

Belconnen High School

Board Report

2014



This report supports the work being done in the ACT Education and Training Directorate, as outlined in the Strategic Plan 2014-2017 “Educational capital: Leading the Nation”. It complies with reporting requirements detailed within the Education ACT 2004 and the National Education Agreement.



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The school website is <http://www.blch.act.edu.au>.

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About our school

Introduction to School

Belconnen High School opened in 1971 and enjoys a rich history such as the school hall being the Tally Room for the 1972 Federal election. We cater for students from years 7 to 10 with our core values of respect, excellence, leadership, pride, cooperation, and having a positive attitude and commitment. The school is situated in the ACT suburb of Hawker and has close links to both the Primary Schools (years P to 6) and Hawker College (years 11 and 12) in the local area.

Our School Board and Parent and Citizens (P & C) work closely with our school community to provide an environment that promotes excellence, celebrates success, nurtures the wellbeing of all students and successfully provides students with the skills and values that will prepare them for the challenges and responsibilities of adult citizenship. This has seen the P&C introduce parent forums that provide information for parents and feedback to the school.

Pastoral care is an integral part of the school staffed by our Student Services Co-ordinator, Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, year group Co-ordinators, School Counsellor, a Youth Support Worker and a Chaplain. This team ensure a supportive House system and a Student Representative Council (SRC) that is connected to the governance of the school.

The school offers a traditional comprehensive curriculum that is structured around the Key Learning Areas of English, mathematics, science, science studies of society environment (SoSE), physical education, the arts, technology and languages other than English (LOTE). The Languages currently offered at the school are French and Indonesian.

Students are extended and challenged through the highly successful enrichment program (PEP) in the areas of English, mathematics, SoSE and physical education. Students are given the opportunity to study a number of Vocational Education and Training courses and to begin an Australian School Based Apprenticeship (ASBA).

Complementary to the traditional curriculum the school runs a number of targeted programs designed to engage and connect students to the school and their learning. Amongst these is a highly successful program that caters for students with a diagnosis of high functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), in particular Asperger's Syndrome. This program enables the students to be integrated into the school. The program is staffed by both teaching and support staff who design and facilitate the student's learning through an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). The program successfully transitions the students into a mainstream college for years 11 and 12.

Student Information

Student enrolment

In 2014 there was a total of 381 students enrolled at this school.

Table: 2014 Student Enrolment Breakdown

Group	Number of Students
Male	206
Female	175
Indigenous	10
LBOTE	89

Source: Planning and Performance, August 2014

Student attendance

The following table identifies the attendance rate of students by year level during 2014. Student attendance rate is the percentage of school days attended by students in each year level at the school. Student attendance is measured over two school terms; that is from the first day of the school year for students in term one to the last day of term two.

Table: 2014 Semester 1 attendance rates

Year Level	Attendance Rate %
7	90.4
8	86.2
9	82.1
10	83.1

Source: Planning and Performance, July 2014

Students are expected to attend school punctually and regularly. Should a student be absent for a period, a note from a parent or guardian must be received. This note is handed to the Pastoral Care Group (PCG) teacher on the first day the student returns to school. This note may be brought in prior to a known absence. BHS operates an electronic messaging system by which parents can be contacted by SMS message if their child is absent from school. The PCG teacher will routinely contact parents if a student is absent for three days without explanation. A letter is sent to parents (as required by the Department) after five days continuous absence.

Staff Information

Teacher qualifications

All teachers meet the professional requirements for teaching in an ACT public school.

The proportion of teaching staff with certificates/degrees/diplomas and a postgraduate qualification is shown below.

Table: 2014 Qualification of Teaching Staff

Qualifications	Teaching staff (%)
Certificate/Diploma/Degree	100
Postgraduate	66

Source: School Data, 19/11/14

Workforce Composition

In 2014 the workforce composition of the school is highlighted in the following table. The data is taken from the school's verified August pay report. For reporting purposes It includes all school staff including preschools if applicable, staff absent for a period of less than four consecutive weeks, staff replacing staff absent for more than four consecutive weeks. It does not include all casuals and staff who were not paid in this period and staff absent for a period of four consecutive weeks or longer nor unfilled vacancies.

Table: 2014 Workforce Composition Numbers

Role	Total
Administrative Service Officers	11
General Service Officers & Equivalent	1
School Leader A	1
School Leader B	1
School Leader C	7
Teachers	27
TOTAL	48

Source: Workforce Management, August census 2014

There are no indigenous staff at this school.

Volunteers

A Total of 220 hours of work was volunteered in 2014.

School Review and Development

In 2014, the ACT Education and Training Directorates *Strategic Plan 2014-2017* provided the framework and strategic direction for the school's plan. This is supported by the *School Improvement in ACT Public Schools Directions 2010-2014* and the *School Improvement Framework* which are the overarching documents providing support to achieve high standards in student learning, innovation and best practice in ACT public schools.

All ACT public schools participate in a four year cycle of school review and development. Schools take part in a continuous cycle of review comprising annual self assessments against their school plans. In the fourth year schools undergo an external validation process. This

process provides an independent and unbiased assessment of the school's progress towards achieving system and school priorities.

Belconnen High School was validated in 2014. A copy of the validation report can be found on the school website.

School Satisfaction

Schools continually use a range of data collection tools to gain an understanding of the satisfaction levels of their parents and carers, staff and students. In August/September 2014 the school undertook a survey to gain an understanding of school satisfaction at that time. Staff, parents and students from year 5, and above, with the exception of students in special schools, who were invited to take part in an online survey.

Overall Satisfaction

In 2014, 53 parents, 37 staff and 283 students responded to the survey. Where less than five responses were received the results were not reported due to concerns about participant privacy.

In 2014, 72% of parents and carers, 92% of staff, and 57% of students at this school indicated they were satisfied with the education provided by the school.

As well in 2014, 14 national parent survey items and 12 national student survey items were included in the surveys. These items were approved by the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) for use from 2014. The following tables show the percentage of parents and carers and students who agreed with each of the national items at this school.

Table: Proportion of parents and carers in agreement with each national opinion item

Item	(%)
Teachers at this school expect my child to do his or her best.	75
Teachers at this school provide my child with useful feedback about his or her school work.	64
Teachers at this school treat students fairly.	70
This school is well maintained.	79
My child feels safe at this school.	90
I can talk to my child's teachers about my concerns.	81
Student behaviour is well managed at this school.	64
My child likes being at this school.	74
This school looks for ways to improve.	72
This school takes parents' opinions seriously.	67
Teachers at this school motivate my child to learn.	66

My child is making good progress at this school.	68
My child's learning needs are being met at this school.	62
This school works with me to support my child's learning.	68

Source: 2014 School Satisfaction Surveys, September 2014

Table: Proportion of students in agreement with each national opinion item

Item	(%)
My teachers expect me to do my best.	89
My teachers provide me with useful feedback about my school work.	61
Teachers at my school treat students fairly.	52
My school is well maintained.	38
I feel safe at my school.	57
I can talk to my teachers about my concerns.	41
Student behaviour is well managed at my school.	25
I like being at my school.	50
My school looks for ways to improve.	68
My school takes students' opinions seriously.	42
My teachers motivate me to learn.	59
My school gives me opportunities to do interesting things.	64

Source: 2014 School Satisfaction Surveys, September 2014

This information can be considered alongside information available on the *My School* website (<http://www.myschool.edu.au>).

These results as well as the continual review of school performance contributed to the evaluation of our school plan and the development of annual operating plans. The school plan is available on the school website.

Professional Learning

In 2014, staff participated in a professional learning conference run by the school. The conference was a mixture of keynote addresses and workshops. The two keynote addresses were "Belconnen High as a Professional Learning Community" and "10 Essential Skills for Teachers". Staff were surveyed in 2013 for their strengths in certain skills as well as areas in which they would like to learn more. This information was used to form workshops that were run by our own staff. This proved to be a very successful model.

Learning and Assessment

NAPLAN Assessment

Students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in all ACT schools participated in the National Assessment Program-Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). This program assesses skills in reading, writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation and numeracy.

In 2014, 0.00 % of year 7 students and 1.00 % of year 9 students were exempt from testing based on nationally agreed criteria.

Results are not reported when there are fewer than five students with NAPLAN results. This rule is applied to protect the privacy of students in small schools.

The following table shows the 2014 mean scores achieved by our students compared to the ACT.

Table: Belconnen High School 2014 NAPLAN Mean Scores

Test Domain	Year 7 School	Year 7 ACT	Year 9 School	Year 9 ACT
Reading	532	569	574	600
Writing	474	524	525	559
Spelling	525	554	569	591
Grammar & Punctuation	532	566	561	591
Numeracy	527	559	558	598

Source: Performance and Planning December 2014

The table shows that the 2014 NAPLAN results for our year 7 and year 9 students were below the average of the ACT in all domains.

Performance in other areas of the curriculum

The school achieves many successes in the areas of performing arts, music and sport with students and teachers representing the school in local, regional, national and international competitions. Recent highlights include: students exhibiting visual art works at the Australian National University (ANU); high numbers of students excelling in National English, Mathematics, Science and History competitions; musical performances in the ACT "Step into the Limelight" production and outstanding results in many sporting competitions.

Progress against School Priorities in 2014

Priority 1

Build staff capacity to improve student outcomes

Target/s

Increases in year 7 student results in diagnostic testing and moderated assessment tasks in both English and Maths

All staff focusing on fundamental teaching strategies

Professional Practice plan developed

School improvement domains covered with this priority

Teaching and Learning Leadership and Management

Progress

The school underwent external validation at the start of Semester 2 this year. This process is the completion of the school's four year strategic plan of which the 2014 Annual Operating Plan is the final 6 months. The External Validation Report is available on the school website www.blch.act.edu.au. The report highlights the many achievements for this priority.

The strategies that were successfully completed in 2014 were:

1. The 10 Essential Skills Training for Staff in the professional learning days in January
2. The appointment of the Executive Teacher for Professional Practice at the start of the year. The development of the role has continued throughout the year, including the mentoring of all teachers on the 10 Essential skills.

The strategies that were sustained in 2014 were:

1. Literacy
 - Continue writing focus across the school
 - Evaluate skills practice book for year 7 students
 - Moderated assessment tasks
2. Coaching with executive staff to build their capacity as instructional leaders
3. Study Skills book
 - Published and supplied to all staff and students
 - Copies supplied to year 6 students in feeder primary schools
 - Continue professional learning for staff in Teaching & Learning meetings
4. Numeracy
 - Continued introduction of Australian Curriculum
 - Continue non-streamed classes to year 7
 - Maths online
5. The semester (unit) planners for all teachers – linked to professional pathways
6. The new reporting procedures and templates
7. Continue all staff to use spreadsheets that align to learning outcomes

Worthy of specific mention are the introduction of "Maths online" to support classroom teaching and as a homework practice tool and non-streamed maths classes to year 7. Both have proved a huge success, most notably, the increase in student confidence in learning mathematics. Non-streamed classes are being used in other year groups and curriculum areas.

Across the cluster of schools the development and supply of the Study Skills Guide book has been extremely successful. The book is published and supplied to all staff and students at the start of each year; this includes the year 6 students in the three feeder primary schools. Evidence suggests the book is valued by staff, students and parents. A second edition of the book was published in 2014 that incorporated changes suggested by the primary school teachers.

Coaching with executive staff to build their capacity as Instructional Leaders has proved to be a highly successful strategy and can be directly linked to the outcomes of the focus on the mentoring of fundamental teaching strategies for teachers. The focus led to students being more settled in the school in general and more able to focus on their learning.

Priority 2

Build a positive school culture

Targets

School Satisfaction data continuing to trend upwards for school identity and pride.

Positive trends achieved for the attendance, suspension and student results data for students in the STEPS program.

School uniform introduced

School improvement domain/s covered with this priority

Student Engagement Leading and Managing

Progress

The strategies that were successfully completed in 2014 were:

1. The review of the Student Welfare policy so that it's owned by all stakeholders and used by all staff.
 - Agreements
 - Role of year Coordinators
2. Extension of the STEPS program to include individual learning plans for the students involved

The strategies that were sustained in 2014 were:

1. Reinforcing school-wide taboos and a set of standard classroom rules
2. Changes to graduation and House System i.e. all year groups to graduate
3. The focus on pastoral care
 - Staff scripts for contacting parents
 - "Get Sorted" handbook
 - Student organisation skills included into CARE program
4. Targeted professional learning and coaching for executive staff
 - Individual directions and coaching sessions

- Executive conference
 - Specific coaching for Deputy Principal
5. The roles for Student Representative Council (SRC) and School Captains strengthened to provide leadership opportunities for year 10 students
 6. Strengthening the school pride through the introduction of new uniform
 7. Focus on renewed facilities for staff and students
 8. Refocus the student rewards through the school ceremonies

This priority has been the most crucial for the school. As the success in the other priorities was dependant on the success in this priority. This is highlighted in the commendations made by the External Validation panel:

Belconnen High School is to be commended for the following.

1. **Improvement to school culture.** From the beginning of the school improvement cycle and with the appointment of a new principal the school culture was systematically addressed. Changes were identified in small steps and embedded quickly such as the introduction of school uniform, school captains and school assemblies. The changes have led to a renewed sense of pride amongst the school community.
2. **Facilities improvement.** Changes and improvements to the buildings and resources are evident throughout the school and are well respected by all students. For example, student artworks are displayed in galleries around the school without protection and are not being vandalised. Walls have been painted and are not vandalised. Students and staff are respected with the provision of high quality equipment and resources. Staff are also provided with professional work spaces such as a staffroom and faculty staffrooms that are functional and allow for collegial team work.
3. **Professional learning communities.** The establishment of professional learning communities has provided a strong process for teachers learning together, solving problems of practice and reflecting on their practice.
4. **A strong executive team with a clear vision and focus.** The key drivers of change have been the principal, deputy principal and executive staff. They have reestablished staff cohesion, team work in faculty groups, established professional accountability and improved morale.
5. **The development and operation of school rules.** *Rules and taboos* are clearly identified in each classroom and corridors. All staff take responsibility for all students and are consistent in their approach. The attention to establishing *rules and taboos* has led to a settled and learning focused environment.

Further evidence of our success against the targets set for this priority includes: School Satisfaction data continuing to trend upwards for school identity and pride; positive trends achieved for the attendance, suspension and student results data for students in the STEPS program and the introduction of a School uniform has also been favourably received.

Priority 3

To build a stable community-based school

Targets

Increase student numbers from local primary schools

Increased parental involvement at the Parent Forums

School improvement domain/s covered with this priority

Community Involvement

Leading and Managing

Progress

The strategies that were sustained in 2014 were:

1. The focus on school marketing events such as Open Night and year. 7 Information Night. The letterbox drop to advertise the Open Night was repeated this year
2. Continuing to strengthen links to primary schools (Hawker, Weetangera & Florey)

Strategies:

- Maths and science extension program for all primary schools
 - Host primary schools' staff meetings at Belconnen High School with directions presentations
 - Executive staff have more involvement at primary schools
 - Students have more involvement at primary schools
 - Supply Study Skills books to year 6 students
3. Lead the local area schools including Hawker College through the evolution of the Hawker Collegiate to include all schools in the Cluster.
 4. Continue working with P&C to establish a model for Parent Forums

The strategy to include the primary schools in our assemblies was trialled and did not achieve the desired outcome and therefore was not continued.

The strategy to continue planning for school refurbishment will form a priority in the school's next Strategic Plan.

In respect to our targets in 2014 student enrolments for year 7 significantly increased. This increase is predominantly from our local area primary schools. The school attributed this increase to improvements made in school marketing events such as Open Night and the Year 7 Information Night and a letterbox drop of a new marketing flyer. Another significant contributing factor was the continuation of forming stronger links the local primary schools. The increase in year 7 enrolments are anticipated to continue in 2015.

Financial Summary

The school has provided the Directorate with an end of year financial statement that was approved by the school board. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

The following summary covers use of funds for operating costs and does not include expenditure in areas such as permanent salaries, buildings and major maintenance.

Professional learning

The average expenditure at the school level per fulltime equivalent teacher on professional learning was \$1280

Voluntary contributions

This school received \$13310 in voluntary contributions in 2014. These funds were used to support the general operations of the school. The spending of voluntary contributions is in line with the approved budget for 2014.

Reserves

Nil

Financial Summary	
	31-Dec-14
INCOME	
Self management funds	573694
Voluntary contributions	13310
Contributions & donations	6680
Subject contributions	15548
External income (including community use)	18560
Proceeds from sale of assets	54
Bank Interest	9640
TOTAL INCOME	637486
EXPENDITURE	
Utilities and general overheads	189732
Cleaning	202268
Security	13209
Maintenance	97266
Mandatory Maintenance	
Administration	18974
Staffing	
Communication	18575
Assets	6585
Leases	
General office expenditure	26098
Educational	31446
Subject consumables	9310
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	613463
OPERATING RESULT	24023
Actual Accumulated Funds	85637
Outstanding commitments (minus)	
BALANCE	109660

Endorsement Page

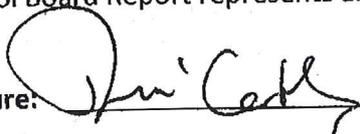
I declare that the Belconnen High School Board has operated in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 2004 including the following sections.

- 39 (4) The school board must give effect to the chief executive's directions.
- 44 (2) The chief executive must end the appointment of a member of the school board of a public school, other than the principal of the school if-
- The member is absent from 3 consecutive meetings of the board without reasonable excuse or leave given by the board or
 - Contravenes section 49 (disclosure of interests by members of school boards) without reasonable excuse.
- 46 The members of the school board of a public school must, whenever is necessary, nominate a member of the board as a member of any selection panel established by the chief executive to make recommendations to the chief executive about the appointment of the principal to the school.
- 47 (2) However, the school board must meet at least four times a year.
- 48 (10) The school board must keep minutes of its meeting.
- 49 Disclosure of interests by members of school boards.
- 49 (3) The disclosure must be reported in the school board's minutes and, unless the board otherwise decides, the member (The first member) must not-
- be present when the board considers the issue or
 - take part in any decision of the board on the issue.
- 49 (5) Within 14 days after the end of each financial year, the chairperson of the school board must give the chief executive a statement of any disclosure of interest under this section in relation to the school board during the financial year.

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD

Parent Representative:	Ashok Krishnan, Carolyn Fisher
Community Representative	
Teacher Representative	Crystal Webber, Rebecca Cowan
Student Representative:	George Detheridge, Chloe Scheffler
Board Chair:	Rebekah Gupte
Principal:	David McCarthy

I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief the data and information reported in this Annual School Board Report represents an accurate record of the school's operations in 2014.

Principal Signature: 

Date: 25/2/15

I approve the report, prepared in accordance with the provision of the ACT Education Act, section 52.

Board Chair Signature: 

Date: 28/2/15