School context

Menindee is a remote school in far west NSW, situated 120kms East of Broken Hill on the Darling River, the Paaka. The school provides Kindergarten to Year 12 learning, catering for Years 11 to 12 through the Wilvandee Access Program which links Menindee with central schools in Ivanhoe and Wilcannia. The school focuses on improving outcomes in literacy and numeracy through programmes that aim to increase attendance and retention by providing a culturally sensitive curriculum. The school aims to engage students through innovative programs and the employment of Aboriginal community members. The school has a close operating partnership with a locally governed association, Menindee Enterprise Park Educational Services, whose aim is to support the traineeship program through creation of business opportunities for the local community and financial support of trainee wages. On average 90% of students undertake a school based traineeship (SBAT).

Staff

MCS staff are typically early career teachers who take the option of incentive transfer at the end of the qualifying period of three years. This trend has begun to change and the school is looking at strategies that encourage staff to remain past three years. They are well supported professionally through various means including remote delivery of professional development.

Principal’s message

The following text is taken from the Principal’s address delivered at the School Presentation Evening 2013.

I will start this evening by acknowledging the sadness and grief that has surrounded many families in our small community, Queen Elizabeth II famously used the phrase ‘Annus Horribilis’ to describe a year in which nothing seemed to go right and I would not blame anyone for thinking of 2013 as their horrible year.

However I have been blessed with my father’s sense of realist optimism and see 2013 as a year in which the triumph of education has been celebrated by everyone in our school.

EVERY student will, if they’re allowed to sit and think about it, see a moment this year that was truly inspiring for them.

Some numbers...

Averaged over the year, 108 students attended MCS, Our attendance sits 2% above our regional average and while our days lost to suspension have remained fairly similar to other years, the number of students involved has declined. Put simply there are more students and behind the scenes more families, whose respect for education has firmly cemented the partnership growing at Menindee.

This year 10 students commenced their school journey and 10 completed it and their academic results are there for all to see. Statistics can be spun to tell many tales but there is one unmistakable truth in our results. Students come to Menindee Central School and they grow, on average 5-15 points GREATER than anywhere in the state!

We’re not there competing with Fort St or Hurlstone Ag, YET, but for a school of around 100 students and a committed community behind it, we have so much we can be proud of.

I can attribute some of this growth to our acknowledgement of the student as a whole and a growing recognition of each student’s strengths. Socrates talked of education as the drawing out of an individual’s talents and our focus for 2014 will be to continue to seek out and deepen the conversation with students and their families as to how we can tap into each student’s
strengths to lever their educational success. If you think back to a time when you could not wait to get to work on that special project, when you couldn’t get enough of a topic and had a teacher who helped, standing beside, rather than in front and to the ‘buzz’ you felt when you were acknowledged for your hard work. It is this spark we want to ignite in our young people. Our focus on the positive and working on a strength rather than deficit basis is writ large in our Positive Behaviours for Learning program and in our school values. Being Safe, Smart and showing Respect.

Our inclusion in the Connected Community Strategy has brought with it many challenges, however it has not been a road we’ve walked alone. I thank the community of Menindee for providing honest, real feedback about what our school should be and how we should get there. I thank Darlene Newman, Eleanor Sloane (Golly), Fiona Kelly, then President of the AECG and William Mafi, P&C president, for their support and hard work on the school reference group. The tree has been planted and we’re already seeing the fruit of our labour. Can I again ask that if you can spare an afternoon once in a while that you consider joining the AECG or P&C, your support of these two bodies is critical in ensuring community expectations are mirrored in the school.

I must also thank Daniel who was appointed to the new role of Community Engagement Officer. Daniel has shown a level of courage, dignity and integrity that is beyond reproach and applies the one simple tenet that I ask all our staff to test themselves against, ‘is this the best thing for the kids?’ and if it is, then it’s worth doing with 100% commitment.

Can I also thank, the many organisations and agencies who have worked to strengthen our interagency approach to supporting the students and families of Menindee, among them Mission Australia, Family and Community Services, Police, NSW Health and Maari Ma, I look forward to bigger and better for 2014.

Our departing permanent staff, Kerryn and Elizabeth, thanks you for your dedication to your students. You each bring strength of character and humanity to the role of teacher that will hold you in good stead throughout your career; I know you take with you happy memories of your time at Menindee Central. To Lauren, Dean and Will who have ably filled the ranks this year as temporary appointments I wish we were able to offer you something more and perhaps down the track we will be able to.

Finally to our students, well done. School is a testing time, with highs and lows, nights like tonight pay tribute to all your hard work, but don’t let this be your marker, set your sights on the stars, dream the blue sky and remember the red dirt under your feet, you have it all before you.

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.

Daryl Irvine

P & C

Firstly I would like to thank all members for their support during 2013. It was a great pleasure as well as an enjoyable experience to be the President of the P & C.

For a P & C to work effectively it requires “TEAM WORK” with members and I thank you for all your efforts.

During 2013 the P & C donated a large amount of money to help students with excursions, formals and towards the Presentation Night.

The Committee has made little profit with fundraising during 2013 by running a Mother’s and Father’s Day stall, Halloween Disco, BBQs at sporting functions as well as the annual Carols By Candlelight. I really appreciate the support the community and members of the P & C give to benefit Menindee Central School, without this support many aspects of students’ education simply would not be possible.

William Mafi
**Student representative’s message**

2013 saw an increased amount of choices for students across the school. A range of extracurricular opportunities ensured all students were able to access activities in which they held an interest.

Our schools cultural dance groups have expanded and there are now both boys and girls from across the school participating in local and state wide events.

The overseas cultural awareness trip for Year 12 was reintroduced and 6 students represented Menindee Central School. They visited the North Island and returned sharing stories about a cultural school visit in Auckland.

Our annual excursions were revamped giving students new experiences. The Sydney School Spectacular trip saw the introduction of a NSW Sport and Recreation component challenging students on a ropes course and testing their skills sailing.

Primary excursions were not forgotten. 2/3/4 spent a night in Kinchega National Park as part of their studies on National Parks and 5/6 visited Ballarat during their study of ‘The Gold Rush’ they panned for gold but unfortunately came away empty handed.

Even though there were many fantastic excursions we were also lucky enough to have frequent visitors to the school. These visitors included Lindfield East on their annual pilgrimage, Killara High School, Charles Sturt University as well as those who presented workshops for us like ‘Heaps Decent’, Johnny Huckle, Responsible Pet Care, Deadly Treadly and author Jane Caroll. It has been a busy year, with many opportunities for students at Menindee Central School.

*Leonie Nolan*

*Jack Sloane*

2013 School Captains

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**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**

The students of Menindee Central School (MCS) come from a predominately indigenous background (approx. 70%) and in the majority have lived in Menindee their entire life. Students from Menindee go on to find employment and further education in regional centres such as Broken Hill, Dubbo and Mildura and typically choose to further their study in Sydney or Adelaide.
Management of non-attendance

Students with poor attendance are referred to the Head Teacher Secondary Studies, who works with the Home School Liaison Officer, Year Advisors, SASS staff, Learning Support Team, and community to support student retention and engagement. In school support includes provision of attendance plans, check-ins with year advisor, an curriculum support, as needed. The school also refers students to community organisations and counseling as needed.

Post-school destinations

One student has commenced an apprenticeship, two students attend TAFE full-time, two students have traineeships and four are yet to gain full time employment with plans for commencing further training.

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

There were nine students enrolled at MCS in Year 12, all successfully completing their HSC in 2013. From the nine students enrolled, eight students (88%) successfully undertook at least one or more VET subject as part of their pattern of study. These subjects included Certificate II in Business - Business Services, Industry Based Learning and Certificate II in Engineering - Metals and Engineering through the Western Institute – Broken Hill campus while Cert II Outdoor Recreation – was studied through Western Institute - Lithgow campus. Additionally, Primary Industries (Cert II – Horticulture) was delivered internally at Menindee CS.

Six students commenced a school based traineeship with four students (66%) successfully completing the traineeship. All students studied the Business Services Traineeship.

In 2013 all Year 12 students (100%) undertook Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses. Some of these courses were delivered internally by the school while others were delivered externally through TAFE Broken Hill. Courses studied included Primary Industries, Business Services and Metals and Engineering. Several students were enrolled in more than one course. All 2013 Year 12 students (100 %) successfully completed these courses. Also, in 2013 students in Year 11 (4) , Year 10 (3) and Year 9 (1) made successful starts to their VET courses.
Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent Vocational educational qualification

From the 9 students enrolled at MCS in Year 12, all 9 students (100%) successfully completed their HSC in 2013. The students studied a diverse range of HSC subjects including English Advanced, English Standard, English Studies, Mathematics, General Mathematics, Primary Industries, Music, Sports Recreation and Lifestyle, Community and Family Studies, Biology, Economics, Modern History, Business Services, Business Studies, Industrial Technology and Visual Arts.

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>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
<td>0.2 (1 Day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Australian Education Regulation, 2013 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce.

Menindee Central School employs 9 Aboriginal staff ranging in positions from Student Learning Support Officers to executive staff.

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>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation</td>
<td>100</td>
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</table>

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>30/11/2013</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>360906.87</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
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<td>Trust receipts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
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<td>Total income</td>
<td>1349567.74</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Expenditure</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excursions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>5816.90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
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<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
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<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>196125.94</td>
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<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>55496.12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>18535.79</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>94773.72</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>1868.18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
<td>872638.54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balance carried forward</td>
<td>476929.20</td>
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</table>

The information provided in the Financial Summary is current at the date shown. This is the latest financial information available for 2013, prior to the change-over in financial systems for our school.
School performance 2013

Academic achievements

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)

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing (NAPLAN).

Click on the link http://www.myschool.edu.au and enter the school name in the Find a school and select GO to access the school data.

Where student numbers are below 10, reporting protocols prohibit us making use of data that may identify individual student performance.

NAPLAN Year 3 - Literacy

The following average performance data is compared to all NSW DEC schools. As the data shows, while there is a favourable comparison to be made to the Similar School Groups (SSG), there is some room for improvement. Trend data indicates that this gap is closing and in most cases a clearly discernable northward trend is apparent.

Reading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average score, 2013</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>SSG</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>398.7</td>
<td>346.8</td>
<td>418.7</td>
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</table>

Writing:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average score, 2013</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>SSG</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>365.5</td>
<td>329.8</td>
<td>399.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Spelling:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average score, 2013</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>SSG</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>353.8</td>
<td>338.1</td>
<td>418.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grammar & Punctuation:

NAPLAN data for years 5, 7 and 9 focuses on Student Growth in comparison to NSW DEC schools. As can be seen in the data and graphs, the school has maintained strong growth across the years. Concerted efforts to tailor educational programs to individual students is beginning to bring dividends. Overall student achievement should now fall in line with continued high growth results.

NAPLAN Year 3 - Numeracy
Numeracy:

Average score, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School</th>
<th>SSG</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>367.0</td>
<td>335.8</td>
<td>430.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>367.0</td>
<td>335.8</td>
<td>430.3</td>
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</table>

Grammar & Punctuation:

Average score, 2013

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School</th>
<th>SSG</th>
<th>State DEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>367.0</td>
<td>335.8</td>
<td>430.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>367.0</td>
<td>335.8</td>
<td>430.3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

NAPLAN Year 5 - Literacy
Reading: average student growth of 128.4 compared to NSW DEC 85.7.

Average progress in Reading between Year 3 and 5

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<td>SSG</td>
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<tr>
<td>State DEC</td>
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Writing: average student growth of 42.7 compared to NSW DEC 55.2.

Average progress in Writing between Year 3 and 5

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<td>SSG</td>
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<tr>
<td>State DEC</td>
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Spelling: average student growth of 67.6 compared to NSW DE 84.9

Average progress in Spelling between Year 3 and 5

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<td>School</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSG</td>
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<tr>
<td>State DEC</td>
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</table>

Grammar & Punctuation: average student growth of 94.8 compared to NSW DEC 79.4

Average progress in Grammar & Punctuation between Year 3 and 5

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSG</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State DEC</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
NAPLAN Year 5 – Numeracy
Average student growth of 101.8 compared to NSW DEC 85.7.

NAPLAN Year 7 – Literacy
Reading: average student growth of 65.2 compared to NSW DEC 49.1.

Writing: average student growth of 33.7 compared to NSW DEC 19.3.

Spelling: average student growth of 58.5 compared to NSW DEC 61.5.

Grammar & Punctuation: average student growth of 26.0 compared to NSW DEC 33.4.

NAPLAN Year 7 – Numeracy
Average student growth of 63.5 compared to NSW DEC 47.5.
NAPLAN Year 9 - Literacy

**Reading:** Average student growth of 65.0 compared with NSW DEC 40.2.

![Average progress in Reading between Year 7 and 9](chart)

**Writing:** average student growth of -8.6 compared to NSW DEC 17.5.

![Average progress in Writing between Year 7 and 9](chart)

**Spelling:** average student growth of 36.6 compared with NSW DEC 43.0.

![Average progress in Spelling between Year 7 and 9](chart)

NAPLAN Year 9 – Numeracy

Average student growth of 55.3 compared to NSW DEC 41.7

![Average progress in Numeracy between Year 7 and 9](chart)

**Grammar & Punctuation:** average student growth of 64.7 compared with NSW DEC 38.0.
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).

Where student numbers are below 10, reporting protocols prohibit us making use of data that may identify individual student performance.

The graph above shows student growth in three broad achievement bands. Although the graph on first glance would appear to indicate poor performance, it actually indicates an upward trend in student results. A focus for the school is lifting student performance in the HSC and a number. Performance cannot happen without retention and as the graph below shows, the programs put in place to assist in school retention have shown marked success.

Record of School Achievement (RoSA)

No students at Menindee Central School have applied for the ROSA during 2013, due to full retention to HSC.

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

Menindee Central School had a smooth transition for its first year of the Connected Community strategy. Being a Connected Community school has provided Menindee Central with a Senior Leader Community Engagement, Daniel Fusi. The work done by the senior leader brings benefits to the school students, teachers, wider community and agencies. Another feature of Connected Communities has been the development of a School Reference Group (SRG). The SRG, which is predominantly Aboriginal, has been set up to assist and advise on programs, policies and funding use within the school.

Menindee Enterprise Park continues to provide pre-employment opportunities for students and traineeships at school and beyond. Menindee Enterprise Park remains a significant meeting place for Aboriginal students and families.

The Aboriginal staff is instrumental in supporting Aboriginal students, teachers and parents. This is done by input and advice to staff, arranging meetings for parents and assisting students.
Multicultural education

Menindee Central School’s Harmony Day celebrations have proven to be a major event on the school calendar for the students and wider community. Harmony Day is a chance to showcase the many nationalities and talent within our school and community. This in turn nurtures the students’ pride in their heritage and culture, whilst developing all students’ understanding and acceptance of other nationalities.

Menindee Central School has continued to strengthen its partnership with Lindfield East Public School which was formed in 2011. This has been further enhanced by our annual excursion to Sydney staying at Lindfield East Public School and also hosting Lindfield on their excursion to Menindee. The excursion allows the students of Menindee Central School to embrace and learn from other cultures. The teacher exchange program has been extended to include Killara High School as well as maintaining Lindfield East. It provides the staff to gain valuable insight and experience in teaching vastly different schools.

Cultural Dancers

The Cultural Dance Troupe was formed in 2012, where the girls’ dance skills began to develop. This year, a very committed and polished group of 8 – 10 girls have been engaged in a number of different presentations throughout the Western Region presenting their repertoire of Polynesian Dance ‘routines’, under the highly professional direction of Community Engager William Mafi.

Highlights for the dancers include dancing at the Principal’s conference in Dubbo, dancing for the Minister for Education, at NAIDOC Week celebrations in Broken Hill, the Broken Hill Fringe Festival, and most recently at a Home for the Aged.

Such a volume of output has been unprecedented in the school, and would not have happened without the mutual commitment from the young performers, their parents, and William Mafi. A younger ‘beginner’s cultural dance class’ has now begun to continue the journey.
**Weeping Cloud**

Finally, the locally produced and performed production of the story of Isabel Bennett’s life: “Weeping Cloud” has once again been seen by many audiences this year. This beautiful and constantly evolving stage production has seen many students develop their performing skills. Boys are involved in the dancing, and many of our middle school girls perform regularly in other roles in the story.

Performance highlights include staging the show for Lindfield East School, For Charles Sturt University Students, and for Killara High School, on 3 separate occasions.

All in all, it is impossible to ignore the growth, and emerging enjoyment of performing arts at Menindee Central School.

**Wilvandee**

The Wilvandee Access Program (WAP) is one of 5 Access Clusters in NSW. WAP is a dynamic, collaborative and challenging learning program for Year 11 and 12 senior students from Wilcannia, Ivanhoe and Menindee Central Schools. The program provides a shared curriculum for senior students via video conferencing technologies to enable our students to complete their senior education at their local school without having to live away from home.

**Traineeship Program**

2013 saw the ongoing development and continuation of the School’s Traineeship Program. This program involves 100 days of paid on the job training (over 2 years) linked to an appropriate TAFE course which the student completes at school. This also contributes to the student’s subjects for their HSC. Students were employed in areas as diverse as Local Government, Health, Retail, Education, Office Work (all while completing a Certificate II in Business Services) and Metals and Engineering. Warm thanks are extended to all local businesses who have supported and continue to support this program. At the completion of the Traineeship students have 100 days of paid on the job experience and a linked TAFE Certificate II to show for their efforts. These are invaluable for our students as they chase post school employment. 6 students commenced the program in Year 11 at the start of 2012. 4 students successfully completed their Traineeships at the end of 2013 (66%). Also 4 Year 11 students started their Traineeships in 2013. They were all on course for a successful completion at the end of 2014.
Transition Program

Menindee Central School has implemented a diverse and detailed Transition Program across 3 different levels of schooling.

Firstly, the transition from Pre-School to Kindergarten: Students commencing Kindergarten in 2014 spent every Thursday down at Menindee Central School in a designated and specially equipped room. As part of these visits the students regularly visited the Library and also had exposure to the Cooking Room, Art and Music Rooms. In Term 4 the students spent several whole days in with the current K/1/2 class.

The 2013 Year 6 students also undertook a systematic program over 4 weeks that enabled them to familiarise themselves with the secondary department. The students were exposed to lessons across all secondary Key Learning Areas, had contact with all of the secondary teachers and the different classrooms.

Finally a major emphasis has been placed on providing our senior students with as much assistance as possible to allow them a smooth transition from school to post school life. Elements of this assistance include access to School Based Traineeships, Careers Days, University Visits, access to TAFE courses and servicing support agencies such as Skillset.

Music

2013 has been a year of consolidation, and quiet emergence of confidence and new found ability for a number of students. It could be best summed up by one student’s written comment: “Anyone can make music, even if they don’t know how to play an instrument”.

Growth of significance include some students initiating and presenting solo vocal acts for the first time at events such as Harmony Day, and NAIDOC Week, and a polished primary choir participating in the Broken Hill Eisteddfod.

Further to this, the staging of the musical production “Jay and The Giant – A Menindee Fairy Tale” was also a success in terms of the quality of vocal performance, and the level of participation, particularly from our Secondary Students.

Another highlight was the inaugural Year 7/8 film night, where a number of original soundtracks were premiered to a public audience.

The year was capped off by a highly successful Carols By Candlelight where all primary students performed.
Visual Art Report

This year once again saw a lot happen in the art department. The level of engagement for the students was mostly very high, across many media in 2D, 3D and 4D. Stop motion techniques were introduced by a visit from Keith Munro, head curator of Aboriginal Art at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney.

Students have once again sold many works in Sydney and more locally, bringing the total value of sales by students to over $15,000 in recent years.

Helen Bub-Connor and I have been working closely and leading the students in seeing the possible overlaps between visual and musical thought and feeling.

Several students worked with Cheryl Blore on a huge timber sculptural backdrop for the musical “Jay and the Giant”, which was another successful collaboration and experience for the students.

Badger Bates visited and demonstrated the joys and skills of linocuts to interested students, and launched another branch on the Menindee art tree.

Over twenty students had their artworks exhibited at Broken Hill Regional Gallery in the 2013 “Far West Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Prize”.

It offered prize money of $1,000 to the winner. Fifty six artists entered and young Leo Johnson took out the prize money.

Perhaps the most important thing of all is the overall level of student engagement in their practising of art at the school. It has been another privileged year for me as a teacher to have so many talented students.

Finally, the school has been approached by Joe Eisenberg, the Director of Maitland Regional Gallery, near Newcastle with a request for an exhibition of Menindee School student artworks later this year. He saw their work in Sydney a couple of years ago, and was deeply impressed and surprised by the depth and apparent maturity of the work. This is an opportunity the likes of which no other school I know of has been offered.

Rick Ball

Agriculture 2013

Some of the highlights and celebrations from Agriculture and Primary Industries include:

- A 45% increase in Stage 5 enrolments.
- The introduction of Early Commencement for students entering Primary Industries in stage 6 allowing greater pathways into future careers.
- 4 Year 12 students completing Primary Industries as part of their HSC. All 4 students successfully completed Certificate II in Horticulture, which is nationally recognised.
- Primary Industries students working in partnership with Year 10 agriculture students to complete a fencing project and enclose small paddocks for livestock.
- Grape vines planted and established, maintained by students, linked to local industry.
A paddock to plate program introduced to give students a deep understanding of how food is produced and how they can maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Transitional Equity Funding

Menindee Central School was the recipient of transitional equity funding that enabled the enhanced support of staff and students in improving the educational outcomes for students. Strategies included:

- Employment of additional School Learning Support Officers (SLSO) to assist in classroom settings.
- Assistance to staff attendance for attendance at professional development activities aimed at increasing their cultural competence.
- Support for the application of the Quality Teaching Framework, used to inform teaching practice, by Dr James Ladwig.
- Engaging of a critical friend, Dr Bob Morgan, to provide feedback on the cultural progress of the school.

National partnerships and significant Commonwealth initiatives

The following provides a broad overview of outcomes achieved as a result of participation in National Partnerships initiatives. A comprehensive analysis of the schools performance as a result of participation in National Partnerships is available from the school.

Improving Literacy and Numeracy

As indicated by the previously mentioned NAPLAN data, student performance in Literacy and Numeracy has shown continued improvement both in achievement and student growth.

All students K-6 have been mapped against the Literacy Continuum which has assisted in the development of explicit teaching programs, as well as identifying individual student progress. Each student has made some progress along the continuum thought the course of the funding period.

Interviews with students indicate that as students progress through school they gain a greater understanding of the process of assessment.

During the situational analysis of 2010 a total of 7 staff did not know, or disagreed that whole school strategies improved student performance in literacy. One teacher strongly felt that the professional learning provided by the school did not fit their needs. Four teachers felt that there were not sufficient resources in their faculty to support their teaching of literacy.

Staff attended PD in Data analysis. Our staff understands how the school uses data from NAPLAN to inform whole literacy school strategies. Most staff is able to identify and explain the whole school strategies for literacy. The next step is for staff to be able to use data
from NAPLAN to specifically inform their teaching practice, and be able to explain how.

Staff report increase in confidence and capacity to deliver explicit literacy content, using outcomes and content from the new curriculum, as a result of Kerry McInnes (consultant) Literacy specialist who delivered quality PD to all teaching staff.

The community attended PD in Data analysis to assist in programming of Literacy and Numeracy and report that there is a basic understanding of NAPLAN session for parents and caregivers. This was effective for those parents and carers who attended the sessions or made arrangements for individual meetings, but more work needs to be done to engage more of the community in these information sessions. Community perception. Many think NAPLAN is useful as a tool to show how students at MCS are ranked with students from other schools across the state. Some parents and caregivers fail to see the relevance of NAPLAN. It is perceived as a tool for the school to get money.

Impacts of National Partnership funding were directly attributable to;

- **Team teaching**
  Staff indicated they developed skills in coordination of curriculum delivery as part of a team. Aspects of classroom practice were altered to enable staff to access release from class and to adopt project based learning.

- **Class structure**
  The ability to ensure smaller class cohorts had a direct impact on staffs’ ability to develop individualised learning approaches. In direct relationship to the Australian Standards for Teachers, standard one, staff recognised firsthand the powerful modifier of knowing their student and how they learn.

- **Integration of technology**
  Due to the support of district support staff and the ability to release staff to pursue professional learning opportunities, the level of integration of technology into teaching practice rose significantly. Staff commented though that it was not necessarily the quantity of technology use, more the quality of implementation which delivered the greatest impact.

- **Increased Leadership density**
  Executive staff were able to take on greater coordination of curriculum and staff development. Having a meld of experienced and new scheme staff further enhanced the sustainability of management structures.

- **The addition of extra SLSO’s (Student Learning Support Officers)**
  Has benefitted our students in many ways including;

  - in class support – group work, one on one support
  - Our SLSO workers come from a variety of family backgrounds within the community. This is beneficial in dealing with student issues as most students have a family member/relation working at the school.
  - The ability to get information out to the community more easily.

The employment of extra staff has allowed staff to develop a culture of professional development that is self-directed in line with school planning. Staff have developed a clear understanding of the need for accurate data to allow the school to determine the focus areas to be included in the school plan, allowing for adequate resources, teacher training and budgeting to align with school needs. Staff will also be provided with time for reflection, professional dialogue around teacher practice and to participate in effective planning and evaluation processes.

National Partnerships initiatives have enabled teachers to receive intensive professional development in the areas of numeracy, literacy and leadership. As a direct result this professional development capacity has begun to increase skills in teacher practice. The majority of current staff have successfully participated in SMARTdata professional development, and therefore competent in the use of NAPLAN results to analyse individual and whole school strengths and areas for further development in regards to literacy and numeracy. This skillset will be utilised to provide in-house training to new staff, in a continuing whole-school approach to using
SMARTdata to inform future teaching directions. The learning support of staff individually was achieved through mentoring, coaching, team teaching and professional dialogues. Lesson study processes were initiated and teachers participated in a cycle of planning, implementing, data collection, and redesigning learning experiences, the Quality teaching framework underpins this work. The development of the essential elements of a literacy program and the essential elements of a numeracy program means that the school has an ongoing focus on student outcomes through consistent practice. This is a highly sustainable approach as the document forms part of the professional dialogue between teachers and their supervisors as well as among teachers as they share their practice. Specialist curriculum support will be maintained through a close working relationship with consultants.

Western By Design strategies are imbedded in the School Management Plan and reflected in the day to day operations of the school. Processes in whole-school evaluation and planning were refined and strengthened during the life of The National Partnership Initiative. School evaluation and data collection procedures were timetabled throughout the year and successfully used to inform future targets and directions. These changes were reflected in individual professional learning plans. Timetabling structures were organised to cater for learning needs of students and professional learning experiences based on evaluation of student data and teacher practice. The schools approach in developing effective team structures across the school led to distributive leadership amongst staff where sustainable practices were developed. Finally the reporting cycle for students and parents was refined and linked to Best Start data and the Literacy and Numeracy continuums.

Investing in Focus schools

The utilisation of “Focus School” funding has enabled the retention of additional teaching and para-professional support staff to ensure momentum is maintained. The following is an overview of the schools use of Investing in Focus schools funding as part of the Connected Community Strategy.

- Establishment of a School Reference Group tasked with oversight of the implementation and continued development of the schools activity plans.
- Employment of a paraprofessional tasked with improving community engagement in school activities.
- Subsidisation of a school bus run of a morning and afternoon to assist with attendance.
- Employment of additional SLSO’s to assist with the development and classroom implementation of Student Personalised Learning Plans in coordination with teaching staff.
- Purchase of upgraded Information Technology equipment and literacy/numeracy resources to assist early stage one/stage one staff implement the Early Action for Success plan under the direction of the Instructional Leader.
- Provisioning of support to the AECG for the purpose of conducting the Connecting to Country, staff cultural development activity.
- Obtaining the services of a literacy consultant to assist in the development of a whole of school literacy program aimed at lifting the performance of students, particularly in reading.
School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

School evaluation processes

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used include:

School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013

School priority 1

Improving Teaching of Reading and Numeracy

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- 80% of Kindergarten students reached at Regional Reading Benchmark.
- 50% of year 5 and 7 students met or exceeded expected growth in reading.
- 25% of students achieved expected growth in Numeracy.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Teacher professional development on the implementation of the National Curriculum.
- Further refinement of the school action plan for literacy and numeracy.
- Further embedding of Quality Teaching processes in planning for teaching and learning.

School priority 2

Strengthening Transition and Pathways structures

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- All stage 6 students achieve HSC exit credential as detailed in pathways plan.
- 70% of year 7 and 9 student surveys indicated a general satisfaction with school life. 50% of students felt that school was important.
- All students received a detailed report outlining strategies that families can use to assist in the development of their students literacy and numeracy skills. Data from best start formed the basis of students initial personalised learning plan.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- All pre-school and year 6 students have clearly documented transition plans as part of their PLP.
- Further refine the protocols and systems utilised in the Integrated Case Management approach to learning support.
- Continued close cooperation with partner agencies in triaging and referring families in order to provide efficient access to supports.
School priority 3
Establishing a Culturally Connected Curriculum

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- All students have a Personalised Education Plan that includes learning, attendance and health strategies, developed in consultation with families.
- There was a slight 2% reduction in reported negative student behaviours as measured by the welfare reporting system.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- PLPs developed in combination with partner agencies for all students and communicated to families through regular discussion.
- Whole staff attend the Connecting to Country professional development event hosted by the AECG.
- AECG partnership agreement ratified to acknowledge the school’s participation in the connected community strategy.
- Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff to share effective practice, engage in professional discussion and mentor each other.
- Events for building competencies in Aboriginal cultures for all staff in partnership with Elders, local AECGs and community members occur.

Professional learning

Throughout 2013 our staff again engaged in a broad range of professional learning through State, region, whole-school and independent opportunities. Over 740 separate events were attended or had staff participation. Some of these include regular workshops attended by our staff over previous years such as the Virtual Math’s and Virtual English Faculties.

Some of our in-house professional learning included a very successful ‘Connecting with Country’ staff development day, in which staff engaged in activities tailored specifically to cater for teaching in Menindee.

Our Executive team presented at the Buunji conference in Sydney in November.

With an ever-increasing number of online training and development opportunities, staff are able to engage in a broad range of professional learning on an individual level, with the support of colleagues and supervisors.
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: