

Alfred Deakin High School

Annual Action Plan Report 2017

Context

Alfred Deakin High School is a year 7–10 school located in the suburb of Deakin. The school was established in 1966 and commenced 2017 with an enrolment of 887 students, supported by 85 staff. Towards the end of 2017 our enrolment had increased to 908 students. The school's Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage value has remained steady over the life of the strategic plan at around 1129.

Alfred Deakin High School is a high demand school with 52 % of students in 2017 enrolling from out of the Priority Enrolment Area (PEA). This percentage will decrease over the life of the next plan due to an increase in area population growth. The school draws students from more than 58 different cultural backgrounds and values the diversity of its population and celebrates the advantages that this diversity brings to the school.

The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students with English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) students has remained steady over the life of the plan. Twenty-five International Private Students are currently enrolled at the school, a significant increase on previous years. The school has a Learning Support Centre (E-Study) that caters for 16 identified students, and an additional 19 students are accessing integration support.

The school promotes the development of the whole child through a broad range of learning experiences and opportunities. This includes a core and elective curriculum, academic extension and a gifted and talented program. Programs are centered on building wellbeing in students with a focus on restorative practices. Students are provided with flexible learning options to cater for learning needs such as accessing external programs (online language, CIT, AIE), undertaking independent projects, supporting elite athletes/performers, vocational education programs or assisting with health/wellbeing balance.

The school community values the diversity of its population and celebrates the advantages that this diversity brings to the school. Approximately 33% (228) of our students were born outside Australia and more than 32% (290) of our students speak another language at home. About one third of our students have at least one parent whose was born outside of Australia. The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students speaking English as an Additional Dialect (EALD) is steady.

The current principal has been at the school since 2011 and is supported by two School Leader B staff who have also been at the school for some time. The school has a stable team with less than 10 percent turnover of staff each year.

Students at ADHS value having diverse opportunities in a positive and inclusive atmosphere where everyone's individuality is respected. The school values the active and supportive relationships of its parents and carers and the respectful and friendly relationships that exist in the school.

In 2017 we have addressed many changes in the school, including:

- Managing to continue an effective learning environment following a significant reduction in funding allocation in 2016 of \$300,000.
- Continuing to adjust to the new Student Resource Allocation (SRA) funding model for ACT Education.
- Creating an alternative learning space – the Gryphon room – to cater for students with additional needs in literacy, numeracy and organizational needs. The Gryphon room also provides high level support for students requiring flexible, alternative or additional education options.
- Evolving Outdoor Education into year-long electives. ADHS now conducts the most Outdoor Education excursions of any high school in the ACT.
- The refurbishment of Kitchen 1 into a contemporary learning environment that will assist students gain Hospitality competency certification.
- Refurbishment of the Horticulture gardens, including murals, raised garden beds for accessibility and open learning area for classes.
- Updating the media and photography labs with state of the art IT, including developing a green screen, sound proofed filming studio.
- Refurbishing the Staff Common room and providing a contemporary food preparation space for staff.
- Upgrading the gym lighting and installation of high quality fans for effective air movement during use in hot weather periods.

Known challenges for 2018 include:

- Implementing a new five-year Strategic Plan to ensure student learning outcomes are maximized across the curriculum.
- Complying with WH&S requirements for a 50-year-old school, including ensuring universal access to all curriculum offerings for students with additional needs.
- Installing a café style environment outside the new kitchen that also supports students with sensory, auditory processing and other challenging learning needs.
- Incorporating a new Learning Support Unit (LSU) in the provision of special needs education at ADHS and reducing the size of the Learning Support Centre (LSC).

Methodology

Methodology in evaluating progress

The school engages annually in a thorough process of evaluating performance over the previous twelve months. This evaluation occurs at key points throughout the year, including following the release of NAPLAN, analysis and reporting to staff by the Literacy and Numeracy team and the Targeted Support Team, the release of system surveys, internal surveys, student voice forums and other evidence.

This year ADHS was reviewed by an external panel of validators to evaluate our progress over 2014-2017. In broad terms, the panel sought to determine, through evaluation against the National School Improvement Tool (NSIT), the extent to which the school has met its agreements, achieved its priorities, and addressed its challenges in the context of a continuously improving educational environment.

The External School Review was conducted over three days and involved a wide variety of data-gathering approaches, including desktop review, observations, interviews and documentation. This approach provided evidence for the panel to consider against the nine inter-related domains in the NSIT to inform the affirmations, commendations and recommendations for this school improvement

cycle. The Alfred Deakin High School External Review Report 2017 can be found on the ADHS website.

Further, the annual ADHS Leadership Conference held late term 3, and the weekly leadership meetings, affords the leadership team and some classroom teachers an opportunity to deeply consider data, reflect on progress in 2017 and to identify opportunities for further school improvement.

A range of data sets have been analysed during the year including but not limited to:

- Annual Satisfaction Survey – parents, student and staff.
- The Australian School climate and School Identification Measurement Tool (ASCSIMT)
- National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)
- National School Improvement Tool (NSIT)
- National Safe Schools audit
- NAPLAN versus grades
- Student grades versus NAPLAN versus class allocations (core, extended and unicorn)
- Progressive Assessment Test for Reading (PAT-R), for Maths (PAT-M)
- Cognitive testing data
- Attendance data
- School Data Tool – range of data sets available
- Internal surveys – student, staff
- Student feedback to staff
- Forums – student, staff, parent

Evaluation of Performance

Priority 1: Enhance Growth in Learning Outcomes for all Students

Targets

By the end of 2017

- Increase the proportion of Year 9 students achieving better than expected growth in reading, writing and numeracy, inclusive of ATSI students
- Increase the proportion of students reporting that they have a voice in matters that affect their learning

Progress

The first key improvement strategy towards this priority has been to *continue to develop high quality teaching practice* at ADHS.

ADHS has embedded the practice of teachers observing each other using a range of formats chosen by the staff. These included the Quality Teacher model (QTm), focussed observation on specific practice identified by staff, or use of a range of scaffolded templates. Most staff have either been observed or have provided feedback to staff on at least three occasions in 2017.

The start of the school year saw the opening of the Gryphon Room, a fully redesigned, engaging space where teachers could work with targeted students. Teachers worked with students across all years, targeting specific areas across the broader literacy, numeracy and flexible learning spectrum. There were groups focusing on aspects of reading and comprehension skills; some focused on their writing skills; while others were enrolled in more holistic targeted literacy and numeracy programs.

The South-Weston Network of schools (including ADHS) was enrolled in The Writing Project. Our school was commended on the repeatedly high gains made in writing over the last four years. Utilising this data (and to build on work began in 2016), our staff engaged in professional learning about how to help our students with their writing every day. Teachers focused on the following three types of writing: casual writing (e.g. class notes, quick written responses, study notes); semi-formal writing (e.g. extended paragraphs, letters, formal communication methods); and, formal writing (e.g. assignments, reports, reflections). Teachers engaged in professional reading and the sharing of strategies to explicitly teach and model all three types of writing.

Teachers also focused on providing exemplar templates and explicit teaching of text types used in assessment tasks. Each faculty began to collect work samples, real-world text examples, and scaffolds that were relevant to the specific types of written assignments that they use. To assist in this process, teachers utilised the Writing Across the Curriculum materials. Some teachers are trialing cross-curriculum writing projects, an area that will become more of a focus in 2018.

Building capacity in staff to provide students with regular high quality feedback, empowering them to be leaders of their own learning, was a strong focus throughout the year. Embedding Formative Assessment, as described by Dylan Wiliam, was the subject of professional learning and development sessions in a variety of forums. Specifically

- Ongoing development and implementation of tasks in faculties lead by SLCs, as seen in course documentation
- Deputy Principal and two Executive Teachers attended Dylan Wiliam workshops at the Hawker Brownlow 'Thinking and Learning Conference' in May
- Presentation to leadership team on Formative Assessment in June

- Whole school PLC on Formative Assessment in June
- Formative Assessment PLC met on two occasions in Term 2

In 2017 the year 7 students undertook two introductory programs in ICT:

- Pre-Digital Citizenship course - <https://sites.google.com/a/ed.act.edu.au/adhs-digital-citizenship/> .This course was undertaken through English classes and encourages students to investigate and discuss issues of working and “playing” in the digital environment. More than half the students completed the quizzes assigned to each section of the course, and teachers report engaging discussions with their classes
- ADHS GAFE - <https://sites.google.com/a/ed.act.edu.au/adhs-gafe/> . This was a new course introduced in 2016 with the aim to expose year 7 students to a range of skills across the Google platform so that all incoming students have a base knowledge of working in Google Drive. This course was continued in 2017, each faculty was assigned different areas of the course to introduce the application and then within each faculty assigned some work for the students to demonstrate their capabilities. It was designed to ensure students have a basic understanding of the Google suite of applications and as a reference for queries about functionality within the Google suite.

Innovative practice at ADHS in 2017 continues to improve the ‘Student Information Database’ (or SID) so staff can access student achievement data from a range of sources for each of their classes. The data included cognitive testing, PAT-R and PAT-M testing, NAPLAN, ILP, ALFREDS, EALD, ATSI students and other evidence of social and emotional needs of students. This innovation continues to improve staff access to key progress information for students, especially literacy and numeracy, and assist greatly in ensuring students learning is personalized and that there is a progression of information from year to year on each student. In 2018, we expect to commence utilizing the Directorate’s Student Administration System (SAS) and anticipate this new database will incorporate all that SID has provided over the last four years.

The effectiveness of the strategy to continue to develop high quality teaching practices at ADHS is indicated by 72% of staff reporting they use system data and processes to inform their planning (65% in 2016). Eighty three percent of staff at ADHS report a focus on improving the quality of the school’s teaching and learning practices. Continuing gains in numeracy and reading in NAPLAN are reported below. The proportion of students who report they are provided with useful feedback about their schoolwork is 69% (from 58% in 2014 and 67% in 2015) and 79% of students know what they have to do to get the results they want (75% in 2016). The proportion of students reporting their teachers recognise their learning needs and support them to achieve was 59% – a significant drop from 70% in 2016. This is despite additional care in student placement in classes in 2017, the establishment of the Gryphon room and the wide advocacy at PLC of student learning plans that identify and support student learning needs.

A second key improvement strategy towards achieving this priority was *to increase community partnerships in student learning*. Key to building partnerships is ensuring parents and carers have access to the best possible information.

ADHS ensured that through parent-teacher evenings held across three afternoons/evenings, the Deakin Digest (12 issues) and individual parent meetings we communicated to parents the range of opportunities and events that were available to students and developments in the community conversation coordinated by the Directorate on ‘The Future of Education’. A parent forum was held to solicit and discuss our school community’s view, broadly and school focussed, on what was working well, how we could improve and the bigger dream question of ‘what if...?’. Led by our School Board Chair, Mr. Andrew Bealing, the community response will be incorporated into the

School Plan and the Directorate consultation process.

Further, ADHS held four parent forums in 2017. Topics included:

- Educating parents on the new online learning management platform called GAFE, BYOD and Digital Citizenship
- Streaming and class formation at ADHS
- Opportunities and education at ADHS for new parents
- Transitions to college
- Europe overseas tour information pre and post departure; and
- Assisting year 7 parents become familiar with learning at ADHS through the experience of their child.

Collectively, these forums were attended by more than 1,000 parents.

ADHS considers that the efforts to increase community partnerships in student learning have been maintained with almost 78% of parents reporting that community partnerships are valued – this is good evidence of our work in this area. Parents report a higher satisfaction related to receiving feedback on their child’s learning (85% in 2017 from 80% in 2016). Eighty nine percent of parents also reported satisfaction that they can discuss their concerns with teachers (83% in 2015), 84% were satisfied their child’s learning needs are being met (79% in 2016), and 77% that the school works with parents to support their child’s learning (72% in 2016). ADHS will continue to monitor and evolve better means of building partnerships with parents.

The third key improvement strategy to *enhance opportunities for student voice in learning programs and learning environments* was explored with vigour through 2017 by the inaugural Student Executive Group (SEG). Student forums were held during the year, across years 7 – 10, each an hour long. Forums were also conducted with International students and with students in the Unicorn program. Follow up meetings were held with students for a deeper discussion on particular topics with the Principal. The minutes of these forums were circulated to all staff, and the highlights reported to students via three assemblies. There were some quick fixes such as

- replacement and regular cleaning of the microwaves for students, located in the Canteen
- replacement of locks on toilet doors
- regulations on use of devices in classrooms
- Encouraging students to rephrase their inappropriate language to reduce swearing
- Running sessions to de-mystify the Unicorn and streaming process at ADHS

Suggestions from students for longer term improvements and implemented in 2017 included

- Changing the Pastoral Care (PC) program to the Pastoral Care/Hour of Wellbeing (PC/HOW) such that each semester two year groups engage in an activity of their choice for one hour per fortnight followed by a structured PC program for each year group for the second semester. Student surveys report a very high level of satisfaction with the change.
- Suggestions were made around reforming the use of ALFREDs (Advance Learning Framework for Real Education Difference) with regards to SMART goal-setting
- More information on a range of topics important to them, such as Mental Health year group workshops on this topic following a presentation by BATYR. In addition, Mental Health and Wellbeing was a focus of two assembly presentations by the Principal.
- Activities/clubs were scheduled at lunch time including games, art, sport clubs.

Student voice was also solicited directly to provide feedback on, and suggest improvements to, the

teaching and learning experience in every classroom. All staff were required to seek regular feedback from students via online surveys or other formats. A number of high quality feedback forms were circulated to staff to support them in this initiative. Staff were required to consider the feedback and discuss with their supervisor how they would adapt their programs or pedagogy in response to that feedback.

Our overall approach in 2017 in regard to this priority showed stability in student responses in the target indicators. The proportion of students who report they have the opportunity to provide feedback about teaching and learning programs remained steady (59%), as did the proportion of students reporting that teachers motivate them to learn (69%) and the school provides opportunities to do interesting things (80%). The proportion of parents reporting teachers motivate their child to learn rose from 82% in 2016 to 85% in 2017.

The proportion of students achieving expected growth or better in reading was 68%, higher than in 2016, and remained the same for numeracy. The writing domain cannot be reported on due to the change in genre of the writing task.

Table: Year 9 students achieving expected growth or better In NAPLAN

Test Domain	% of students 2017	% of students 2016	% of students 2015	% of students 2014
Reading	68.1	63.3	76.4	61.3
Writing	67.9		65.3	65.9
Numeracy	67.1	67.1	81	75.3

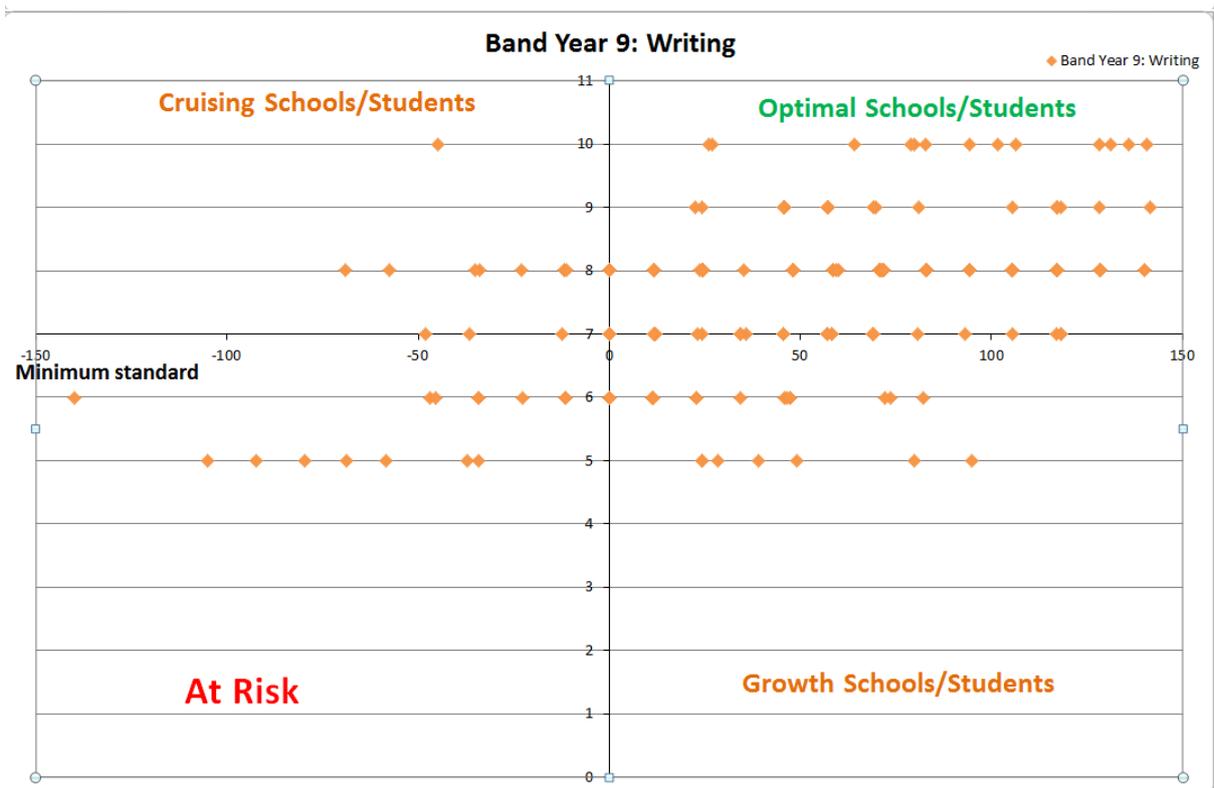
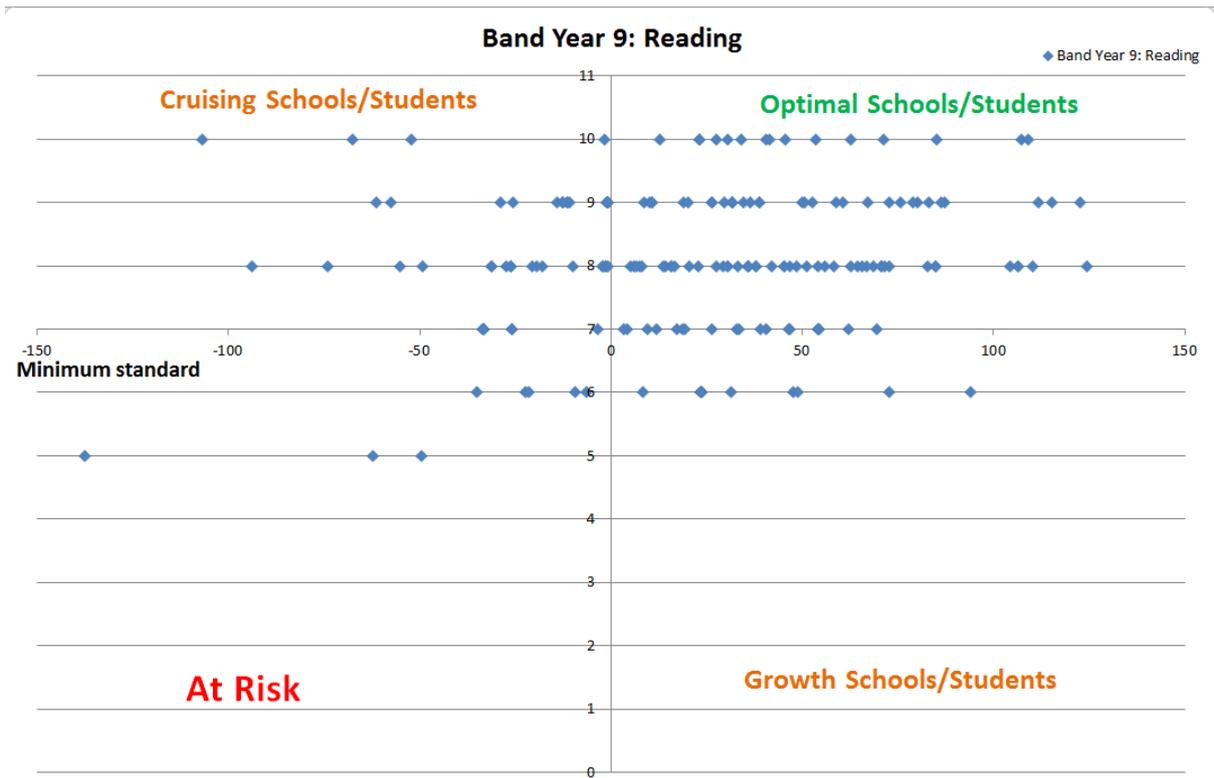
The following graphs provide an insight into how well ADHS is adding growth to students over two years in literacy and numeracy. Utilising methodology suggested by John Hattie, ADHS has calculated the effect size of our work at .45 each year for both literacy and numeracy. This is the equivalent of one year's gain for one year's work!

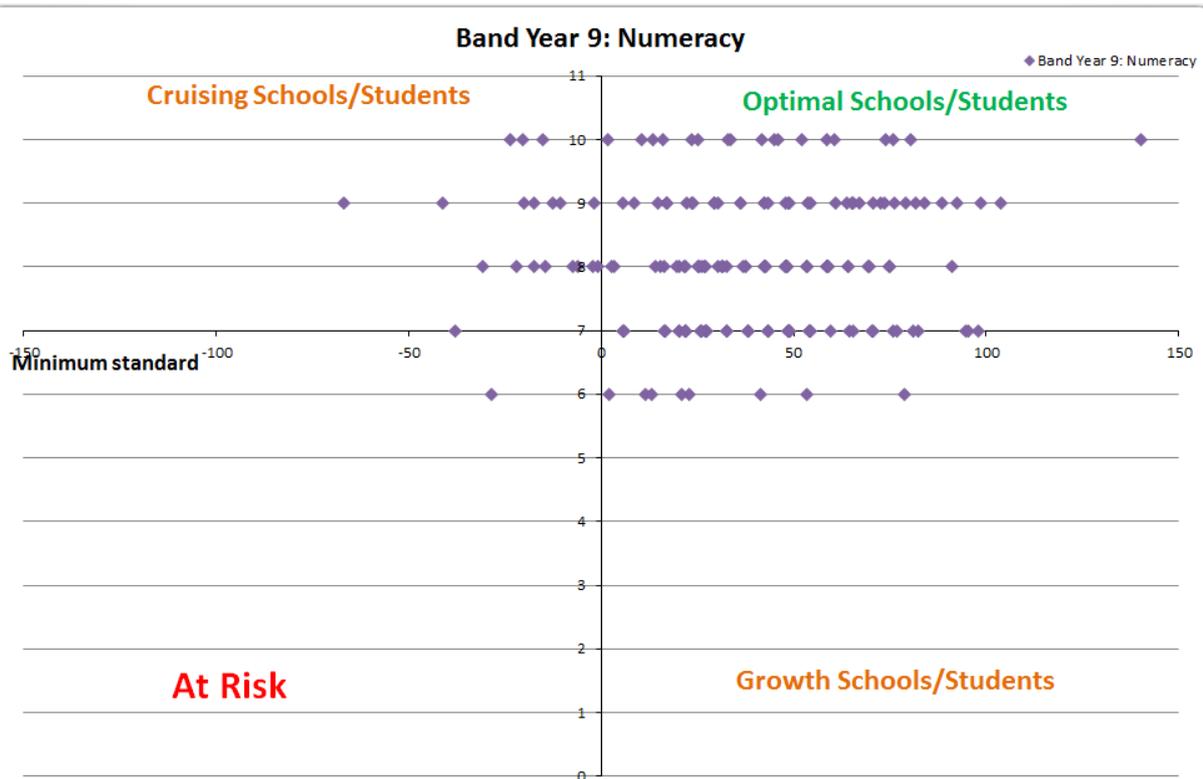
Cruising students: start above average but do not gain a year's growth

At Risk students: below average and do not gain a year's growth

Growth students: start below average but gain more than a year's progress

Optimal students start above average and gain a year's growth.





The two tables below summarise ADHS' progress towards achieving NAPLAN targets, set by the Directorate, for the ADHS School Improvement cycle. The targets are based on a four year mean average. All targets were met (green) or were within the identified range (yellow) for the reading and numeracy domains.

Table: School mean scores against targets for Reading 2014-2017

Calendar Year	Year 7 Target	Year 7 Actual	Year 9 Target	Year 9 Actual
2014	574±8	578	612±10	610
2015	577±10	587	611±10	617
2016	579±8	578	614±10	613
2017	581±8	583.6	616±10	619.8

Table: School mean scores against targets for Numeracy 2014-2017

Calendar Year	Year 7 Target	Year 7 Actual	Year 9 Target	Year 9 Actual
2014	563±10	566	610±10	617
2015	565±10	576	613±10	611
2016	568±8	569	612±10	613
2017	570±8	579.0	614±10	618.3

Source: School Data Tool, ACT Educational Directorate Targets

In 2017, ADHS has a higher mean in both the literacy and numeracy domains for years 7 and 9 than the ACT and National system means.

Priority 2: Enhance and improve ADHS community wellbeing

Targets

- Increase the proportion of students who agree to an excellent standard in the Student Relations aspect of the School Climate survey
- Increase the proportion of students who agree to an excellent standard in the Emotional Engagement aspect of the School Climate survey.

Progress

The first key improvement strategy in this priority was to develop programs and practices to support student wellbeing through a 'Healthy Hub' to enhance understanding and practice of wellbeing across the community.

Key to our work improving the wellbeing of the ADHS community was the further implementation of the ALFREDs (Advance Learning Framework for Real Education Difference). ADHS initially developed the ALFREDs in 2015, through an action research project sponsored by the ETD 'Accepting the Challenge' program, to improve and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attendance. The ALFREDs replaced the personalised learning plan required for these students and are designed to significantly assist students identify their strengths, happiness and learning styles. In 2017 ALFREDs continued to be implemented across ADHS for all students 7 -10. Students and staff have time allocated through tutor group and pastoral care sessions to assist in completion and discussion of these personalised learning plans. We will review the use of ALFREDs in 2018 and consider implementing an online portal that includes the Directorate's Student Pathways template and include student self-reporting on progress in wellbeing cross curricular capabilities.

Following a review of the Week of Wellbeing (WOW) in term 1, 2016 ADHS transformed the previous Pastoral Care program in 2017 into Pastoral Care/Hour of Wellbeing aka PCHOW. ADHS recognises that schools have a pivotal role to play in connecting character development in children and young people to individual and collective wellbeing, which in the longer term will shape the values and attitudes of the society in which they live.

Our aims in PCHOW are;

- Meet outcomes for General Capabilities
- Have Fun
- Model well-being concepts and outcomes across all faculties
- Engage the whole school community
- Bring students together across year groups in a vertical approach

PCHOW provides an opportunity to drive positive ideology through a shared approach with all staff utilising the skills/knowledge they have in their own interest/specialist or hobby areas. Students across two year groups engage in HOW during semester 1 and over thirty activities are offered for one hour a fortnight. Students enroll in an activity for 5 weeks and another activity for the following 5 weeks. In semester 2 students switch back to a Pastoral Care program that has a thematic approach for each year group. Students have reported (89%) strong support for the program through formal surveys.

- A focus on wellbeing is established right from the commencement of the school year during our professional learning days. Staff could nominate activities in which to engage including kayaking, mountain bike riding, yoga and art. This initiative places an emphasis on physical

activity and fun, increasing connections between staff and promoting wellbeing across the school.

- A Staff wellbeing PLC continues to be held in week 7 each term. The focus is on staff engaging in activities that support a healthy mind and body, and that also builds stronger, happier relationships in the school community.
- An emphasis on healthy eating has been established. This focus includes encouraging staff to:
 - role model healthy eating (keeping red foods out of sight of students)
 - provide healthy food for morning teas
 - ensure our catering at events provides for healthy eating
 - minimise fundraising through BBQ's and cake sales to twice only per term
 - provide alternative extrinsic rewards to students rather than red foods.
- Staff are celebrated for their involvement in additional activities outside of school that support their wellbeing.

The Australian Curriculum general capabilities play a significant role in equipping students to live and work successfully. 'Students develop capability when they apply knowledge and skills confidently, effectively and appropriately in complex and changing circumstances, in their learning at school and in their lives outside school' (ACARA website, 2017). In 2017, we continued to audit our curriculum and progress is being made on the inclusion of the general capabilities in the curriculum. ADHS continues to look to the Directorate for additional support and direction on how this can best be implemented and we anticipate some further developments in this area in 2018.

Healthy Kids Association commenced management of the daily operations of the ADHS School Canteen in 2016 following the development of a License Agreement in late 2015. The school envisaged that this would see an upturn in patronage by both students and staff, and a return to profitability to benefit the school. The most recent information provided continues to suggest that ADHS School Canteen is not meeting key indicators that were expected. At the time of writing this report we anticipate a meeting with Healthy Kids Association to gather evidence on patronage, affordability and profit for 2017, with an aim of reviewing the arrangement in 2018.

In the 2017 School Climate Survey, 93% percent of students reported excellent or adequate 'student relations'. 'Students are accepting of each other's differences' was most strongly endorsed by year 10 students whilst year 8 response to the item 'Students go out of their way to help each other' was most weakly endorsed.

A second key improvement strategy for this priority was to increase and deepen *opportunities for student voice in the corporate life of the school*. Student forums were conducted with students in term 3 and 4 focused on teaching and learning environment improvements – see section above for full report on outcomes. The Principal also met and had wide ranging discussions with small groups of students on several occasions on particular issues pertinent to student engagement (see more extensive report in Priority 1 above). Student Leadership @ ADHS was defined and clearly articulates how students can be involved in leadership programs.

Our actions in this priority show we are maintaining an impact. Students (59%) are reporting they can provide feedback about teaching and learning programs (63% in 2017). However, only 50% of students report they can suggest changes to the student environment and feel listened to. This may require further exploration in 2018 to solicit further ways to ensure student voice is heard and acted on! Finally, a further success indicator was that 83% of students reported 'that the school looks for ways to improve' – an increase from 80% in 2016.

Overall our progress in this priority area to our identified targets was successful. We are delighted in the continuing improvement of the school climate and the culture. In the School Satisfaction Survey students report feeling very safe at ADHS (78%) and 74% report that they like being at ADHS. This is confirmed in the Climate survey with 96% students reporting adequate or excellent levels of Perceived Support and Safety – higher than other ACT schools. The proportion of students who agreed to an excellent standard in the Student Relations aspect of the School Climate survey remained steady at 23% (overall agreement was 93%). Emotional engagement concerns how much students are interested in and are enjoying their learning at school. Emotionally engaged students will find the lessons fun and exciting, subsequently learning more. In 2017 at ADHS 93% of students reported adequate or excellent levels of emotional engagement.