Stuart High School

Annual Report

2013

Vision: We all are working together in a safe, caring and enjoyable environment to achieve successful educational outcomes for all students.

Context Statement

Stuart High School, in Whyalla, is a year 8-10 site serving a wide range of student needs. Curriculum offerings are diverse, with special interest areas such as Active 8, Aquaculture, Horticulture, Specialist PE, The South Australian Aboriginal Sports Training Academy, Youth Opportunities Personal Leadership Programme and extension programmes for students’ displaying additional gifts. We have 26 teaching staff and 21 support staff.

A strong emphasis on practical and contextual learning is evident across subjects, as is the need to ensure all students are literate and numerate, including the use of ICTs. Certificate level courses are offered, and well supported. In 2014 Stuart, Eyre and Whyalla High Schools will all Offer Trade Training Courses that all students will be able to access. We have strongly encouraged students to trial work place training opportunities, and ultimately school-based apprenticeships: even if their ultimate goal is a university related career. School-based apprenticeships are secured annually as a result. Work place learning allows students to provide evidence of the competencies expected by the Australian Curriculum and Australian employers. All students gather evidence of their learning in year 8 and 9 as a lead up to the PLP. PLP Results have further improved this year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students 2012</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total enrolments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time equivalent enrolments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language background other than English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student attendance rate</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The school culture strongly reflects the safe, caring ethos depicted in our school vision and most students enjoy a level of customisation within their learning schedules. A range of Government and non-government agencies are enlisted to support their learning through mentoring. Our cross agency support and networking have significantly improved this year. I worked with Lyn Breuer and the manager of Housing SA to get together with other agencies to discover and establish community support available to students and their families. Some families are unaware of the breadth of resources available to them.

A significant number of students have Negotiated Education Plans (NEPs). All of our students are expected to sit NAPLAN and we do not exempt any students. This skews our NAPLAN results and means we have to look at individual results. We believe it is discriminatory to exempt students with disabilities.

While we are still significantly concerned about attendance generally, and unauthorized absence in particular, we have seen an improvement with new school attendance guidelines for 2014. This has meant the school working closely with the DECS attendance counsellor. In 2014 we aim to significantly reduce unauthorised attendance and hence improve attendance overall.
School Facilities are generally very good and support quality teaching include a gymnasium, aquaculture and horticulture centres, modern kitchens, a recording studio, and excellent IT infrastructure throughout. We have completed our upgrade of Aquaculture and also our science labs and library this year.

The school has gained strong recognition over a number of years, for its enterprising approaches to teaching and learning. THIS year with the support of Governing Council, we purchased enough Apple laptops for all year 8s next year. Staff have also been provided access to laptops to ensure they are at the leading edge in terms of use of technology to create and problem solve within curriculum.

**Education Context for Whyalla**

Residents of the Whyalla region have below average levels of school achievement, with 32.1% of the population aged 15 to 64 years having completed Year 12 or equivalent. This is significantly below the average of 44.6% for the State population. Of those people who did not attend either school or left at Year 10 or below, 81.2% (3,467 people) have no further qualifications. Part of our aim at Stuart High is to help change this demographic.

The Whyalla region has above average proportions of younger people aged less than 45 years. The population has increased over recent years, and is projected to decline in the future. The population of the Whyalla region in June 2009 was 23,229 people (1.4% of the State’s population). Whyalla region has slightly above average youth (15-24yrs) with 13.7% of the population.

The Whyalla region has a substantial Aboriginal population. At the time of the 2006 Census, 768 people or 3.6% of the total population in the region were of Aboriginal origin, significantly above the State average of 1.7%.

The link between educational attainment and employment outcomes is well documented. Over 5% of the region is currently unemployed. The main industries in this region are manufactured based, and require certain levels of education to be considered for employment. As education levels are significantly below the state average, it is not surprising that there are currently high levels of unemployment and long-term unemployment in the town. Lack of education, long-term
unemployment, and young people on income support in the region are very visible in the housing market, with home ownership considerably low and the strong reliance on rental housing, especially from Housing SA. Stuart High aim to work in partnership with parents to ensure that students attend regularly so they achieve at school to maximize their employment opportunities for the future.

**Enrolments:**

Our enrolments stayed stable this year. Initially we had an overall drop in numbers by 40 but we were expecting this as the numbers for year 8 were down across Whyalla. However, the publicity around the Fight Club has resulted in a drop in enrolments for year 8 for 2014 with people changing their choice of school as a result. We still expect to pick up some students during the year, as has been the transience trend over the last couple of years. This year our retention was 120% which shows that we pick up more students than we lose during the year. Our success in providing students with individual learning programmes, to further develop strengths, and in supporting students who need extra help or extension, has been evidenced by our increasing enrolments during the year.

### Student background 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School ICSEA value</td>
<td>893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average ICSEA value</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data source</td>
<td>Parent Information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Distribution of students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bottom quarter</th>
<th>Middle quarters</th>
<th>Top quarter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Distribution</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Distribution</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100*

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**Report from Governing Council**

**Governing Council Chairperson**

Robyn Miller

“This is my second year as Governing Council Chairperson. In that time the numbers of parents on the Stuart High School Governing Council have grown and grown. We have a full membership. The meetings only go for an hour, twice a term and we all get along really well. I think that is why people keep on coming back and why the numbers have grown. You do not have to know what do to on a governing council when you start. You learn as you go along.

In my time as Governing Council Chairperson, the numbers of students on the governing council have also grown and it is excellent to have students talking to us about what is happening at the school and ideas they have for improvement. I am very proud that my son, Daniel was one of the founding members of the present Student Representative Council. The SRC form last year made sure that the student voice committee would continue this year.”
The school values are important to all of us: Remember CREWS are the letters of the school values:

- **C**: Caring,
- **R**: Respect,
- **E**: Enjoyment,
- **W**: Working Together and
- **S**: Safety.

The school prides itself that we care about and respect all student and parents. We believe in working in partnership with parents and caregivers. Parents are very important to a student’s success at school. The school also runs a lot of sporting activities and out of school activities and this is important for student learning and enjoyment.

This year the governing council have worked with the school to:

- Make sure all year 8 students have a laptop (and next year all year 8 and 9s will have a laptop). The school has enough computers that we are one computer for every student.
- The whole school has had every teacher and SSO teaching literacy: looking at increasing students’ vocabulary and reading skills. Presently all teachers are explicitly teaching students how to proofread and edit their work. This focus will continue next year. This plan is on the school website and all students have a copy in their diary. As a result, we have seen an improvement in NAPLAN reading and writing results.

We hope you all a safe and enjoyable Christmas and New Year. We wish year 10s all the best in their learning next year at Edward John Eyre High School and look forward to all year 8 and 9 students returning to us next year.

**Staff Retention and Qualifications**: Staff turnover in country areas in much higher than the metropolitan area. To those staff who left us at the end of the year…we offer our best wishes for future endeavours.

**Qualifications**: All teachers at Stuart High School have the appropriate qualifications for teaching. One staff member has masters in counselling and another staff member is finishing masters in counselling.

**Staff attendance**: Staff attendance was high again last year despite having one staff member on work cover some of the year. Staff non-attendance, even so, was less that than 2%.

**School Achievement and Attendance Data**

The NAPLAN test has not been useful for us in terms of assessing the value the school has added. However, our mean scores in all test areas did improve form 2010, which was pleasing.

Many of our students are below the national minimum standards when they enrol at the school. This year we trialled some new assessment and intervention method with some of our most disadvantaged students. We used PROBE to assess students literacy levels. PROBE gives us more information than NAPLAN. When students’ achievements are significantly below their peers we assist students to improve their literacy skills from their existing levels. Next year systems are in place to assess all year 8s and a higher proportion of year 9 and 10s.

According to NAPLAN (national literacy and numeracy Testing) the majority of students who attend regularly at Stuart High School make strong individual progress between year 7 and 9. Our attendance rate is only 73%. While we have had some improvement in this area, we are seriously concerned about the number of days that some students miss: we know that this will stop these students from getting the job that they want in the future.
Non-Attendance is of serious concern to Stuart High School staff. Attendance at school is compulsory until students are 18. The school has a clear attendance improvement plan. All staff are following this. Centrelink also cuts payment to students and families where students are not attending school on a regular basis but this does not seem to have any impact.

Unauthorized absences have steadily risen over the last 3 years and we have had ongoing conversations with the Regional Director and the Regional Attendance counsellor around how we improve our attendance data. On any one day we can be missing as many as 30% of students. Already in 2014 staff has been retrained re following up attendance and we will continue to have the attendance counsellor in the school one day a week. In 2014, we aim to reduce unauthorized attendance to below 5%. We also aim to continue to refer all serious non-attenders to the regional attendance officers. All students with serious non-attendance and this refers to more than 5 days away in a term will have a meeting with school personnel to draw up a FAMILY INTERVENTION AND ACTION PLAN FOR ATTENDANCE.”

SACE Data re Personal Learning Plans (PLP)

Our PLP or Personal Learning Plan results have improved since 2009. When students have finished their PLP it also means that they have completed the first part of the South Australian certificate of education (SACE).

As you can see, there has been a significant improvement in the number of students achieving a good result in relation to their PLP.

We had five students doing ASBAs last year, with many year 9s indicating they would be keen to do an ASBA in 2014. We are looking to have about four students doing ASBAs in 2014.

Strategic Direction for the Site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean Scores by Test Aspect</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>504.7</td>
<td>510.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>509.9</td>
<td>516.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>463.6</td>
<td>499.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>507.7</td>
<td>526.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>496.0</td>
<td>512.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Literacy and Numeracy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>496.0</td>
<td>512.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>509.9</td>
<td>516.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>507.7</td>
<td>526.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our mean scores and results overall improved from 2010 to 2013. Literacy and Numeracy results for students can be found on the ACARA website:

http://www.myschool.edu.au

In 2013 staff, spent time analysing our data and identifying and monitoring learner achievement needs to support improvement of individuals, classes and targeted groups. Our analysis of data helped us to identify our site priorities for 2013 and for 2014.

We do not find NAPLAN a particularly useful tool for measuring student achievement because many of our students are well below the National Minimum Standard in literacy and numeracy when they enrol at the school and their growth while they are here does not show on this website. The site also includes students with disabilities results with the results of all other students and this “skews” our overall school results. Next year, of the 45 year 8s we have enrolling only three are at or above the national minimum standard. However, we know that staff has the skills to lift student’s individual results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Persuasive Writing</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Grammar and Punctuation</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SIM 517</td>
<td>ALL 474</td>
<td>SIM 508</td>
<td>SIM 507</td>
<td>ALL 513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>503 - 531</td>
<td>456 - 452</td>
<td>493 - 523</td>
<td>491 - 523</td>
<td>500 - 526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>624 - 630</td>
<td>487 - 606</td>
<td>527 - 643</td>
<td>620 - 537</td>
<td>633 - 647</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students who are below National Minimum Standards have individual learning plans and we meet with individual parents to show how we do make a huge difference to the results of individual student during the time they are studying at Stuart High School. Parents wishing to discuss individual student growth are welcome to make an appointment with the school.

**Student Voice**

As reported in 2009 we were intending to set up a student voice committee in 2010 and we achieved our goal. In 2013 the student voice committee continued successfully running assemblies and review night. They also joined forces with other students across Eyre Peninsula to set up an EYRE SRC. In 2014, we will be exploring ways to work in with the other two secondary schools and primary schools to improve Whyalla’s student voice.
This year we had 37 students complete the student survey and gained some information to improve planning. A copy of the survey is available from the school. The most common kind of comment below the rating of other sites, from students, was along the lines that they wanted school to be more interesting. We are looking in 2014 about how to further engage students. Most student comments were on a par with the state.

Staff Voice

SHS has 26 teachers and 21 School Services Officers (SSOs), a full-time Aboriginal Community Education Officer (ACEO) and a Grounds Person at 33 hours per week giving a total of 48 staff. A significant number of teachers are in their first three years of teaching. The school’s leadership team consists of the principal, two assistant principals, student counsellor and five coordinators. One coordinator has a focus on social inclusion, one Aboriginal Education and three in curriculum. The leadership team meets on a weekly basis. SHS has an SSO Level 4 who oversees roles and responsibilities of SSOs in liaison with the school leadership team.

24 Staff responded to the DECS Staff survey and again this gave us useful information to inform planning. Most responses were on a par with other sites. However it was pleasing that staff were above other sites in saying: “Staff are supported by the school in the management of students” behaviour; There is good communication between staff in this school; I am encouraged to discuss and share teaching methods and strategies with other teachers; teachers feel appreciated for the work that they do in this school; Teachers can freely express their opinions or concerns to other staff at this school.

The leadership team also conducted a range of staff surveys over the course of the year and we were particularly pleased with the positive results from the staff Psychological Health Survey.

Parent Voice

We would have liked more of a response to parent surveys. Three parents/caregivers completed the parents’ satisfaction survey out of 80 surveys sent out with self-addressed envelopes. Parents who were happy with the school do not seem to have responded. The small number responding does not make this information valid for planning.

Professional Development of Staff

Staff assessed our use of professional development to aid continuous improvement in students learning. Staff reviewed staff meeting systems and structures in an attempt to ensure that our improvement of student learning through professional development has a more systemized approach. This will be reviewed again at the end of 2014. At present the leadership, team acts as a Professional Development committee. Staff understands that professional development needs to be in line with state, regional and school (tri level) strategic priorities. Every staff meeting is based around staff training.

### School staff 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching staff</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time equivalent teaching staff</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-teaching staff</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All teachers developed a personal development plan in line with this tri-level strategic approach. Our Professional development assessment revealed that staff understood the need to concentrate on improving data related to student outcomes in relation to reading for understanding. The school allocated extra resourcing to staff Professional Development. This was in consultation with the Governing Council who clearly value and understand that staff training is a strong strategy to improve student learning.

In 2013, we worked towards a stronger focus on student literacy development particularly in the areas identified as needing more work by the NAPLAN and our own PROBE testing.

Stuart High School was the base for several PD sessions delivered by Ross Hamilton, ESL Regional Consultant, in 2011. Substantial numbers of staff attended sessions about supporting students in NAPLAN writing and reading, assigning accurate and consistent ESL Scales and gaining a deeper understanding of language. Alice Carter, ESL teacher and our literacy coordinator used this knowledge to develop resources for all teachers about topics such as genre writing and editing. They support the school’s agreements about the teaching of literacy across the curriculum. Alice also encourages staff to make good use of data about student progress to highlight the importance of our whole school agreements about literacy.

All staff and students are working towards implementing our literacy agreement: a copy of this is on the website. Next year we want to work more closely with parents on strategies that will support student to work on further developing their literacy skills at home.

The school was funded with 1.0 Counsellor for the last 6 months of 2013 through the DECD Resource Allocation Adjustment Panel (RAAP) process to provide a review of case management for students with poor attendance, significant mental health, housing and emotional difficulties who have been referred to agencies such as Families SA, CAMHS, Centacare, Mission Australia, Plaza Youth, Housing SA. The Counsellor works with students to develop their resiliency through a Rational Emotive Therapy model. This approach has shown great success with students managing personal issues whilst gaining skills to empower them and improve their well-being. The school has opted to use their own staffing allocation to extend the Counsellors work in 2014.
Students with Disabilities 2013

At Stuart High School, students, staff and parents relate well to each other and respect and value difference. We have 69 students with Disabilities: 16 Students from years 8-12 make up the Special class. The attendance of these students is the best in the school.

All students have a Negotiated Education Plan (NEP); As a result, individual progress this year has been significant. All plans have been written and discussed involving parents, students and staff.

Aboriginal Education and Employment Strategy

In line with regional and state priorities improvement in Aboriginal Education outcomes have been a priority at Stuart High School. We have 47 Aboriginal students. Every student has an Aboriginal Learning Plan. We employ six Aboriginal staff members and these staff members work with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. We have already seen an improvement in Aboriginal attendance and achievement. However, we still need to do further work to support families so that children attend regularly. In 2013 the school’s community implemented the strategies outlined in the 2010-2014 Stuart High Aboriginal Education Plan and will spend time in 2014 refining the implementation of these strategies.

In 2014: to improve Aboriginal attendance, which is below that of non-Aboriginal students, we have continued to a part of the South Australian Aboriginal Sports Academy (SAASTA). The involvement in SAASTA will have benefits for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students as the school will attract many high-level sporting clinics to which we would not otherwise have had access. We significantly improved Aboriginal parent involvement in the Governing Council this year with more than half of members being Aboriginal. Parents wishing to see a copy of Our Aboriginal Education Plan should contact the School.

All staff completed Cultural Competency training at the beginning of the year.

Low Socio- Economic Background

Last year we had 135 students who were registered for school card. This is nearly half of all students. Many students who are eligible do not apply for school card and do not pay school fees. These results in loss of fees and money every year as many of these families also do not pay the fees either.

Historically and across Australia students from low socio economic background do not do as well in NAPLAN. They are also over represented in behaviour management processes. Attendance is also often an issue for these students. We have strategies in place to address this and to further support the learning of these students: often on an individual basis. Staff are always available, and in fact welcome the opportunity to work with students and their parents /caregivers, to develop individual plans to improve individual student outcomes.

Behaviour Management

For improving engagement, as well as students' literacy / numeracy we are in particular developing and teaching strategies towards having, a 'positive psychology' mindset so that they are ready to cope with the demands of school and to effectively engage with school and curriculum. This is through our REBE programme (Rational Emotive Behaviour Education). We have trialled it with our most disengaged students this year in FLO with some success so we are
looking at implementing it across the whole school next year. We are seeing that this approach does improve student behaviour.

Suspension data was improved on last year. We find that students who have been at Stuart High School for 3 years of schooling improve their Behaviour with support over their time with us. We believe strongly in working in partnership with parents and staffs pride themselves on making regular contact with parents in relation to positives and concerns.

FOLLOW UP FROM SCHOOL REVIEW

Recommendation 1:
Staff engages in effective literacy scaffolding techniques through professional development and establishes coordinated literacy teaching agreements in identified areas such as reading comprehension.

The school has a well-documented and communicated literacy agreement for all staff and students and we are exploring in 2014 how to further involve parents. All staff have been involved in significant training and development in relation to teaching literacy across the curriculum. The school spent over 20,000 on professional training last year. Most of this was related to our Site Improvement Plan.

Recommendation 2:
Staff focuses on further developing knowledge and understanding of the provision of differentiated teaching and learning programs, to meet the needs of a wide range of student literacy levels within classrooms.

Staff believes that this is an area that is developing. In one class there are huge differences between student ability. Some students are still learning phonics while others are working at a level above peers. Comments suggest that differentiation is a work in progress, but more work still needs to be done. There is also some differences in staff ability to effectively differentiate the curriculum. We will continue training in this next year.

Recommendation 3
The school leadership leads a collaborative inquiry by staff, with input from students and parents, to investigate the ICT directions of SHS over the next five years to enhance student learning. The school has a strategic plan in ICT and we are working towards implementing this. In 2014 we will survey staff, students and parents again to inform our planning.

Recommendation 4:
Staffs examine the practicality of students being based in designated homerooms to decrease student traffic and to increase student ownership of learning environments. Classrooms during the year have become obviously more literacy rich.

The majority of staff says that this is being done at the moment teachers direct this and next year we hope to work more towards student ownership.

Recommendation 5:
All staff develops a formal performance development plan that clearly links to the School Improvement Plan and personal professional learning.
All staff completed a literacy agreement and met with the principal about their programmes. Next year we will have more of a focus on training coordinators to ensure they are meeting regularly with staff around performance.

Recommendation 6:
The Site Learning Plans depth and functionality is increased by further developing specific and measurable targets for distance travelled.

This has occurred and all staff is familiar with the sites learning priorities and targets. Next year we will be looking to consolidate our work in improving literacy outcomes.

Recommendation 7:
The Eyre/Western Region conducts a collaborative inquiry to assess the feasibility of extending education at SHS to Year 12 in an effort to improve attendance and retention of students.

Nothing has happened about this: but the three secondary schools are beginning to look at how they will work more closely together to improve student outcomes across Whyalla. Next year, year 10 students can choose to study Trade courses at any of the secondary schools.

Recommendation 8:
The school leadership team makes explicit with staff the connection of their individual roles with the Site Improvement Plan in order to further develop instructional leadership.

All staff complete literacy agreement and have regularly meeting with line managers.

Recommendation 9:
The school leadership forms a joint staff/student working party to explore avenues to formalise student voice structures to complement the informal processes currently in place.

See Above.

Finally, we would like to thank all parents, caregivers and families of students of Stuart High School. We regularly receive comments from outside organisations in relation to the excellent behaviour our students demonstrate.

This is a credit to you as parents and caregivers.