Menindee Central School
Annual School Report 2014
School context statement

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).

Principals Message

The following text is taken from the Principal’s address delivered at the School Presentation Evening 2014.

A well-known first Australian provided a highlight of the year for me in a very bittersweet way. Noel Pearson, lawyer, academic and land rights activist delivered one of the finest orations I have ever heard as he eulogised at memorial service for that giant of Australian political history, Gough Whitlam. I am happy to say I wept like a baby as I listened to those 18 minutes, during which there were many highlights, however there was one line which has stuck with me The Whitlam government was a textbook example of reform trumping management... and I will return to this thought later.

He then went on to list over 25 different reforms that the Whitlam government introduced that have helped shape modern Australia, among them one which was re-visited and validated by Professor Gonski, that of needs-based school funding.

The notion that equity should be the driving force in deciding where school funding should be allocated, equity based on circumstance and need rather than the fallacy of an equal share. Australia is yet to see real equality and without vigilance, privilege rather than equitable opportunity may be how our students futures are decided, when economics may become the deciding factor when deciding to pursue a higher education, rather than the need to better yourself. I encourage everyone to send a message when it comes time that those in the bush, who perhaps have most to lose, are watching.

As Noel was rattling off those reforms I felt a small pang of jealousy that even though I was alive at the time I have no memory of this tumultuous time in Australian history and then a thought occurred to me. In a small way, we are undergoing our own tumultuous time in public education in NSW. I can say without a shadow of a doubt there has never been a greater period of change in the Department of Education, of real reform. Local Schools Local Decisions, LMBR and the RAM and of course Connected Communities are part of a reform agenda that the Minister, the department our school can take a great deal of pride in.

Yes, there have been hiccups, as there will be in any great change and I take this moment to thank our suppliers and businesses for their patience and support through a trying period in bedding down our new finance system. We are at the forefront of this reform, a 229 school, is it worth the pain? Noel Pearson thought it so, even though many others at the time Gough brought in the sweeping changes did not. Reform trumps management, but only if the moral purpose is clear and there is a willingness to stay the course, history bore this out in Gough’s case and I think it will in ours too. Our moral purpose is clear in each of the education reforms, giving more power to the local community to make decisions about how it’s young people should be educated and the tools to fund it equitably.

The year has included many highlights, the Mungo Youth Exchange project and the
expansion of City/Country alliance to name just two. However they are two that talk to the best of what we do, preparing our youth to take an active part in shaping this country, of reforming it, as Gough attempted all those years ago.

Thank you to the students, staff and community of Menindee Central school for a wonderful year. I look forward to an even greater one in 2015.

I encourage you to get involved in your school, like it, love it or loathe it, it is yours. One thing is for certain, without frank and fearless discussion real reform will not be possible.

Daryl Irvine

Student information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students be consistent with privacy and personal information policies. This may mean that some statistical information cannot be provided as it may identify individual students.

Student enrolment profile

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State DEC

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Attendance for primary students remains strong, however, there have been some irregularities noted in the gathering of exempted attendance and leave data.

### Secondary

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Secondary attendance remains an area of concern and is the continued focus of school planning. Due to the small cohorts, data has been unnecessarily skewed due to the attendance concerns for a few students. School processes have been addressed to strengthen links to wider support agencies to lessen the impact of similar situations.

### Post-school destinations

Due to the low student numbers we are prevented from reporting statistical information that could be used to identify students. Menindee continues to enjoy near 100% retention through to the HSC and in the 2014 graduating cohort, we have students studying at University, TAFE and in full time employment. Numbers of students who are unemployed and not in further education are statistically lower than like school groups.

### Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

95% of students undertook at least 1 Industry framework and all had the opportunity to undertake industry based learning as part of a school based traineeship.

### Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent Vocational educational qualification

2014 saw the ongoing development and continuation of the School’s Traineeship Program. Menindee Central School worked in conjunction with TAFE Western Broken Hill to support students in year 11 and 12 complete their TAFE qualifications. This program involved 100 days of paid, on the job training (over 2 years) linked to an appropriate TAFE course which the student completed at school. This also contributed to the students’ subjects for their HSC. Students were employed in areas as diverse as Local Government, Retail and Legal work (all
while completing a Certificate II in Business Services) as well as Local Agriculture and Metal Fabrication (while completing a Certificate II in Metals and Engineering). 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. Our warm thanks are extended to all local businesses who have continued to support this program. These are invaluable for our students as they seek post school employment.

100% of students in year 12 complete Certificate II courses with three students completing their HSC examination in Business Services and on completing the Higher School Certificate Examination in Metals and Engineering. 3 students successfully gained their accreditation and sat for the Higher School Certificate whilst in Year 11. 4 students commenced the program in Year 11 at the start of 2013. 3 students successfully completed their Traineeships at the end of 2014 (75%). In addition, 5 Year 11 students started their Traineeships in 2014. They were all on course for a successful completion at the end of 2015.

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

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

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

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

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<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
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Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Staff participated in over 60 different professional development activities that were connected to the provision of Quality Education at MCS. These included whole staff development days at the commencement of the year as well as two at the start of terms two and three. A highlight of the year was the Connecting to Country event that involved all staff coming together and sharing experiences with the Aboriginal community of Menindee and district. Other events included staff involvement with Virtual Faculties, supporting secondary Maths and English teachers, L3 and TEN – literacy and numeracy training for stage 1 and Kindergarten.
Beginning Teachers

For the first time in quite some time MCS had no beginning teachers. This is expected to change in 2015 and a great deal of planning was put into support structures to meet this upcoming challenge.

Financial summary

For 2014, the 229 schools are required to report on financial information from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2014.

A finance committee was established this year in an oversight role and to assist in the management of local initiatives requiring a financial commitment of some type.

Through good management and a thorough knowledge of sound accounting practices, the school was able to successfully navigate the complexities of the DEC’s new financial systems and was able to return a balance a variance of less than 1% of the predicted end of year position.

A large percentage of the balance carried forward has been earmarked to cover the erection of two Covered Outdoor Learning Areas (COLAs), which will more than triple the usable shade area of the school.

It is anticipated that the school will return to a normal pattern of expenditure in 2016.

A full copy of the school’s 2014 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.
School performance 2014

Academic achievements

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.

Due to the small numbers of students who sat the Year 3 and 5 NAPLAN tests, we are unable to provide tables or graphs of their results as it may be used to identify individual students results. However we have included the progress from year 3 to 5 as an indicator of student performance.

As these graphs illustrate, there has been significant progress made by students in literacy. Students from MCS progressed further than similar school groups and the state in all areas except for writing. The school has invested significant effort in ensuring this momentum is not lost. Writing remains a focus area for the school in general.
NAPLAN Year 5 – Numeracy

As the above graph above indicates, students at MCS did not perform well in this years NAPLAN test. This result is not truly indicative of the progress of students. Due to the small student numbers, one or two students who had a ‘bad day’ during testing has adversely affected our overall result. Other benchmark testing of students in numeracy has indicated that this result is an anomaly and the strong growth in student numeracy skills achieved in previous years continues. None the less, the school continues to invest heavily in the teaching of numeracy to raise overall achievement levels.

NAPLAN Year 7 - Literacy

Reading

Menindee Central School had a greater percentage of students in bands 9 and 8 in 2014 compared to previous years.
Grammar and Punctuation
Menindee Central School had a greater percentage of students in bands 8 and 7 in 2014 compared to previous years.

NAPLAN Year 7 – Numeracy
Menindee Central School had a greater percentage of students in bands 7 and 6 in 2014 compared to previous years.

Writing
Menindee Central School had a greater percentage of students in bands 7 and 6 in 2014 compared to previous years.

NAPLAN Year 9 – Literacy
Reading
Menindee Central School had a greater percentage of students in band 8 in 2014 compared to previous years.
Spelling
Menindee Central School had a greater percentage of students in bands 9 and 8 in 2014 compared to previous years.

Grammar and Punctuation
Menindee Central School had a greater percentage of students in band 8 in 2014 compared to previous years.

Writing
Menindee Central School had a lesser percentage of students in bands 8 and 7 in 2014 compared to previous years. Writing remains a focus for the school.

NAPLAN Year 9 – Numeracy
Menindee Central School had a greater percentage of students in bands 9 and 8 in 2014 compared to previous years.
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.

However, it was pleasing to note that 5 students successfully completed their Higher School Certificate in 2014, while another 7 are due for completion in 2015.

Achievements in the Arts, Sports and other School Programs

Music

2014 has been a year of enrichment and expansion of music programs. Full participation and striving for excellence have been central goals for students this year. All students in from Kindergarten to Year 6 participated in music classes. Students participated in a range on music making activities including forming bands, percussion ensembles, accompanying dance performances and developing instrumental and vocal skills.

The addition of a peripatetic music instructional program, to the school music program has facilitated the meeting of individual student interests and talent development. Students have had the opportunity to receive lessons on an instrument of their own choosing. Vocal instruction has also been offered and accepted by students. A total of twenty students participated in this program. Students were provided with a number of opportunities to demonstrate their learning, performing for other classes and community events throughout the year. It is anticipated that this program will continue to develop in terms of numbers of students involved in 2015.

The annual Carols by Candlelight performance for the community of Menindee continue to be a highlight of the performing Arts Calender. Community members and students performed to a captive audience of locals and people who had driven from Broken Hill to attend.

Dance

Key to the school’s development of students’ interests and abilities this year has been a focus on expanding students dance repertoire and to develop their dance skills at an earlier age. Students from across the school participated in a range of dance activities. All primary school students participated in tuition in line-dancing instruction. Students demonstrated their learning to a sold out audience in the Menindee Civic Hall to members of the wider community. Members of Community Choir participated in the performance in which students in performed a range of Country Hoedowns.
Weeping Cloud

The presentation of the Menindee Musical, ‘Weeping Cloud’, continued to be a focus of performing Arts throughout the year. Students performed the musical each term throughout 2014 to a range of audiences. This year the cast of Weeping Cloud has been extended with both students from the primary school and high school were involved, as were members of the Menindee community choir. This musical has great meaning to the students, parents and staff at the school as it is a based on a story that comes from the community. It is anticipated that the musical will continue to be presented to an even wider audience in 2015. The school recognises and thanks Isabella Bennett for her willingness to share her story. As a result of their involvement, students have continued to develop their stage craft and improved confidence in performing.

Transition Program

Menindee Central School continues to implement a diverse and detailed Transition Program across 3 different levels of schooling.

Firstly, an emphasis was placed on transition from Pre-School to Kindergarten. Students commencing Kindergarten in 2015 spent every Thursday 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 experienced specialty settings such as TAS, Art and Music Rooms. In Term 4 the students spent several whole days in with the current K/1/2 class.

The 2014, Year 6 students also undertook a systematic transition program over 4 weeks that enabled them to familiarise themselves with the secondary section of the school. Students involved were provided with the opportunity to experience lessons across all Key Learning Areas within the secondary school and had the opportunity to meet all of the secondary teachers and visit the different classrooms.

Finally, a major emphasis was placed on providing our senior students with as much assistance as possible to assist them in making a smooth transition from school to post-school life. Elements of this assistance included access to School-based Traineeships, Careers Days, University Visits, access to TAFE courses and support agencies, such as Skillset. An extension to these programs is planned for 2015.

Wilvandee Access Program

Wilvandee Access Program (WAP) is one of 5 such Access Clusters in New South Wales. In 2014 WAP has continued to be a dynamic and supportive learning program for students in Year 11 and 12 from Ivanhoe, Menindee and Wilcannia Central Schools. Students were provided with access to connected classroom facilities enabling senior students to full access to a suite of courses suited to their learning goals. This program continues to facilitate learning at a senior level, supporting students’ education within a remote community context.

Visual Art

The past year has seen continued improvement to students’ interest and involvement in Visual Art activities. A new development has been the conscious decision to rearrange equipment within the art room, for the space to re-designed to become more like an art studio for young artists, rather than be used as just a classroom space. As a consequence, the space is respected as a truly creative arts space.

This has involved each student learning both the freedoms and responsibilities of an artist and learning how to use ideas and materials meaningfully, with the constant supervision and professional mentoring by myself, as an experienced artist. Over all, this was a considerable success, as students were able to decide upon their own projects and processes and to determine their own future directions as artists, with renewed confidence.

During the whole of the year we had the prospect of a large and professionally run exhibition of
Menindee School artworks at the Maitland Regional Gallery, which opened last November and continued on until February this year. Thousands of people visited the show, many newspaper articles were written about it, and letters of appreciation were written to the school. Several students were able to get along to the official opening, and they were amazed to see their own works and those of their friends exhibited in such a prestigious place. Over $1,000 worth of work was sold, and some of the work will be shown soon at the Broken Hill Regional Gallery.

Two students successfully completed their HSC in Visual Art. Both are pursuing their interest in Visual Art beyond school.

Once again the school entered works into the Far West Aboriginal Art Prize. Their work received very favourable mention from both well-respected judges who were known to me and others previously unbeknownst to me.

Rick Ball.

**Sport**

In 2014 an emphasis was placed on improving the participation of Students at Menindee Central School. Students participated in a wide range of sports including Swimming, Athletics and Golf.

In swimming, an emphasis was placed on learning to swim with a Swim School for students in years K-6 and in River Safety for students in years 5 & 6. Students also participated in the school Swimming Carnival and Barrier Swimming Carnival.

Students continued to have the opportunity for participation in enrichment and extension sporting activities both within and beyond the school. Students participated in the barrier cross country and the Barrier Athletics carnival on a local and regional level as well as in the Secondary Athletics Carnival in Broken Hill. In addition, students participated in three sports days as part of the Wilvandee program both in Wilcannia and in Menindee.

Wombat Golf Challenge and Secondary students in the Jack Newton Gala Golf Day. As the school views itself as an advocate for sporting participation that extends beyond school, it is anticipated that there will be an even greater emphasis on students’ engagement in recreational sports activities in 2015.

**Significant programs and initiatives – Policy**

**Aboriginal education**

Throughout the year Menindee Central School embarked on a number of activities to foster better understanding of Menindee Aboriginal history and enhance community engagement.

Connecting to Country for all school staff was presented by the Menindee local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group. This involved the staff visiting significant cultural sights in and around Menindee. MCS staff was given a Paakantji lesson and was entertained by local characters who shared stories about growing up in Menindee. This event gave staff some insight into the essence of Menindee and was a great prelude to the NAIDOC celebrations.

NAIDOC activities were held at the old reserve which is a significant place for many local Aboriginal families. Students and community were involved in the preparation of the reserve for the event. Students helped staff and community cook the “johnny cakes and flaps”, which was enjoyed by all. Activities were led by both teachers and community members. A highlight of the day was the amount of community involvement and the level of student engagement.
Harmony Day celebrations at Menindee Central School continue to be a highlight of the Menindee Central school calendar. The celebrations in 2014 provided another opportunity for rich engagement with the wider community of Menindee. Culturally focussed activities provide the opportunities for students to showcase their culture and that of others, building mutual understanding and respect for other cultural background. This year Harmony Day was celebrated through activities that included wearing costumes from other cultures, a concert in the school hall and gathering to sample foods from other cultures in a market-style atmosphere in the school quadrangle.

The Harmony Day Concert was a major feature of the day’s proceedings. The highlight of the concert involved of members of the wider Menindee community students working with students, from both the Primary School and High school, in the cast for a performance of ‘Weeping Cloud’. It featured performances by the senior group of students as members of the Menindee Cultural Dancers Ensemble. A focus on presentations across all age groups was achieved, with preschool, kindergarten, years 3 and 4, 5 and 6 primary groups performing. The valued support of the community was a key element in this celebration, with a performance by the Community Choir.

Cultural Dancers

The Cultural dance Troupe, formed in 2012, is becoming renowned throughout the Western Region for the expertise and polish in their presentation of numerous performances in 2014. The dance troupe toured by special invitation to Lake Cargelligo with a support crew and two staff and three volunteers from the local community to perform for NAIDOC week celebrations. In addition, the cultural dancers performed at two nursing homes in Broken Hill as part of Christmas celebrations. Specialising in Polynesian dances, under the expert tutorage of Mr William Mafi, a recognised performer in his own right, the students have continued to develop their skills and extending their program of routines. Leadership of student dancers has developed through activities including their presentation of a workshop at West Ettalong for NAIDOC week for five hundred students. This included ten dancers, one student presenter and four staff and included volunteer form the Menindee community. The group are anticipating expanding their repertoire with a focus indigenous dance performances in 2015, with the expertise of a visiting indigenous specialist.
Significant programs and initiatives – Equity

Aboriginal background

As a focus school under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan (ATSIEAP) NSW, MSC has delivered a number of outcomes as mandated by NSW DEC delivery policy.

Domain 1: Readiness for School

• Aboriginal children under five years of age benefit from interagency actions to improve their social, physical and cognitive development. Throughout 2014 an Interagency Case management Team established by the school, was able to broker support for the community Pre-School by a number of government and non-government agencies. This included attendance support and monitoring by the Senior Leader-Community Engagement attached to the school.

• Aboriginal students are developmentally ready to benefit from schooling (e.g. in their physical health, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills, communication skills and general knowledge). Staff undertook training in the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) and conducted parent and community information sessions on the use of Best Start reports to enhance the initial year of schooling. A transition program co-located on school premises further enhanced this important transition.

Domain 2: Engagement and Connections

• Aboriginal students are engaged in and benefiting from schooling. The school further consolidated our implementation of the Positive Behaviours for Learning program which has allowed the school to make informed decisions about the direction and tone of behaviour interventions. Data on suspension is positive and numbers of students who have had NO major referrals has increased. Transition points at middle school and the senior years have received particular focus to ensure the very unique needs of these two groups of students are met.

A boys and girls expedition again proved to be a successful learning and engagement tool. The students were encouraged to push themselves with physical activities and their success was celebrated by their peers and teachers alike. Over the two days the students received talks from the Menindee Health Service staff about drugs and alcohol and were given the opportunity to reflect on their own health and well-being. This event allows for team building among the students and improves teacher-student relationships.

• Aboriginal students and communities are empowered through the promotion of their identity, culture and leadership in community partnerships with providers of early childhood and school education. Support for the cultural dance group, community choir, art exhibitions and Carols by candlelight have enhanced the reputation of the school and enable disparate groups to engage with the school through a variety of settings.

Domain 3: Attendance

All compulsorily school-aged Aboriginal children and young people are enrolled in school and progressing through schooling at the same rate as non-Aboriginal students. The school invests considerable finance for the operation of a bus. This bus assists in transport to and from school as well as extending access to extra-curricular events and lowering of associated costs.

Domain 4: Literacy and Numeracy

Aboriginal students are meeting basic literacy and numeracy standards and overall levels of literacy and numeracy achievement are improving. Staff professional development in EAL/D and the teaching of literacy and numeracy has been enhanced through the engagement of experts who regularly visit the school to provide individualised attention to professional learning as well as group based activities.
Domain 5: Leadership, Quality Teaching and Workforce Development

• High performing principals and teachers are effective in supporting Aboriginal students to become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens. Students have participated in a number of inter-school events including the Mungo Youth Project and City/Country alliance visits. These visits highlight opportunity for students to demonstrate their knowledge and experience with peers from other school settings e.g. leading lessons in dance and traditional language.

• Aboriginal students benefit from school leaders who have a strong understanding of their students’ cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The Connecting to Country event remains central to our place based emphasis on education at MCS.

Domain 6: Pathways to Real Post-School Options

Aboriginal students make a successful transition from school to work and/or further study. Pathways planning is individualised and is the result of a deep discussion between school staff and students and their families. An aspirational excursion program culminating in an international experience has had a positive impact in retention/attainment data and post school destinations involving employment or further study.

Socio-economic background

Menindee Central Schools enrolment profile is characterised by a high percentage of students who are of Aboriginal descent and from a low socio-economic family. As such most, if not all of the programs that support students and families of Aboriginal background also contain funding derived from the equity loading for socio-economic background. A long-standing agreement between the AECG and the school ensures that all students gain the benefit of equity funded programs regardless of cultural or social background.
Other significant programs and initiatives

Investing in Focus Schools

2014 saw the first full year of operation under the Investing in Focus Schools Program and much of the years work was a consolidation of the activity plan established through extensive collaboration with the AECG and school reference group. As peak body representing Aboriginal Parents and Community the AECG played a critical role in the establishment and brokering of the terms of reference for the School Reference Group (SRG). Meeting monthly the SRG has been able to put into action three directions for improvement at MCS.

1. Capital Improvements

Increasing the amount of shaded area was highlighted through consultation with community as well as maintenance identified through a facilities inspection conducted by the regional Asset Management Unit. The maintenance aspects of the project have been completed, while the construction of two large Covered Outdoor Learning Areas (COLAs) will be completed in 2015.

2. Improving Literacy and Numeracy results.

A substantial investment has been made over the last three years in employing school learning support officers (SLSO’s), the majority of whom are residents of Menindee and Aboriginal. Each student, from early stage 1 through to 5, enjoys the support of a SLSO in their classroom. This level of place-based support for teachers, in addition to the service provided by the Aboriginal Education Officer and Community Engagement Senior Leader provides a level of connection to families and community that raises the bar in best practice.

3. Improving the quality of cultural professional learning of staff.

The Connecting to Country cultural awareness training was again conducted for all staff regardless of the length of time they had served at MCS. This training continues to provide a deepening of the connections between the school and the community it serves. A great deal of effort was taken to embed genuine conversations into the three days of immersion, much of which occurred on the old Menindee Aboriginal Reserve.

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:

- **Tell Them From Me** surveys conducted by the Learning Bar organisation. Conducted online and involving ALL students year 3 to 12, ALL staff as well as the option for parent and community, of which 26 participated.

- Parent forums conducted formally once a semester and informally in conjunction with a community event once a term. Attendance at these events typically runs at 60-70% of parents.

- Situational data analysis conducted by the school’s executive team each semester. Sources include attendance, behaviour and academic performance as measured in external benchmarking and internal assessment.
School planning 2012-2014:

School priority 1
Improving Teaching of Reading and Numeracy

Outcomes from 2012–2014
- All students K-2 reading at Regional Benchmarks by December 2014
- All Year 5 and 7 students meet or exceed expected growth in reading by 2014.
- All students achieve expected growth in Numeracy by 2014.
- Average achievement gap in NAPLAN testing between Indigenous and Non Indigenous students reduced to 12% across all years by 2014.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:
- 70% of students achieved regional reading benchmarks over the reporting period.
- 60% of year 5 students and 40% of year 7, met or exceeded their expected growth target.
- 40% of year 5 students and 50% of year 7, met or exceeded their expected growth target.
- The average achievement gap across all testing between Indigenous students and the state average during the reporting period was 19%.

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
Building Leadership Capacity Across the School Community

Outcomes from 2012–2014
- Protocols for methods of communication are negotiated with all caregivers.
- Professional Learning Plans are established for ALL staff that include cultural competence activities.
- Increased participation in student leadership opportunities.
- Increased participation in professional development by community.
- All school management teams have community representation.
- Whole school community able to articulate school Welfare system.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:
A number of these outcomes have been discussed in an earlier section as they are applicable to the outcomes of the Connected Community strategy and Focus Schools funding program. Others include;
- Positive Behaviours for Learning (PBL) Implementation checklist indicates 90% of staff and 60% of parents are able to describe the school behaviour and welfare system.
- The school has established a social media presence on Facebook and Twitter to increase the opportunities to engage with caregivers.

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

- Personalised Education Plans that include learning, attendance and health strategies, developed in consultation with families for all students.
- Partnership agreement developed in consultation with AECG.
- Establishment of a Community Engagement team to promote adult education courses.
- 10% reduction in rates of negative student behaviours as measured by welfare reporting for 2012.
- Attendance rates by Indigenous students exceed state targets and in parity with Non-Indigenous students.
- Majority of school community surveys indicate the school is a ‘Culturally Safe’ environment.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

A number of these outcomes have been discussed in an earlier section as they are applicable to the outcomes of the Connected Community strategy and Focus Schools funding program. Others include;

- An Integrated Case Management Team (ICMT) met monthly in order to develop a greater understanding of the needs of students and families and to develop an integrated approach to providing support.

- Attendance rates for Indigenous students were on average 6% lower than non-Indigenous students in year K-6 and 4% lower for years 7-12. The state comparison was 5% and 11% respectively.

- The establishment of a Community Engagement position at Senior Leader (clerk grade 7/8), continued to provide impetus to the work of the community engagement team. Adult courses in music, fitness and art were attended by over 30 students, providing a visible connection to education for mainstream students and their families.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2014, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their responses are presented below.

- Over 70% of students felt that education had a purpose in their lives and that the school was able to provide that education.
- Over 90% of students said they wished to complete school (HSC).
- 1 in 5 parents had a negative comment about the school’s administration, generally regarding inefficient or erroneous communication.
• All caregivers surveyed felt the school offered a safe learning environment for their children.
• 80% of staff felt they had their professional learning needs met.
• 50% of staff had experienced elevated levels of stress in the conduct of their duties.
• 80% of community surveyed felt the school enjoyed a positive reputation.

Future Directions
2015-2017 School Plan

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

As a Connected Community School an integral part of the management structure of the school is the School Reference Group (SRG). The SRG in partnership with the school executive team established a clear set strategic goals that gave guidance to the school as it progressed through the Connected Community Strategy. With representatives of the two peak parent bodies, the AECG and P&C, represented on the SRG, regular feedback on the strategic direction of the school is used to guide the schools operational level. Those discussions were the genesis of this plan. The SRG has continued to guide the fleshing out of the plan throughout this process.

Other formal methods included workshops as part of whole school staff meetings and professional learning events. Community who perhaps were unable or unwilling to attend P & C or AECG meetings were given the opportunity to provide input through a week long consultation “Pop-Up Shop”. Advertised through the school news and in various businesses around Menindee, a kiosk was staffed of an evening in Menindee’s Civic hall. Conversations on the current operation and future direction of the school were captured and used in the distillation of the strategic direction of the school.

Less formal, though just as importantly, student opinion was captured through yarns in the playground and during completion of the “Tell Them From Me” surveys.

As a result of this consultation process the following three strategic directions will be the focus of our work over the next 4 years.

Increase student engagement in education
To assist in the cultural, emotional and educational growth of students through a school culture that places their wellbeing at its core. Each student is recognised as an individual who is nurtured in a supportive environment that encourages them to see education will help them reach their potential and lead to greater life outcomes.

Improve Student Performance in Literacy and Numeracy
To work in partnership with colleagues, families and community to lift student performance in literacy and numeracy as measured against external benchmarks at the key transition points of beginning school, middle years and HSC.

Increase the Organisational Effectiveness of the School
To improve the level of communication and consistency in servicing the community of Menindee in order to raise the level of confidence in the school’s ability to provide a quality learning environment that is culturally responsive.
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: