2008 Annual School Report
Yass High School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
Our school at a glance

Established in 1958, Yass High School is a learning institution with traditional values and behavioural expectations and excellent technology and an enviable reputation for providing an outstanding education for the young people of the township of Yass and the district.

Proudly comprehensive, Yass High School offers both a broad curriculum and special programs which cater for the learning, emotional and social needs of all students.

The school has an exceptional record of sporting and academic achievement and has contributed to the town and district for several generations.

A comprehensive peer support and discipline system, which focuses on positive reinforcement and self-discipline, provides staff and students with a safe, ordered, secure and caring environment that is conducive to teaching and to learning.

Yass High received the Director-General's Award in recognition of "the exceptional quality and outstanding achievements of the school" in extra-curricular and cultural programs.

Four recent senior students have achieved the Minister's Award of Excellence and Mr. Geoff Townsend's achievement in receiving the Minister's Award for Service to Public Education is indicative of the level of staff commitment and expertise in maximising student learning and welfare outcomes.

Our past P&C President, Mrs. Rhonda Corcoran, received the 2006 Public School Parent of the Year Award indicating the level of community involvement.

At Yass High School we encourage all students to take responsibility for their own learning. We emphasise the development of literacy, numeracy and technology skills in a safe and harmonious learning environment.

We provide strong welfare support for the students and their families. We reward achievement, commitment and individual improvement and we provide relevant and appropriate academic, social, sporting and student leadership programs to meet the needs and aspirations of our students.

At Yass High School, we are respectful, responsible and safe learners

Our priorities at Yass High School are:

- The promotion of excellence and achievement, especially in School Certificate and HSC results
- Promoting public education and reflecting our beliefs and values in our school culture
- Valuing and appreciating diversity and differences
- The peaceful resolution of conflict through peer mediation and peer support programs
- The development of confident, articulate and skilful young adults with justifiably high self esteem
- Improving all aspects of student learning outcomes
- Refining assessment and reporting of student achievements to show what students know and can do, and what they need to do to improve.
- Continual staff training in technology in learning, student welfare and administration
- Embedding technology across the curriculum
- Developing Web design and multimedia
- Ensuring student leadership opportunities
- Maintaining a strong focus on student welfare
- Rejecting bullying and harassment as unacceptable, anti-social behaviours
- Developing the creative and performing arts
- Continuing debating and public speaking
- Extending opportunities for gifted and talented students
- Providing learning support to students with special needs

Staff

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

Significant programs and initiatives

English Faculty Report

This year the English faculty has been focused on preparing for the implementation of the new texts and prescriptions for the 2009 HSC. Year 12 English students have begun their HSC course with ‘Belonging’ as the Area of Study. The Advanced English students have been studying the poetry of Australian poet, Peter Skryznecki whilst the Standard English students studied The Crucible by Arthur Miller.

The close study of a contemporary play was introduced into the junior program, with some year 8 classes exploring Hating Alison Ashley and others looking at Two Weeks With The Queen.
The Fairytale Genre unit remains a popular unit with Year 7. Year 10 had the opportunity to read a new contemporary novel, Guitar Highway Rose and Year 9 explored narrative verse in Out Of The Dust as well as a variety of ballads.

This year students participated in the International English competition with students receiving distinction, credit or participation certificates.

Tutor reading continued this year with a number of Year 7 students assisted in their reading by older students. Such a program is only possible through the generosity of the Year 10 and 11 students who volunteer to be tutors and the staff who work with them.

Two students participated in the public speaking competition at Boorowa this year and debating continued to be well supported by the students. There was one senior and two junior teams. All the teams participated in the Premier’s Debating Challenge, with the Year 8 team going on to become zone finalists, competing in the inter-zone competition at Bomaderry. The Year 9 debating team had the chance to be billeted at Bombala where they competed against Monaro and Bombala High.

Support Unit

Students from the Support Class have been engaged in a wide range of educational experiences, both in the school and community environments.

One student has completed Year 11, three students have completed a Life Skills School Certificate and two junior students have completed outcomes from the Stage 4 and 5 Board of Studies Syllabi.

Work Experience has been a priority for all students in the Support Unit with students successfully completing their training for the Breakfast Club program. Students organise and store the milk order for the Breakfast Club and wash-up, dry and store all utensils from the program. Students from the Support class were part of the group that won awards from the NSW Red Cross Ceremony in Sydney.

Students from the Support Class are also involved in recycling food scraps for the farm, paper and spent printer cartridges, a key part of the Environment Committee.

All students were involved in the Sir Roden Cutler Wheelchair Ride through the Yass Community. Laura Damron-Standford, James Mather, Andrew Todd, Natasha Wilson, James De Mestre and Daniel Anderson were awarded a Sir Roden Cutler Medal for their personal achievements. Mrs. Freebody was awarded a Sir Roden Cutler medal for teamwork and work with students with disabilities. The Sir Roden Cutler Charity also assists in raising awareness in the local community of the achievements of people with or caring for people with a disability.

Students from the Support Class enjoyed being active participants in the International Day of Disability held across a number of countries worldwide. The Yass local community joined together to enjoy a day of performances, stalls, information, dancing and enjoying a meal together. This international event gives people of all ages with a variety of disabilities the chance to network, enjoy friendships and bond with others in the local community setting. All students have spoken highly of this annual event.

Mathematics Faculty Report

YHS students have continued to achieve well in all external exams such as the School Certificate, Higher School Certificate and NAPLAN.

As well, students have been offered many extra opportunities and have achieved highly in these competitions:

- 2008 Australian Mathematics Competition – 27 students entered with 6 gaining Distinction certificates, 5 Credits and 9 gaining Proficiency awards
- 2008 Australian Intermediate Maths Olympiad – 1 Year 9 student was invited to enter this competition. Only 711 students were entered into this competition and he gained a Distinction (one of only 16 awarded)
- 2008 Maths Challenge – 4 students were entered with 1 achieving a Distinction and 1 a Credit
- 2008 Girls Choices Year 9 Summer School for Maths, Science & Technology – 7 girls have qualified and been selected to represent at this Summer School to be held at the University of Newcastle in December
- Video Conference of a Year 8 class with a corresponding class in Macksville High School

Staff have continued to keep abreast of new developments in mathematics by responding to the new proposed Stage 6 syllabus, attending the Mathematical Association of NSW Annual Conference and doing inservicing on the Interactive Whiteboard.

Science Faculty Report 2008

Students had a great variety of opportunities to study and enjoy science at Yass High School in 2008. Senior students had a selection of 3 science courses to choose from including Biology, Chemistry and the increasingly popular Senior
Science course. Junior students have again enjoyed our yearly excursion to the National Science Festival in Canberra where they observed shows on the “Earth from space” and “things that go bang” as well as the many exhibits and the ever popular Darleks.

Students entered the UNSW Science competition and the Chemistry Quiz.

15 students entered the Science competition. Of these 4 students obtained Distinction certificates and 4 students obtained Credit certificates.

In the Chemistry Quiz 6 senior students entered this competition. Sophie Payne obtained a Credit certificate.

Year 8 Yass High students were very successful in the ESSA test with 1 student obtaining an overall band 6 level of achievement and 9 students obtaining a band 6 in one or more of the 5 categories.

Year 10 students were very successful in the School Certificate Science exam in 2008. 4 students achieved a band 6 level of achievement and 57% of students achieved band 4 or better.

Work has started on the internal refit of our 3 permanent science laboratories. They are being upgraded with a funding grant made to Yass High School. The laboratories are expected to be ready for the new school year in 2009.

We have a new staff member for 2009, Mr Duncan who has recently retrained to become a science teacher. He was previously a crash investigator. He has replaced Mrs Oberg who has taken leave for 2009.

Music and Band Programs

This is the first year that the Yass High School Band Program has been lead by Mr. Greenwood. The Link Band, Concert Band, and new Stage Band began rehearsals in earnest, to start preparing for the years events. These events include:

**Concert Band**
- ANZAC DAY
- Yass Show
- National Eisteddfod
- Floriade – Stage Band, Clarion and Hot Air also performed
- Year 12 Final Assembly
- Presentation Night
- Cooma Cottage – “Carols By Candlelight”
- YHS 50th Anniversary Celebrations – Stage Band, Link band and 9/10 Music Students also performed

**Stage Band**
- Yass Show
- National Eisteddfod
- “Canberra Southern Cross Club” as a part of “Jazz About”.
- “Folkus Room”
- Special Awards Assembly
- Merimbula tour performances at Magic Mountain, Pambula Golf Club, Merimbula Open Air Arena, and Eden High School. They combined with the “Sapphire Coast Concert Band and Eden Marine High School for two of these concerts.
- Year 7 Orientation Day

**Link Band**
- “Band Link 2008” Link Band, with the “Combined Primary Band” & Bairnsdale High School Junior Band
- Presentation Night
- Cooma Cottage – “Carols By Candlelight”

The band parent support group met in February to discuss and implement ways in which they can help band students and staff in the band program through fundraising.

The response from our local primary schools has also been overwhelming with over thirty new musicians receiving their instruments in early term one. The tutor and student tutor tradition continues to support the high level of musicianship seen in the various bands. A school choir has formed in term four and will be a great addition to the schools music program.

Mr Fisher continues to conduct the Concert Band and has led the band throughout the year.

Mrs England continues to keep the bands running smoothly with organising the band music and our instruments.

Mr Greenwood conducts the Stage Band, Link Band, and the Combined Primary Band and organised the performance opportunities that these young musicians have been involved with this year.

This year the Yass High School Music Program has seen some large structural changes such as the new white board, glass fronted display cases for the music trophies, guitar racks, additional shelving in the storeroom and additional computers in the class room.

The repair of all current instruments has been a big financial commitment this year with all brass and woodwind instruments serviced.

In addition to these instrument we bought 6 clarinets, 1 bass guitar and 1 electric guitar, an electric drum kit, crash cymbals and other percussion equipment, electric piano, PA system, 6 guitars, 5 keyboards, 3 CD Players, Bass Guitar Amplifier, CD vocal trainer, Sibelius Music
Software, Mix-craft and Aurelia Aural software to assist students meet their IT competences.


The music band program continues to diversify with the school “Stage Band” performing all year, and the start of a vocal group and school choir in term four.

### Agriculture Report

2008 was another busy year for the Agriculture Department. Over the Christmas break two Limousin heifers were fed and prepared for the Canberra Royal Show. Both heifers were shown by students during the show including year 12 Primary Industries students who were doing their work placement at the same time.

Thanks must go to Glyn and Anne Williams of “Newton-Wood Limousin Stud” of Murrumbateman for their kind and continued support of the school through their animals.

Our Jersey cow had a male calf in March and was used to foster a Limousin steer calf as well as feed her own calf. Students were able to see how dairy cattle and their milk producing capacity could fit into a beef cattle system through this kind of relationship. The Limo calf will be shown at the 2009 Canberra Show.

Year 11 PI students were actively involved during the start of the year with fencing, constructing a flood-gate and laying irrigation pipe to the river. They also worked on many farm maintenance activities and worked with tractors and machinery in a range of normal farm operations throughout the year.

Stage 5 Agriculture was busy throughout the year with Cereal Cropping, Beef Cattle production and overseeing the beginning of a new enterprise in the school, a White Suffolk sheep stud.

The “Flat Rock White Suffolk Stud” was begun with funds available from compensation paid from a dog attack on some of our sheep at the beginning of the year. Ten ewes were purchased and by the end of the year we had 15 lambs on the ground ready for selection and culling. Next year we hope to be showing some of these animals at local shows.

Year 7 and 8 Technology (Agriculture) classes have continued to follow a program centred on designing housing for poultry and vegetable growing. The layer hens being raised by the students during their projects have been a major source of income both through eggs and sale of live birds.

Year 8 common unit students have once again participated in the Dairy Industry ‘Cows Create Careers’ project which centres on looking after two donated calves from a commercial dairy herd and to complete a range of ITC tasks which are externally assessed along side the dozen or so other schools in the SE region of NSW.

This year Yass High was the best performed school and won a $500 cash prize that will be used to buy some young dairy heifers for the schools Jersey Stud. This is the second year running that the school has won a major prize in this competition.

The school has also been the recipient of a $45,000 grant to reclaim stormwater for irrigation purposes. This system is now in place and has made a big difference to the sustainability of the schools vegetable and fruit growing enterprises.

In the second part of the year a partnership between YHS and a local beef producer, Renato Gaspari, has born fruit, with the successful preparation and showing of two Angus steers for Albury Show. Both steers were placed 4th and 5th in the carcass competition and were sold for just under $1000 each. This was a great result for both the generous donor and the school.

### Human Society and its Environment

The 2008 academic year was one of quality teaching development. We had faculty development days which concentrated on scope and sequence for Stage 5 Australian History and Geography and Stage 6 Business Studies and the programming of units of work. The quality of teaching delivery has been enriched by the wider range of information technology resources we now have at our disposal.

We entered students in the NSW History Teachers Association competition and gained high distinctions, distinctions and credits along the way. Two of our students finished in the top 4 percent in the state. The faculty ran successful excursions such as the Year 11 trip to Sydney; Year 9 History to the Australian War Memorial and Year 10 Geography visited the National Australia Museum as part of their fieldwork requirements for the School Certificate.

### Teaching and Learning Faculty

#### Careers

Once again, Year 10 students had the opportunity to do a week of work experience in the Yass community. 2008 has been a busy year for careers and a wide range of activities were organised for students.
These included:

- University of Wollongong discovery Day for Year 12
- Defence Forces visit to school for Years 10 to 12
- Two Occupational Health and Safety courses
- Brick and Block program for Year 11 Construction
- Future Leaders Forum at ANU for Year 11
- TB vaccinations at Young Hospital for nursing work experience
- YHS Careers Expo for Years 10 to 12
- HSC marker’s day at Goulburn for Year 12
- Meet the Keeper Day at Taronga Zoo
- Work Ready Day for Year 11 VETR and Year 10
- TAFE Taster Day for Year 10
- AFP Career Introduction Program for Years 10 and 11
- Canberra Careers Market excursion for Year 10
- ARMS medical careers visit for Years 10 to 12
- CIT Careers Adviser visit to do applications for Year 12
- Kapooka Army Experience day for Year 10
- RSA and RCG courses for Year 12
- Transport and Logistics excursion to Queanbeyan for Year 10
- Hip Pocket financial literacy workshops for Years 10 and 12
- Two week School to Work Program for Year 10 in Term 4.

Transgrid Scholarship
The Transgrid Scholarship is awarded each year to a student who has shown commitment to academic excellence in all areas of study, to the General Statement of Purpose of Yass High School and who has displayed impeccable standards of presentation in school uniform and general conduct. The recipient must also have a long term commitment to the pursuit of an academic or professional career.

This year the scholarship was awarded to Rebecca Lewis.

Rebecca has a distinguished academic record throughout her 5 years at Yass High School. She is a thoughtful, independent, diligent, hard working and intelligent student. She has been an active member of Yass High School Concert Band since Year 5. She was elected as school captain for 2009 by her peers. She has taken on a leadership role in SRC activities.

She plans to continue her education at university either in the field of Medicine or Fashion Design.

Food Technology and Textiles
Food Technology and Hospitality students have been involved in catering for various functions, including Year 6 Orientation morning tea, YHS presentation evening and YHS 50th Anniversary. They also catered for and presented two buffets in Semester 2. Some students competed at the Yass Show.

Textile students created items from recycled materials and created a brochure to promote recycling.

Media Studies
This year in Media Studies students were taught how to create their own website.

Through the program, students were encouraged to use the familiar to learn about the unfamiliar, using aspects of their own lives as topics to base a website on. Consequently, using what is relevant and significant to increase student engagement in the classroom.

Students were encouraged to consider different aspects of what makes a good website and then designed their own. They learned about incorporating “layers”, “frames pages”, “cascading style sheets” and the underpinning language that glues it altogether “html”, students created their own wave to surf.

Visual Arts
This year, one Visual Arts teacher received a NSW Department of Education and Training “Teaching Excellence Award” and two of the teachers have been actively involved in the “Engaging Middle Years Boys in Rural Educational Settings”. This program has focused on literacy and the use of ICT in the classroom.
Students have participated in numerous competitions, including Workplace safety (Digital Artwork), Department of Education Design Awards, Garden Photography as well as Berrima Photographic and Digital Media. Students have exhibited their photographic and artwork at Yass Show, Canberra Show, Goulburn Regional Art Gallery and “It’s a Girl Thing”.

Students participated in the Year 11 combined schools project, which involved students working with an artist at the Goulburn Regional Art Gallery and viewed various art exhibitions.

There has been continued growth in the Digital and Photographic Media course and Year 9 students learnt how to make short films and digital animations. Year 9/10 Visual Design students used “recycling our world” as a theme for better understanding of recycling.

This year has been a very busy year for the Visual Arts teachers, as they are all Year Advisors and they designed and produced the 50th Anniversary School mural.

**Breakfast Club**

Our Brekky Club continues to serve on average 140 breakfasts each Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Over twenty student volunteers dedicate hours each week to ensure its ongoing operation. But without community support this would not be possible.

Debbie from Martins General Store has continued to work with Mark Ellis (Buttercup Distributor) to donate bread each week. Sam Porter and Dairy Farmers continue to be our most valued milk supplier. Red Cross and Sanitarium provide much appreciated cereal, soy milk products and snacks as part of their Good Start Breakfast Club Program. Yass Newsagency contributed by supplying numerous magazines and reading material for reading and discussing whilst enjoying brekky.

This year we welcomed the kind sponsorship of Yass Computers, contributing prizes for our annual Walkathon. Last, but never least, our Yass community; through encouragement, support and donations by way of our walkathon.

**Youth Challenge**

The Energy Australia Red Cross Youth Challenge is a program that empowers young people to work together on a project that makes a real difference to their community.

The Energy Awards celebrate the achievements, excellence and contribution of these young people by applying Red Cross principles in action with their own communities, through Youth Challenge.

This year, Yass High School students were successfully recognised in numerous categories:

**Peer Award** - Anthony Gallagher of Year 9 was recognised in the award for his contagious energy, motivation and pro-active involvement in Our Breakfast Club. This award is recognition of Anthony’s dedication in volunteering each week at the Breakfast Club and his contribution to mentoring younger students and students with special needs. In excess of 20000 students across NSW were eligible to be recognised with his award. Congratulations to Anthony.

**Environment Award** - Awarded to the Environment Committee who have been involved in establishing a ‘reduce, reuse, recycle system” within the school to change the habits of the staff and students and educate the school community in the importance of recycling.

**Most Innovative Award** – The Breakfast Club were highly commended in this category for their Breakfast Club DVD “Every School, Every Where, Everyday” which explains the process of setting up a breakfast club with the hope this DVD can be used as a tool amongst all schools in NSW wanting to set up their own breakfast clubs.

**Energy Australia Shield** was awarded to Yass High School, for having the most positive contribution to their community. Students have been working on a number of successful community projects throughout the year, on a range of issues from environment to student welfare.

**Transition Brekky Club at Yass Primary School**

As a way of introducing Yass Public School students to our Breakfast Club program, and some of our student leaders, YHS Brekky Club became mobile and spread the message of food health and the importance of volunteering; modelling “values”.

It is a new program which we hope to extend to other primary schools in our schools community in 2009, supporting stronger links between the schools and facilitating a more valuable transition program between primary and high school.

**PDHPE**

The popularity of the subjects offered by Yass High School in this area is evidence of the strong school focus on the development of the “whole child”. Excellent results in the 2 unit PDHPE course, an overwhelming interest in the P.A.S.S. elective and the high level of sporting involvement show the relevance and interest of Personal Development, Health and Physical Education to all students at the school.
PDHPE has evolved into a complex area of the curriculum. As well as the focus on improving physical fitness and health in our young, many of the programs such as drug education, driver education, staying safe, nutrition, relationships and tolerance, body image and sexual health which schools must implement are woven into the teaching and learning of PDHPE. In 2008 professional development was undertaken in the areas of sexual health and driver education. This will help to ensure that quality education in these areas continues to be a focus at Yass High School. More continuous assessment reflecting the improvement of skills in all areas of the subject allowed more authentic assessment, particularly in the School Certificate where coaching the skills of particular sports and officiating was assessed.

Police Liaison Officer Annette Cassidy visited Yass High School to again reinforce the message on cybercrime, drug use, driver safety and appropriate relationships. This continues to increase the positive relationship between our students and the police.

The foundation laid in the PDHPE area provides for our continued success in sport. This year we had 22 South Coast Representatives, 14 in swimming, 2 in cross country, 3 in athletics, 1 in cricket and 3 in touch. Per student, Yass High School would be one of the most successful schools throughout the region.

Our boy’s open touch, 9/10 touch and open rugby league all made it through to the final 20 of state-wide competitions which is an outstanding achievement for a school of our size.

A number of students from the Year 12 Sport Lifestyle and Recreation class have been employed by the Australian Sports Commission as After School Community Care Leaders, a program designed to foster positive attitudes towards being active. The accreditation to gain these employment opportunities was gained through their course at school. These opportunities foster positive relations between school and the wider community, one of the values held strongly by the school.

Renewed focus on the quality of teaching and learning will provide the basis for continuous improvement in 2009.

**Technology 2008**

All computers across the school no matter how old have been installed with a “standard operating environment”. This improves support from regional support and improves training possibilities. Administrative use of information and communication technologies remains high with many functions now being incorporated in the portal.

The main focus for this year has been an increase in “Interactive Learning” using Information and Communication Technologies. The two main components are the installation of the connected classroom in room 10 and four interactive trolleys for access in all parts of the school. The connected classroom consists of an interactive whiteboard, video conferencing unit, cameras and microphones and associated software in a package. Yass High was one of the first schools in the state to have the system installed. Six staff from the school received two days training in making best use of the technology. Four Interactive Trolleys were introduced to all staff at the second school development day. These trolleys consist of a multimedia computer with audio system, short throw data projector, interactive tablet and wireless tablet. The unit in the library had the additional feature of a high definition television tuner which received constant use during the Beijing Olympics.

Staff have moved from their previous @education emails to the @det system making communication between Principals, regional staff and teaching staff more efficient. Students are moving to a new email system provided by Google with vastly superior storage and features. This will still operate from within the Portal. Internet filtering has been moved from the outsourced filters to DET which should mean a more educationally centred system. The school continues to be one of the major users of student email as a means of communication with the monthly Intouch being sent to all students, staff, and requesting parents. The school website has been upgraded to allow staff to submit news and photos and links to Yass High School Online Learning and an interactive online calendar used to keep the school community informed. A 50 year’s celebration site was also included. A monitor of the number and location of hits on the site revealed a wide audience especially when the InTouch newsletter was regularly updated on the site.

The student Eduweb provides a framework for student’s use of the Internet and a place for students to display their best work.

With the present fileserver reaching the end of its useful life, it will need to be replaced. Negotiations are well underway to decide on the hardware and operating system to be used. The level of support from regional and state-wide IT support will be a major factor in the decision. We have been informed that installation and commissioning cannot take place before Easter next year so interim measures need to be undertaken to
extend the life of the existing system. Additional server storage and network storage to cope with the large number of multimedia projects undertaken by staff and students will be installed as soon as possible. A full workstation audit has been carried out and a regional network audit is scheduled in coming weeks to ensure every aspect of the system is optimised.

The school will be renewing the school website during 2009 to make it simple for all staff and selected students to update areas of the site increasing its currency.

The wireless network across the school will be replaced by a much more comprehensive system to accommodate the planned introduction of Federal Government subsidised student laptops. Negotiations are still underway between the state and federal governments but Yass HS has been included in the first phase valued at over $100,000. The refurbishments of the science labs is planned to increase wireless access and accommodate interactive whiteboard technology.

Standards based student reporting using the DET system is being investigated for implementation in the new year.

**Principal's message**

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.

**Mr. Paul Bills**

**P&C and/or School Council message**

February 2008 saw the completion of the Boys and Girls Toilets. This was a much overdue project.

Phil Armour, from the Agricultural Department, also received a $50,000 grant. This will go towards making the School more water wise, upgrade taps and also to install a water tank.

At the end of Term 2 we saw Lynne Jenson retire as Deputy Principal. This was a great loss to the School as Lynne was always fair in her dealings with the students and great at balancing the many and various needs of staff. Louise Pinson was acting Deputy Principal Terms 3 & 4.

July saw the installation of the two COLAS. These were made possible with the Grant money and shade areas have been erected along the front of the School Hall, in between the boys’ toilets and the Principal’s Office. Our thanks to Rapley Constructions and Ian McLennan.

In September Anne Hind retired from her role as School Counsellor and was farewelled at a School Assembly. She has done a wonderful job over the years and will be missed.

Also in Term 3 we saw the much overdue installation of the new curtains for the stage. The new blue ones have made a difference after the many years of seeing red. Many thanks to Michael Barton who made the curtains. They were paid for by school funds.

In October the P&C held a Car Boot Sale which was a great success. $872.00 was raised on the day and the P&C has decided that this should be an annual event. Many thanks to Lisa Wylie, Joy Blackman and Natalie Rhodes for organising this event.

November 21st saw the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the School. Past Principals and students were invited to come and celebrate this occasion. A special Assembly was held along with tours of the School for the visitors. A Biathlon was also part of the celebrations. P&C put on a BBQ lunch.

After many years of catering for the Music Club the P&C had to withdraw its services due to the lack of parent volunteers. Many thanks to Rhonda Corcoran and Karen Carter who have, over the years, co-ordinated this.

After many years the Music Festival had to cancel its annual event due to lack of support. This was a shame as this event gave the opportunity for our local music students to display their talents.

Once again the traffic committee has worked very hard over the year in conjunction with Mark Foran and the Yass Valley Council regarding the traffic and pedestrian movement within the school grounds. This has been of great concern to the P&C over the years and hopefully we can see an improvement during 2009.

I’d like to take this opportunity to thank all parents and staff who have worked tirelessly for Yass High School throughout the year. You are a relatively small and enthusiastic group who work extremely hard for our school. Thank you to all those parents who have helped with the Music Club catering, the school band, canteen and sporting carnivals.

Above all thank you to my Executive Committee, to my Secretary Mary Cochrane-O’Sullivan for her secretarial skills, Ian McLennan and Andrew Southwell, P&C Treasurers, for keeping the books up to date and Joy Blackman who has looked after the Canteen finances. A big thank you to those of you who have served on our committees.

I have enjoyed my term as President over the past 3 years and unfortunately this will be the last year I will be involved with the P&C. I have had three children attend Yass High and the youngest finishes Year 12 this year.
This School can be proud of its achievements and will continue to grow over the many years ahead.

Gavin Payne
President

Student representative's message

The SRC at Yass High continues to be involved in many school activities and leadership programs. At Yass High, students volunteer to be part of the SRC. Each member commits their time to lobby on behalf of their fellow students.

This year four students attended the 3 day SRC conference at Warrumbui. Ten schools were represented at this conference by students and SRC Advisers. Year 9 SRC students were group leaders, ensuring that the Year 8 students gained leadership skills and made friends with students from other schools.

On the last day of the conference a forum is held in order to decide the motions that will be taken further to regional conference. Proposals that are passed at this level are then taken to a state conference and are eventually presented to politicians. Yass High students were not successful in getting a motion passed, requesting the state government to fund breakfast clubs in all state schools.

This, however, has not deterred them from pursuing this idea. The Yass High SRC will be looking to promote awareness by presenting information at the next SRC conference during workshops.

This year the SRC formed an Environment Committee which is open to all students to attend. The Committee has focused on recycling within the school and have worked in conjunction with students in the support class to enable paper recycling to occur within the school.

The SRC will be setting goals for 2009 early in the new year during an SRC training day. All SRC members are to be congratulated for their commitment and enthusiasm.

Student information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.
Post-school destinations
A survey by the Careers Adviser gave the following results:

- Approximately 85% of the students surveyed were engaged in full-time work.
- Retail continues to be the principal area of employment.
- Approximately 60% of those students undertaking tertiary studies are full-time.
- Several students are having a Gap year before taking up their University offer.
- Students have entered into a range of study areas including Health, Information Technology, Education, Travel, Child Care and Automotive.
- Most students have found employment in the local area.

Staff information
It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Staff establishment

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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>61</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff attendance
Staff have access to leave entitlements such as sick leave. In 2008 the average daily attendance rate for staff, as determined by the Department, was.

| Staff Attendance | In 2007 the average daily attendance rate for staff was 94.3% |

Teacher qualifications

Retention to Year 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SC02 - HSC04</th>
<th>SC03 - HSC05</th>
<th>SC04 - HSC06</th>
<th>SC05 - HSC07</th>
<th>SC06 - HSC08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>45.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEG</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>44.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>60.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Financial summary
This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

**STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS - YASS HIGH SCHOOL**

Year ended 30th November, 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Balance brought forward</th>
<th>217,280.20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global Funds</td>
<td>283,770.85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied Funds</td>
<td>137,509.55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; Community Sources</td>
<td>152,976.22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>17,738.31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust Receipts</td>
<td>40,897.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL RECEIPTS</strong></td>
<td><strong>632,891.94</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE | 850,172.14 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Teaching &amp; Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key Learning Areas</td>
<td>94,663.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>34,829.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>60,743.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>8,382.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; Development</td>
<td>3,276.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied Funds</td>
<td>148,447.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual Relief Teachers</td>
<td>91,250.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; Office</td>
<td>76,150.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>59,386.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>22,736.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>51,067.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A full copy of the school’s 2008 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 2008

Academic

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 the assessments. Yr 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7). Yr 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9).

In the School Certificate the performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from Performance Band 1 (lowest) to Performance Band 6 (highest).
Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at and above minimum standard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>90.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>76.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>78.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>78.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Certificate

Percentage of students in performance bands:
School Certificate English-literacy

Percentage of students in performance bands:
School Certificate Mathematics

Percentage of students in performance bands:
School Certificate Science

Percentage of students in performance bands:
Australian History, Civics and Citizenship
Minimum standards

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards for reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy for years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

The performance of the students in our school in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy is compared to these minimum standards. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these standards are reported below.

Percentage of Years 7 and 9 students in our school achieving at or above the minimum standard in 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum Standard Information</th>
<th>Percentage of Year 7 students achieving at and above minimum standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>97.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at and above minimum standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

The school has continued to make significant contact with elders and community members in 2008. There have developed closer links between Berinba, Yass and Bowning Public schools and YHS to identify and address the needs of indigenous students as they reach high school. We were able to engage Mr. Greg Chatfield as our Liaison person to work between the four schools. This initiative continues having a positive impact on all students.

Respect and responsibility

All our school plans and policies are based on the following concepts:

Co-operation: Working together to achieve common goals, providing support to others and engaging in peaceful resolution of conflict.

Participation: by being a proactive and productive individual and group member having pride in and contributing to the social and economic wealth of the community and the nation.

Care and Concern: for the well being of others, demonstrating empathy and acting with compassion.

Fairness: being committed to the principles of social justice, opposing prejudice, dishonesty and injustice.

Democracy: in accepting and promoting the rights and freedoms, responsibilities of being an Australian citizen.

Progress on 2008 targets

We are currently planning for the next three to four years. At the present time, it is probable that the key priority areas for Yass High will be:

School's Priority 1:

To ensure improved student learning achievements and academic expectations are reflected in school and system data.

We will have achieved this when:

a) The school achieves an upward trend (positive growth) in the learning outcomes identified in ELLA, SNAP, NAPLAN, SC and HSC data.

b) All staff demonstrate an understanding of the dimensions and elements of the QT framework through programming, lesson delivery and assessment tasks.

c) Students and parents are well informed of teaching and learning strategies in our school.

School’s Priority 2:

To ensure that all students demonstrate growth in literacy and numeracy skills as reflected in NAPLAN, SC and HSC data.

We will have achieved this when:

a) Quality literacy teaching and learning programs exist in all classes.

b) There is an upward trend in value-added literacy/numeracy data evident in School Certificate results.

c) There will be an upward trend in value-added literacy/numeracy data evident in ELLA, SNAP and National Testing results.
School's Priority 3:
To embed a clear set of behaviours and values which are linked to positive behaviour in school practice and school culture.

We will have achieved this when:

a) A clear set of core behaviours and values are embedded in, and linked to, positive behaviour in school practice, student behaviour and positive school culture.

b) All school policies and practices reflect the values and beliefs of the school community.

c) All staff feel professionally valued within the school community.

d) The school community has a deep understanding and substantial engagement in promoting the school’s values.

Key evaluations
It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2008 our school carried out evaluations of student retention and student learning as reflected in school surveys and RISC data.

Educational and management practice

Background
The executive undertook the analysis of student management data available from RISC, our register of individual student contact, which is our student management program which stores our welfare and discipline decisions. This has been in place for three years. The data used was on long and short suspensions and referrals to the time out room.

Findings and conclusions
From a start of this data in 2006, there was an overall drop in short suspensions in 2007 of 59% and in 2008 a further reduction of 65%. Girls made up only 18% of these contacts and boys the vast majority of 82% over three years. The conclusion seems to be that our focus on boys’ education has had a positive impact in the classroom with more boys engaged in their learning and less off task behaviour being exhibited. A similar trend is evident with referrals to the time out room over three years. From a baseline of 2006 data, there was a 76% decrease in referrals in 2007 and a further 69% decrease in 2008. Boys represented 82% of referrals and girls 18% over the three years. This is identical to the suspension data over the same triennium.

Future directions
The Executive is pleased with the apparently steady and significant downward trends in the number of students engaged in off task behaviour. Our recent focus on boys’ education strategies may be having a significant impact. We believe that our continual efforts to address teacher needs in professional learning are also having a positive and significant impact on student engagement.

Curriculum

Improving Student Engagement and Retention

Background
Increased student retention through the secondary years of schooling has been a focus of the Department of Education for many years. It continues to be of vital importance to the Yass High School community.

Yass High School continually seeks initiatives to maintain and improve the engagement of students.

Findings and conclusion.
We agree that some important strategies for improving engagement and retention in Years 7-12 are working well while others require some more attention. There is a need to publicise across the community what we are doing well. We acknowledge that there was a 28% loss from Year 10 to Year 11 in 2006-2007 and a 25% loss in 2007-2008 from the same years. VET appears to be gaining impact on retaining students with 43% of Stage 6 students enrolled in at least one VET course, with 15% in two courses, 8% in three and 1% doing four VET subjects. We have noted that there is a significant proportion of Stage 6 students enrolled in a non-UAI program of study. We predict that 50% of HSC students in 2009 will choose a non-UAI pattern of study.

The senior executive, full executive and staff have investigated and discussed how to improve or initiate the following engagement and retention strategies:

- Enhance our links with partner primary schools within our local learning community
- Continue to offer a highly effective primary-secondary transition program based on understanding the academic and personal needs of students
• Improve our use of the analysis of data and information from partner primary schools; ensuring awareness of previous testing and targeted

• Set and maintain high expectations of performance and achievement by all students

• Encourage and equip parents to raise their expectations and their understanding of the importance of completion of Year 12 or an equivalent vocational qualification for every student

• Ensure that high expectations are expressed by teachers that students will progress into and complete Years 11 and 12

• Significantly improve our retention rates between Years 10 and 11

• Development in students of a strong sense of pride and identification with Yass High School

• Continue to make the Quality Teaching Framework a priority

• Provision of a strong literacy and numeracy emphasis across the curriculum, Years 7-12

• Offering a broad and interesting curriculum across Stages 4 and 5

• Investigate the impacts of VET in Stage 5

• Further develop our delivery of Life Skills in Stage 5

• Maintain, support and develop our effective Student Learning Support Team

• Continue our close attention and follow up to student attendance and fractional truancy issues

• Development of student understanding and commitment to the importance of obtaining formal qualifications at school

• Goal setting, study skills days, student learning days and careers education days in Stage 4 and Stage 5

• Strong careers program and effective careers advice and counselling to Stage 5 students through the careers adviser, ‘careers team’ or whole-staff approaches

• Flexible approaches to work experience

• Development of a school specialisation that attracts and holds student attention, e.g. performing arts, creative arts, sport

• Wide-spread recognition of student achievement and leadership through school newsletters and the local newspaper, including extensive use of student pictures to convey the school’s positive culture

• A continued program for developing student leadership and initiative in all students.

Future directions

• Publicising our initiatives and programs aimed at student retention and engagement

• Continuing the planning of making a submission for a Trade Training Centre at Yass High

• Entrenching the PBS program to establish a school wide positive culture of learning and achievement in schools

• The continuation of the RISC process in the ongoing monitoring of student progress

• Ensuring more effective communications in the transition process from our partner schools

• Energising the formation of our learning community with Berinba, Yass and Bowning Public Schools

• Developing a greater parent participation in Parent Teacher meetings and developing school communication and reporting by investigating the use of new and traditional technologies

• Supporting the Learning Support Team and the school counsellor to ensure that they are informed to address student learning, health and welfare issues

• Investigating and implementing alternative pathways in Stages 5 and 6, particularly Stage 5 VET

• Supporting programs that deliver vibrant careers education and post-school guidance

While we believe that we offer students an interesting and appropriate education, we are also aware that we must continue to seek initiatives and maintain our awareness of new opportunities and trends as they arise.
Professional learning

The school held three school development days in 2008. The focus areas of these were:

- Literacy, numeracy and the promotion of student learning outcomes.
- Teaching and learning strategies with continuing emphasis on “raising the bar” and the promotion of improved learning outcomes.
- Staff wellbeing and resilience.

Other professional development included Vocational Education training, various faculty workshops, Year Advisers’ workshops, mental health conferences, leadership conferences, behaviour management workshops, literacy workshops, cooperative learning and thinking skills sessions. Fifty teachers participated in these courses during the year.

Training in mandatory DET requirements for child protection, code of conduct, emergency care, CPR and OHS were also conducted.

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.

Mr. Paul Bills, Principal
Ms. Louise Pinson, Deputy Principal
Mr. Rod Saville, Head Teacher Computing
Mrs. Michele Winter School Administration Manager
Ms. Vicki Coade, Librarian
Mr. Gavin Payne, P&C President

School contact information

Yass High School
Grampian Street Yass NSW 2582
Ph: 62261711
Fax: 62263174
Email: yass-h.admin@det.nsw.edu.au
Web: yass-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
School Code: 8334

Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at: