Our school at a glance

Students
Millbank School has an enrolment of 27 students comprising 19 girls and 8 boys. 11 students identify as Aboriginal.

Staff
Millbank Public School has a teaching principal and one full-time classroom Teacher.

A part-time position of two and a half days per week is made up of release from face to face, library, learning support and a Gifted and Talented program. This position is partially funded by the Priority Schools Program.

The school has a part-time School Administration Manager, two part-time School Learning Support Officers and a General Assistant who works one day per week.

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

Significant programs and initiatives
Aboriginal Education
Multicultural Education
National Partnerships
Priority Schools Program
Gifted & Talented Program
Environmental Education

Student achievement in 2011
As there were less than 10 students involved in the National Assessment Program, and in order to comply with privacy and personal information policies, the results from these will be discussed in general.

Literacy & Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3
NAPLAN results for new students will inform the development of programs which will support their educational needs.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5
All students in Year 5 achieved at or above the national minimum standard in Reading, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. 50% of students achieved at or above the national minimum standard in Writing.

Numeracy – NAPLAN Yr 5
All students in Year 5 achieved at or above the national minimum standard in Numeracy.

Messages
Principal’s message
There have been a number of new directions, this year, resulting from additional funding provided by the National Partnerships Program, and as a result of the ongoing professional development of staff and their commitment to continuous improvement.

Through participation in the Positive Behaviour for Learning Program, school values have been clarified and made more explicit. Consultation between students, community and staff has led to the development of the core values of Responsibility, Reliability and Respect.

A new vision for engaging students as 21st century learners has resulted in the wider use of Web2 tools in the classroom, creating opportunities for improved home-school participation in learning.

2011 has seen the completion of a three year planning cycle, and the compilation of this report has provided a valuable opportunity for reflection and consideration of where our school is headed in 2012 – 2015.

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.

Arthur Bain

Students and Teachers at Millbank Public School
P & C message

There was a very slow start to the P & C year. At one stage we weren't sure whether we could continue or not. An extraordinary meeting was held to discuss the future of the P&C and this attracted a few more members. From this meeting a committed group of parents banded together to raise funds to have an end of year camp at Scott’s Head, all students attended. Some of the successful fundraising activities were discos held at the Community Hall; the Halloween Disco was attended by a wide range of ghouls, demons, accident victims and mummies, not to mention the odd princess or two.

Many thanks go out to those who donated goods for the Christmas hamper, which made a substantial sum for the P & C. We are looking forward to the same enthusiasm in 2012.

Shari Knox

Student representative’s message

The Student Representative Council (SRC) has achieved a lot in 2011. In the first term they had a ‘Colour for a Cure’ day. The school bought six cans of hair spray, and for a gold coin donation kids could have their hair coloured. They raised a fair amount of money. They have had two pet days, both of which were successful. Olivia Knox and Lily Kyre attended an Impact Leadership Conference in Term Three, where they learned some new leadership skills, as well as debating skills and the high five leadership principles; careful thinking, involving others, generosity towards others, prioritizing time and recovering from setbacks. They held a toy sale to raise money for the Queensland floods. With the Coles voucher scheme, the SRC decided on what sports equipment that the school should order. With all the vouchers collected, the SRC gained a lot of new equipment. They have developed a ‘Better Buddies’ scheme. All the students in Years Three and above have a buddy from the younger class. The smaller kids can rely on their buddies to look after them and help them when they need it.

Lily Kyre

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

Our school’s average attendance was 91.6% in 2011; however we are still below the State average of 94.3%.

Management of non-attendance

Good attendance is recognised and celebrated at Millbank Public School.

Attendance is a regular agenda item in staff meetings and poor attendance is followed up with phone calls. The importance of good attendance is highlighted in regular newsletters and at school assemblies.
Class sizes

Primary class sizes are included in the annual school report in order to provide parents with as much local information as possible. The following table shows our class sizes as reported at the 2011 Class Size Audit conducted on Monday 21 March 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll class</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total per year</th>
<th>Total In class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JUNIOR CLASS</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUNIOR CLASS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUNIOR CLASS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUNIOR CLASS</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENIOR CLASS</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENIOR CLASS</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structure of classes

Two class groups were formed, a Junior and a Senior class. The junior class included students from Kindergarten to Year 3, Early Stage One, Stage One and early Stage Two; and the Senior Class included students from Year 4 to Year 6, Stages Two and Three. When a Year 3 student left at the end of Term 1 it was decided to move the remaining Stage 3 student to the Senior Class.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>1.168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Release from Face to Face</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority School Funding</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>0.696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Assistant</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.432</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table describes staff establishment paid directly by the Department of Education and Training, in addition 2 Student Learning Support Officers (SLSO’s) are employed and a part-time Music teacher.

These additional positions are paid from a range of Tied Funds including the Priority Schools Program, to improve educational equity in low socio-economic areas; Integration Funding, used to support students with disabilities; and the Dhanggati Language Program, funded to support student learning of the local Aboriginal Language and improving understanding of the culture.

The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on Indigenous composition of their workforce.

At Millbank School we actively encourage the employment of Indigenous staff. The language tutor, an SLSO position, is a local Dhanggati elder and one other SLSO also identifies as Aboriginal.

Staff retention

Staffing has remained stable however falling enrolments in 2012 will impact on staffing numbers.

Teacher qualifications

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teaching team
Financial summary

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary:</th>
<th>30/11/2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>41738.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>49127.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>68163.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>2837.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>2482.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>525.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>164875.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
<td>8135.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>1655.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
<td>5984.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>2146.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>59351.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
<td>2679.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
<td>13936.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>6464.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>6375.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
<td>520.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
<td>16775.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
<td>124025.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance carried forward</td>
<td>40849.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff professional development is a high priority at Millbank School, this year a significant investment was made using tied funds.

A full copy of the school’s 2011 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meeting of the P & C. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2011

Achievements

Arts

As part of our balanced school curriculum, we have a strong commitment to creative arts. Students at Millbank have had access to a rich music program once again in 2011. From Year 3 upwards, students who demonstrate the ability to focus and practice a musical instrument have the opportunity to learn keyboard in small group settings. Some talented musicians have emerged from the keyboard lessons taught by Ruth Shepherd, a specialist music teacher with 30 years of experience teaching keyboard and music with a focus on it being an enjoyable and creative experience.

Representatives from our school also participated in the Macleay Educational Community of Schools Music Festival, joining students from 17 other schools to sing as part of a massed choir. All students participating in the festival found it a wonderful experience. It is an especially great opportunity for students from small schools like ours.

Ruth, the specialist music teacher attended professional development provided by Musica Viva. Participating teachers were presented with strategies to engage reluctant students in music education. Our students joined Willawarrin Public School for two concerts this year. Firstly, The Hummingbirds, a female a capella quartet whose energetic performance spans the realms of popular singing from gospel, to blues and doo wop to lullabies. Later in the year students were
enthralled by the rhythms of Africa, with Teranga, taking the students on a journey through song and dance in the Senegalese culture and showing them how to connect to their inner rhythm.

The end of year concert was a showcase for talented musicians in our school, with some students performing their own compositions. Performances ranged from classical and contemporary keyboard, to jazz and rhythmic improvisations.

Students submitted works in the Macleay Educational Community of Schools “Spring into Art” exhibition at Gladstone Art Gallery. A variety of media was used including detailed drawing, collage and sculpture.

Performing arts are part of the integrated curriculum at Millbank School, experiences included attending a performance by “Mr. Badger”, the lovable character from “Wind in the Willows”. Students were enthralled and inspired by his one man show.

Sport

Millbank Public School values the participation and achievements of its students in both individual and team events and encourages a positive attitude and an active lifestyle. A wide range of sporting events provided students with opportunities to display their skills. All students participated in the “Upriver Fun Swimming Carnival” with Bellbrook, Greenhill and Willawarrin Schools. More competitive swimmers were involved in the PSSA Swimming Competition.

Students participated in the “John O’Neill” Sports Carnival, an annual carnival for small schools in the Upper Macleay.

Successful competitors from our school’s athletics carnival entered the Macleay Small Schools Athletics Carnival. With significant community support, softball has become very popular at our school, with Bellbrook and Willawarrin Schools joining us for a softball coaching day with members of the Macleay Softball Association. Another highlight was a staff/parent/student softball challenge on the last day of Term 3.
Our archery program has continued to inspire students from Years 3 to 6. Students learn the skills of persistence and analyse data to demonstrate how practice and participation lead to improvement.

Community Engagement

Millbank School encourages parent and community involvement in the school, and the development of home-school partnerships to improve student learning outcomes. Some examples of our commitment to community engagement are:

The Books in Homes program, that has been running at the school for three years now. This program provides each student with 9 brand new books, which they have chosen themselves, to take home and keep. The children chose the 3 books from 48 quality books (25% by indigenous authors) which are sent to the school for inclusion in the school library each term. The children order the books and these are given out at the end of term assembly. The books each have a name plate on which is written the child’s name and a bag to keep them in.

Durri Aboriginal Medical Service has been running a Diabetes Education Program at our school. Students in Years 5 and 6, and their parents, have participated in a research project for the University of Newcastle.

As part of the LEAPS Program (Lifting Educational Aspirations for Parents and Students), Year 5 and 6 students from Willawarrin, Bellbrook and Millbank Primary Schools took part in napkin folding, computer animation, checking blood pressure and nail painting techniques, at North Coast TAFE’s Port Macquarie Campus. Participating students were accompanied by a parent or family member.

The day also gave attendees further information on how to research career, study and finance options through various websites from North Coast TAFE, University of Newcastle, Mid Coast Uni Portal and Hastings Education Fund. It is hoped that these resources will be used in helping students decide on tertiary or higher study and career pathways in the future.

Camps and Excursions

Excursions are used to support learning programs in school; they enable students to apply knowledge and understanding from the classroom to the world beyond the school walls. In 2011 the school participated in two excursions and a whole school camp.

To support a unit of learning about production and sustainability students from our school visited Australian Solar Timbers. They saw how timber is sustainably produced, how the company utilizes solar power to run the plant and discussed the importance of sustainable industrial development. In 4th term the senior class had an excursion to Uralla to see the museum exhibition at McCrossin’s Mill on the Chinese at the Rocky River gold field. This was part of our integrated literacy/ HSIE/Science unit on the gold rush.

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Mountain” by Christopher Cheng very real for the students.

During Term 4 the school packed up and went to Scott’s head Youth camp for a three day camp. John McQueen from Cascades Environmental Education Centre took the students for a day out investigating dune care, wave formation and the flora and fauna of the beach environment.

Surf Education Australia taught students about survival in the surf, strategies for identifying and surviving in rips: and a basic introduction to surfing.

The camp was an excellent experience for students, staff and parents and gave us all the opportunity to develop more positive relationships.

Environmental Education

The senior class participated in a Streamwatch excursion and tested the water quality of Hickey’s Creek at three sites: in the rainforest, in semi-cleared land, and in fully cleared land. The class tested the water temperature, the pH, turbidity and the number of aquatic macro invertebrates. Catching the water organisms was very entertaining as everyone waded in the water with their nets and jars. Mayfly larvae, which are very sensitive to pollution, were found at all three sites which was a positive sign although the diversity decreased as we moved downstream. The excursion made everyone very aware of the importance of our local water catchment.

The students again embraced participation in “Schools Clean Up Day”. Students, under the guidance of the SRC cleaned up the roadside from Hickey’s Creek Bridge to the Community Hall. Students identified that there was a lot less rubbish than in previous years. We took this as an indication that out local community has become more aware of the importance of caring for our environment.

Cleaning up our beautiful environment

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 these assessments.

Yr 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)
Yr 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)

As there were less than 10 students involved in the National Assessment Program in year 3 and Year 5, and in order to comply with privacy and personal information policies, the results from these will be discussed in general.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 3

Areas of strength include:

- Sentence structure and punctuation,
- Visual literacy – connecting information in the text and illustrations,
- Inferring the reason for an event.

Areas for development include:

- Structuring texts in writing,
- Identifying the main idea in a narrative,
- Identifying errors in spelling.
**Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 3**

Areas of strength include:
- Identifying three dimensional shapes by their nets,
- Working mathematically to solve multi-step word problems,
- Using co-ordinates to locate position.

Areas for Development include:
- Using fractions,
- Using an array to solve a multiplication problem,
- Interpreting a timetable to locate information.

**Literacy – NAPLAN Year 5**

Areas of strength include:
- Interpreting metaphor,
- Using effective spelling strategies in writing,
- Connecting information in a text.

Areas for development include:
- Inferring the reason for an event in a text,
- Identifying punctuation errors when proofreading,
- Using commas appropriately in lists.

**Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 5**

Areas of strength include:
- Using formal units to determine area,
- Using a rule to continue a number pattern,
- Correctly identifying the operation needed to solve a number problem.

Areas for development include:
- Solving multi-step problems using money,
- Identifying decimal number patterns,
- Determining how data in a table has been sorted.

**Progress in literacy**

Progress in Reading, Grammar and Punctuation between Years 3 and 5 has been consistently above state and region averages. There has been a significant growth in Spelling, which was a target this year.

**Progress in numeracy**

Progress in Numeracy was below both state and region averages; this has been identified as an area for development.

**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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 3 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Year 5 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

We have engaged with implementing the NSW Aboriginal Education Policy with the aim of improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal students and educating all students about Aboriginal Australia.

An Aboriginal Learning Team (ALT) was formed this year. The team included local elder and Aboriginal parents. A role statement was developed, priorities identified from the “Dare to Lead” snapshot results from 2010. The ALT were part of the team evaluating and developing the school plan for 2012.

Our principal made a major commitment this year to working with the Macleay Valley Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG), the peak community advisory body on Aboriginal Education, in developing a partnership agreement with the Department of Education and Communities, representing both TAFE and the Macleay Educational Community of Schools (MECS). A draft agreement was formed after a very successful community consultation meeting in September. It is expected the agreement, will be approved and signed early in 2012.

For the first time this year 100% of families participated in meetings to develop Personal Learning Plans for students in Terms 1 and 3. Strong home, school and community partnerships have a significant positive impact on student academic and social outcomes.

The Dunghutti Language Program continued in 2011; however the delivery was interrupted by health issues affecting staff on the program. This remains a core program in the school. There is a high cultural value in having an elder regularly in the school. Learning another language also supports student understanding of the grammatical structure of English. We are honoured to be able to participate in the learning of the local language.

The school participated in the NAIDOC celebrations in Kempsey, auspiced by the Durri Aboriginal Medical Service. The celebrations were opened with a Welcome to Country and the release of doves. Students participated in indigenous games.

An Aboriginal perspective is reflected across all Key Learning Areas (KLA’s), an example of this is the use of the Koori Mail as a teaching resource and as a strategy for keeping staff and senior students up to date on contemporary Indigenous issues.

Multicultural education

All classroom teachers ensure that multiculturalism is a fundamental value and that teaching and learning programs are culturally inclusive.

Bellbrook, Medlow and Willawarrin Public Schools joined us this year to celebrate “Living in Harmony Day”, a celebration of cultural diversity. Members of our school community from China and Papua New Guinea delivered workshops in crafts and culture. Elwyn Toby, a Dunghutti artist and musician shared his knowledge and experience with the students. Parents, students and community members shared a Mexican feast.

Teaching and learning programs promote the understanding that Australia has a multicultural history and that many different cultural have contributed to Australian society, for example students learned about the Chinese experience on the NSW goldfields in an integrated HSIE/Literacy unit.

Programs explicitly promote the Anti-racism policy.

Elwyn Toby – artist and musician
Millbank students were valued participants in the “Cultural Diversity Day” held at the Kempsey TAFE campus. Our choir sang two songs in the Dunghutti language. They also participated in a bush tucker program, face painting, badge making and activities designed to increase understanding of the challenges facing people with disabilities.

Values Education

Students at Millbank are encouraged to respect themselves and others, to take responsibility for their actions and to develop the values to become good citizens.

In 2012 students have demonstrated this by:

- Promoting an active student leadership team who have planned and delivered a number of initiatives over the year (see Student Leader message) including Colour for a Cure, the Better Buddies Program and Pet days.
- Requesting new flags for the school and participating in a flag raising ceremony with our local State Member of Parliament, Andrew Stoner.
- Raising money for the Heart Foundation by participating in “Jump Rope for Heart”.
- Participation in values clarification exercises as part of the Positive Behaviour for Learning Program (see National Partnerships initiative).

Connected Learning

Learners in the 21st Century need to be able to access information and have a variety of skills in learning collaboratively and presenting information in engaging and meaningful ways. This year Millbank School has supported this by investing in technology infrastructure and teacher professional learning.

The school invested in additional laptop computers, a wireless network and USB storage devices for students. This enabled students to work in a wider variety of environments, including borrowing laptops for use at home. The USB devices enabled students to complete projects at homes without internet access.

Vivian Appleton, the teacher librarian, is currently working towards her Masters Degree in Librarianship. As part of her studies she investigated extensively the use of Web 2 tools. These tools were then used with students to significantly increase engagement with learning.

Both students and staff engaged with the use of Blogs to reflect on learning and teaching. This was an extremely successful strategy. Solid research suggests that reflection on how learning takes place increases student ability to retain and transfer learning into different contexts. A teacher reflection Blog enabled staff to share successful strategies, and identify unsuccessful strategies; it improved staff communication and supported continuous improvement.

Continued use of Interactive Whiteboards and Video Conferencing facilities have become an integral part of the school’s learning and teaching strategies.
Priority Schools Program

Millbank School received $12,300 in Priority Schools Program (PSP) funding this year. The purpose of this funding is to minimise the impact of educational disadvantage for students from low socio-economic backgrounds. It is a tied fund and can only be used in specific ways to support improved numeracy and literacy learning outcomes for students.

In 2011 funds were spent on the following areas:

- Accelerated literacy – sets of texts were purchased to support an integrated teaching and learning program, literacy themes are linked to Science and HSIE topics. This connectedness makes student learning more meaningful and effective.

- Online Assessments – while in larger schools NAPLAN is a very useful tool for planning and assessment, in our smaller context it does not provide sufficient data. By using an online assessment tool developed by the Australian Council for Educational Research, the school is able to monitor student achievement in numeracy and literacy regularly and accurately. This means we can become more flexible in adapting our teaching strategies and find the strategies that work for our students.

- Community engagement – staff participated in professional development in order to improve home/school communication. PSP funds enabled us to devote sufficient time to having parent, student and teacher meetings to develop Personalised Learning Plans for every student.

- Music program – a specialist music teacher provided whole school, and individual music lessons to students. Research indicates that music has a significant impact on improving achievement in both literacy and numeracy (Caldwell, Harris Vaughan 2011).

National Partnership programs

Millbank School received $30,707 in Low Socio-Economic National Partnerships funding this year. The purpose of this funding is to raise the quality of teaching in participating schools as this is the single greatest in-school influence on student outcomes. The funding is available for four years and must be used to develop sustainable change. The partnership emphasises strengthening school leadership and teacher professional development.

In 2011 funds were spent on the following areas:

- Team Leadership for School Improvement – a compulsory program for school leaders, increasing understanding of implementing effective change, data analysis, motivating teams with feedback and collaborative problem solving.

- Taking Off With Numeracy – a lesson study program where teachers from Millbank and Bellbrook schools, with a consultant, observed each other teach, giving feedback and strategies for improvement. This collaborative learning strategy is highly effective in making significant improvements to classroom delivery. In addition the consultant led the team through using the Numeracy Continuum to assess and develop individual learning programs, and the development of a “balanced numeracy session”. All participants reported increased confidence in teaching numeracy. School based data and feedback from students indicated a significant improvement in engagement and learning.

- WRAPS - ‘A Writing Approach to Reading’ is designed to teach spelling, reading and writing. The course breaks down elements required to read, write and spell into small manageable chunks. It was implemented with the aim of engaging parents and improving literacy standards throughout the school community. Individual lessons were given to students who needed extra support with spelling and handwriting as well as
being available to parents who wished to improve their literacy skills.

Literacy levels increased in all those who took part. The engagement of parents led to an impressive flow on effect as younger children and grandchildren of those who participated began to take an interest in books and pre-reading sounds. Some students chose to attend school early 3 days per week to participate in WRAP lessons. These students have demonstrated improved results in spelling foundations and now have improved writing skills.

Implementing the program for both students and teachers has been a very rewarding experience with student confidence growing each week. The program engaged and elevated parent participation in the school leading to volunteering in the junior classroom listening to the children read.

- Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) – a broad range of systemic strategies for improving social skills and learning outcomes while preventing problem behaviour. It is a four year journey of improving school culture in a systematic way.

The journey began with the formation of a PBL team including parents, staff and a mentor. The team reviewed the Student Welfare (Discipline) Policy leading to an improved system of positive behaviour awards and a clear set of consequences for inappropriate behaviour.

Our mentor, Elizabeth Henley led a values clarification exercise with students and parents, and three core rules were developed for the school.

The core rules that emerged were “Respect, Responsibility and Reliability”. These core rules were used to again refine the awards system. An awards excursion was introduced for the end of term for students who have 100% attendance and/or a set number of awards.

The impact has been significant, students report that they have a clearer idea of expected behaviours and feel more able to achieve success.

The next steps, in 2012, will be for staff to develop explicit lessons for each core value in a range of settings across the school.

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**Respectful**
- **Class**
- **Playground**

**Responsible**
- **Lunch Area**
- **Oval**

**Reliable**
- **Games Court**

**Comment**

Progress on 2011 targets

**Target 1**
Increase the number of students in Years 3 - 6 spelling at an age appropriate level or above from 44% in 2010 to 54% in 2011 using the South Australian Spelling Test.

Our achievements include:

- Regular data collection and analysis led to changes in strategies and organisation of the explicit teaching of spelling
- Improved home/school communication by inclusion of spelling data in Personal Learning Plans
- School assessments in September showed that 62.5% of students are spelling at an age appropriate level or above (target achieved).

**Target 2**

Increase student achievement in Numeracy in Yrs 4 & 5 from a group mean of 64% in 2010 to 70% in 2011

Yr 6 from a group mean of 47.8% to 52% in 2011 using the OPI assessment

Our achievements include:

- Regular data collection and analysis led to changes in strategies and organisation of the explicit teaching of numeracy.
- Improved home/school communication by inclusion of numeracy data in Personal Learning Plans.
- Assessments in Term 4 showed Yr 4 group mean was 69% (target not quite achieved), Yr 5 group mean was 70% (target achieved) and Yr 6 group mean was 57% (target exceeded)

**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 2011 our school carried out evaluations of Positive Behaviour for Learning Program and Numeracy.

**Educational and management practice**

Positive Behaviour for Learning

**Background**

This was a new initiative in 2011. The program was evaluated by interviews with members of the school community, including the following:

- Parents and family members
- Community members

Focus groups were conducted by DEC Equity consultants with

- Students
- Parents and Aboriginal community members

**Findings and conclusions**

- Students responded that they like the flexibility at Millbank School; they recognized the importance of good attendance and relationships at school.
- Parents perceived that the school is like a family, that there is no bullying and that teachers are caring and fair. There were concerns regarding the behaviour of some older students.
- There was a perception that students and parents were enthusiastic about the “special” events, examples were dress up days, Harmony Day and sporting events. It was stated that would be better if more parents could be involved.

**Target 3**

To improve student attendance rates from 89.7% in 2010 to 92% in 2011.

Our achievements include:

- Employment of a Community Engagement Officer to liaise with parents.
- 100% parent participation in Personal Learning Plan meetings.
- Attendance rate of 91.6% (Target not quite achieved).
Future directions

- Analyse data collected in 2011 to identify areas in the school where and what problem behaviours are most common.
- Develop explicit lessons to enable students to demonstrate Respect, Responsibility and Reliability in a variety of contexts.
- Develop strategies to increase participation of parents in school activities.

Curriculum

Numeracy

Background

Analysis of school and system based data was conducted on a regular basis with staff, data included

- OPI assessments for Maths
- NAPLAN analysis

Focus groups were conducted by DEC Equity consultants with

- Students
- Parents and Aboriginal community members

Findings and conclusions

- Students perceived that learning in this area was interesting; they felt that there are a good variety of learning activities. Some aspects they found too repetitive and would prefer to have more choice in their learning.
- Parents and community members emphasized that learning is a three way partnership between parents, students and teachers. That perceived that the students are very engaged with learning.
- Teachers felt that there had been a high quality of professional learning in this area. The regular analysis of data contributed to improved teaching and learning programs.

Future directions

- Increase student directed experiences using Multiple Intelligence grids in Numeracy.
- Extension of Lesson Study program to include professional sharing with more schools.
- Use assessment tools to plot students on the Numeracy Continuum in order to improve reporting to parents and delivering more individualized programs.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2011 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented below.

- Students indicated that they like being at Millbank School, they would like more fruit trees (our orchard is still developing). They enjoy the variety of sporting activities available but would like more equipment. They indicated that the school would be better if it had more students.
- Parents indicated that they felt well informed of student progress and that their participation was valued highly. Responses suggested that there was room for improvement in communication. Communication needs to improve regarding giving notice of events, the role that school leadership plays in wider educational issues and information about events outside the school environment. Parents want more sporting involvement and more excursions.
- Teachers indicated that they are excited by the new initiatives available using National Partnerships funds and the use of technology to engage learners. They feel well supported in their role and that they have access to the resources needed to teach effectively. Co-operative assessment, analysis and planning have been effective during 2011.

Professional learning
All teachers at Millbank Public School have participated in professional learning activities with the focus on improving student learning outcomes:

- All staff participated in school development days, analyzing the management plan, completing OH&S and Emergency Procedures training and policy review. Additional days included investigating Multiple Intelligence teaching strategies with Ralph Pirozzo, Focus on Spelling and exploring “Play is the Way”, a program for developing social skills and resilience using cooperative games.
- Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) – the PBL team attended a number of training days, initially to understand the theoretical and research background to the program, and then to share the journey. This collegial sharing has valuable lessons.
- Leadership – all full time staff participated in leadership training, this included the Teaching Principals Program, Team leadership for School Improvement and the Women in Educational Leadership Conference.
- The Community Engagement Officer completed training in “A Writing Approach to Reading” (WRAP), and used the training to work with parents and students to support improvement in Literacy.
- All full time teaching staff participated in “Taking Off With Numeracy”, a collegial support program involving observing colleagues teach, reflecting on best practice and using the numeracy continuum.
- The Junior class teacher participated in “Best Start” training. Assessing student readiness for school, and using the literacy and numeracy continuums to deliver teaching programs tailored to individual student needs.
- The average expenditure per teacher, including part-time and casual staff was $5 837. The total expenditure on professional development was $23 347. This is a significant increase due to additional funding from Low SES National Partnerships.

School planning 2012—2014

The school planning policy provides direction for the preparation and implementation of school plans including the identification of priority areas, intended outcomes and targets that are consistent with the NSW State Plan and the Department’s planning documents.

School priority 1

Outcome for 2012–2014
Enhance leadership capacity to achieve greater positive change in educational outcomes for all students.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
- Positive parent response regarding school communication about programs and activities increases from 71% in 2011 to 84% in 2012.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
- Build on the use of the school website for communication and as an educational tool.
- Participation in Collegial Leadership Network.
- Links developed on the website to library, science and maths blogs.

School priority 2
Outcome for 2012–2014
Empower the school community to engage in achieving improved social and learning outcomes.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
To improve student attendance rates from 89% for Terms 1 -3 in 2011 to 92% for Terms 1 -3 in 2012

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
- Employment of a School Learning Support Officer in a community engagement role to promote the achievements of students, liaise with parents, and make attendance data more accessible.
- Continued implementation of PBL Program.
- Increase student directed learning experiences in differentiated curriculum.

School priority 3
Outcome for 2012–2014
Improve student outcomes in literacy and numeracy, by integrating the explicit teaching of skills across all learning areas.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
Increase student achievement in Grammar and Punctuation in
- Yr 4 from a group mean of 40% in 2011 to 50% in 2012
- Yr 5 from a group mean of 64.8% in 2011 to 70% in 2012
- Yr 6 from a group mean of 45% in 2011 to 55% in 2012 using OPI assessment data
Increase student achievement in Numeracy
- Yr 4 from a group mean of 53% in 2011 to 60% in 2012
- Yr 5 from 66% in 2011 to 72% in 2012
- Yr 6 from a group mean of 58% in 2011 to 64% in 2012 using OPI assessment data

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
- Teachers regularly collect and analyse data to assess the effectiveness of Teaching & Learning Programs
- Literacy teaching demonstrates strong elements of connectedness and significance by integrating explicit teaching of literacy across Key Learning Area’s.
- Consolidation of Taking off With Numeracy Program

School priority 4
Outcome for 2012–2014
Develop higher quality partnerships between home, school and community.

2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
School policies that reflect joint planning with the Aboriginal Learning Team increase from 0 in 2011 to 2 in 2012.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
- Increase engagement of the Aboriginal Learning Team from 1 meeting in 2011 to 4 meetings in 2012.
- Aboriginal Learning Team (ALT) guides and informs school on appropriate strategies to engage students and community and to improve educational outcomes
- Principal engages with the Macleay Valley AECG and actively supports the completion, implementation and ongoing monitoring of the MVAECG/DEC Partnership agreement.

About this report
In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school's practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school's future development.

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Parents can find 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: