

Girraween High School Annual School Report

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way



Our School at a glance

Girraween High School is a co-educational academically selective high school.

Year 7 entry is administered by the Selective High School and Opportunity Class Placement Unit of the Department of Education and Training. Selection to fill vacancies in Years 8 to 12 is determined by the school and is based on students' record of achievement.

Students are drawn mostly from the western and north-western suburbs of Sydney. In 2006 the enrolment was 756 (with over 70% of students from a Non-English Speaking Background).

Messages

Principal's message

Girraween High School is an academically selective high school where the staff is committed to academic excellence and high achievement.

A wide range of educational experiences designed to develop students to their full potential is offered.

We work with our school community to provide greater learning opportunities for our students. Our school encourages students to take pride in themselves, have high expectations and value learning.

There is a strong emphasis on providing a diverse and challenging curriculum for our students. As the vast majority of our students pursue tertiary studies, our curriculum is of necessity academic.

The curriculum at Girraween High School relates to the processes by which learners acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes. Therefore teaching and learning programs reflect the identification of our students' needs, the prescription and range of learning outcomes, teaching processes and strategies, as well as assessment and evaluation. At Girraween High School, academic achievement is stressed.

We strive to:

- foster active learners who can work both independently and collaboratively
- encourage critical thinking skills
- instil respect and tolerance for others
- encourage students to have and fulfil the highest possible expectations of themselves
- develop skills in technology and its application.

Girraween High School prides itself on providing a broad range of activities to extend our students. This year saw our school continue to offer many activities to support students in pursuing special interests at school.

The Duke of Edinburgh Scheme provides an opportunity for students to achieve their bronze, silver and gold awards. Students are encouraged to be involved in such groups as the chess club, the concert band, debating teams, the Tournament of Minds and Shakespeare Day.

In 2006 there were more student leadership opportunities provided through our highly successful invigorated House system. Leadership opportunities are provided for Years 7 to 10 students through training as peer mediators, student representative council membership and as House Leaders. In Years 11 and 12, students can also become prefects, House Captains and/or peer support leaders.

The school receives many enquiries about how students may be enrolled at Girraween. Year 7 entry is administered by the Selective High School and Opportunity Class Placement Unit of the Department of Education and Training. Prospective students sit for the selective schools test and are offered places at the school after consideration by a selection panel.

A school based enrolment committee determines the entry of students to Years 8–12. On the basis of the information provided with the application, students will be placed on a reserve list. There is no special test for enrolment for Years 8 to 12. Students on the reserve list are offered a position at the school when a vacancy occurs.

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 G. Murty B.Sc.; Dip.Ed

Relieving Principal

P & C message

The Parents and Citizens Association has been active in managing the school canteen which employs a paid manager and an assistant. Parent volunteers provide ongoing assistance in the canteen.

The P & C has been able to fund a variety of resources through canteen funds. These include student homework diaries, awards for school service at the Presentation Evening and contributions to enhance the facilities in the Drama and Music rooms. In 2006, \$10 000 was allocated towards improving the aesthetics of the school gymnasium.

Members of the P & C have undergone training to be part of staff selection panels, as well as representing the parent body on the Uniform Committee, the Strategic Planning Committee and the Student Selection Panel. The P & C has also been involved in applying for grants to improve and upgrade facilities. The Association offers an opportunity for parents to contribute ideas and assistance to the broader aspects of schooling.

Zuie Hervey

2006 President of the P & C Association

Student Representative Council (SRC) message

The 2006 school year saw some significant improvements in relation to the profile of the Student Representative Council. The students' ongoing commitments to charity based activities such as the *40 Hour Famine*, *The Stand Against Poverty Campaign* (an international event) and significantly their contribution to the school's sponsor child from Peru, have assisted the SRC members to not only learn the benefits of taking part in humanitarian causes, but has raised awareness in the school of the value of their role as student leaders.

In addition to the fundraising and charity campaigns, the SRC took part in a two month Toastmasters Course that was coordinated by the Rooty Hill Toastmasters Association. This course was aimed at improving the communication and leadership skills of SRC members. As a result of the successful completion of this course, four of the SRC members have been selected to speak to undergraduate students at the University of New South Wales in 2007 during late March and early April, in order to demonstrate the benefit of their public speaking and communication skills.

The SRC have also been involved in both district and state representation. A Year 11 student was given the honour of being part of the New South Wales State SRC as a result of her commitment and exemplary leadership skills. A Year 10 student was involved at a regional level. Both students regularly attended their respective meetings outside the school. Their commitment and consistent communication as to what was occurring at different levels of the SRC, helped to provide their peers and the SRC Coordinator with creative ways of promoting and ameliorating student leadership.

The Student Representatives and the School Executive body have also developed a stronger relationship. Meetings between these two groups have improved communication in relation to the direction the students and the executive would like the school to head towards. This will become an ongoing and valued process in 2007.

Michael Cinquetti

SRC Coordinator

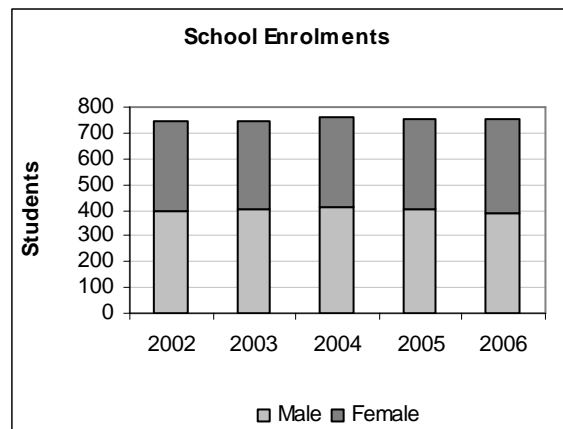
School context

Student information

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

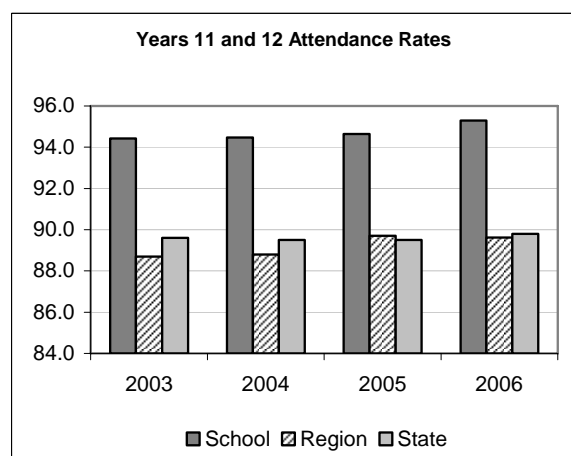
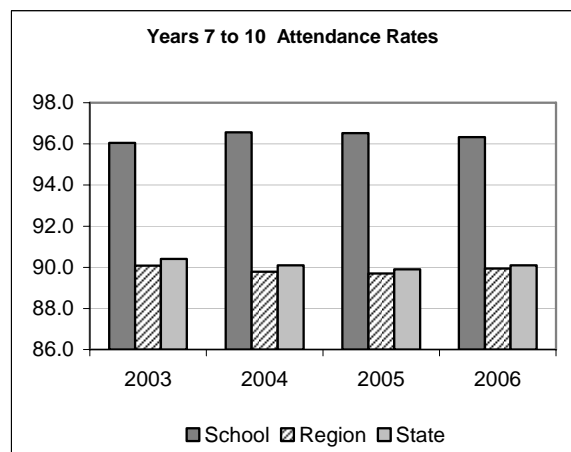
Student enrolment profile

In 2006 our enrolment was 756, comprising 353 girls (47%) and 403 boys (53%). Enrolment at the start of 2007 was 757, comprising 374 girls (49%) and 383 boys (51%).



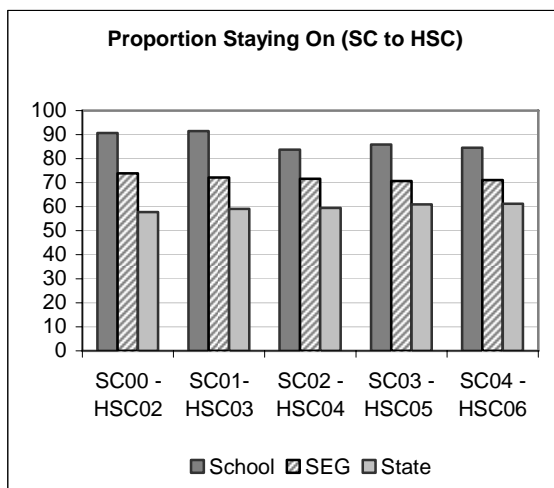
Student attendance profile

Overall attendance is excellent reflecting the success of the school's attendance program. The school's attendance rates continue to be significantly above the regional and state average attendance rates.



Retention to Year 12

The retention rate for SC 2004 to HSC 2006 was comparable with the rate over the two previous years. At the end of Year 10, Girraween High School does lose some students to other selective schools. In most cases students are moving to schools closer to where they live. This distance factor becomes more important in the senior years as many courses have to be taught before or after normal school hours.



Post-school destinations

Students from Girraween High School are focused on entry to tertiary institutions. All Year 12 students apply for the University Admission Index and expect to gain admission to university.

Approximately 96% of students received main round offers of a place in a university course.

The breakdown of placements is:

University of New South Wales	33%
University of Sydney	22%
University of Technology	17%
Macquarie University	16%
University of Western Sydney	11%
Interstate Universities	1%

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

Position	Number
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	2
Head Teachers	8
Classroom Teachers	39.8
Teacher Librarian	1
Teacher of ESL	0.4
Counsellor	1
Careers Adviser	1
Total	54.2

Staff retention

There were two new members of staff appointed this year. A temporary position on the English staff was filled by a permanent appointment and a Science teacher who was promoted was replaced.

The retention rate from 2005 to 2006 was 96.2%.

Staff attendance

Staff have access to leave entitlements such as sick leave. In 2006 the average daily attendance rate for staff was 96.2%, as determined by the Department of Education and Training.

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools. In 2006, there were 8 members of staff with Postgraduate qualifications.

Qualifications	% of staff
Degree or Diploma	86
Postgraduate	14

Financial summary

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

Balance brought forward	160 018.93
Global funds	395 021.05
Tied funds	119 590.40
School & community sources	430 187.49
Interest	12 406.81
Trust receipts	71 467.03
Canteen	0.00
Total income	1 188 691.71
Expenditure	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	94 126.69
Excursions	171 690.73
Extracurricular dissections	153 718.57
Library	22 815.61
Training & development	1 106.85
Tied funds	147 170.85
Casual relief teachers	109 175.45
Administration & office	168 645.75
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	70 628.54
Maintenance	57 453.72
Trust accounts	62 978.88
Capital programs	24 927.78
Total expenditure	1 084 439.42
Balance carried forward	104 252.29

A full copy of the school's 2006 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 2006

Achievements

Arts

In August 2006, the music, art and drama areas of the school combined to produce MAD06. Over 60% of the school population was involved in the two evening productions of MAD06 at the Q-Theatre in the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre at Penrith. MAD06 showed the great spirit and drive of the school community and its success was a direct result of the hard work and effort of all those involved. All members of the school community were proud of the very high standard of the art work, musical and drama performances.

The school's Music Faculty was involved in the very successful school Band Tour, where the school's band visited many schools from the Blue Mountains to Windsor to Girraween. Also in 2006, over 90 students from the Music Ensembles Program combined to form the school's marching band.

The success of the Year 11 Drama class production of 'Cosi' was very pleasing and highlighted the talents of the Drama class and the dedication of their teacher.

Due to the high standard of his HSC major work for Visual Arts, a Year 12 student was nominated to be part of ArtExpress. Robert Boncardo and Katrina Smith, the 2006 School Captains, were nominated to perform at Encore due to the high standard of their HSC performances for Music 1.

In the Premier's Reading Challenge, Year 7 students had an outstanding completion rate leading to Girraween performing extremely well in the high school division.

Sport

Sport at Girraween High School played a major role in contributing to the success of the invigorated house system. House competitions were introduced for Terms 2 and 4 during Tuesday Sport. New house shirts were issued to students as part of their sports fees to help boost positive and enjoyable competition.

Additionally, the attendance and participation rate for the swimming and athletics carnivals rose by 20%. The participation rate in the cross country carnival was markedly higher as house spirit became an integral part of sport in the school.

Girraween High was the overall Blacktown Zone Champion School in all three major carnivals (Swimming, Cross Country and Athletics).

Individual performances of note included Dean Powell for representing the Sydney West Region in basketball, Karen Leung for coming sixth in the state in 100m breaststroke at the CHS Swimming Carnival, and Ai-My Le for being selected in the NSW Vigoro Schoolgirls team to play in Tasmania in March 2007.

Other

Girraween High School students achieved excellent results in the Australian Mathematics Competition. Prizes were awarded to five Girraween students, while 23 students achieved high distinctions and 187 students achieved distinctions.

In the Australian Mathematics Olympiad Committee (AMOC) Challenge Stage, six Girraween students achieved high distinctions and 12 students achieved distinctions. Stuart Rynn, a Year 9 student, was invited to the Australian Mathematics Olympiad. A Year 11 Girraween student was invited to the National Mathematics Summer School at the Australian National University, Canberra.

Girraween students achieved outstanding results in the Australian National Chemistry Quiz, competing against students both nationally and throughout the Asia region. Ivan Luburic and Matthew Chi of Year 10 were presented with plaques for achieving results in the top 1% of the competition and our other competitors were awarded 23 high distinctions and 23 distinctions.

After earning second place in the Sydney finals of the state Titration Competition, a team of three Girraween Year 12 students qualified for the National Titration Competition, attaining silver medals for their efforts.

Science Olympiad results were excellent. In Chemistry, four students achieved high distinction and three students achieved distinctions. For the Physics exam, one student achieved a high distinction and in the Biology exam, one student achieved a high distinction, while two students achieved distinctions. Bill Wang of Year 11 was selected to study as a Biology Olympiad Scholar during the school holidays at the University of Canberra.

In the Australian Business Studies Competition, one Girraween student achieved a high distinction, while 23 students achieved distinctions.

In the Australian Economics Competition, two Girraween students gained high distinctions, while seven Girraween students gained distinctions.

In the Australian Geography Competition, 75 Girraween students received high distinctions and 60 students received distinctions.

Of the 474 Girraween entrants in the 2006 Australasian Schools Science Competition (ICAS), 20 were awarded high distinctions, which placed them in the top 1%, and 154 students attained distinctions.

Of the 251 students from Girraween entered in the Australian Schools Computer Skills Competition, nine students gained high distinctions, while 42 students gained a distinction. In the Australian Informatics Competition, 36 Girraween students were entered. One student gained a high distinction and seven students gained distinctions.

In the CSE Programming Competition, two of the Girraween teams were state finalists. One team was offered cash scholarships by the UNSW for achieving fourth place.

The school ran five teams in the inter-school Chess competition. The Year 10 intermediate team won their way through to the state final, where they were narrowly defeated by Sydney Grammar.

On Tuesday 21 March 2006, the school held a Harmony Day dinner in the school gymnasium. This informal event provided an opportunity for parents of Year 7 students to meet the staff, as well as a celebration of the culturally diverse community of Girraween High School.

In November 2006, Girraween High School received a Waterwatch Platypus Award for excellence in Environmental Education and for the school's volunteer work in the upper Parramatta Water/Stream Watch program in 2006.

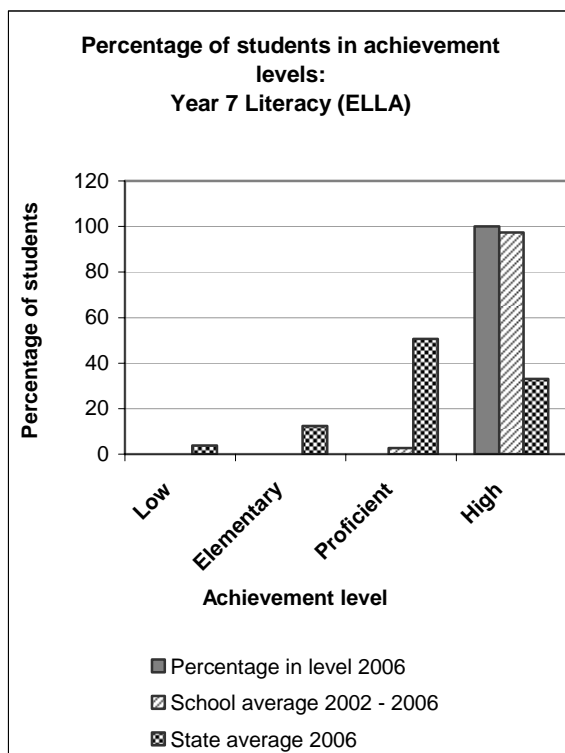
Throughout 2006, senior students and staff donated blood at the Parramatta Blood Bank. In total, there were 167 donations placing Girraween High School second in the 2005/2006 Vampire Shield (a school competition run by Parramatta Blood Bank).

Academic

Literacy – ELLA Year 7

The school was pleased with the outstanding results gained by our Year 7 students in the 2006 English Language and Literacy Assessment (ELLA). All students in Year 7 in 2006 were placed in the highest achievement level (compared to 33.0% of the state being placed in the highest level).

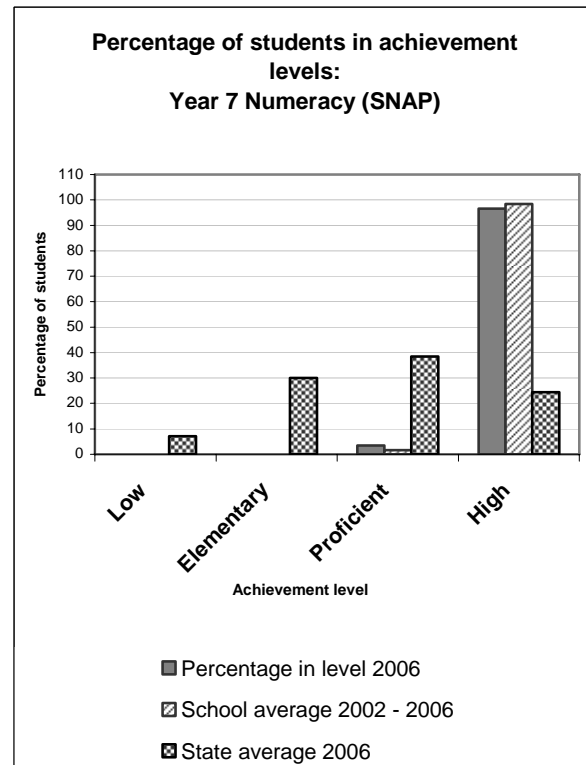
The successful Literacy Day conducted for all Year 7 students is an integral part of the school's literacy program.



Numeracy – SNAP Year 7

In 2006, our school received an Award of Excellence for the outstanding achievement in numeracy development. The award was presented to the school by Mr Lindsay Wasson, the Regional Director for Western Sydney, as part of National Literacy and Numeracy week.

In the 2006 Secondary Numeracy Assessment Program (SNAP), our Year 7 students achieved outstanding results. While the state average for students being placed in the highest level was 24.4%, at Girraween High School 96.6% of students were placed in the highest level.



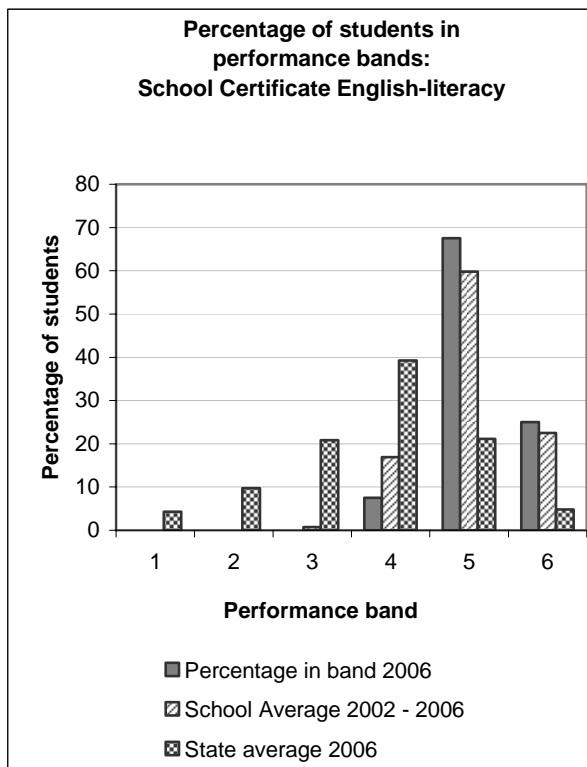
School Certificate

Year 10 students sat for formal tests in English-literacy; Mathematics; Science; Australian History, Civics and Citizenship; Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship and Computer Skills. The Year 9 Science accelerant class sat for the School Certificate Science test.

In the School Certificate, the performance of students in all tests, except the Computer Skills test, is reported in performance bands ranging from Performance Band 1 (lowest) to Performance Band 6 (highest). There is no set percentage of students in each Performance Band. The test are standards-referenced and the state percentage figure for each Performance Band can vary significantly.

In the Computer Skills test, conducted for the first time in 2006, the performance of students was reported in three Performance Bands: Competence not demonstrated, Competent, and Highly Competent.

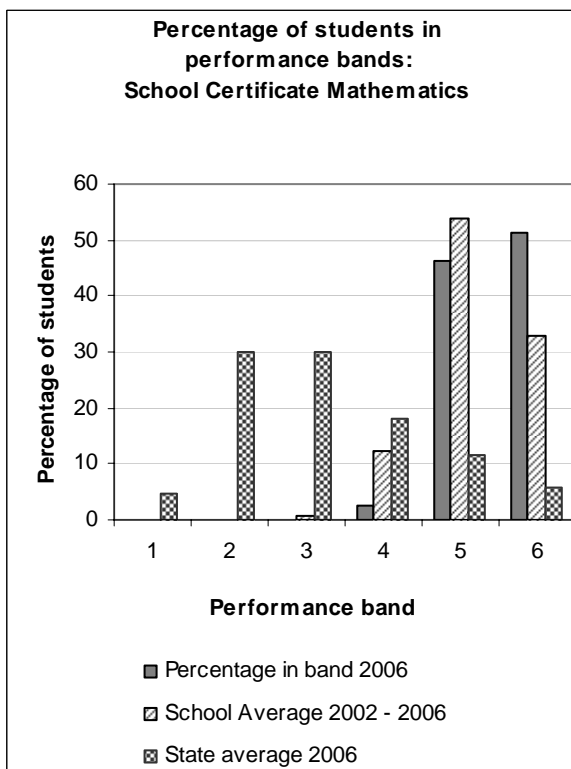
English Literacy



The school had 25% of students in Band 6 compared with the state average of 4.8%. In Band 5, there were 67.5% of students compared with the state average of 21.1%

An analysis of the results showed that student progress from the Year 5 Basic Skills Test in Bands 5 and 6 was in line with expectations.

Mathematics

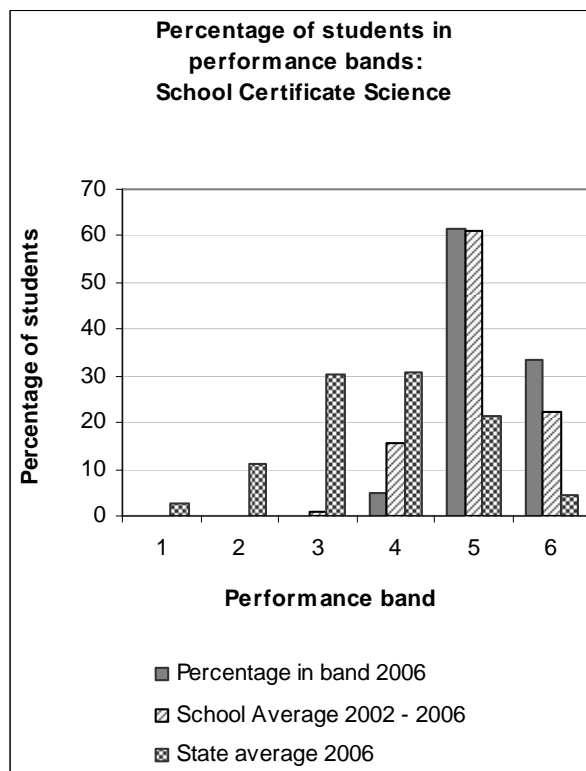


The school had 51.3% of students in Band 6 compared with a state average of 5.7%. In Band 5,

there were 46.2% of students compared with the state average of 11.5%. The percentage of students at the school in Band 6 in 2006 showed a significant increase compared to 2004 and 2005, leading to a reduction in the percentage of students in Bands 4 and 5.

A comparison with our Like School Group (LSG), which is the other selective high schools, demonstrated that Girraween students were at the very top of the performance band and that they had shown greater relative improvement.

Science

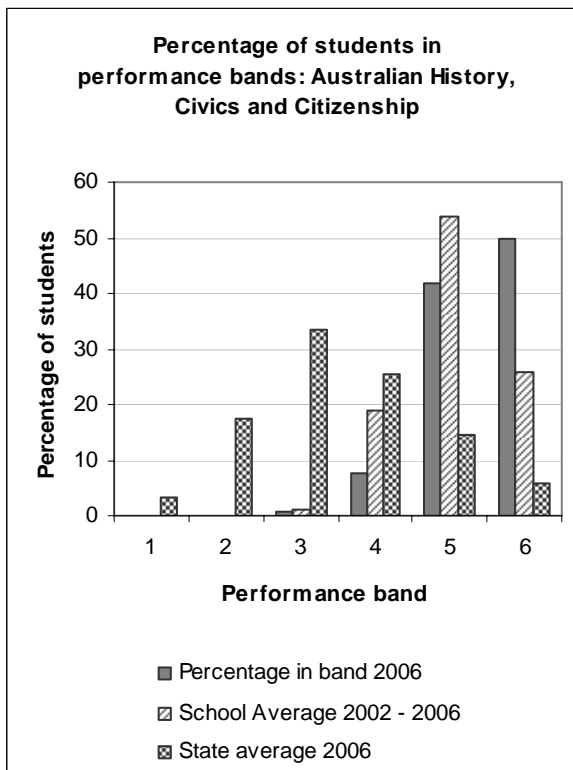


The school had 95.2% of students placed in Bands 5 or 6 (which equates to an exam mark of 80% or more). This is better than the average for our Like School Group (LSG), the other selective schools, which was 88.7%, and considerably better than the whole state average of 25.7%. The Accelerant Course of Year 9 students performed exceptionally well, with 100% of students achieving Bands 5 or 6.

The school had 33.6% of students in Band 6 compared to a state average of only 4.3%. The percentage of students at the school attaining a Band 6 in 2006 showed a significant increase in comparison to the percentage of previous years.

Analysis of the results showed that student progress from the Year 5 Basic Skills Test was higher for students of Girraween High School than for students from other selective schools (LSG). The analysis also showed an increase in relative growth within the school compared to the average relative growth of previous years.

Australian History, Civics and Citizenship

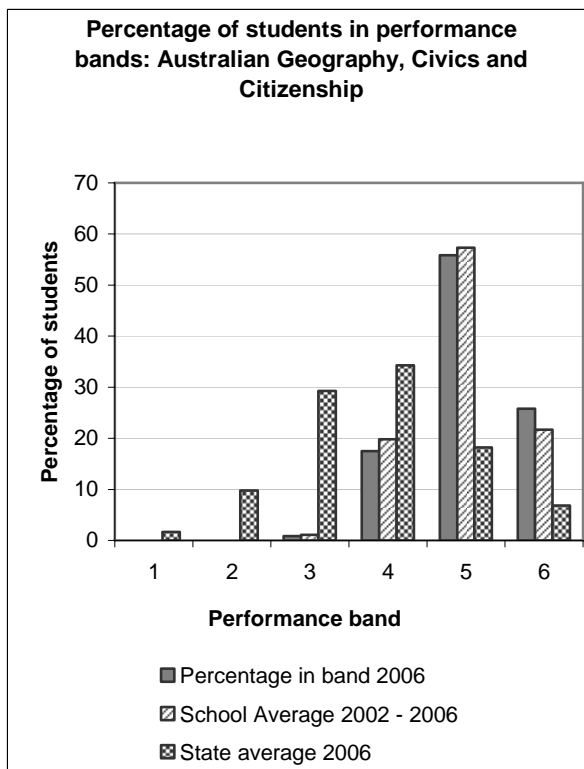


The school had 50% of students in Band 6 compared to the state average of 6%. This was a considerable increase on the 2005 figure of 44.16%, and led to a reduction in the number of candidates who achieved a Band 4 or Band 5 in 2006 compared to 2005.

In comparison to the state, 91.7% of Girraween students obtained a Band 5 or 6 compared to a state average of 20.4%.

Overall the 2006 History results were the best ever achieved by the school at the School Certificate.

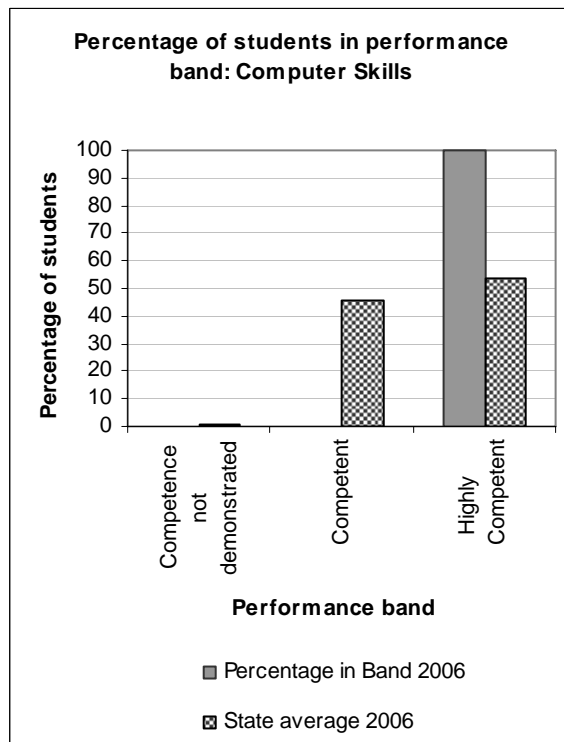
Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship



The school had 25.8% of the students in Band 6 compared with the state average of 6.8%. In Band 5 there were 55.8% of the students as compared with the state average of 18.2%.

An analysis of the results shows a consistent performance in line with expectations and a slight improvement in the number of students receiving Band 6.

Computer Skills



The results gained by Girraween students in the inaugural Computer Skills test was very impressive with all of our students being placed in the Highly Competent Performance Band.

School Certificate school-based assessment

The school assesses students' performance in all courses with results reported in Grades A (highest) to E (lowest).

The school forms classes for the School Certificate in all Key Learning Areas.

An analysis of grades showed that:

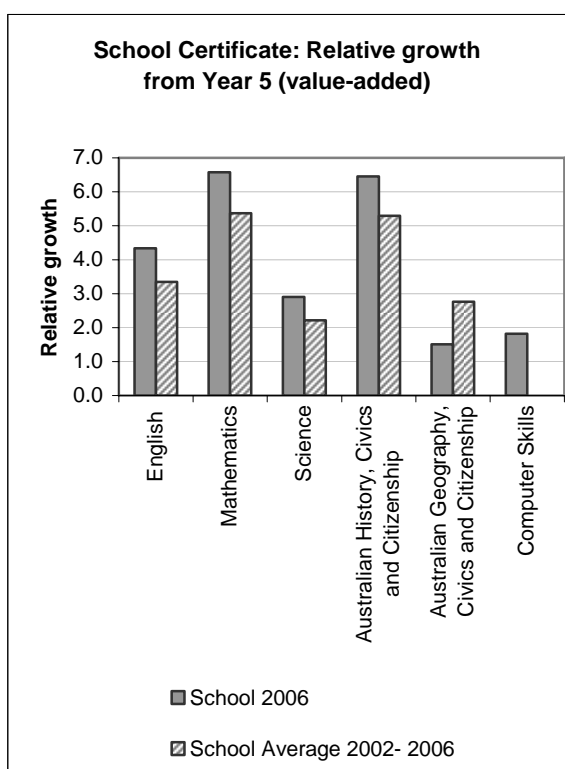
- in English 93% of students received Grades A or B
- in Mathematics 99% of students received a Grade A (A10 or A9) or a Grade B (B8 or B7)
- in Science 87% of students received Grades A or B
- in Australian Geography 96% of students received Grades A or B
- in Australian History 94% of students received Grades A or B
- in Personal Development / Health / Physical Education 79% of students received Grades A or B
- in Commerce 97% of students received Grades A or B

- in History all students received Grades A or B
- in Food Technology all students received Grades A or B
- in Information and Software Technology 96% of students received Grades A or B
- in Drama all students received Grades A or B
- in French all students received a Grade A
- in German all students received a Grade A
- in Japanese 93% of students received Grades A or B
- in Music 88% of students received Grades A or B
- in Graphics Technology 88% of students received Grades A or B
- in Visual Arts 90% of students received Grades A or B.

The distribution of grades showed that boys received a higher percentage of Grade A results than girls in Mathematics, Science, Australian Geography, Commerce, History, Information and Software Technology and in Personal Development / Health / Physical Education.

School Certificate relative performance comparison to Year 5 (value-adding)

The school is pleased with the significant improvement in student performance since Year 5 and that the value-added growth is higher than the school average in English, Mathematics, Science and Australian History, Civics and Citizenship. The Computer Skills improvement is difficult to judge since 2006 was the first year for this School Certificate test.



Higher School Certificate

In the Higher School Certificate, the performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest). In extension courses, the performance bands range from Band E1 (lowest) to Band E4 (highest).

It should be noted statewide there is no set percentage of students in each band. The results are standards-referenced and the state percentage figure for each band can vary significantly.

Girraween High School formed extension classes in History, Japanese, English and Mathematics.

Acceleration continued in Chemistry enabling 19 students to complete this course one year early.

Seven students completed distinction courses in Cosmology, Comparative Literature or Philosophy through Charles Sturt University.

Students from our school were placed:

- first and third in the state in Information Processes and Technology (IPT)
- second in the state in Advanced English
- fifth in the state in Cosmology
- seventh in the state in Ancient History
- seventh in the state in Music 1.

Special congratulations are in order for Kunal Sharma who was in the top seven in the state for two courses and received a UAI of 99.95.

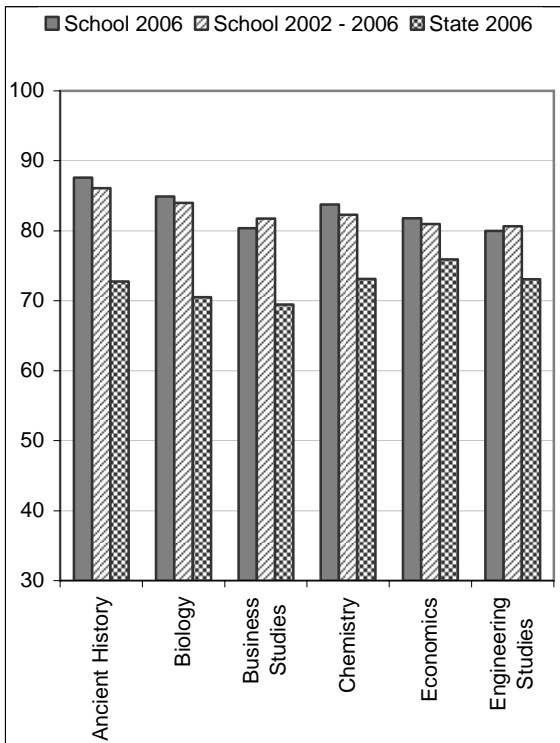
Five students received the Premier's Award for All Round Excellence in the Higher School Certificate for gaining results in the highest band in courses totalling 10 or more units.

Girraween High School received 189 mentions on the Board of Studies Distinguished Achievers List.

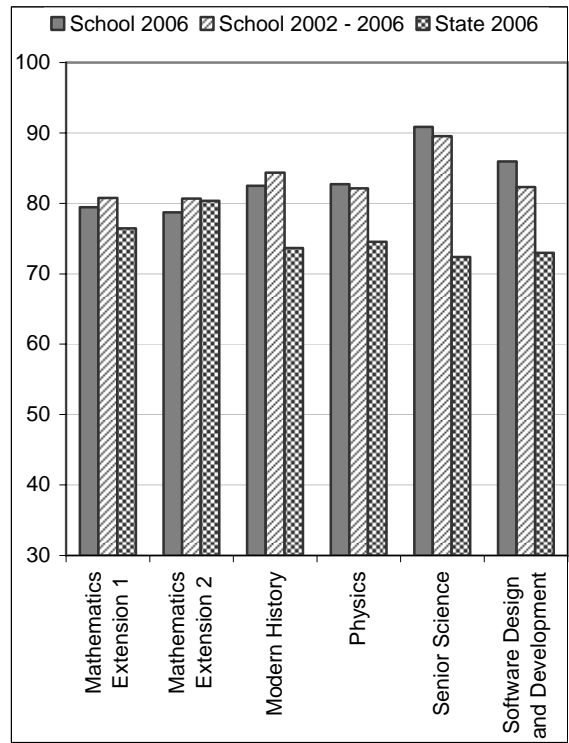
Over 60% of students received a UAI of 90 or greater, with over 40% of students in Year 12, 2006 receiving a UAI of 95 or greater.

The following four graphs show the mean (average) score of students in each of the Higher School Certificate courses with ten or more students. The graphs show the impressive results of Girraween High School students in the 2006 HSC. For the majority of the courses, Girraween High School students performed significantly above the state mean.

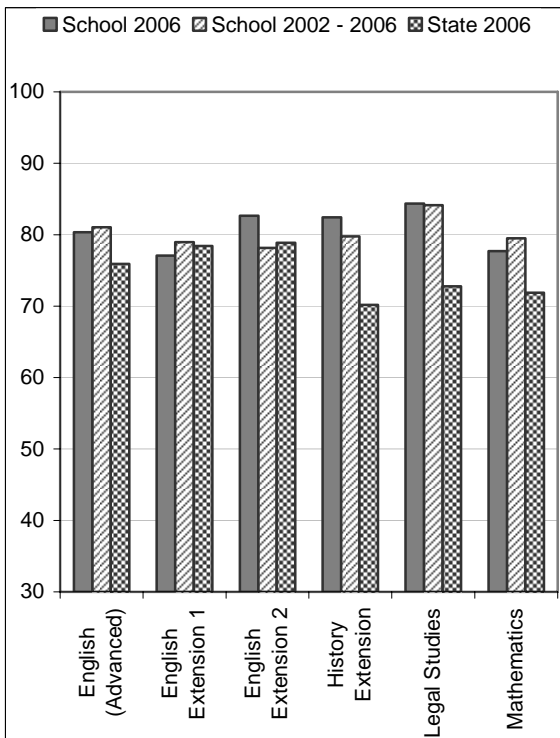
HSC Graph 1: Mean score of students



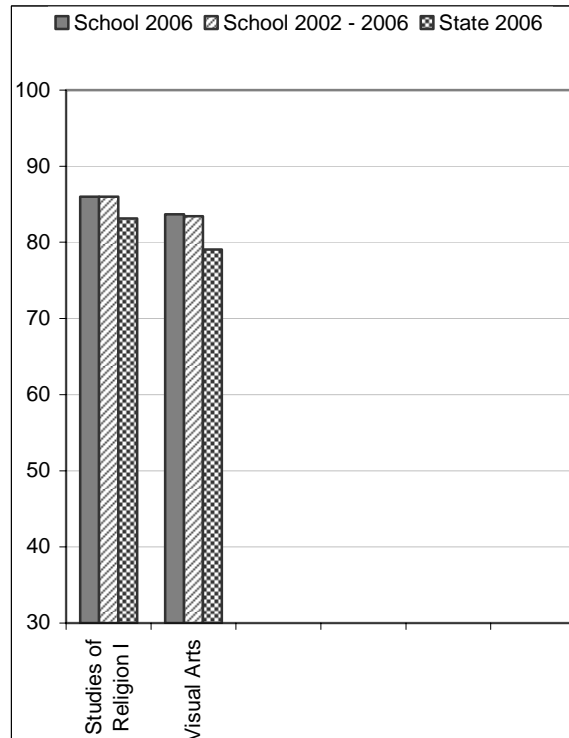
HSC Graph 3: Mean score of students



HSC Graph 2: Mean score of students



HSC Graph 4: Mean score of students



The analysis of each KLA follows.

English

In English (Advanced) average performance was above the state mean with nine students placed on the Distinguished Achievers List. One student scored 99% and was placed second in the state in the course. A comparison with performance in the School Certificate showed students had made progress in line with state average.

In English Extension 1, three students achieved a Band E4. In English Extension 2, outstanding results were achieved with seven students, or 39% of the candidature, achieving a Band E4 (compared with only three students achieving Band E4 in 2005).

Mathematics

Both Mathematics and Extension 1 had means well above state average. In Extension 2 where the Mathematics faculty had trialled a third class, presenting 52 candidates (approximately 10 students more than usual), the mean was 0.34 marks below state average.

In all three courses offered in 2006, the value-added progress of students made from the 2004 School Certificate was above state average. Especially pleasing was the value-added of students who received a Band 4 in the 2004 School Certificate.

Thirteen students were placed on the Distinguished Achievers List for Mathematics, 30 students were placed on the Extension 1 list, while nine students were placed on the Extension 2 list.

The number of students in the top two bands (Bands E4 and E3) in Extension 2 was similar to our performances since 2002. However, the number of students in Band E2 was significantly higher, indicating that possibly too many students had elected to study this most challenging course.

Extension 1 showed a similar pattern. The number of students in the top bands (Bands E4 and E3) were similar to our performances over the last few years. However, with higher numbers of candidates (an increase of 10 students from 2005) a larger number of students received a Band E1 (an extra 6 students compared to 2005).

Mathematics showed this same pattern with a similar number of students in the top bands (Bands 5 and 6) as in the last few years. However, six students achieved a Band 1 or 2. This may have been the result of students not electing to present in General Mathematics in 2006.

Science

Results were excellent with all courses performing well above state averages and above the Like School Group (other selective schools) performances in Biology, Chemistry and Senior Science.

In all HSC Science subjects (comprising Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Senior Science) student's progress from the School Certificate was above the state average.

Several students were placed on the Distinguished Achiever's Lists: 12 students in Physics, 17 students in Chemistry, 7 students in Biology and 14 students in Senior Science.

The percentage of students in Bands 5 and 6 in 2005 compared to our 2006 results showed Biology was consistent at 81%, Chemistry went from 75% in 2005 to 80% in 2006, Physics went from 63% to 66% and Senior Science went from 83% to 88%.

In Senior Science, 82% of students achieved a mark of 90% or above compared to 7.4% across the state, 27% of Biology students achieved a mark of 90% or above compared to 7.8% across the state, 28% of Chemistry students achieved a mark of 90% or above compared to 8.8% across the state, while 18% of Physics students achieved a mark of 90% or above compared to 7.7% across the state.

History

All subjects were well above state average with the Ancient History results being the best at Girraween High School for six years.

In Ancient History, 52.3% of students achieved a Band 6 compared to 10.63% for the state. One student, Kunal Sharma came seventh in the state.

In Legal Studies, 83.32% of students achieved a Band 5 or 6 compared to the state average of 37.36%, while in Modern History the figure was 70.58% compared to the state average of 42.35%.

History Extension showed a positive improvement on 2005 with 90% of students in the top two bands in 2006.

Social Sciences

In Economics, five students achieved a Band 6, while 21 students received a Band 5. 69% of students achieved a Band 5 or 6 compared to the state average of 46%.

In Business Studies, 11 students achieved a Band 5. 58% of students achieved a Band 5 or 6 compared to the state average of 31%.

In Geography, all three students achieved a Band 5 or 6 – one student achieved a Band 6, while two students received a Band 5.

The Studies of Religion 1 Unit course had its first group of students attempting the HSC. Four students received a Band 6, nine students received a Band 5 and the remaining two students received a Band 4. This means that 86% of students achieved Band 5 or 6 compared to the state average of 47%.

The percentage of Girraween students in Bands 5 or 6 showed an improvement in Economics and Geography. In Business Studies there was a decline from 68% of students in 2005 achieving a Band 5 or 6 to 58% of students in 2006.

Technology and Applied Studies

Results for this group of subjects were above state average. A comparison with performance in the School Certificate showed students had made progress in line with the state average in all courses.

Five students were placed on the Distinguished Achievers List in Information Processes and Technology compared with two students in 2005. Seven students were placed on the Distinguished Achievers List in Software Design and Development compared with three students in 2005.

Samuel Vo achieved first place and Jonathan Hakim achieved third place in the state for Information Processes and Technology.

In Software Design and Development, 42% of the students achieved a Band 6. In 2006, 84% of the students achieved a Band 5 or 6, compared with all students in 2005 achieving a Band 5 or 6.

In Information Processes and Technology, 72% of the students achieved a Band 6, with all of the students achieving a Band 5 or 6 (which was the same situation in 2005).

In Engineering Studies, 60% of the students achieved a Band 5 or 6 in 2006 compared to all students achieving a Band 5 or 6 in 2005.

Creative Arts

In Creative Arts, students' performance in all courses was above the state mean.

In Visual Arts, two students were placed on the Distinguished Achievers List. In the Music 1 course, three students were placed on the Distinguished Achievers List – including Katrina Smith who achieved seventh placed in the state in Music 1.

Both Katrina Smith and Robert Boncardo were nominated to perform in the Encore concert for music. A Girraween Visual Arts student had his major artwork selected for Art Express.

Due to the small candidature in these subjects comparisons with the School Certificate are not reliable.

Languages

All students in Japanese Continuers achieved a Band 5 or 6, with students performing significantly above the state mean. Two students were placed on the Distinguished Achievers List.

In French Continuers, one student was placed on the Distinguished Achievers List.

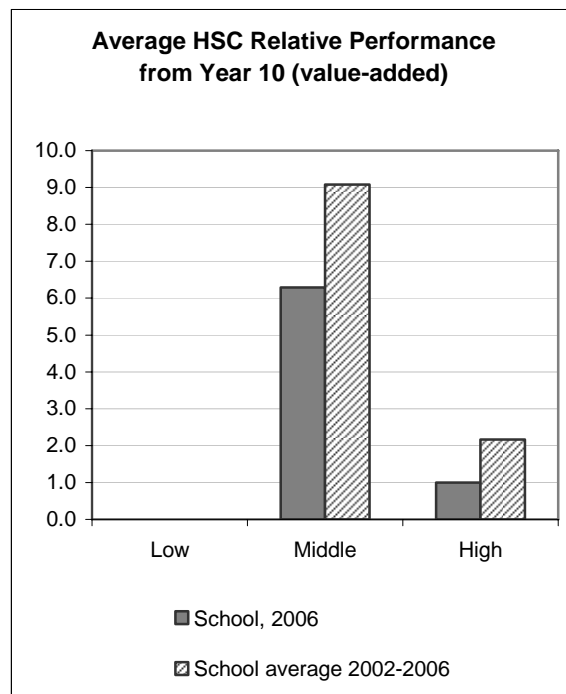
A comparison with performance in the School Certificate showed students had made significant relative growth in Languages.

Personal Development Health and Physical Education (PDHPE)

In PDHPE, all four students were placed on the Distinguished Achievers List, with the students performing significantly above the state mean.

Higher School Certificate relative performance comparison to School Certificate (value-adding)

In recent years, especially in 2004 and 2005, the school has significantly value-added to students Higher School Certificate results relative to their performance in the School Certificate. The positive value-adding was still evident in 2006 but it was not to the same level as recent years.



National benchmarks

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum desirable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages. These are referred to as national benchmarks.

Percentage of Year 7 students in our school achieving benchmarks in 2005 and 2006

The impressive performance of Girraween High School students measured nationally is evident when it is noted that all students in Year 7 in 2006 and in 2005 met national benchmarks.

Percentage of Year 7 students meeting national benchmarks				
	2005		2006	
	School	National	School	National
Reading	100.0	*	100.0	*
Writing	100.0	*	100.0	*
Numeracy	100.0	*	100.0	*

* National benchmarks were not available at the time of printing this report.

Significant programs and initiatives

In 2006, programs and initiatives were implemented by the school to address identified needs.

Aboriginal education

Throughout 2006, faculties addressed issues relating to Aboriginal education and Aboriginal perspectives.

All faculties included in their 2007 Management Plan a review of faculty policies and practices to ensure that they align with the *Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy 2006–2008*. Throughout 2007, perspectives and activities relevant to Aboriginal education and training are to be incorporated into all KLAs.

Multicultural education

Over 70% of students at Girraween High School are from a Non-English Speaking Background (NESB). The school is proud of the cultural diversity and the cultural harmony that is evident in classrooms, in the playground and through the inclusive nature of the school's welfare system.

Learning about other cultures is incorporated into all courses where it is appropriate. Students in Years 7 and 8 study French or Japanese and in Years 9 and 10 there are elective classes in these courses. French and Japanese are also studied for the Higher School Certificate by some students.

In 2006, students were exposed to other cultures through interaction with our sister school, Hisai High School in Japan, and a school visit from College Gerrard-Philippe in France. Interschool visits increased greatly the understanding of students about the Australian culture compared to other cultures.

Respect and responsibility

The invigoration of the House system in 2006 was possibly the most successful program of the year. In 2006, students were divided into Houses for Roll Call, as well as for Inter-House competitions and sporting functions such as the swimming, athletics and cross country carnivals.

It is envisaged that in future, each Roll Call/House group will remain with the same Roll Call teacher each year throughout their time at the school.

The success of the House system in 2006 was measured by the increase in House and school spirit, record student attendance and participation in all three school carnivals, and the increased enthusiasm to be involved in extra-curricular activities.

In 2006, new procedures were adopted for the election of student leaders to expand student leadership opportunities. New leadership roles of House Leaders and House Captains were also created.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is an international leadership in action program, available to all young people aged between fourteen and twenty-five. To complete the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, students are encouraged to show imagination, to be able to look beyond barriers and to set goals.

In 2006, the school had 41 students participating in the Bronze award, 22 students in the Silver award and 20 students in the Gold award.

An important component of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award is community service. Bronze award students are required to complete a first aid certificate. Silver award students are required to complete 30 hours of community service over 6 months, while Gold award students must complete 60 hours of community service over 12 months.

After completing a Duke of Edinburgh's Award, students will have developed many life skills including self belief and self confidence, a positive and realistic self image, a sense of respect and responsibility to others and a connection to the broader society.

The school's innovative student welfare programs offer a range of opportunities to promote respect and responsibility. The Year 7 transition program includes informing the parents and students of the school's expectations, as well as sessions on anti-bullying strategies and relating to other students.

All Year 9 students participated in 2006 in a school developed program called the 4 R's. This program provides students with strategies to address and enhance their resilience, reliability, resourcefulness and responsibility.

External presenters were invited to address various groups of students at the school. Speakers, such as Brent Sanders and past students, and presentations, such as Educate to Elevate, highlighted to students respect and responsibilities to themselves, the school and the wider community.

Support to students and another opportunity to promote respect and responsibility was provided by students through the Peer Support, Peer Mediation and the Year 12 Peer Tutoring programs.

Throughout 2006, senior students and staff donated blood at the Parramatta Blood Bank. This initiative helped to raise among all students and staff a sense of school and community pride, as well as the sense that the school is assisting those in need in the wider community.

Other programs

Success for Boys Program

Girraween High School received a grant of \$10 000 from the Federal Government under the *Success for Boys* program. This funding is for staff development and the development of school-based projects aimed at improving the learning outcomes for boys. Overall, male students at Girraween High do well in the HSC but there are some boys who need special assistance to ensure that they reach their potential.

On the School Development Day held on May 1 2006, Chris Curran, an educational consultant, conducted a workshop relating to the program. All staff underwent the first phase of the professional development program which was designed to raise the awareness of staff of boys' education issues and to canvass interested staff for school-based projects.

Throughout 2006, staff worked on developing school-based projects and resources based on mentoring

and technology. Further development and implementation of strategies to improve the outcomes for boys are planned for 2007.

Sister School Program

The school celebrated in 2006 twelve years of a sister school relationship with Hisai High School in Japan. The Hisai – Girraween Sister School Program has helped all our students broaden their knowledge of another culture.

In the twelve years of the relationship more than 235 Australian and Japanese students have had the opportunity to experience life in another country, improving their respective language skills and forming new international friendships.

In March each year a teacher and a group of students from Hisai visit Girraween High School. In the September/October vacation the visit is reciprocated.

The friendships formed on these relatively short visits are often long lasting.

The sister school relationship remains strong and continues to provide an excellent opportunity for staff and students to experience another nation's culture.

Progress on 2006 targets

Target 1

To reduce the percentage of students in all courses in Band 4 of the School Certificate Tests to less than 5% of the cohort.

The target was not achieved but most courses did make significant reductions in the percentage of the cohort in Band 4.

Our achievements include:

- the target was achieved in Mathematics and Science
- in English Band 4 declined from 20% to 6.6%
- Australian History Band 4 declined from 10% to 7.5%.

Target 2

To improve student learning outcomes in numeracy.

Our achievements include:

- student progression from Year 7 to 8 in numeracy, as measured by SNAP, was significantly above state average
- the school won a Western Sydney Regional award for achievement in numeracy
- all staff are more aware of issues relating to numeracy.

Target 3

To increase resilience in students.

Our achievements include:

- the school developed 4 R's program (that has a focus on: resilience, reliability, resourcefulness and responsibility) used for Year 9 in 2005 was evaluated, then modifications were made to the program and successfully implemented with Year 9 in 2006
- the trialling of increased access for students to Year 10 Peer Mediators allowed earlier intervention and resolution of conflict between students
- refinement of anti-bullying strategies and procedures and the appropriate dealing of student welfare issues
- the introduction of the concept of 'personal best' awards, called Year Recognition Awards, to all of the junior Year groups Recognition Assemblies.

Target 4

To improve student learning outcomes in sport.

Our achievements include:

- record attendances at athletics, swimming and cross country carnivals
- participation in House system increased
- new opportunities for student leadership successfully implemented through the House system.

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 2006 our school carried out evaluations of Planning and Extension 2 Mathematics.

Educational and management practice

School Planning

Background

The school has had a significant turnover of staff over the past few years. In the light of these changes it was felt that an evaluation of school planning would assist our management team to respond to any significant issues raised.

The evaluation instrument chosen was SchoolMap, which is provided to schools by the Department of Education and Training. Fifty-five teachers were surveyed using best practice statements on school planning. For each statement of best practice, respondents were required to select one of four options ranging from strong agreement to strong disagreement.

Findings and conclusions

The survey revealed one significant area where school planning could be improved. Only 42% of those surveyed believed the processes to allocate resources were open and understood.

In all other areas of school planning surveyed, the response was very positive. Over 90% of those surveyed believed the school involved staff, students and parents in decisions about the school purpose. Over 80% believed that the school priorities and targets are identified through planned evaluation, that the main purpose of school targets is to improve student learning outcomes, that planning documents are developed with the support of students, parents and staff, and the planning processes are responsive to emerging needs.

Future directions

The planning process developed in 2006 will continue in 2007. The development of the school budget will require wider school community participation to increase the openness and understanding of this process.

Curriculum

Extension 2 Mathematics

Background

Since 2001 there has been a 44% increase in the number of students presenting for this course. There has been an increase in the number of students in the E2 band. The school already had a selection process for the course and this needed to be reviewed.

The evaluation instrument chosen was the Student Subject Attitudes Survey (SS-SSA), which is provided to schools by the Department of Education and Training.

Findings and conclusions

Students rated *Thinking they would like the course and expecting to do well* as important in choosing the course. Parental influence was more important for girls (37%) than boys (22%) in choosing the course.

Students were asked to rate the effort put in this course relative to the amount of work put into other courses. Seventy seven percent of girls rated this course the most demanding, as against 68% of the boys.

Less than 35% of students were getting together with other students to help one another and share learning.

Over 85% of students believed their teachers expected them to do well.

A larger percentage of boys (77%) compared to girls (61%) were confident that they really understood what was taught, but interestingly girls performed better in the Higher School Certificate.

Future directions

The school's current selection procedure for the course is to continue.

Students are to be encouraged to form study groups and assist each other with their work.

Even though more students are achieving in the E2 band, students completing the course have not had any significant change in their average Universities Admissions Index. As an academically selective school, students will be encouraged to take courses at the highest level.

Other evaluations

Intellectual Quality and Significance Years 7 to 9

Background

The evaluation instrument chosen was the Intellectual Quality and Significance Survey, which is provided to schools by the Department of Education and Training. This survey followed up a Quality of School Life Survey conducted in 2005. Information from those surveys is assisting the school improve student performance in Stage 4.

Findings and conclusions

Overall students were very positive about the intellectual quality in lessons.

Significant numbers of students struggled to see relationships and connections between courses.

A disappointing result was that many students believed they did not learn how Indigenous Australians might view things.

It was also disappointing to find that 25% of boys still considered not everyone in the class was treated fairly.

Future directions

The school will need to ensure the Aboriginal Education Strategy is implemented more effectively. This is addressed in the 2007 Management Plans.

The *Success for Boys* program introduced in 2006 will continue in 2007.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In the process of developing the 2006 Strategic Plan, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. The school community was consulted in the development and refinement of the school's Core Values and the school's Statement of Purpose.

During the development of the Key Strategic Areas the school needs to address throughout 2007–2009, the opinions of parents, students and staff were also sought. A total of 85 people responded to this survey – comprising 48 students, 25 parents and 12 staff. There was overwhelming satisfaction with the school's emphasis on academic excellence, high expectations and high achievement.

Parents and students were pleased with the emphasis on learning at the school and the high quality of the teachers and the delivery of their lessons. One parent noted the pleasing "... high standards of academic excellence which facilitates leadership through tolerance and acceptance of diversity".

Respondents were aware of the school's "... high quality of facilities to promote learning" (as one student responded) and stressed that these facilities need to be maintained and further enhanced.

Staff, students and parents were satisfied with the current school spirit and culture and felt that this should be maintained and enhanced in the future. A teacher felt that the school should keep the "... happy and warm atmosphere", while a parent was pleased with the "... friendly ambience between students".

Survey respondents were pleased with the school's Recognition Assemblies. One teacher noted that the school should keep "... Recognition Assemblies [as they are] excellent in order to enhance positive self esteem".

One parent stated that the school should keep "...all the wonderful music initiatives such as the concerts, ensembles, music tuition".

Respondents were pleased with the invigorated House system, with one student stating that the school should keep "... the house system – it makes it a lot more fun", while a teacher commented that the "...new house system [is] excellent – it's really improving the tone of the school and the kids are really enthusiastic".

Professional learning

The Professional Learning (PL) funds were expended in the areas of:

- syllabus implementation
- Quality Teaching
- career development
- welfare and equity
- use of ICT
- beginning teachers.

The first two areas listed above used the bulk of the funding in 2006.

This enabled staff to attend training and development in specific syllabus areas and extend their teaching expertise. Staff were involved in attending a range of conferences and workshops that addressed school priorities in the area of Quality Teaching.

School Development Days in 2006 covered a variety of topics including:

- strategic planning
- emergency care training
- boys education
- anaphylaxis training
- ICT training – boys' education, digital photography, interactive whiteboard.

All school development days were evaluated by the staff and generally positive feedback was received after each day.

Projects funded by PL funds in 2006 included:

- Executive Conference
- Strategic Planning Conference
- Welfare conference
- Year 7 Literacy Day
- Peer Support Program.

As a result of the Strategic Planning process undertaken in 2006, new priorities have been targeted for Professional Learning in 2007 such as:

- The establishment of a numeracy team
- A focus on the engagement of middle years learners
- The accreditation of New Scheme Teachers.

School development 2007 – 2009

Throughout 2006, consultation was conducted to develop the school's Strategic Plan for the 3 year period 2007–2009. Clearly understood priorities, strategies and action plans were developed, with ownership of vision and product by the entire school community.

Wide consultation of the school community was conducted prior to, and after, the 2006 Strategic Planning Conference held on Wednesday 31 May 2006. In attendance at the conference were 44 people – 13 parents, 14 students and 17 staff members. An overview of the Strategic Planning process conducted leading up to the Conference was given, which included the development and refinement of the school's Core Values and the school's Statement of Purpose.

The following Key Strategic Areas that the school community needs to address in terms of outcomes and suggested projects throughout 2007–2009 were identified:

- Academic Excellence
- School Spirit and Culture
- Community Involvement.

Participants at the Strategic Planning Conference were given an opportunity to work in small groups (comprising teachers, students and parents) to develop outcomes and suggested projects for one of these Key Strategic Areas.

The outcomes and suggested projects developed at the Conference were further refined before becoming the centrepiece for the school for 2007–2009, beginning with the 2007 Management Plans.

Training and support was provided to Head Teachers and Program Managers to ensure the smooth transition into the development of the 2007 Management Plans. During Term 4 2006, a booklet was produced that contains the 2006 Strategic Plan and the 2007 Management Plans. This booklet is available on the school website.

Targets for 2007

Target 1: To develop a culture of high expectations and students attempting to achieve their Personal Best.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- culture of high expectations and 'Personal Best' (PB) award encouraged
- endeavour to increase engagement in learning for all students
- evaluation of implementation of *Success for Boys* strategies
- review all school policies and practices to ensure that they align with the *Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy 2006–2008*
- expand opportunities for the recognition of student achievement.

Our success will be measured by:

- positive *Quality of School Life* survey results for Years 7–9 students
- more students have achievement recognised at Recognition Assemblies and other appropriate forums.

Target 2: To reduce the percentage of students in all courses in the School Certificate Tests and the Higher School Certificate Examinations in Band 4 (excluding HSC Extension Courses).

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- effective monitoring of student performance
- develop individual learning plans for targeted students
- augment current best teaching practice to maximise student performance in the SC and HSC, leading to results in the highest two bands in all courses
- develop school-wide Middle Years strategies
- implementation of *Success for Boys* strategies
- early detection of students whose performance is of concern.

Our success will be measured by:

- action learning plans implemented
- 50% reduction in Band 4 School Certificate and Higher School Certificate results (excluding HSC Extension courses).
- SC and HSC value added data from SMART to be equal to or better than comparable schools.

Target 3: To maintain and further enhance educational facilities.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- maintain and further enhance school facilities
- condition assessment of the school's facilities conducted and areas of concern indicated
- school provides a clean, stimulating and functional environment for staff and students
- beautification of school gymnasium
- restoration of embankments around Assembly Area
- senior students responsible for making enhancements to Senior Study Room.

Our success will be measured by:

- school site and classrooms are clean, comfortable and stimulating
- provision of further facilities receive favourable feedback from students, staff and parents.

Target 4: To implement the school Strategic Plan and to monitor and evaluate progress.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- 2007 Program Area and Faculty Management Plans address the school Strategic Plan.

Our success will be measured by:

- progress reports throughout the year reporting favourably on the implementation of the Management Plans
- Mid-Year Interim Reports and End of Year Reports from Program Areas and Faculties providing evidence of productive alignments with the school Strategic Plan.

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.

Sharmaine Aguanta	Student
Zuie Hervey	President P & C Association
Christopher Howard	Staff
Greg Murty	Relieving Principal
Heather Weber	Staff

School contact information

Girraween High School

Gilba Road, Girraween 2145

Telephone: (02) 9636 7293

Facsimile: (02) 9896 3274

Email: girraween-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au

Website: www.girraween-h.schools.nsw.edu.au

School code: 8500