provide leadership opportunities for our students. Students from years 5 to 12 have the opportunity to nominate for membership of the student forum and when necessary elections are held.

The Student Forum aims to:
- represent the student body;
- plan and organise fund raising, social and recreational activities;
- improve school amenities and appearance; and
- encourage school spirit and pride.

In 2008 the Student Forum once again supported Red Nose Day through the sale of merchandise by raising $307.50; and also the Flying Doctor service raising $68 through the Jelly Bean Guessing competition.
The annual school dance was organised by the Student Forum, who booked the disc jockey, decorated the hall and decided the theme. A fantastic time was had by all.

The 2008 winner of the Student Forum annual poetry competition was Year 5 student Lauren Smith.

Programs for students with identified learning needs

The Alternate Program continued to provide the opportunity for success for all students by catering for individual needs, reducing the number of teachers per student, consolidating curriculum, utilising test talker software and streamlining contact in order to support the achievement of learning outcomes.

In 2008, the program supported 59 students. There were 24 teachers directly involved in designing curriculum and teaching these students.

Successes included the following:
- Thirteen students participated in a corrective reading program
- One student successfully completed the Life Skills HSC and one single course student completed a single HSC Life Skills course
- Seven students completed single courses in Life Skills at the preliminary level
- Ten students continued their enrolment in Stage 5 courses and achieved success in the School Certificate, directly as a result of the Alternate Program
- Nine students in remote geographical areas were supported through partnerships with DSODE teachers and local community members.

The Alternate Program will continue to be evaluated. Students in the program will have Personalised Learning Plans (PLP) developed and reviewed. It is anticipated more students will be able to access technology to support their engagement in learning. Networks with Lincoln Education and Training Unit, Girrakool Education and Training Unit, Greater Western Area Health, Community and Mental Health, Burnside, Department of Community Services (DoCS), local PCYC centres, local Neighbourhood Centres, Broken Hill Skills Share Centre, Youth Pathways, Tafe, Centacare and Life without Barriers will be consolidated.

Progress on 2008 targets

Targets for 2008

Target 1

*Each student to achieve Literacy and Numeracy targets defined in individual learning plans.*

Teachers used the 2007 BST, ELLA and SNAP data to construct individual education plans for students.

Our achievements include:
- All K-6 students, who could be tracked, improved by at least one reading recovery level in six months with the average improvement two levels
- All students recorded growth in both their spelling and reading ages based on standardised benchmarking
- 67% of students enrolled in the Alternate Program, for whom value-added data could be measured, met Western Region’s standard of improvement by at least one Band.

Target 2

*All Years K – 8 students who have regular timetabled lessons in phone, satellite or Bridgit will achieve an 80% attendance rate in 2008*

In 2008 students in years K-8 were provided with opportunities to participate in timetabled lessons with their peers and teachers via technologies wherever possible.

Our achievements include:
- The development of an expectation and practice that students provide a reason if they are unable to attend lessons, preferably before the lesson commences
- Co-ordination of individual student and family lesson timetables with teacher timetables
- Data collected showed that 76% of K-6 students attended the minimum 80% of scheduled lessons
- Students in Years 7 and 8 regularly participated in scheduled phone and satellite lessons. Due to the complexity of keeping attendance lists for students across multiple subjects and teachers, it has not been possible to provide an accurate measurement of this attendance.
Target 3

Single course students access at least one form of technological support in the provision of their learning

Quality teaching and successful learning requires regular interaction between students and teachers.

Our achievements include:

- 80% of single course students were able to access regular lessons via telephone, satellite, online learning or Bridgit
- 23% of single course students visited the school for workshops with peers and teachers
- 15% of students accessed at least one home school visit from their DSODE teacher(s)
- 17% increase in achievement of higher Bands in 2008 HSC results compared with 2007 HSC results.

Target 4

All teachers develop at least one unit of online or digital learning material in 2008

In term 1 2008, staff had the opportunity to participate in 12 school-based professional learning activities in technologies including Moodle, School Management System database, Teleconference, Videoconference, Bridgit, Smartboard and Smart Notebook.

Our achievements include:

- Eighty five teaching staff participating in Moodle training.
- Trained SASS supporting the development of digital or online units of work
- Online courses and units of work developed in all key learning areas with learning materials being developed in nine courses on Moodle
- Significant school-wide production of CD, DVD and Moodle based learning resources to complement or replace leaflet materials.

Target 5

All full time Aboriginal students will achieve 2008 goals identified in Individual Education Plans and Personal Learning Plans

Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) were created for 31 of the 41 fulltime and Pathways students. PLPs could not be completed for ten students who were either unavailable or not contactable. PLPs are created through consultation with student, parent or carer and teachers. They are reviewed each year.

Our achievements include:

- Students who completed PLPs achieved, or are working towards achieving, nominated goals
- Four students achieved their School Certificate
- One student achieved Band 5 in Computing Skills while the remaining three students achieved Band 4
- Five fulltime Aboriginal students enrolled in Preliminary HSC courses
- Five Aboriginal students are completing their HSC through Pathways.

Target 6

Increased retention or re-direction of students identified as being at risk of leaving school

The Transition Committee identified students at risk of disengaging in education and implemented specific strategies targeting the educational needs of these students.

Our achievements include:

- Ten female students attended the ‘Glam It Up’ workshop, which was provided by Western Student Connections
- Training of 30 staff in ‘Rock and Water’
- Establishment of strong links with community support agencies across Western Region
- Regular field services were provided to students supported at the Coonamble Youth Centre
- Personal Learning Plans developed for all students identified as being at risk
- Eight students successfully completed work experience.

Target 7

100% of staff have an approved personal development plan

This target was selected to encourage staff to identify their needs for professional learning based on evaluation of student data, NSW DET priorities and professional goals.

Our achievements include:

- All staff members have an approved personal development plan, shared and discussed during TARS. This plan is reflective of both the school's 2009-2011 plan and individual teachers’ professional growth needs
- Information from professional learning plans was used to identify school funded professional learning activities
- Staff increased their professional knowledge and skills necessary to achieve school targets and goals
- Staff actively joining cross KLA curriculum committees in the school to gain experience in areas where they have identified a personal interest or need
Reflection shows that the majority of staff achieved their goals in 2008. Some goals have been continued into 2009.

Key evaluations

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2008 our school carried out evaluations of Leadership for Change and Visual Arts stage 4.

Educational and management practice

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations - one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2008 our school carried out evaluations of Leadership and Stage 4 Visual Arts.

Background

With a large student population and staff it is important that systems and practices are enacted to support the development of leadership skills. School leaders effectively implement change processes which result in improved student learning outcomes. As a result of participating in the Executive Leadership Development Program, school executive identified a need to increase the provision of leadership development opportunities for teaching staff.

Findings and conclusions

In 2008 staff attended professional learning in leadership activities including Langford Quality Improvement, Student Leadership Planning, Leading Professional Learning, Leading Change in Schools, Principal Preparation, Supporting Beginning Teachers and Accreditation for New Scheme Teachers.

The school established teams for planning across all areas of the school. These teams used Langford planning tools to systematically collect and analyse data, develop and implement action plans and monitor improvements through ongoing evaluations.

The opportunities for teachers to act as leaders and team members have been enhanced, leading to consistent growth and improvements in targeted school areas such as middle years, Aboriginal education, transition and career planning for students and the increased use of ICT in teaching and learning. School leaders have modelled commitment to school improvement.

Future directions

In 2009 growth in leadership capacity will continue to be a school planning priority. Senior executive will act as mentors and coaches for teachers leading school improvement teams. As new staff join the Executive they will complete ELDP training and ensure a shared understanding of leadership priorities and practices within the school.

Curriculum

Background

The existing stage 4 Visual Arts learning materials were in the form of leaflets which focussed on reading about art rather than making and doing. This had led to students being disengaged from the course and few students choosing Visual Arts as an elective in Year 9.

Responses to student and parent surveys indicated that students were taking too long to complete assigned work and that when the work required extensive reading students became disengaged.

Findings and conclusions

Online learning materials were created using Moodle. Students, who were able to access coursework in electronic form, continued to work at their own pace and received feedback from teachers in a much reduced timeframe. This enhanced student motivation and engagement significantly. The Moodle program also provided students with the opportunity to communicate with fellow students and to share art works in a safe online environment.

In addition activities were planned and implemented at residential camps allowing students to become involved in art practices which they couldn’t do at home. Students also engaged in group activities and produced collaborative art works across a range of styles.

The outcome has been more students completing set course work and students entering their art works in competitions. There has also been a significant increase in communication between students and staff which centre on making art and completing art works.

Future directions

The Middle Years program will allow teachers to develop cross curriculum materials designed to increase relevance and student engagement.
Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2008 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented below.

Parents were supportive of a focus on Middle Years curriculum planning and delivery and the provision of combined activities for students in later primary and early secondary years. This helped younger students develop and prepare for secondary schooling and provided all students with leadership opportunities as well as the chance to work together as a community.

Parents greatly assisted in the lobbying for funding to expand the school’s hostel. The hostel extensions have now been completed to the satisfaction of the whole DSODE community.

Parents regularly expressed great satisfaction with the individual care that the school staff provide for their students as well as the support given to parents and carers as supervisors.

Parents actively sought support for students when appropriate, knowing that the staff would do their utmost to work with parents and achieve solutions.

Professional learning

In 2008, Teacher Professional Learning funds were fully expended with all staff accessing professional learning funds. The average expenditure per teacher on professional learning was $665. Teachers accessed a wide range of professional learning activities in alignment with the goals and targets detailed in the 2008 Annual School Plan.

The school provided staff development days in each of Terms 1, 2 and 3. Activities included mandatory training sessions in Child Protection, Anaphylaxis, First Aid and the Code of Conduct.

Thirty staff participated in the ‘Rock and Water’ training, Langford quality improvement processes training, Middle Year schooling initiative training, syllabus implementation workshops, leadership and career development activities, literacy and numeracy skills development workshops, ICT learning and welfare training initiatives. Beginning teachers participated in a range of activities specific to their needs.

Throughout the year the technology team conducted numerous workshops to enhance the development of electronic delivery of course materials.

School development 2009 – 2011

Targets for 2009

Target 1

In 2010 & 2011 literacy growth rates for long term (greater than two years) enrolments in distance education will exceed the average expected growth rate.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Areas for improvement in individual student learning will be targeted and IEPs constructed
- Aggregated data will be used to identify areas for improvement for larger cohorts
- Teachers will identify corresponding areas for professional learning
- Students will be provided with specific learning across all KLAs to address targeted literacy areas.

Our success will be measured by:

- Each student achieving literacy targets defined in IEPs
- Stage 2 and 3 children applying learnt spelling words and correct grammar usage in daily writing activities
- Development of a bank of quality learning programs targeting specific literacy skills
- Students surpassing the average expected growth rate.

Target 2

In 2010 & 2011 numeracy growth rates for long term (greater than two years) enrolments in distance education will exceed the average expected growth rate.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Areas for improvement in individual student learning will be targeted and IEPs constructed
- Aggregated data will be used to identify areas for improvement for larger cohorts
- Teachers will identify corresponding areas for professional learning
- Students will be provided with specific learning across all KLAs to address targeted numeracy areas.

Our success will be measured by:

- Each student achieving numeracy targets defined in IEPs
- Development of a bank of quality learning programs targeting specific numeracy skills
- Students surpassing the average expected growth rate.
Target 3
Stage 5 students at risk, who actively engage in their negotiated curriculum program within the first 5 weeks of enrolment, will progress to completion of the SC and/or further education or training.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Personal learning plans to be constructed in collaboration with each student, parents and/or carers, district office student services support staff and teachers
- Boys’ education strategies and transition programs to be implemented to support these students
- Using technologies, including the new laptops, to increase student engagement and retention

Our success will be measured by:
- Students engaging in learning and achieving PLP goals

Target 4
Each teacher will provide evidence of their application of the Quality Teaching model (TARS) using the Quality Teaching framework (examples provided from which to model).

Strategies to achieve this target include:
- Collaborative development of programs and lesson plans with focus on specific quality teaching elements and standards
- Mentoring and coaching programs to support leadership development
- Focus on using technologies to support teaching and learning.

Our success will be measured by:
- Development of teaching and learning programs with strong evidence of explicit focus on quality teaching
- Increased student engagement in aspects of learning linked to this program.

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.

School contact information
Dubbo School of Distance Education
Myall Street Dubbo NSW 2830
Telephone: 02 5804 7000
Facsimile: 02 6884 0777
Email: dubbo-d.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Website: www.dubbo.dec.education.nsw.gov.au
Dubbo School code: 4587

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: