Dubbo School of Distance Education
Annual School Report

2012
Messages –

Principal’s message

Dubbo School of Distance Education (DSODE) designs and delivers individual educational programs for students across New South Wales (NSW). Students are enrolled in classes from Preschool to Year 12. All full-time and pathways students experience special circumstances, which prevent them from attending a local face-to-face school. As the sole rural autonomous secondary distance education provider in NSW, DSODE services rural students located from the Victorian border to the Queensland border and from the ranges to the South Australian border. A key delivery strategy is to use field service programs and technologies to establish and maintain regular personal contact with students in order to build the relationships so necessary for effective learning.

DSODE is a key provider of educational curricula and services for Stage 5 and Stage 6 students studying in schools which may not have the student numbers or staff to offer a full range of courses. Students enrol in DSODE as single course students studying one or more subjects not available to them in the home school. DSODE provides an equity service for many students who would otherwise be disadvantaged. Since 1991 DSODE has developed a range of specialised programs aimed at catering for students who meet the criteria of one or more of the school’s enrolment categories. These include geographical isolation, travelling in Australia or overseas for periods of up to 12 months, pregnant students and young parents, medical illness, special needs such as behaviour, emotional or mental health issues, vocationally talented students and extraordinary circumstances. The needs of DSODE’s students and their communities are diverse and hence require significant thought and planning when preparing and delivering educational services.

Studying by distance is very flexible and enables students to fit their study into their existing schedules. DSODE maintains a strong focus on utilising technologies such as telephone, online courses, satellite, web conferencing and videoconferencing to create collaborative class groups. 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.

DSODE continues to provide new solutions to deliver quality education for our future generations.

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 (DSODE) Primary Parent Forum met on four occasions in 2012 during the Primary Camps. Meetings were well attended by parents, who provided constructive input on all occasions. Jenny Ballhausen attended all four meetings and presented valuable information to parents about topics relating to school activities, satellite lessons, timetabling and planned activities for future camps.

One of the highlights of 2012 for the Parent Forum and students was the tea towel fundraiser organised and overseen by primary parent Vanessa Cavalot. The high quality tea towels were produced in blue and white representing the school colours with the school logo printed in the middle. DSODE students were asked to draw simple pictures and include their names. The tea towels sold for $15 each and the activity was a huge success, raising $850 for the Parent Forum. Thank you to all those who participated and helped the fundraiser exceed expectations and provide enjoyment for many years to come.

Uniforms were the focus of the Term 2 camp. Parents organised bulk printing of T-shirts and pullovers with the school logo printed on them. Having a uniform adds to the sense of belonging
to a group, helping students to bridge the gap of isolation.

During Term 3 a collection of interested DSODE parents participated in a research project carried out by a University student from Canberra. One-to-one and half-hour telephone interviews were conducted regarding parents/supervisors’ experience of distance education, providing information which may be useful for teachers and parents/supervisors in the future. Findings from this study are yet to be published.

Phase 1 of the satellite upgrades occurred throughout Term 4 in student classrooms, for which are all very grateful. We are looking forward to Phase 2 occurring in 2013.

The school year finished off well with a whole school Presentation Day. It was wonderful to celebrate the achievements of the students. The Parent Forum bought high quality pens in DSODE colours to give to Year 6 students leaving Primary and for parents or supervisors leaving DSODE. The parents of DSODE students thank the teachers and administration staff for always nurturing and helping us both as a group of parents and as individuals.

Rachel King
President
Dubbo School of Distance Education
Parent Forum

Student representative’s message

In 2012 the Student Representative Council (SRC) sought to develop strategies to overcome the challenges of a distance education student leadership model. We have followed through with a plan to ensure students take more responsibility for directing the progress and programs that the SRC undertake. Better attendance at SRC meetings has been achieved by calling or texting the SRC representatives reminding them of upcoming meetings. This resulted in at least 50% more attendance than last year. Unfortunately, the planned SRC camp was cancelled due to lack of numbers. The SRC organised a number of student discos and activity nights during residential camps. The SRC also raised funds for charity by selling chocolates to staff and organising a barbeque at the 2012 Term 4 final staff development day. SRC activities were accomplished under the leadership and with the support of the SRC staff coordinators, Mr Justin Ayling, Miss Krystal MacBeth, Mr Allyn Smith and Mr David Strain.

Lexie Johnson
President
2012 Student Representative Council

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 NSW and overseas. In 2012 the school enrolled 413 full time, 87 pathways and 616 single course students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-6 Dubbo</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-12 Fulltime</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12 Single Course</td>
<td>108.8</td>
<td>106.8</td>
<td>106.6</td>
<td>118.4</td>
<td>111.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-12 Pathways</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>51.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>483.5</td>
<td>511.4</td>
<td>609.5</td>
<td>575.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student attendance profile

Measurement of student attendance by tracking student presence on a daily basis is not applicable in a distance education context. DSODE has established processes to monitor student participation.

Management of non-attendance

DSODE contacts students and parents when participation across the range of courses is causing concern. Support is offered to help the
student increase engagement. If non-participation continues, a range of interventions, which may include support from the Home School Liaison Program, are enacted.

**Post-school destinations**

In 2012, 32 full-time students and two pathways students completed Year 12. Of these, 15 students are now studying at university, four are studying at TAFE, five have commenced apprenticeships and three are working in paid employment. One student is attending a private training college.

At the time of writing this report the post school destinations of three students was unknown.

**Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training**

In 2012 83 students were enrolled across eight vocational education and training courses; 12 as full time students and 71 as single course students.

**Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification**

In 2012, 32 full-time students and two pathways students completed Year 12. In all, 83 students, including single course, were enrolled in one or more HSC or equivalent VET courses in 2012. Thirty seven achieved a Certificate II or higher and 46 gained a statement of attainment detailing competencies achieved which could contribute toward a Certificate II or higher qualification. Four students received Certificate II in three courses. Statements of Attainment for Certificate II in three courses were awarded to five students and one received a Statement of Attainment for Certificate III. Twelve students were awarded HSC accreditation.

**Staff information**

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

**Staff establishment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on Indigenous composition of their workforce.

In 2012 DSODE staffing composition included two permanent full-time Aboriginal teachers and two permanent full-time administration staff. In addition, DSODE used school funds to employ an additional Aboriginal part-time administration staff member and Norta Norta funds to employ an Aboriginal tutor.

**Staff retention**

In 2012 DSODE employed Vanessa Duncan and Natalie Elwell as beginning teachers and Shari Jackson as an administration staff member. Staff retention at DSODE is high.

**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>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>17</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 30/11/2012

Income
Balance brought forward 767717.20
Global funds 825810.02
Tied funds 247460.63
School & community sources 110458.98
Interest 39885.90
Trust receipts 244227.64
Canteen 0.00
Total income 2235560.37

Expenditure
Teaching & learning
  Key learning areas 400986.18
  Excursions 39163.28
  Extracurricular dissections 5016.37
Library 11390.86
Training & development 92229.77
Tied funds 155230.86
Casual relief teachers 3420.10
Administration & office 136650.26
School-operated canteen 0.00
Utilities 63331.14
Maintenance 22785.11
Trust accounts 81970.07
Capital programs 63948.26
Total expenditure 1076122.26
Balance carried forward 1159438.11

The school will present a full copy of the school’s financial report at a meeting of the parent forum in 2013. Further details concerning the school’s annual financial statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2012

Achievements

Arts

Primary

Geographically isolated students in Years K-6 received lessons in Music and Visual Arts via the satellite. Music lessons were organised in stage groups and Visual Arts as a single whole school group.

In 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 with art materials to create a range of artistic pieces.

A large selection of students’ work from Preschool to Year 6 was displayed at Presentation Day. The range and variety was well received by parents and the wider community.

Secondary

Photography

Enrolments in both Stage 5 and Stage 6 courses have continued to increase. At residential camps students participated in workshops at DSODE, Western Plains Zoo, Western Plains Cultural Centre and the Japanese Gardens. Light boxes were purchased to extend student experiences. All staff continued to complete professional learning to enable them to extend the photographic experiences for students.

Once again a student used work completed at school to develop a portfolio that gained her early admission to university to study photography. One student also had considerable success exhibiting his work in the Riverina area.

Visual Design

Teachers continued to write course material as enrolments increased. All units can now cater to students of all abilities and have been modified to meet the needs of students with specific physical and learning disabilities.

New units of work have been developed which have an Asian emphasis. Textbooks have been purchased for students to enable them to identify personal areas of interest and encourage them to develop projects that explore these interests.

Visual Arts

HSC students were very successful this year with the entire cohort achieving results above state averages. One student was particularly successful, having his Major Work selected for inclusion in Art Express.

Staff participated in the annual Distance Education Visual Arts Network meeting in Sydney and brought back to the school a range of Visual
Arts resources that will be adapted for our students.

Staff participated in cross KLA activities at all junior residential camps and helped students and other teachers to produce a variety of art works.

**Sport**

**Primary**

Students at DSODE are given as many opportunities as possible to partake in Primary Small Schools Association (PSSA) sporting opportunities.

At the Dubbo-Wellington Small Schools Swimming Carnival, DSODE had only one swimmer in the competitive carnival due to very small numbers attending. This was predominantly due to flooding in western NSW which prohibited many students from attending.

In Athletics, a small but enthusiastic band of students competed. Stephen Loxton achieved Junior Boys Champion and was one of five students selected for the Dubbo District Carnival. Despite cold, sleet conditions, the students performed admirably.

Stephen Loxton competed at the Western Region Cross Country carnival, finishing 11th in his age group.

Belle Smith attended Girls Soccer trials and was selected as a member of the team to compete at the State carnival in Sydney in June. This team competed enthusiastically, improving their skills and abilities immensely.

**Secondary**

2012 was a historic year in terms of sport at DSODE. This year saw the introduction of the Sports Organiser role, with the chief aim being to increase representative sporting opportunities for students at the school. Karin Morgan fulfilled this role, successfully achieving this aim with the support of the Personal Development, Health, Physical Education (PDHPE) faculty.

DSODE was represented at Western Area Combined High Schools (CHS) carnivals, with students competing at the CHS Western Area Swimming and Athletics Carnivals. DSODE had a record number of students who trialled for selection in a range of Secondary Western Area representative teams, including netball and soccer.

The PDHPE Department was again active in promoting and providing a range of physical activity options for students that extended their course work. This year all residential activities were strategically planned and implemented to maximise student opportunities to develop movement skills in a range of sporting and movement contexts. Students participated in intensive athletics, game sense and fitness programs during residential camps. Students and parents were also given the opportunity to participate in the ‘Health Hustle’ initiative promoting physical activity for both students and parents. This involved members of the PDHPE faculty leading morning exercise sessions over satellite, which focused on improving the health and wellbeing of DSODE families.

The PDHPE Department’s focus on increasing the physical activity opportunities for students also led to participation in both the Bourke and Port Macquarie Area Workshops for DSODE students.

Unfortunately, the annual school Swimming Carnival was cancelled due to heavy state-wide rain and the cancellation of the Term 1 residential. Once again, however, the school’s Athletics Carnival was a great success with 100% participation of students in all events. This statistic is reflective of the level of student enjoyment and engagement and explains the staggering 19 records that were broken. Age champions in each junior year group were awarded medals.

The 2012 sporting year culminated with DSODE students formally recognised at Presentation Day. Students were recognised for their participation, sportsmanship and athletic ability demonstrated throughout the year. Awards included the Junior and Senior Boy and Girl Sports Champions Awards as well as the Junior and Senior Boys and Girls Sportmanship awards.
Academic

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.

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

and/or

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).

Reading – NAPLAN Year 3

In 2012, four students in Year 3 presented for the NAPLAN in Reading. No graphs or tables are published, as the cohort tested had less than ten students. However, growth was achieved by students enrolled in DSODE for more than eighteen months.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3

In 2012, four students in Year 3 presented for the NAPLAN in Numeracy. No graphs or tables are published, as the cohort tested had less than ten students. However, growth was achieved by students enrolled in DSODE for more than eighteen months.

Reading – NAPLAN Year 5

In 2012, seven students in Year 5 presented for the NAPLAN in Reading. No graphs or tables are published, as the cohort tested had less than ten students. However, growth was achieved by students enrolled in DSODE for more than eighteen months.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5

In 2012, seven students in Year 5 presented for the NAPLAN in Numeracy. No graphs or tables are published, as the cohort tested had less than ten students. However, growth was achieved by students enrolled in DSODE for more than eighteen months.

Reading – NAPLAN Year 7

In 2012, 14 students in Year 7 presented for the NAPLAN literacy assessment. Results were provided to parents or carers for individual student performances in reading, writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation. Students whose results are below Band 6 will be targeted to receive additional support. DSODE will focus on strategies to improve performances in writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation. These strategies include scheduled literacy lessons for all students in Middle Years.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7

In 2012, 14 students in Year 7 presented for the NAPLAN numeracy assessment. Results were provided to parents or carers for individual student performances in data, measurement, space and geometry, number, patterns and algebra and overall numeracy. Students whose results are below Band 6 will be targeted to receive additional support. DSODE will continue to focus on strategies to improve performances in reading and understanding in the area of numeracy.
In 2012, 35 students in Year 9 presented for the NAPLAN numeracy assessment. Results were provided to parents or carers for individual student performances in data, measurement, space and geometry, number, patterns and algebra and overall numeracy. Students whose results are below Band 6 will be targeted to receive additional support. DSODE will focus on strategies to improve performances in reading and understanding in the area of numeracy.

**Progress in reading**

Average progress in Reading for Year 3 and Year 5 is not displayed as the cohorts are less than ten.

**Progress in reading – Year 7**

Average progress in Reading for Year 7 is not displayed as the cohort tracked is less than ten.

**Progress in reading – Year 9**

Data has been analysed for 18 students who have been tracked since 2010. In spelling, writing and grammar and punctuation the school mean scores exceeded the regional mean scores but not the state mean scores. Results in writing, grammar and punctuation indicate a need for explicit teaching of skills and strategies to address these areas. Strategies have been planned and introduced by faculties across all KLAs in 2013.

**Progress in numeracy**

Average progress in Numeracy for Year 3 and Year 5 is not displayed as the cohorts are less than ten.
Progress in numeracy - Year 7

Growth in numeracy was above expectations and also above state averages. Of the 12 students for whom growth data is available, one student was enrolled in DSODE for 18 months prior to NAPLAN. The other students were enrolled from two, three or six months prior and hence the growth is not reflective of the school’s teaching and learning practices. Analysis of individual student performance has identified specific areas for remediation and explicit teaching.

The school executive and teaching staff previously participated in systematic and regular professional learning relating to numeracy across the curriculum. In 2013 staff across all KLAs will refresh their focus on numeracy in teaching and learning activities. Students were provided with weekly practice in numeracy activities.

Progress in numeracy - Year 9

Of the 25 students for whom growth data is available, 16 students have been enrolled for 18 months prior to NAPLAN. Of these, three students’ growth was less than expected. The other students were enrolled from two, three or six months prior. It is not possible to draw general conclusions with such small numbers of students enrolled for short periods. Teachers continue to focus on individual student performance, celebrating successes and addressing areas for improvements.

In numeracy, data, measurement, space and geometry and number, patterns and algebra the DSODE’s mean scores exceeded the Region’s mean scores but not the State’s mean scores. Analysis has shown that teaching programs in the Mathematics and Alternate Program faculties have had a significant impact on student learning in the area of numeracy.

RoSA

In November 2012, 87 students were entered for Year 10 assessment. Of these 55 achieved a RoSA10 and 32 a statement of attainment known as a TOS10. Of the 87 students, 64 continued into the Preliminary year at DSODE in 2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERIOD OF ENROLMENT</th>
<th>RoSA10</th>
<th>TOS10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 6 months before Assess</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Higher School Certificate

In 2012, 34 students were awarded an HSC. Thirty-two of these students studied full-time and two accessed a pathways study pattern. A further 12 pathways students, who sat for some HSC examinations, were awarded a Record of Achievement and five of these are continuing with their studies in 2013.

In addition there were 266 single course enrolments from 75 schools who sat for examinations in one or more courses. Forty-one BOS and school-based courses were studied and seven VET courses.

Table of bands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Band 6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band 5</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band 4</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>106</td>
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<td>Band 3</td>
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<td>Band 2</td>
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<td>Band 1</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>E4</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average mark for ten HSC courses, which have a candidature of more than ten, are
compared with previous performance average mark calculated using 2008 – 2012 HSC average marks in the following two graphs.

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 percentage of our students achieving at or above these standards are reported below.

**Percentage of Year 3 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2012**

In 2012 four students in Year 3 presented for NAPLAN in Literacy and Numeracy. No graphs or tables are provided as the cohort was less than 10 students.

**Percentage of Year 5 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2012**

In 2012 seven students in Year 5 presented for NAPLAN in Literacy and Numeracy. No graphs or tables are provided as the cohort was less than 10 students.

**Percentage of Year 7 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students excluded)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>92.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>85.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>92.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Higher School Certificate relative performance comparison to School Certificate (value-adding)

As DSODE students participating in the HSC examinations include single course students in addition to full-time and pathways students, the value-added data provided to the school is meaningless.
Percentage of Year 9 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>94.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>85.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>85.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>91.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

In 2012 DSODE provided learning programs for 111 fulltime Indigenous enrolments from Kindergarten to Year 12. Additionally, there were 17 students undertaking pathways study and 32 single course enrolments.

In 2012 DSODE provided learning programs for ninety six Aboriginal students in Stages 1 through to 5 and twenty two Aboriginal students in Stage 6. Of particular note is that DSODE student Matthew Matheson gained a Wudhagaragarra Award for Encouragement in Stage 4. This award was presented to the student at the Dubbo Awards Ceremony, which he and his family travelled from Walgett to attend.

DSODE had a very successful Reconciliation Day Celebration during a residential camp and celebrated Naidoc day with a full day program of activities at the Term 4 Muster Camp. A key event was the guest speaker, Aboriginal activist Michael Anderson, who was one of the original “Black Power” organisers involved in setting up the Tent Embassy. Given that 2012’s Naidoc focus was the 30 year anniversary of the Tent Embassy, it was fitting that all students and staff listened to this very inspiring speaker.

More DSODE students completed Personal Learning Plans (PLP) and staff continued to develop and implement PLPs for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. This has become a key strategy to achieve engagement and quality outcomes.

In 2012 the continued commitment of DSODE Aboriginal Education Committee members to be actively involved in the newly formed state-wide Distance Education Aboriginal Education network has seen the emergence of a collegial approach to developing and implementing strategies and resources for use across participating schools.

In 2012 staff undertook professional learning in Aboriginal Perspectives provided by DSODE teacher Ken Horley, who undertook training to deliver the 8-ways Pedagogy Training.

In 2012 Vanessa Duncan and Tim Quayle, with sustained support from teachers and administration staff, continued to operate the learning centre, which ran each Tuesday and Wednesday and allowed for students to seek tuition and lesson support from DSODE teachers. This initiative supports Indigenous students and also many young parents. The crèche is also provided on these days. A further key strategy implemented to support Indigenous students has been provided these students with access to Indigenous staff members. In 2012 Kim Simpson and Maxine Toomey continued to offer support to both teachers and students alike.

Multicultural education

DSODE continued to include focuses on multiculturalism in teaching and learning practices and learning materials created by DSODE school staff. A key focus on developing cultural awareness of staff relating to Indigenous students and families will continue in 2013. Staff accessed professional learning relating to including an Asian perspective in learning programs.

The school has a trained Anti-Racism Contact Officer, who provides information and support for school community members.

Other programs

Technology

Digital Education Revolution (DER) funding has provided a laptop to all staff members who needed one for lesson preparation and delivery. A large number of staff has undertaken further professional learning opportunities provided by both the NSW Department of Education and Training and the DSODE Information Communication Technologies Professional Learning team.

DER laptops have been provided to all eligible fulltime students in Years 9, 10, 11 and 12. The school had the extension of a permanent
Technical Support Officer (TSO) to provide assistance with staff and student laptops until the end of 2013.

Online learning modules have continued to be revised and developed in 2012. Existing courses have also been revised and rolled over for students to continue using in 2013.

Opportunities arose in 2012 for DSODE to further participate in and develop resources for the Orana Connected Learning Community. This has resulted in further courses, resources and materials being shared by a variety of schools in Western Region. DSODE’s staff actively assisted schools in developing their online materials for 2012.

A new satellite provision contract and software provider are being sought to provide an enhanced satellite delivery service for students in 2013.

DSODE staff have actively participated in Distance Education networks in 2012 to provide new course materials, particularly to meet Australian Curriculum requirements.

**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 2012 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 Terms 2 and 3
- HSC students having access to the Western Region Enrichment Seminars in June as part of the Term 2 residential
- field service visits by teams of DSODE teachers in Terms 1 and 4 to deliver workshops to students in ABE schools
- weekly access to teleconferences and videoconferences, creating opportunities for discussion and immediate feedback
- effective working relationships and open lines of communication between co-teachers
- VET field service visits to contribute to work placement and students’ achievement of competencies
- access to the Pathways program
- post school destinations for 2012 HSC students included seven accepting university places, one joining the Armed Services while others are waiting on apprenticeships or enrolled in TAFE courses and some have joined the workforce in either full time or casual positions. The students are enrolled in very diverse courses, ranging from nursing to teaching to engineering to hospitality. Those who accepted university places did so at universities in NSW, Victoria and Queensland.

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 to cater 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.

**Young Parent Program**

The average number of enrolments in the Young Parent’s program has increased each year since the program’s introduction. In 2012 the number of young parents enrolled at any point in time varied between 30 and 40.

The crèche opened for one day per week in conjunction with the DSODE Learning Centre. This has increased numbers of young parents regularly engaged in lessons at school. Staff have continued to provide enthusiastic and dedicated support for students in the young parent program.

Challenges included:

- some students not engaging consistently for a long length of time
• inability to regularly contact some students
• Students attending DSODE Learning Centre irregularly.

Student Leadership
In 2012 the Student Representative Council met regularly to plan and provide activities for the student body to increase participation in leadership and governance. As students are geographically situated across the state, it remained a constant challenge to coordinate teleconferences and plan events to be held during residential camps. The SRC showed determination, persistence and creativity in communicating and achieving objectives. Further information is available in the student representative’s message earlier in this report.

Middle Years
The Middle Years Program in 2012 saw the introduction of a Literacy Program for all mainstream Year 7 and 8 students. The Program continued to evolve due to regular assessment and review of existing programs and processes for all students and courses. The program featured the following development throughout the year:

• revising the structure of Year 7 and Year 8 curriculum to reflect the upcoming Australian Curriculum requirements
• continuation of the use of student timetables, term planners and structured lesson times via satellite and teleconferences
• implementation of the cross-curriculum unit of work All About Me and London Olympics 2012. The implementation of the London Olympics 2012 module was followed up with an Olympic themed residential held onsite at DSODE
• establishment of the role of Middle Years Coordinator to liaise with Year 7 and 8 Student Advisors, allocate new enrolments to appropriate class groups and ensure work is packed and ready to be posted on the necessary dates
• planning and implementation of a Middle Years Camp in Term 4, when Year 6 students were invited to participate in a combined two day project with current Year 7 and 8 students
• appointment of two Year 7 Student Advisors at the end of Term 3 so that relationships could be established with 2012 students in Year 6, who were transitioning to Year 7 in 2013
• introduction of a Literacy Program in Semester 2 aiming to target areas of weakness as identified by NAPLAN results
• preparation and distribution of Middle Years resource kits for incoming Year 7 students
• establishment of a Middle Years network across all distance education centres and a collaborative, cross KLA writing project for introduction in 2014 focusing on Asian perspectives for the Australian Curriculum.

The Middle Years Program has proven to be highly successful in 2012 and will continue in a “maintenance phase” during 2013, with preparations being made for the introduction of the Australian Curriculum. The program continues to deliver structured and organised student learning through flexible delivery and increased use of technologies. The program will continue to increase the use of blended learning and collaborative opportunities for 2013 students in Years 6, 7 and 8.

MindMatters
In 2012 DSODE continued into the second year of its five-year plan to implement the MindMatters program. Under the leadership of Brenda Colliver, and with the committed support of an active staff team, the school was recognised as one of thirteen schools at the National MindMatters School Recognition event 2012. This program supports whole school approaches to mental health and wellbeing and improving outcomes for young people and their community. See reports under professional learning and community satisfaction for further details.

Alternate Program
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 and streamlining contact in order to support the achievement of learning outcomes. The program offered the opportunity for all students to reach their potential and consolidate and extend their skills from current foundations. In 2012 this program catered for approximately 112 students and was underpinned by a Personalised Learning Plan (PLP) for every
student. Twelve students transitioned back to face-to-face schooling. This equates to approximately 10 per cent of total enrolments, which is very encouraging.

Where appropriate and relevant, the program also developed relationships and alliances with a diverse range of agencies and local organisations that support students in a holistic context and nurture the opportunities for the successful engagement and achievement of learning outcomes.

Youth Education Support Program

The Youth Education Support Program (YES), increased enrolments from 12 in 2011 to 28 in 2012. This program seeks to improve student engagement with education and targets students who, at times and for various reasons, find engagement in a face-to-face school environment difficult. The program also aims to assist students as they transition to the workforce or a suitable training provider. DSODE is very pleased with the 2012 YES program results, with 98 per cent of targeted students engaging in the program and the 14 students who left school making the transition to TAFE or the workforce. This was a significant achievement for these students.

The Transition Advisor and DSODE Outreach Centres were integral components contributing to the success of the program. They provided many of the students with opportunities to participate in regular face-to-face workshops and work experience.

DSODE currently offers 17 school-based courses, ranging from Aged Care to Automotive Retail and Beauty Mathematics. The program has been recognised and adopted by other distance education schools. In 2012 Karyn Burgun, who is responsible for leading and developing the YES program, agreed to lead and coordinate the state-wide distance education 17 Leaving Age Network group. Through this network partnership many new courses are on the agenda for development in 2013.

Outreach Programs

2012 was a successful year for our Outreach Centres in Parkes and Orange. At Parkes Outreach Centre two students completed Year 10, while two others transitioned from the YES program to further study within the Parkes community. In 2013 three students will begin their pathway to an HSC, and one will begin Stage 5. Orange Outreach Centre supported students studying in varying Stages, including one student beginning his pathway to an HSC.

Parkes and Orange Outreach Centres are both equipped to cater for students’ educational needs. They are both located within shire-owned and maintained buildings and offer bathroom and kitchen facilities for the students to access. Parkes has student access to free Wi-Fi and Orange will have this access early in 2013, ensuring that all students attending will have access to (Digital Education Revolution) DER laptop computers. Groups of teachers visit each centre once per fortnight to provide students with further educational support.
Progress on 2012 targets

Target 1

- In 2012 literacy growth rates for long-term (greater than 18 months) enrolments in distance education will exceed the average expected growth rate.

Our achievements include:
- in the area of reading, fourteen out of the nineteen students tracked met the target
- in the area of spelling, eleven out of 19 students tracked met the target.

Target 2

In 2012 numeracy growth rates for long-term (greater than 18 months) enrolments in distance education will exceed the average expected growth rate.

Our achievements include:
- of the nineteen students tracked in Years 5, 7 and 9, thirteen met the target.

Target 3

- Stage 5 students at risk, who actively engage in their negotiated curriculum program within the first five weeks of enrolment, will progress to completion of compulsory education in DSODE or transition to further education and training or transition back to their home school.

Our achievements include:
- In 2012 there were 70 Stage 5 students enrolled in the Alternate Program; 37 of these were in Year 10
- In Year 10, 8 of the 37 Alternate Program students transitioned back to face-to-face school, as a result of successful engagement in educational curricula and support provided, and one student transferred to TAFE to complete Year 10
- Of the remaining students enrolled in Alternate Program Year 10, 13 achieved the credential of a RoSA and continued into Year 11 in 2013
- This accounts for 60% of the students who either successfully transitioned back to a face to face setting, successfully transitioned to a TAFE setting or completed the RoSA
- the 15 students who did not engage successfully in the program were referred to the Department of Education school attendance personnel and, in some cases, community services.

Target 4

- In 2012 80 per cent of staff engage in at least one professional learning activity relating to student mental health.

Our achievements include:
- this target was met with 100 per cent of staff engaging in a range of professional learning activities to support positive student mental health
- for more detail see the professional learning report later in this document.

School evaluation

NSW public schools conduct evaluation to support the effective implementation of the school plan. In 2012 our school carried out evaluation of the MindMatters implementation, which reflects the school’s commitment in providing student welfare structures that support quality teaching and learning.

In 2012 MindMatters was introduced so that all staff at DSODE became better informed about health and wellbeing.

Background

The enrolment number of students with high support needs has grown in recent years and the need was identified to improve the engagement of these students in learning. To address this situation, a team was established to implement the principles of MindMatters Australia at DSODE. MindMatters was then included in the 2012-2014 school plan with the goal to promote the mental health and wellbeing of both students and staff.

Findings and conclusions

The MindMatters strategy for 2012 was to improve staff knowledge of mental health and wellbeing.
A survey was conducted at the beginning of the implementation of the program. This survey will be used at various stages as a tool to evaluate the success of the program. The survey was conducted for the second time at the end of 2012 and will be conducted again at the end of 2013 and 2014.

Both teachers and SASS staff have been engaged in a variety of professional learning activities throughout the year. These have included:

- Professional Learning conducted during staff development days and at full staff meetings
- Level 1 and Level 2 MindMatters training
- Youth Mental Health First Aid training
- MindMatters team members attending the GenerationNext conference in Sydney
- Student Advisors attending the Accidental Counsellor training.

To better support students with complex needs, individual Student Wellbeing Plans have been created. These are to be accessed during the early stages of enrolment and will assist student advisors to work with families in the case management of identified students.

An inter-agency approach has been established and involves liaison with the Western Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service School Link Coordinator and other outside agencies. The aim is to provide staff and parents with better access to available support services.

Future directions

- In 2013 KidsMatter will provide a focus on preschool and primary enrolments.
- Mentoring sessions with MindMatters Australia will continue.
- The evaluation survey will be conducted and analysed at the end of 2013 and 2014.
- Staff professional learning on mental health and wellbeing will continue.
- Resilience activities will be developed across all KLAs and introduced into residential, transition and outreach centre learning programs.

- Information on mental health will be published in the school newsletter.
- An improved Starter Pack for new full-time enrolments will be developed.
- An effective collection of resources for staff to access will be provided.
- At the conclusion of 2014, there will be an evaluation of learning materials incorporating health and wellbeing and staff will evaluate their own practices to gauge their success in better engaging students in their learning.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2012 the school regularly sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school’s performances through a primary parent meeting held once a term during camp week, a secondary parent teleconference held once a term and regular phone contact with individual parents. Given the widespread geographical location of parents and students these arrangements best meet the needs of the DSODE community.

Parents and carers are encouraged to contact DSODE staff for regular feedback and support through a variety of communication channels. The parent or carer as a supervisor plays an integral role in supporting their student. Together, teachers and supervisors focus on effectively engaging students in order to maximise achievement of educational outcomes.

In 2012 the Dubbo Learning Centre was established and early in 2013 a survey relating to student learning and engagement at the Dubbo Learning Centre was undertaken.

Background

In 2011 Vanessa Duncan, teacher at DSODE identified the need to provide learning support for approximately 40 students living in or close to the Dubbo area and learning via distance education. After planning and significant preparation, the Dubbo Learning Centre (DLC) was established in 2012 to provide DSODE students with the opportunity to attend school and access support from the teachers two days per week. The DLC runs from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm on Tuesday and Wednesday. Students attend and engage in timetabled individual lessons with their
teachers, completing lessons independently and at times engaging in planned peer group activities.

Findings and conclusions
In February 2013 students attending the DLC completed a survey about the DLC. Attendance data and information from the survey are presented here.

- In 2012, 15 students attended the DLC on at least one occasion with eight students attending regularly.
- In 2012, 45 teachers provided lessons for students attending the DLC.
- Student comments about the value of the learning centre were overwhelmingly positive.

Future directions
Students have affirmed the importance of accessing the DLC to have lessons and support from teachers. In February 2013, 17 students have registered to attend lessons.

Professional learning
In 2012, teacher professional learning funds spent totalled $119,066. Funds supported an increased level of teacher participation in developing effective state-wide distance education networks in 2012 and increased support for teacher attendance and participation at the annual Distance Education Conference held in Sydney. Further development of Mindmatters programs was encouraged and as per the school plan target, 100 per cent of staff attended at least one professional learning training session relating to supporting positive mental health.

The average expenditure per staff member in 2012 was $1169.60. Teachers and school administrative and support staff accessed a wide variety of professional learning activities which aligned with the goals and targets detailed in the 2012 Annual School Plan. The school provided staff development days in each term.

In Term 1, activities involved the DEC mandatory training sessions in Child Protection, Code of Conduct, Workplace Health and Safety and Child Protection updates. In addition, staff undertook training in anti-bullying, cybersafety, understanding Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and Aboriginal pedagogies. Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation updates for new staff were conducted throughout the Term 1 and Mindmatters sessions were provided in staff meetings.

In Term 2, staff were able to choose an area of interest to develop teaching and learning strategies further. The options included working with students with ASD, Mindmatters, Aboriginal pedagogies and whole-brained learning. In addition, during Term 2, 25 delegates from DSODE attend the distance education symposium in Sydney. Emphasis in this professional learning was to support the development of distance education networks across the state.

In Term 3, an emphasis was again placed on Mindmatters. Eighty-one staff undertook a session outlining Mindmatters strategies to assist students, along with a further session on workplace practices and safety with Ros Williams. A further 19 staff undertook two days of training in Youth Mental Health First Aid. Staff also undertook the online training in cybersafety. In addition to staff development days, faculties developed their own professional learning to involve plans and strategies to support the school’s 2012 targets. This included support for literacy and numeracy initiatives, the development of Stage 6 programs and support structures for effective assessment processes, the development of faculty scope and sequences in preparation for the implementation of the Australian Curriculum and creating more effective learning and engagement strategies at a faculty level.

In Term 4, staff became acquainted with the upcoming implementation of the Australian Curriculum. Focus for the two days was on developing cross-curriculum resources and opportunities in the three priority areas: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures; Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia; and Sustainability. On the second day, teachers were able to put theory into practice by visiting the botanic garden precinct in Dubbo to develop ideas and resources for student activities when they visit the school for residential and workshops. During this term, staff undertook updates in CPR training, emergency care and anaphylaxis.
Staff continued to further their knowledge and skills development in the areas of quality teaching, new curriculum and syllabus requirements, leadership and career development activities, literacy, numeracy and the use of information communication technologies (ICTs) in teaching and learning. In 2012 there was an increase in staff accessing professional learning in areas of special education (e.g. students with ASD, mental health or behavioural disorders); curriculum delivery in areas with new syllabuses; and the implementation of the National Quality Framework for Early Childcare and Preschool.

DSODE staff have also been instrumental in supporting other teachers in Western Region by offering a variety of ICT, professional learning and KLA network support. A number DSODE staff are coordinators of distance education networks and are working across a variety of schools to support and share ideas in delivering new curriculum.

School planning 2012—2014
The school planning policy provides direction for the preparation and implementation of school plans including the identification of priority areas, intended outcomes and targets that are consistent with the NSW State Plan and the Department’s planning documents.

School priority 1
Outcome for 2012–2014
AITSL standards implemented

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
• all teaching staff develop personal professional learning plan with supportive TARS and EARS.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
• provide weekly professional learning club to support teachers’ collaborative progress through the Classroom Teacher Project (CTP) modules and other professional learning activities
• provide executive with an overview of the CTP
• executive ensure professional learning in work area meetings relating to the CTP

• revisit school professional learning templates to incorporate Australian Institute of Teaching and Leadership requirement.

School priority 2
Outcome for 2012–2014
Steady implementation of the Australian Curriculum in accordance with timelines.

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
• scope and sequences developed for Australian curriculum courses in Primary and Secondary courses: English, Maths, Science and History

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
• support the distance education networks in the development of Australian Curriculum learning resources
• map existing learning materials to the national curriculum syllabi
• access commercial and Board of Studies resources to support materials development
• provide professional learning activities for teachers to support Australian Curriculum implementation.

School priority 3
Outcome for 2012–2014
Enhanced engagement of all students in DSODE learning programs

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
• regular attendance of targeted students at the Dubbo Learning Centre and the Parkes, Orange and Bourke Outreach programs.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
• establish reliable and consistent staff presence in each centre
• develop communications between leaders of each centre, teaching staff and students
• establish class groups and assign teachers to classes
• provide student workshops in transition, personal wellbeing, use of social media and other identified areas of need.
School priority 4
Outcome for 2012–2014

Improved Literacy and Numeracy outcomes for all DSODE students

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

• in 2013 literacy growth rates for long-term (greater than 18 months) enrolments in distance education will exceed the average expected growth rate.

• in 2013 numeracy growth rates for long-term (greater than 18 months) enrolments in distance education will exceed the average expected growth rate.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

• implement personal learning plans for all students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 identified as performing under the state benchmark

• continue timetabled weekly literacy lessons for Stage 4 students

• use SMART data to identify weaknesses in literacy and numeracy for each student

• continue supporting a whole school culture that develops literacy and numeracy in all teaching and learning activities.
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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Melissa Halpin  Deputy Principal
Rachel King  Parent Forum
Debbie Murray  Deputy Principal (RLG)
Sharon Keyte  Head Teacher
Lexie Johnston  Student Representative Council
Jenny Ballhausen  Assistant Principal
Susan Gown  Assistant Principal
Liana Leigo  Head Teacher
Susan Howlett  Head Teacher
Marisha Blanco  Head Teacher
Graham Grant  Head Teacher
Lynda Ipkendanz  School Administrative Manager
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Graeme Hosken  Head Teacher
Janelle Dowton  Head Teacher
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Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at: http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/asr