Dubbo School of Distance Education
Annual School Report
2014
School context
Dubbo School of Distance Education (DSODE) designs and delivers individual educational programs for rural New South Wales (NSW) students located from the Victorian border to the Queensland border and from the ranges to the South Australian border. 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. Key delivery strategies include the use of field service programs and technologies to establish and maintain regular contact with students. These strategies help build the relationships necessary for effective learning. Stage 5 and Stage 6 students, enrolled in other schools, access 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 disadvantage-aged. 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, medical conditions that prevent attendance at a regular school, pregnant students and young parents, vocationally talented students, students with additional learning and support needs, including those with disability and students in extraordinary circumstances. The needs of DSODE students and their communities are diverse and require staff to ensure significant consultation and planning with parents and carers when preparing and delivering educational services.

Studying by distance is flexible and enables students to fit study into existing schedules. DSODE maintains a strong focus on utilising technologies to create collaborative class groups. Students are supported in their learning through the provision of quality learning materials that may include print materials, internet-based learning and digital resources.

An important dimension of a student’s learning experience in distance education is the support of the home supervisor or, for single course students, the home-school supervisor. 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 solutions to deliver quality education for our future generations.

Principal’s message
DSODE seeks to provide engaging learning experiences for each and every student. Teachers and administrative staff work as a dedicated team of professionals, consulting with students, parents and carers to find creative and resourceful ways to increase student participation and achievement. In this report you will find descriptions of DSODE student engagement in various programs, accounts of students’ successes and future development aspirations.

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 Principal
Debbie Murray (Relieving Principal)

Parent Forum message
Dubbo School of Distance Education Primary Parent Forum met on three occasions in 2014 during the primary camps. Term 3 camp was cancelled due to hostel kitchen renovations. The Parent Forum discussed a range of issues including excursions, use of parent cupboard, timetabling of satellite lessons and support of DSODE Supervisors.

Excursions were a focus of the parent forum as it was felt that, even though our students are isolated, they shouldn’t be disadvantaged and miss out on school excursions. During 2014 our students were able to take part in a combined small schools excursion to Canberra and the younger students experienced a zoo snooze at Taronga Western Plains Zoo Dubbo. Fun was had by all. Thank you to Jenny Ballhausen for the organisation and accompanying the students. More excursions are in the pipeline for 2015.

It was bought to the Parent Forum’s attention that the parent cupboard in the hostel needed attention. Thank you to Amanda and Cylie for taking this on. New sporting equipment and board
games were purchased and are now available for children to borrow during camp weeks.

DSODE shares its satellite bandwidth with all distance education centres, making timetabling difficult. The Parent Forum has been requesting a lunch break as some families constantly have a student on a satellite lesson making it difficult for anyone to have a break from the schoolroom. It was then brought to our attention how limited we are with bandwidth. One of our parents has suggested that ICPA have a voice in the allocation of distance education bandwidth in the hope that one day DSODE would not be so limited.

During Term 3 parents, supervisors and students were asked to provide feedback on DSODE’s current operation and possible future directions. It was suggested that training as home supervisors would be beneficial. As a result a course delivered by Rural Biz Training called Certificate III Education Support was offered for parents and supervisors to complete at their own expense. Some supervisors started the course and have found it to be very beneficial in the school room.

Term 4 saw the opening of the hostel with the new industrial size kitchen facilities meeting the standards for the hospitality students.

The school year finished off well with a whole school presentation day ceremony. It was wonderful to celebrate the achievements of the students. The hostel was on display with the new kitchen on show and looking amazing.

Once again the parent forum hired the waterslide and a number of families attended. Students had a great time celebrating the end of a hard year’s work.

**Sophia Josephs**  
President  
Primary Parent Forum

### Student representative’s message

In 2014 the Student Representative Council (SRC) held their first planning day during the Term 4 muster camp. A new SRC charter was developed, that takes into account the issues involved in communicating in a distance education environment. The SRC is embracing technologies such as Moodle and Facebook to allow for regular communication between members, committees and the SRC staff coordinators. The SRC organised a number of student led events such as discos and activity nights during residential camps. The SRC also raised funds, for resources for students to use in the hostel during residential camps, by selling DSODE branded travel mugs to the wider school community during the school presentation day 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.

**Billijo Holmes**  
President  
2014 Student Representative Council

### Student information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students 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 2014 the school enrolled 459 full time, 91 pathways and 612 single course students.
K – 6 Enrolments

7 – 12 Enrolments

Student attendance profile

The school data from the student attendance table provided by the Department has not been included because it contains no data for Distance Education schools.

Measurement of student attendance by tracking student presence on a daily basis is not applicable in a distance education context. DSODE has established processes that monitor student participation and engagement in learning. Attendance is measured by student contact with teachers, participation in scheduled lessons and completion of set work.

Management of non-attendance

DSODE contacts students and supervisors 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 the Home School Liaison Program, is enacted.

Post-school destinations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-school destinations</th>
<th>Year 10</th>
<th>Year 11</th>
<th>Year 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seeking employment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employment</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE entry</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>university entry</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

Of the 60 full time students enrolled in Year 12 in 2014, 15 or 25% were enrolled in one or more VET courses. 17.9% of the 352 students (single course and fulltime students) engaged in vocational or trade training in 2014.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent Vocational educational qualification

Of the 60 full time students enrolled in Year 12 in 2014, 42% attained the HSC or an equivalent vocational qualification.

Workforce information

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

Workforce composition

<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>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
<td>104.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Australian Education Regulation, 2014 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce.

The Aboriginal composition of the workforce at DSODE includes two Aboriginal Administration Support Staff and two Permanent Teachers.
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>

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

The major priority for Professional Learning at DSODE in 2014 was to support the achievement of the school identified priority areas:

- leadership and management
- curriculum and assessment
- engagement and attainment
- literacy and numeracy
- Aboriginal education
- organisational effectiveness.

Staff accessed a variety of professional learning experiences by identifying their ability to meet one or more of the priority areas as well as meeting their own identified professional learning plan goals outlined on the application form and through the application process.

In 2014 teacher professional learning funds spent totalled $152,379.23. The average expenditure per staff member in 2014 was $390.71.

Distance education network meetings for the purpose of implementing the Australian Curriculum continued to be supported. The 2014 Distance Education Conference held in Sydney during Term 2 was also supported for these reasons with the same level of participation as was achieved in 2013.

Fifty-three staff members attended a conference with Tony Attwood, held in Dubbo in Term 3, providing valuable strategies for students in our Autism category of enrolment.

One hundred per cent of staff accessed some form of professional development in 2014. Mandatory staff training was covered on school development days as well as at targeted events to enable the development of the school priority areas. In Term 1, activities involved the mandatory training sessions in Child Protection, Code of Conduct, Workplace Health and Safety and Chemical Safety. Cardio-pulmonary resuscitation training updates were provided for new staff as they entered on duty. A group of seven new executive staff participated in the Young Leaders Conference in Sydney. For the first time in 2014 teacher professional learning events with a nil cost were tracked as part of our school processes. These events enabled many teachers to access quality professional learning.

In Term 2, Key Learning Area (KLA) based training was implemented on the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) standards and applying the standards to the development of teaching and learning materials. Professional development plans were also developed and modified. The Vocational Education and Training (VET) faculty reviewed practices and procedures for the external audit. Primary staff participated in training for KidsMatter while Preschool staff engaged in training for the EYLF frameworks. In Term 4 KLA based training was again utilised to evaluate the implementation of Year 7 and Year 9 curriculum programs and to plan for the implementation of Year 8 and Year 10. Analysis of data from NAPLAN and HSC results occurred in order to plan for 2015 teaching programs. Professional learning also focused on best practice in evaluating and developing assessment tasks, completing anaphylaxis online training and technology training delivered by the DSODE Information Communication and Technology (ICT) faculty. Training also occurred throughout the year to enable improved learning support and to support the Non-violent Crisis Intervention Strategies (NCIS) implementation.

New Scheme Teachers working towards Proficient Teacher accreditation

Nine New Scheme Teachers (NSTs) were supported with working towards proficient teacher accreditation level. This included one casual, four temporary and four permanent teachers. One teacher gained accreditation. One submitted the annotated evidence and accreditation report and is currently waiting on a decision. Three teachers employed in 2014 are no longer employed at DSODE. The remaining NSTs continue to be supported in working towards proficient teacher accreditation.
All NSTs participated in individual or small group sessions to plan and discuss achievement of accreditation within their designated timeframe. Attendance and participation varied in accordance with varying employment arrangements and stages in preparation for accreditation. All were supported in the collection and annotation of evidence and were encouraged to participate in ‘Starting Out Strong – Beginning Teachers’ modules via Adobe Connect and video conference sessions.

**New Scheme Teachers maintaining Proficient Teacher accreditation**

Twenty-three (NSTs) were supported with the maintenance of their accreditation at proficient level. All permanent, casual, and temporary teachers completed or accessed professional development throughout the year, and were supported with their logging of teacher identified professional learning and registered professional development in line with BOSTES practices. Weekly support sessions were made available for teachers to assist with mapping teacher identified hours of professional development against BOSTES standards. Teachers were assisted with logging teacher identified professional development into their BOSTES account. This logging was validated twice each term to maintain an accurate record of teacher professional development and maintenance of accreditation.

All whole school professional development, including staff development days, was mapped to BOSTES standards. Two teachers completed their first maintenance cycle of accreditation at proficient level, and were supported with the submission of the Maintenance of Accreditation Report.

**New Scheme Teachers working towards and maintaining higher levels of accreditation**

To support NSTs, who may be considering accreditation at higher levels, Executive and senior teachers were supported in developing their understanding of higher level accreditation. School Executive accessed information about the process of accreditation at higher levels through a presentation from a Highly Accomplished Teacher from a local school. The Executive Assessment and Review Schedule required the school executive to reflect on and provide evidence of BOSTES standards 1.5, 2.2, 5.1, 6.1 at Lead Level.

Two teachers who support NSTs attended professional development in Accreditation for School Leaders to gain more information about the process of seeking accreditation at the higher levels. Subsequently, planning for identifying and supporting staff in seeking higher levels of accreditation has been planned for 2015.

**Beginning Teachers**

To support the three Beginning Teachers in their first year of teaching, funding was provided to give each a reduced teaching load, facilitate their attendance at the regional new teachers’ conference and to attend beginning teacher conferences in their individual subject teaching areas.

**Financial summary**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
<th>30/11/2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>1079973.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>883483.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>674231.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>109858.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>34962.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>246822.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>3029331.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Expenditure</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A full copy of the school’s 2014 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

**School performance 2014**

**Academic achievements**

**2014 HSC**

Two students were listed in the state’s Top Achievers for the Metal and Engineering Examination and the Entertainment Industry Examination. Two students were included on the Distinguished Achievers list. One student was on the list for Advanced English and one student for both Agriculture and Biology.

**Australian Geography Competition**

In 2014, fifteen students participated in the Australian Geography Competition, receiving one High Distinction, three Distinctions, one Credit and ten Participation certificates.

**NAPLAN**

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

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

Year 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)

Year 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)

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

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

**NAPLAN Year 3 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)**

In 2014, eleven students in Year 3 presented for the NAPLAN literacy assessment. Due to considerable growth in enrolment, trends and data were provided. Of the 11 students, seven had enrolled within the previous six months and eight had transferred to other schools within six months of completing NAPLAN. Results were provided to parents or carers for individual student performances in reading, writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation. Students, whose results are within Band 1 and below, will be targeted to receive additional support through the development of individual programs and provision of additional support lessons via telephone or satellite. Nine per cent of students were identified as being below national Minimum Standards. These students all have a Personal Individual Education Plan (PIEP) in place and have learning adjustments recorded.
Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Reading

Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Spelling

Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Writing

Percentage in bands:
Year 3 Grammar & Punctuation
NAPLAN Year 3 - Numeracy

In 2014, eleven students in Year 3 presented for the NAPLAN literacy assessment. Due to considerable growth in enrolment, trends and data were provided. Of the 11 students, seven had enrolled within the previous six months and eight had transferred to other schools within six months of completing NAPLAN. Results were provided to parents or carers for individual student performances numeracy. Students, whose results are within Band 1 and below, will be targeted to receive additional support through the development of individual programs and provision of additional support lessons via telephone or satellite. DSODE will continue to focus on strategies to improve performances in reading and understanding in the area of numeracy. No students were identified as being below National Minimum Standard.

| Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included) |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Reading                                             | 81.8            |
| Writing                                             | 100.0           |
| Spelling                                            | 100.0           |
| Grammar & Punctuation                               | 90.9            |
| Numeracy                                            | 100.0           |

NAPLAN Year 5 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)

In 2014, eighteen students in Year 5 presented for the NAPLAN literacy assessment. Due to considerable growth in enrolment, trends and data were provided. Of the 18 students, 12 had enrolled within the previous six months and six had transferred to other schools within six months of completing NAPLAN. Results were provided to parents or carers for individual student performances in reading, writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation. Students, whose results are within Band 3 and below, will be targeted to receive additional support through the development of individual programs and provision of additional support lessons via telephone or satellite. Eleven per cent of students were identified as being below National Minimum Standards. These students all have a PIEP in place and have learning adjustments recorded. Of the 11 students whose growth can be tracked, an average of 62% of students who demonstrated greater than or equal to expected growth was noted.
NAPLAN Year 5 – Numeracy

In 2014, eighteen students in Year 5 presented for the NAPLAN literacy assessment. Due to considerable growth in enrolment, trends and data were provided. Of the 18 students, 12 had enrolled within the previous six months and six had moved on to other schools within six months of completing NAPLAN. Results were provided to parents or carers for individual student performances in numeracy. Students, whose results are within Band 2 and below, will be targeted to receive additional support through the development of individual programs and provision of additional support lessons via telephone or satellite. DSODE will continue to focus on strategies to improve performances in reading and understanding in the area of numeracy. Nil students were recorded as being below National Minimum Standard. An average of only 27% of students demonstrated greater than or equal to expected growth.

NAPLAN Year 7 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)

In 2014, twenty-eight students in Year 7 presented for the NAPLAN Literacy Assessments. Results were provided to parents or carers for individual student performances in the Assessments. Students whose results are below Band 6 will be targeted to achieve additional support. Through the Year7/8 Literacy Program, DSODE will focus on strategies to improve future performances in writing. Individually scheduled literacy lessons will continue for all students in Middle Years.
NAPLAN Year 7 – Numeracy

In 2014, twenty eight students in Year 7 presented for the NAPLAN Numeracy Assessment. Results were provided to parents or carers for individual student performances in the Assessments. Students whose results are below Band 6 will be targeted to achieve additional support within curriculum learning areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Percentage of Students Achieving at or Above Minimum Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>82.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>92.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>89.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>96.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NAPLAN Year 9 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)

In 2014, nineteen students in Year 9 presented for the NAPLAN Literacy Assessments. Results were provided to parents or carers for individual student performances in the Assessments. Students whose results are below Band 7 will be targeted to achieve additional support within curriculum learning areas.
In 2014 19 in Year 9 presented for the NAPLAN Numeracy Assessment. Results were provided to parents or carers for individual student performances in the Assessments. Students whose results are below Band 7 will be targeted to achieve additional support within curriculum learning areas.
Students sat for examinations in 47 HSC courses. In the table below only subjects which had a candidature of ten or more are shown.

Higher School Certificate (HSC)

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

This is a table of results achieved by all DSODE students who sat for HSC examinations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bands</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Band 6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band 5</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band 4</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band 3</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band 2</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band 1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>E4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>E3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)

Reading 89.5
Writing 61.1
Spelling 100.0
Grammar & Punctuation 79.0
Numeracy 94.7

Other School based Assessments
Essential Secondary Science Assessment (ESSA)

In 2014, twelve students participated in ESSA. Students were on or above state means in all areas. In extended responses all students were above the state mean.
Other achievements

Arts

Primary

Geographically isolated students in Years K to 6 received lessons in music and recorder via the satellite. Music lessons were organised in stage groups and recorder lessons were organized according to student ability ranging from beginner to experienced. 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 recorder, students learnt a range of notes and simple tunes. This is the second year of recorder and students are showing progress.

Secondary

The DSODE school band program continues to grow. This year the band increased its repertoire to include the national anthem, which was ably performed during our school presentation assembly. The band, featuring students across Stages 4 to 6, was also able to present another musical number during the assembly. It is hoped that such performances can continue to be a part of school assemblies and functions in the future.

HSC students were very successful this year, achieving strong results across both the aural and performance components of the exam. The music staff continues to develop programs to strengthen the target area of aural exam performance for our HSC students.

Full-time class numbers in elective music for Stage 5 are steadily increasing. Factors such as the DSODE school band and music camp performances are helping to raise interest in music among full time students.

The annual music camp was held in May and HSC students benefited from the extra performances allowing them to develop their HSC music performance program. Stage 5 students made the most of the opportunity to perform in a variety of musical ensembles across a range of genres.

Staff participated in the annual Distance Education Music Network meeting at Karabar Distance Education School and brought back a range of music resources that will be adapted for our students.

In the visual arts areas, the focus in 2014 was to introduce students to new practices and visit galleries and locations, helping to identify and implement new practices and techniques.

Visual arts staff provided innovative learning experiences in the residential workshops for a range of students. A mono printing workshop was held for Year 6 orientation to DSODE day, using jelly plates to create layered greeting cards. This technique was also used for the Year 9/10 workshops using the landscape as subject.

At the first senior residential students created artist books based on their journey to DSODE. Students were encouraged to use both text and image in felt-tip pen and were shown a technique of using water over the top, which created some fantastic colour effects. This workshop was developed from professional learning undertaken by staff at a teacher workshop in ‘Bundanon’.

Students at the second senior residential had an excursion to the Western Plains Community Centre to view the Ben Quilty 'After Afghanistan' exhibition, supporting the case study they were examining for their HSC studies.

Enrolments in Photography and Visual Design continued to grow and students experienced zoo workshops where they implemented practical skills and knowledge.

In 2015 the Visual Arts faculty intends to utilise the Western Plains Community Centre current exhibitions to offer post excursion art making workshops that engage students in a firsthand experience of viewing artworks by significant and contemporary artists. Photography students will continue to have workshops at local locations that challenge their photographic practices.

Sport

Primary

Students have accessed many opportunities to participate in Primary Small Schools Association (PSSA) events.

At the Dubbo-Wellington Small Schools Swimming carnival, DSODE had a small but enthusiastic group of swimmers participating in the carnival. Kate took out the Senior Girls Championship and, along with Tom and Mercede, qualified for the Dubbo and District team.
In athletics a small group of students competed at the Dubbo-Wellington Small Schools carnival. Tom was equal Junior Boys Champion and Kate was Senior Girls Champion. Mercede, Sonya, Adelaide, Tom and Kate were selected for the Dubbo and District carnival. All performed well and Tom went on to qualify for Western Region.

**Secondary**

Sport has been a significant focus for the Personal Development Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) faculty and the whole school in 2014. The continuation of successful programs implemented in 2013 along with the introduction of new programs has seen sport move in a positive direction. The sports organiser role, undertaken by Ms Newbigging, has expanded with new initiatives being introduced.

In 2014 the school ran its first cross country carnival in Term 1. Cross country was integral to developing various components of fitness in students of DSODE. Students competed in different age groups and ran courses of three kilometres, four kilometres and six kilometres in length. The course was planned along the Macquarie River and the team spirit and cooperation shown by all competitors was a highlight of the carnival. As this was the first cross country run at the school, students who finished first in their age group were crowned age champions and new records were created. DSODE had five competitors represent our school at the Western Region Cross Country Carnival. Towards the end of year the school purchased DSODE singlets and shirts that competitors can wear when they represent the school at future Western region carnivals.

The school ran an athletics carnival during a residential camp week. There were a number of standout performers in each age group and each event. Three students represented DSODE at the Western Region Athletics Carnival. One student was also successful in making it to the state level carnival in discus.

The swimming carnival, also held during a residential, was a great success with high levels of participation in competitive and novelty events. Two students represented DSODE at the Western region carnival with one student winning every one of her events. She went on to represent DSODE at the NSW Combined High Schools Swimming carnival winning a silver medal in 50 metres freestyle and competing at the NSW All Schools in 50 metres freestyle, butterfly and backstroke. The swimming carnival coincided with a water safety program run by the PDHPE faculty. An emphasis on fun and safety was implemented as students participated in various activities including diving lessons, stroke correction, and an aquatic swim and survive rescue program.

Elite athletes at DSODE are formally recognised at Presentation Day. Students were recognised for their participation, sportsmanship and athletic ability demonstrated throughout the year.

One student received a Performance Athlete Scholarship at the NSW Institute of Sport in the sport of cycling. She has had a big year competing in the Australian Track Titles, Elite Women’s, National Road Series, Time Trials, International Grand Prix and the National Omnium Championships.

The PDHPE department was again active in organising Year 7 and Year 8 students in the Premier’s Sporting challenge. These students recorded how much physical activity they participated in over a ten week period. Students were allocated a team leader, providing the leaders with leadership opportunities. Rewards and incentives were provided for students along the way and one student was awarded the Premier’s Sporting Challenge medallion.
Significant programs and initiatives – Policy and equity funding

Aboriginal education

Dubbo School of Distance Education (DSODE) is committed to improving the educational outcomes and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. DSODE staff provided opportunities for collaborative and inclusive decision-making to design and implement practices that are directed at ensuring all Aboriginal students will match or better the outcomes of the broader student population.

A key strategy has been to design and implement quality teaching programs, adjusted to meet the individual learning needs of students. A second key strategy was to support Key Learning Areas (KLAs) in ensuring that teaching and learning materials included Aboriginal content and perspectives.

Additional curricula were created by teachers, with significant input from local Aboriginal people, to address the cultural backgrounds and learning needs of Aboriginal students. Teachers and support staff trained in the 8 (Aboriginal) ways of learning pedagogy and how to incorporate this learning into units of work. For example the 'Yabbie’ unit of work was developed, in collaboration with staff and community, for students in a specific region of Western NSW. This unit can be adapted to make it culturally relevant to other communities where fishing is considered a significant cultural activity. Collaborative work of local Aboriginal Elder and historian Rachel Carney, teachers from DSODE, Buninyong PS and South Dubbo PS saw further development of the unit ‘Yuranigh’s Diary’, which focused on the 8 Aboriginal ways of learning as a structure. The unit is planned to be used from Kindergarten to Year 8.

The Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE) department has written units of work for students on Lake Mungo, Ancient Australia and Studies on Making a Nation, which look at historical aspects of the Myall Creek Aboriginal populations. Geography teachers created units of work that addressed aspects of the changing Australia community and investigated Australian environments, Aboriginal rights and Reconciliation. Legal Studies teachers created a unit of work which focused on sources of law and law reform, circle sentencing and how the law assists Aboriginal Australians in the legal system.

The resource ‘Deadly Bay’ was used in the Youth Engagement Support (YES) Program, cultural games units were used in PDHPE and a unit titled ‘Local Places’, allowing teachers to focus curriculum on a student’s local area, was used in mathematics. Bush tucker was the theme in a number of units the students undertook in technology. The languages and visual arts faculties imbedded Aboriginal perspectives into a variety of units that provided students with meaningful opportunities to explore Aboriginal culture and histories.

Multicultural education and anti-racism

In 2014 the school actively promoted the Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO) contacts and their roles, to the school and the wider school community. In documents sent out to both parents and students the names of the contacts were given and their responsibilities outlined.

During Term 1 camp, ‘Harmony Day’ was celebrated on the 21st March. Students spent the day engaging in activities that encouraged reflection on the richness of a multi-cultural society, global perspectives and what it means to be Australian. Buninyong Public School (BPS) shares common facilities with DSODE, and BPS students and staff also joined in the day's activities.

Students participated in lessons and developed a short clip of photos depicting the message of harmony for each student.

In the starter pack, sent to all Year 8 students in on enrolment, the languages section focused on global language awareness. Mandatory 100 hour language courses, which promote intercultural understanding, formed part of the Year 8 curriculum program. Cultural understanding was taught in other KLA areas as part of tying the priority areas into programs.

Personalised learning and support

In 2014 the Learning and Support Team (LST) strengthened existing processes and initiatives within the school to support students with additional educational needs. The referral process to the LST was refined to maximise consultation
between teachers working with individual students and to facilitate a systematic, equitable process for all students. Strategies to record learning support recommendations and feedback were also improved so that all staff members can access information to enhance student programs and maximise student engagement. A reliable student review model was established to monitor the progress and engagement of students with identified needs, track differentiated curriculum and plan for transition to new courses and teachers. The development of Personalised Individual Education Plans (PIEP) continued with a focus on consultation and collaboration with students, parents, carers and other relevant stakeholders. Throughout 2014 over 200 of these plans were completed and reviewed. Approximately 50 new referrals were received by the LST and approximately 80 student progress reviews were conducted.

DSODE participated, as a trial school, in the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD). Of the 459 students reviewed, 45% were identified as having some level of adjustment to their program and 35% were recognised as having a disability as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). Efficient practices were established to gather and record NCCD information and the school community was informed of the census and its purpose. Participation in the census highlighted the complexity and diversity of our school community and reinforced the need to continue professional learning for all our staff about mandatory DEC practices associated with Every Student Every School (ESES).

Professional learning was presented to all staff about the ESES policy, mandatory department of education requirements, internal LST processes, student curriculum program adjustments and enhancing student engagement. All staff were required to undertake the online Disability Standards for Education training, and to participate in specialist training on Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). LST assistance was provided at executive, head teacher, work area and individual levels, to promote greater understanding of learner diversity, development of inclusive practices and efficient management of student information.

Improved communication with the wider school community was chosen as a focus for the LST in 2014. This was achieved through our LST and PIEP processes, inclusion of LST information in the school newsletter and the provision of additional support through outside agencies when applicable.

### Student Leadership

In 2014 the Student Representative Council (SRC) held their first planning day during the Term 4 muster camp. A new Student Representative Council (SRC) charter was developed to address the running of the SRC in our unique mode via distance education.

During 2014 the SRC was involved in a number of fundraising events, in particular the 40 Hour Famine. Most of the SRC members participated in the event and were very creative in choosing the various items to give up for the 40 hours. Students should be proud of their achievements, managing to raise $1268.30 to go to World Vision.

The SRC also raised funds for resources for students to use in the hostel during residential camps by selling DSODE branded travel mugs and organising a barbeque at the 2014 Term 4 final staff development day.

### Equity Funding

#### Aboriginal background

Dubbo School of Distance Education (DSODE) recognises the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated (NSW AECG Inc.) as the peak community advisory body to the Department of Education on Aboriginal education and training at all levels. Representatives from our DSODE were members and associative members of the Dubbo AECG and attended monthly meetings scheduled by the AECG. DSODE hosted an AECG meeting in Term 1, delivering information about the programs and projects undertaken within DSODE for enrolled Aboriginal Torres Strait Island (ATSI) students. DSODE established learning centres in several geographical areas, providing opportunities for students to gain valuable assistance during teacher run classes held in the local environment. Regular field service visits were provided for students in their homes or in locations suitable for
teachers to undertake one-on-one lessons. Field services involved teachers visiting many areas and holding workshops that allowed students to work in a collegial environment whilst undertaking project-based or inquiry-based learning activities. These workshops facilitated teachers and students using the 8 Aboriginal ways of learning and in particular, hands-on activities.

Throughout 2014 a number of Aboriginal students attended regular residential camps where they engaged in scheduled classes and organised excursions. They also participated in organised special celebrations such as NAIDOC day. In 2014 students and teachers celebrated within the theme of the Anzac anniversary. The school organised a community member, who had served in the Australian Regular Army during the Vietnam War, to address the school as a guest speaker. He recounted his experiences as an Aboriginal Soldier enlightening all who attended the presentation with his stories and recollections.

DSODE continued using the Quicksmart Literacy and Numeracy programs with a number of students accessing the Dubbo Learning Centre. Additional Aboriginal students accessed this program on a weekly basis with their designated teachers.

Teachers completed and implemented Personalised Individual Education Plans (PIEPs) for all Aboriginal students in the school. Targeted students, requiring extra assistance, were referred to the Learning Support Team and recommended learning adjustments were made by teachers to assist students achieve learning outcomes. Aboriginal students were supported and encouraged to participate in the transition to work program, work experience and the Student Representative Council (SRC).

A number of Aboriginal students accessed the school’s Youth Engagement Support program (YES), which gave them opportunities to develop work readiness skills. Courses, such as ‘Interest to Income’, were designed to help students develop their skills into developing a business opportunity. Literacy and mathematics units with an industry focus e.g. ‘Mathematics for Mechanics’ and ‘Mathematics for Hairdressing’ were also offered. These courses provided Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students with fair, equitable, and culturally inclusive educational opportunities. Students accessed a broader range of educational opportunities, preparing them for entering the work force and equipping them with necessary life skills.

**Socio-economic background**

School equity funds were used to support students engage in a variety of school programs and initiatives. Funds were used to provide staffing and resources for a variety of educational programs. Teachers were employed to operate the Bathurst, Orange, Parkes and Wellington Outreach centres, and the Dubbo Learning Centre, which operated two days a week at DSODE. Two teachers were employed part-time to continue with the Stage 4 and 5 Literacy Program working with students on individual phone lessons and scheduling work each week to target specific literacy outcomes. The Middle Years Program was supported through the purchase of student kits at the beginning of their enrolment in Stage 4. The kits will remain with the students for the duration of their enrolment in Distance Education. Additional administration staff were employed to assist with preparing student resources, materials and tracking student progress in the Personalised Individual Education Plans (PIEPs) and Student Learning Support Plans (SLSPs). Funds were allocated to Primary and Secondary Field Services to support teacher visits to students within their home or community locations. Field services and residential camp programs were considered an extremely important aspect of the school. These programs encouraged student engagement in lessons; allowed students to work face-to-face and in class groups with their teachers and other students; increased development of students’ practical skills and established and enhanced positive relationships between students, teachers and peers. Further programs supported by the funding enabled the development and staffing of the YES (Youth Education Support) program, which caters for students transitioning from school to work and TAFE options; and student leadership programs supported by the Student Representative Council (SRC).
Other significant initiatives

Alternate Program

The Alternate Program continued to provide opportunities for success for all students by catering for individual needs, streamlining the number of teachers per student, consolidating curriculum and restructuring contact in order to support the achievement of learning outcomes. This program offered allowed all students to reach their potential and to consolidate and extend their skills from base foundations. In 2014, the program catered for approximately 92 students and was underpinned by a Personalised Individual Education Plan (PIEP) for each student. In addition, a Wellbeing Plan was developed for students identified as requiring such support.

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

Literacy Program

During 2014, the Middle Years Literacy program offered Year 7 and Year 8 programs. The course delivered in 2013 was revised, based on NAPLAN data, and rolled out to the current Year 7.

A new course was written for Year 8, covering the final three comprehension strategies from the “Super Six” that were begun in 2013. Weak points identified from the 2013 NAPLAN were also addressed as part of the Year 8 course. In response to parent feedback, a ‘Word for the Week’ was introduced and students were encouraged to add this word to their vocabulary throughout the week.

Benchmarking was formalised using diagnostic tests purchased from the Australian Council of Educational Research. In 2014 test data was used to form a whole school picture of student skills in grammar, punctuation and comprehension. Software included with the tests allowed for the production of profiles of individual student’s strengths and weaknesses. This information has been shared with class teachers. During 2015 a profile for each middle year student will be made accessible to all teachers.

Leaflets, written as part of the Middle Years Literacy program, have been made available to teachers to address identified gaps in student literacy skills. These are being used by Alternate Programs in conjunction with reading programs.

During 2015 a school goal is to increase the level of collaboration between Literacy Teachers and other staff to support Literacy learning across the whole school.

Middle Years Program

A total of 47 students were enrolled in the Middle Years program. Class groups were established to allow for diverse learning opportunities, which were tailored according to student need and individual access to technology.

All students were provided with a resource kit to assist transition to high school. The kit included key materials for subject areas, in addition to timetables and term planners which support student organisation and engagement.

Cross curricular units of work, including ‘Save Our Stripes’, ‘Unreal Shoes’ and ‘All about Me’ continued to be a focus of Middle Years teaching. Creation of cross curricular material was more challenging due to the workload associated with the implementation of the Stage 4 National Curriculum in some KLAs.

Middle Years area workshops and excursions complemented the school’s successful field service program to support student engagement. Fifteen students attended a Middle Years Broken Hill and Wilcannia area workshop in Term 3. A Middle Years excursion to Wambangalang also occurred during this term. Eleven students attended and participated in activities over three days.

Project based learning, student leadership, mentoring and transition were key focuses for middle years students who attended school residential and area workshops. The Term 4 Muster Camp provided a transition to high school opportunity for students continuing from Year 6 into Year 7, which followed on from their orientation day held earlier in the term. During this camp students participated in elements of the Dubbo City Council’s ‘Plan shapers’ competition which required them to work together to develop plans for existing and new parkland, focussing on...
the Elizabeth Park Precinct in Dubbo. This ongoing project was scheduled to continue in 2015.

Evaluations and alterations of existing cross curricular units and resource kit contents occurred throughout the year, ready for use in 2015.

Educational Support Centres

Parkes, Orange and Bathurst Educational Support (ESC) Centres operated in 2014. Their operation was facilitated in Parkes and Orange by the Hylite Program and in Bathurst by Head Space.

DSODE employed teachers to assist the students with their work and liaise with teachers and supervisors.

The centres continued to work extensively with external agencies such as Pine Lodge (CAMHS), Parkes Family Support Service, Headspace and Bathurst Youth Focus Group.

Students were supported in their learning through fortnightly field service trips where teachers provide students with face-to-face lesson time. Students were also provided with access to technology to complete their work. Increased numbers of staff attended the centres as the year progressed resulting in increased opportunities for students.

There has been a significant increase in student numbers attending the centres of Parkes and Orange. This increased attendance has led to increased student engagement in educational programs. Orange ESC students were recognised at end of year presentation day, held in Dubbo. Previously disengaged young parents attended regularly at Parkes ESC and completed work on a more consistent basis.

In 2015 teachers will facilitate ESC student visits to DSODE during residential weeks for workshops. Orange, Parkes and Bathurst will continue to run with increased teacher support. Bathurst and Parkes will operate another day per week. Continued professional learning will be provided for teachers at the centres and suitable casuals will be sought and employed to replace centre staff in case of staff absences.

Technology

The Digital Education Revolution (DER) program for student laptops has seen Years 10, 11 and 12 provided with laptops in 2014. In 2015 students in Years 11 and 12 only will have these laptops as the program is no longer funded. DER equivalent laptops will be provided to all eligible fulltime students in Years 9 and 10 in 2015-16. The school has retained the services of a Technical Support Officer (TSO) to provide assistance with staff and student laptops until the end of Term 2 2015.

During 2014 the following actions were accomplished.

- Staff used DER laptops to produce work for students.
- Staff members accessed further professional learning opportunities provided by both the NSW Department of Education and Training and the DSODE Information Communication Technologies Professional Learning team.
- Online learning modules continued to be revised and developed.
- Existing courses have also been revised and rolled over for students to continue using in 2015.
- The new satellite provision worked well, enhancing satellite delivery for primary and secondary isolated students.
- Construction of a second satellite studio was completed and the number of satellite lessons doubled.
- DSODE staff actively participated in distance education networks to provide new course materials, particularly to meet Australian Curriculum requirements.

Youth Education Support Program (YES)

The YES Program in 2014 continued to provide a successful alternative educational pathway for students who do not plan to go to University or have had a history of disengagement in schooling. The DSODE YES enrolments increased again in 2014, with many students gaining traineeships or signing with employment agencies, such as Mission Australia.

The introduction of a formalised transition program was successful in obtaining work experience for some students, resulting in increased work related skills for these students and leading to future employment opportunities.
The partnership with a local supermarket in Parkes provided an example of impact of work experience, where local students gained skills in many aspects of this retail chain over a four week period.

The goal in 2015 is to extend programs such as the supermarket partnership into other regions with other supportive businesses.

**School planning and evaluation 2012—2014**

**School evaluation processes**

NSW public schools conduct annual evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan.

In 2014 DSODE evaluated Stage 6 programming, assessment and implementation of the National Curriculum in English, mathematics, science and HSIE.

In the area of teaching, DSODE evaluated the effectiveness of teaching programs to respond to students’ interests, needs and abilities.

Results of the evaluations are detailed in this report.

**Stage 6 programming and assessment**

Mathematics faculty representatives attended courses run by MANSW (Mathematical Association of NSW) and Teacher Training Authority (TTA). Mathematics staff also attended professional learning activities at the MANSW Conference and MANSW project officer, Stuart Palmer’s, courses. Professional learning covered the following elements:

- teaching and writing assessment tasks for Mathematics, Mathematics Extension 1 and 2, Mathematics General 2 and 1 in the HSC course
- teaching and writing assessment tasks for Mathematics, Mathematics Extension 1 and Mathematics General in the Preliminary course
- gathering resources for the focus studies in the HSC & Preliminary Mathematics General courses
- programming and re-organising scope and sequences.

All professional learning was shared with staff at faculty level. Teachers were then able to provide additional resources and assistance for students undertaking Mathematics General 2 and 1 courses, which were examined for the first time in 2014.

HSIE staff participated in a number of professional learning activities which were directly related to the curriculum and assessment, leadership development and engagement of students in their learning. These events included:

- the Geography Teachers Association Conference providing a focus on Stage 4 and 5 Australian Curriculum course content and a review of the HSC exam
- the Legal Studies Association Conference and the Economic and Business Educators (EBE) Legal Update conference
- the History Network Conference
- a presentation delivered by Tony Attwood focusing on ASD students and their learning.

Visual Arts staff completed online professional learning modules on applying the Australian Institute for Teaching and Learning (AITSL) standards to programming and teaching, developing teaching programs based on 21st Century Literacies and using formative assessment to develop teaching programs responsive to student needs and interests. All faculty members completed a 360 self-assessment module to identify their individual strengths and weaknesses as teachers. New programs were written in Stage 4, 5 and 6 Visual Arts after these staff development activities. Assessment schedules were rewritten for all courses in the faculty for 2015. Visual Design programs were rewritten and Stage 6 Photography courses underwent a review process to respond more effectively to student interests.

In 2014, two language staff members attended an intensive one week German language course in which teaching staff from around the state shared ideas on assessing Stage 6 and how to implement differentiated teaching strategies to meet the needs of students with a range of abilities.
The distance education languages network provided a vital communication link between distance education schools. Assessment tasks were shared, discussed and edited where necessary. The distance education network head teachers discussed Stage 6 programs, with the intention to achieve greater uniformity between school programs, whilst still addressing the needs of the individual school communities.

Three language staff members ran the Western Region Languages Network HSC workshop, held at Dubbo School of Distance Education and supported by the Curriculum Directorate. Students from local schools attended and were provided with essential information on addressing the HSC assessment task skills areas and the final HSC exam.

**Implementation of the National Curriculum in English, Mathematics, Science and HSIE**

The production of teaching and learning materials for the new English Curriculum was managed as a shared English distance education network program. Prior to the implementation of the syllabus in Years 7 and 9, the English network worked closely to develop a scope and sequence of learning, outlining the units to be written, outcomes, text types and modes to be covered by each. The scope and sequence also indicated when units were to be written. This scope and sequence was closely adhered to in 2013 leading to the smooth implementation of the new Curriculum for Years 7 and 9 in 2014. However, the imposition of the mandated changes to the Stage 6 Syllabus prescriptions caused the writing of the teaching and learning materials to be disrupted for Years 8 and 10. This imposition also created lack of continuity within the network resulting in a less than ideal implementation of materials for Years 8 and 10 that is ongoing.

Year 7 and Year 9 materials written for the Australian Curriculum were implemented for the first time in 2014. Teachers working in these teams evaluated the implementation of the new materials at the end of 2014, developing a team allocation of duties to update and improve the materials based on teacher, student and parent feedback as part of the evaluation process.

Scope and sequences and programs were implemented for mathematics in Year 7 and Year 9. Materials were written and edited, with answers and feedback given to the writers from Karabar Distance Education Centre and Sydney Distance Education High School. In preparation for the 2015 implementation of new mathematics courses in Year 8 and Year 10, DSODE teachers provided Karabar Distance Education Centre and Sydney Distance Education High School with quality assurance services on scope and sequence documents and learning materials produced by these two schools. DSODE teachers also provided solutions for the learning materials to the distance education mathematics network.

National Curriculum courses in Science have been designed to be interactive and engaging for students. These courses use learning objects, videos and interactive resources to engage students in the topic ‘Working Scientifically’. The course has been adapted for both digital and paper-based activities. Units in Stage 4 incorporated ‘fun facts’, which are designed to peak the interests of students and to relate science to everyday situations. A range of activities in each unit caters for different abilities of students. Teachers have written new materials for both Stage 5 and 6 courses, including reviewing the Science component of the cross-curriculum unit ‘Save Our Stripes’. DSODE teachers actively contributed to the distance education science network and have shared a number of resources with other distance education schools via collaborative technologies.

In line with the scope and sequences for Year 7 History and Year 9 History, drafted in 2013, staff at DSODE completed writing materials and implemented the Australian Curriculum into Years 7 and 9 History. In 2014 DSODE staff wrote Stage 4 units including ‘Overview of the Ancient World’, ‘Investigating the Ancient Past’, depth studies on Ancient Egypt and Ancient China for Year 7 and ‘Overview: Ancient to Modern World’ for Year 8. In Stage 5 units produced by DSODE staff included ‘Overview-Making of the Modern World’, depth studies on the Industrial Revolution, ‘Making a Nation’ and ‘Australians at War’ including both World War I and World War II. Materials were shared across the distance education history network and teachers participated in collegial editing processes. Additionally staff worked on
developing the scope and sequences for Years 8 and 10 History to be implemented in 2015 and wrote materials for the commencement of history courses in these years. Planning for and writing of these courses continues into 2015. All HSIE teachers were introduced to the materials written during 2014 as part of the staff development days at the end of the year and beginning of 2015. All faculty teachers have been involved in the proofreading and review of learning materials.

In Alternate Programs writing and adjustment of history units has been the priority for the faculty. Further writing and modifications have occurred for English, mathematics and science as the courses are being delivered.

Implementation of the National Curriculum in Primary

In 2014 the Australian Curriculum in English was introduced into Primary schools. To enable this to be a smooth transition a number of strategies were put into place.

Current resources were reviewed to identify content relevant to the new curriculum and content that needed to be removed. Professional learning was undertaken by staff in Australian Curriculum, the Literacy Continuum and reading, writing and grammar.

Staff teams were formed, according to personal interests and strengths, to work on English, mathematics, science and history. The latter three KLAS are to be introduced in 2015 or 2016. Each team determined the status of existing resources, sourced new materials and adapted these for use in the distance education environment.

In English, a number of new units have been written including ‘Save One Island Save Them All’ (Stage 3) and existing literacy units have been updated to reflect current outcomes. Wherever possible these units have been developed as cross curriculum units. School reports were rewritten to reflect the new English outcomes. These were used for end of year reports and proved to be successful.

Responsive Teaching Programs

Teaching programs were designed to respond to student’s interests, needs and abilities.

Teaching programs were written by the Mathematics faculty during designated staff development days in 2014. Year 7 and Year 8 programs, all levels of mathematics in Year 9 and Year 10 were covered. The modified materials written for students with special needs in Years 7 to 10 were also mapped against the Australian Curriculum with assistance from the distance education network. These materials were constantly assessed and revised to suit the needs of individual students. Professional discussions continually took place between the Mathematics faculty members regarding all materials and their suitability for our students.

In 2014 Stage 6 courses in geography, economics and legal studies were moved to a Moodle platform for part or full delivery of course work to cater for the learning styles of students. Adobe connect technologies were introduced to enable video and audio streaming and shared desktop classroom teaching. Skype has been used to assist in the delivery of lessons for overseas students. Increased use of learning adjustments has occurred across all subjects in response to the numbers of students with particular needs as identified through student learning plans. Teachers supported these students with assistance from the Learning Support Team. Modified work has been developed in Years 9 and 10 geography and Year 9 history.

Year 10 history depth studies 5 ‘Popular Culture’, was selected based on positive student engagement and interest in similar topic of old syllabus. In Year 10 depth study 6, students were provided with options for their individual person and event case study.

Throughout all learning materials, written for the new history syllabus, varied activities have been included to cater for different technologies, learning preferences and abilities.

Attendance of visual arts staff at conferences led to the introduction of new practices and skills in teaching units. Workshop activities for students were based on the knowledge acquired at visual arts and photography conferences. Networking with other distance education centres led to an
exchange of learning resources. Units on printmaking, sculpture and drawing were adapted for our students. The conferences and network meetings inspired workshops for students throughout the year. Teaching programs for Stages 5 and 6 Visual Design have been rewritten and by the end of 2015 all teaching and student materials will be completely rewritten. Teaching programs for the HSC course in Stage 6 Photography were rewritten and by the middle of 2015 all teaching and student materials will be rewritten for the Preliminary course.

Two Language staff members attended the National Modern Languages Teachers Association Conference discussing with teachers from around Australia, the current and future direction of languages within Australia. The conference also provided teaching and learning tools, such as ‘Language Perfect’ to enhance student ability to recall knowledge in the target language. A similar learning tool will be used in 2015 as the resource has proven valuable for both students and teachers. One teacher attended the Japanese Language Teacher Intensive Seminar K-10 in which resources were shared and discussed to enhance skills of teachers in the target language and address the needs of students in their classrooms.

Three staff members attended the Aboriginal Pedagogy Course and have begun to implement ideas and strategies from the course, embedding these in current programs where appropriate.

Strategies have been put into place to enhance programs with the resources demonstrated at various conferences attended such as video lessons, project based learning, interactive smart board lessons and addressing the needs of students with specific learning needs.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction
In 2012 and 2013 substantial parent, caregiver and student surveys were undertaken. In 2014, the school sought the opinions of parents, caregivers and students’ opinions through scheduled parent and student representative council forums.

In 2014 staff participated in a ‘Focus on Learning’ teacher survey. Over 98% of staff participated in the survey, which examined staff satisfaction with their application of indicators that impact on student learning.

Staff responses indicated staff believed that DSODE teaching strategies, the use of data and collaboration were strong. Responses indicated a strong belief that DSODE is an inclusive school and has a strong, positive learning culture. Two areas have been flagged for future attention. Staff strongly believed that leadership needed to be strengthened through focussing on developing leadership capabilities in all teachers. The second area identified was the need to strengthen the involvement of, and communication with, parents, caregivers and subject supervisors, to increase support for student engagement and learning.

Planning has been initiated to focus on these areas in 2015.

School planning 2012-2014:
School priority 1
Leadership

Outcomes from 2012–2014:
- new scheme teachers well supported
- staff roles clearly defined and understood
- AITSL standards utilised.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:
One hundred per cent teacher development of personal professional learning plans using the AITSL standards.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014
In 2014, head teachers held sessions in executive meetings, which outlined school planning and the requirement for every staff member to develop a personal professional learning plan. These sessions were then repeated in faculty meetings. All teachers were introduced to the language used in the AITSL standards.

A session was held during the final 2013 staff development day outlining schools templates that incorporated the AITSL standards and could be used by staff to determine their professional goals and develop their personal learning plan for 2014. Teachers completed the online module: ‘Developing Your Professional Learning Plan’.
Discussions took place with head teachers during teacher assessment review meetings and teachers were encouraged to match the standards within their personal plan. At the end of 2014, teachers were introduced to the education department’s new performance development framework and the concept of developing performance development plans. A new template for a performance development plan will be implemented in 2015.

School priority 2
Curriculum and Assessment
Outcomes from 2012–2014:
• steady implementation of the Australian Curriculum in accordance with timelines
• increased knowledge and use of best practice in assessment design and feedback.

This was discussed in depth above as the focus for 2014 school evaluation.

School priority 3
Engagement and Attainment
Outcomes from 2012–2014:
• implementation of Every Student Every School initiatives
• preparation of preschool students transitioning to Kindergarten
• enhanced engagement of all students in DSODE learning programs.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2014:
• development and implementation of personalised individual education plans for identified students and a student learning support plans for every student
• progressive implementation of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and National Quality Standards (NQS)
• successful implementation of the learning continuum for students transitioning from Preschool to Kindergarten and modules to support parents in a distance education context
• ongoing review of programs and practices ensuring all staff met accreditation requirements and participated in mandatory training for first aid and asthma management.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

Procedures and processes to support the Learning Support Team were implemented. Every teacher participated in professional learning opportunities to support the strategies of Every Student Every School (ESES). A variety of professional learning sessions at staff development days and during staff meetings were implemented to inform staff of the ESES policies and reform.

A highly functioning Learning Support Team met each week to discuss student referrals and to support teachers make student program adjustments. New school practices required that every teacher identify and record student learning adjustments and relevant information in the school’s student database. Students were better supported to cater for their individual learning needs.

Identified students were encouraged and supported to attend learning centres in Dubbo, Orange, Parkes or Bathurst. Students also participated in a variety of educational opportunities including residential camps, excursions and subject specific workshops. Increased attendance facilitated improved student learning outcomes.

Preschool teachers attended a two-day Early Childhood conference in Sydney and participated in the Rural and Remote Preschool Strategy. An innovative preschool support network was established to collaborate, share knowledge and improve teaching and learning for Preschool children.

An array of technologies and online resources were used or expanded in the school to engage students in their lessons e.g. satellite (REACT), teleconferences, Adobe Connect, Skype, and Videoconferencing. Software including Moodle, Google docs, Ipad apps and online data resources were used to support learning and application. Laptops were distributed to more students
enabling them to access technology supported lessons with teachers and peers.

Key learning areas produced additional learning materials to promote cross-curriculum and inquiry-based learning. Peer marking was introduced to support valuable feedback and recognition of quality work from students.

Single course supervisors were supported with the introduction of video conferences and an effort to increase personal communication between these supervisors and DSODE teachers. Participation of single course students in courses increased due to the promotion and consistent communication efforts.

School priority 4
Improved Literacy and Numeracy outcomes for all DSODE students

Outcomes from 2012–2014:
- 2014 literacy growth rates for the majority of long-term (greater than eighteen months) enrolments in distance education will exceed the average expected growth rate
- 2014 numeracy growth rates for long-term (greater than eighteen months) enrolments in distance education will exceed the average expected growth rate.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:
Individual students whose NAPLAN results indicated they required significant areas of support were targeted with a variety of in-school strategies aimed at improving their outcomes. The majority of identified students were able to display a marked improvement from 2012-14.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014
Personal learning plans were implemented for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 identified as performing under the state benchmark in NAPLAN assessments. In 2013, literacy lessons were prepared and introduced in the timetable for Stage 4 students. Explicit literacy materials targeting the areas identified in the NAPLAN results were written and used to provide individual students with weekly phone lessons. In 2014 pre and post testing was introduced, using PAT (Progressive Assessment Test), to assess Stage 4 student progress in the targeted areas of grammar, reading and comprehension.

In 2014 targeted students attending the Dubbo Learning Centre continued to access the Quicksmart program to consolidate basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The focus was to continue the development of accuracy and automaticity in using the four operations of mathematics, sight words, conventions of English and comprehension.

Student feedback indicated that this program improved the development of basic skills in literacy and numeracy and increased student confidence and capacity to learn in all areas.

Teachers trained in Quicksmart delivery are working towards developing a supervisor package so that the program can be implemented, on an informal basis with students, who do not attend the learning centre.

School priority 5
Aboriginal Education

Outcomes from 2012–2014:
- continued implementation of Aboriginal Education and Training policy
- increased engagement of Aboriginal students in educational programs.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:
- increased attendance of Aboriginal students have shown at DSODE events such as residential, workshops and area workshop programs
- improved retention rates of Aboriginal students as a result of involvement in transition and Youth Education Support (YES) Program.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014
DSODE is committed to continuing the knowledge development of the school community and the ongoing implementation of strategies to achieve goals of the NSW Department of Education Aboriginal Education Policy.
Staff attended professional learning opportunities, including the state conference: ‘Closing the Gap in Education’ and meetings of the distance education Aboriginal education network.

DSODE purchased and used the ‘8 Ways – Aboriginal Pedagogy from Western NSW’ textbook to create and implement new curriculum courses.

Staff Development Days were conducted to assist teachers in developing understanding of the cross-curriculum priority of ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures’ in the new Australian curriculum. Teachers became familiar with the priorities and capabilities in the new curriculum and adopted concepts, presented by the Aboriginal consultants, in developing new units.

Staff were employed to assist Aboriginal students in achieving positive educational outcomes. For example, an Aboriginal tutor was employed two days a week in the Dubbo Learning Centre to conduct face-to-face tutoring sessions with students and an Aboriginal teacher was employed as a mentor to assist Student Advisers and teachers when liaising with parents and carers to construct Personalised Individual Education Plans (PIEPs).

Transition staff and YES program staff supported students to strive for and achieve educational goals through the provision of differentiated learning and the targeting of specific skills to meet student interests.

School priority 6
Organisational Effectiveness

Outcomes from 2012–2014:
- all teachers proactive in providing a safe and harmonious workplace
- school processes and procedures clearly defined and practiced by all staff.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:
- few reports of incidents of injuries relating to WHS
- increased staff understanding of implementation of school procedures and policies to define safe school operations
- staff adherence to relevant and appropriate departmental Work, Health, Safety (WHS) practices and procedures
- staff attendance and participation in relevant departmental WHS and mandatory training.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

Mandatory training sessions were conducted throughout the year during staff development days and staff meetings, enabling staff to understand and comply with current departmental policies and procedures.

Staff participated in a series of professional learning opportunities that targeted WHS requirements in BOSTES, VET and other syllabus implementations for a variety of Stage 5 & 6 courses, the implementation of national curriculum and accreditation for the proficient level of teaching.

Deadlines were met by all staff for departmental, BOSTES and VET WHS reporting requirements issued throughout the year.

Future Directions

2015-2017 School Plan

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

In 2014 the three strategic directions for the plan were developed after consultation with staff, parents, students and the school community. The directions are Curriculum and Assessment, Student Engagement and Learning and Professional Practice. A small executive team worked on adding achievement milestones to each direction and the draft plan was endorsed by the full executive and the Director of Public Schools.

In early 2015 milestones will be completed as individual faculties and school teams implement the new school plan.
About this report

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

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