2009 Annual School Report
Rankin’s Springs Public School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
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Principal’s Message

Rankin’s Springs Public School is a small rural school with spacious grounds, historic buildings and an abundance of excellent resources. We seek to provide quality education for all students in a safe and caring environment, fostering a positive climate and maintaining an outstanding level of discipline.

Our school culture is encapsulated by our motto, ‘Pride in Effort.’ Staff are resolute in their commitment to excellence in teaching, striving for continual improvement in their teaching practice and working diligently to ensure that they effectively utilize all of the school’s resources to support student learning. They are committed to encouraging and helping students to realise their full potential, aiming to help them become self directed, lifelong learners who can create a positive future for themselves and for the wider community. The local community takes great pride in our school, supporting teaching and learning programs extensively and in a variety of ways. Staff are committed to working with parents and the wider community to provide learning programs and opportunities which foster the development of academic, physical, social and emotional skills of students.

The School Council and the Parent and Citizens’ Association (P&C) are both very active and meet regularly. The School Council plays a key role in all evaluations and in the school’s decision making processes. The P&C focuses its energy primarily on fundraising. In doing so it has been able to provide financial support for a number of key programs and initiatives. Parents and community members are also encouraged to approach the school on an individual basis if they have any concerns relating to the educational experience provided at Rankin’s Springs Public School or ideas for its improvement.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the various organisations and individuals for their outstanding support in 2009.

I certify that the information in this report is a result of an extensive school self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school’s achievements and areas for development.

Natalie James
Principal

Our connected classroom equipment, installed early this year

Our new flag pole and covered walkway, funded through investing in our schools and Building the Education Revolution
School Council’s Message

In 2009 the Rankin's Springs School Council consisted of two community representatives (Ron Finch and Julie Groat), one parent representative (Gaye Banfield), the P & C President (Andrea Finch), one staff representative (Claire Sedola) and the principal (Natalie James).

It was another busy year for Rankin's Springs Public School and our school council, including the completion of some long standing projects such as the covered walkways and the beautification of the front entrance to the school. This project involved replacing the edging of the garden beds, planting additional plants and re-mulching the garden as well as designing, ordering and installing a new school sign.

Completing this project was a priority for the school council this year and now has the front of the school looking very good.

The school council was involved in consultation for the submission made by our school for the Building the Education Revolution program. Work completed under this program in 2009 includes external re-painting of all school buildings as well as internal painting of the library, foyer and offices, the relocation of the flag pole, upgrading of the television aerial and its connection to our connected classroom equipment, repair and maintenance of existing gutters and the addition of gutters to the covered walkways.

We had much discussion around various school policies, being involved in the review of the anti bullying policy, student welfare policy, attendance policy and uniform policy as well as revision and updating of the 2010 Student Handbook.

We have been involved with the evaluation of the school plan. Targets and outcomes were determined in consultation with the P&C, school council and school staff. All are very pleased with the progress made towards them.

School council members have observed that those involved in the school community appear to be very happy with the way Rankin's Springs Public School is operating. These observations were supported by the feedback obtained through the school self evaluation process. The members of this council consider this to be the school’s greatest achievement.

Early in the year a special meeting was held to discuss the possibility of ceasing school council due the small parent and community base and the difficulty parents and community members encountered trying to maintain involvement in the P&C while also being a parent or community representative on the school council. However after discussions it was viewed that the school council and P&C are both very valuable and fulfil different functions and determined that every effort would be made to maintain both.

All council members are proud of the wonderful achievements of the school this year, the commitment and skill of the staff and the outstanding level of support and involvement of the community. They were pleased to serve the school community as members of the school council.

Julie Groat
Secretary
RSPS School Council

School Councillor, Ron Finch installing the new school sign on one of our covered walkways

The finished product
**P&C Message**

The P&C had another successful year both socially and financially. We are lucky to have wonderful support coming from both our small body of parents and dedicated community members. Without such support we would be unable to run the functions that we do.

Our fundraising this year started with our Art Spectacular which turned out to be a wonderful night. We held our annual Golf Day in September this year, a little later than usual. It was still a very successful day financially for the P&C and was a wonderful social event for those who attended. At our annual Round Robin, we catered for staff and students from a number of schools around the district. Finally, we catered for an AWB Field Day which involved feeding 80 men in a paddock under a shade gazebo on a freezing, windy day. Not the best weather conditions, but no-one went hungry!

Our fundraising success allowed us to support a few key programs in the school. We were able to support our school and teaching staff by contributing towards the expense of employing a School Learning Support Officer. This has been very beneficial for our children’s learning. We subsidised the expenses of eight children who attended the major excursion to Canberra, with our principal and three parents. The excursion was very educational and enjoyed by all who went. We also subsidised the cost of students’ participation in our annual swimming program, enabling them to travel the 65 kilometres to and from Griffith each Friday of Term 4 in an air-conditioned bus at no expense to the students.

Despite the fact that everyone in our community is still trying to cope with this relentless drought and the fact that our parent body is getting smaller, our P&C Association has remained healthy as a result of growing community support, and for that, we would like to sincerely thank them.

We would also like to thank our principal and her staff for all the work they do for our children. We look forward to continuing to support them all in the future.

*Sue Streat*

Secretary

Rankin’s Springs P & C Association

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**Student Messages**

This year I was chosen to represent Rankin’s Springs Public School as their school captain. It has been a great experience, giving me the opportunity to practise being a good leader and setting a good example for the other students.

One of the highlights for me this year was our major excursion to Canberra. I liked going to Parliament House, Cockington Green and the Dinosaur Museum. We also had the opportunity to go to the snow for a day.

For our Round Robin this year half the primary students decided to play netball. It was fun to try something different. It was great to see other schools come and enjoy our Round Robin day.

I would like to thank the parents and community for supporting the school. They are always wanting to help the students. We enjoy having them at our school.

We have three teachers and a School Learning Support Officer at school. They are always teaching us something new. They have taught me how to be a good leader and how to make new friends with other people.

Finally, I would like to thank all the students who have let me be their captain. It has been a great experience.

*Brandon Prince*

RSPS School Captain
School Context

Student Enrolment Profile
Enrolments at Rankin’s Springs Public School have been declining for some time now. This decline continued in 2009. We started the year with 13 students enrolled but ended the year with 9.

In 2008 there was an equal number of male and female students. In 2009 there was an odd number of students but the difference between the distribution of male and female students was negligible.

![Graph showing enrolments](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Class Size and Structure
Rankin’s Springs Public School consists of one multi-aged class with students from Kindergarten to Year 6.

The following table shows our class size and the distribution of the students across the various year groups as at the beginning of 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll Class</th>
<th>K-6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total in class</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Attendance
The attendance rate at Rankin’s Springs Public School declined slightly in 2009 (from 92.3% in 2008 to 91.9% in 2009). This marginal decline was also experienced by the region and the state.

In 2009 our attendance rate was slightly better than the region (91.4%) but marginally worse than that of the state (92.1%). At Rankin’s Springs Public School, most absences are promptly explained, thus the patterns and rates of student attendance continues to be very pleasing.

The following graph and table provides an overview of student attendance trends over the past 4 years.

![Graph showing student attendance rates](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>96.9</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>94.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>91.9</td>
<td>91.4</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Staff Information

There was little change in the staffing entitlements of Rankin’s Springs Public School between 2008 and 2009. Below are the details of our staffing entitlement for 2009 along with the names of the staff who filled these positions and an overview of their responsibilities in 2009.

Staff Establishment—Teaching Staff

The following table outlines the staffing entitlements for teaching staff at Rankin’s Springs Public School as at the end of 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Part-Time</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher RFF</td>
<td>0.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.31</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Roles and Responsibilities of Teaching Staff

Miss Natalie James is the teaching principal at Rankin’s Springs Public School. Mrs Claire Sedola and Mrs Barbara Luelf were both employed one full day / week during 2009. The responsibilities of Mrs Claire Sedola included providing principal’s release and teaching visual arts as the part-time teacher. Mrs Sedola was also responsible for much of the pre-school to school transition program. Mrs Barbara Luelf’s responsibilities included teaching music and filling the roles of the Support Teacher Learning Assistant, the library teacher and computer co-ordinator. Mrs Luelf also coordinated the Peer Support program.
Staff Establishment—School Administration and Staff

The following table outlines the staffing entitlements for administrative and support staff at Rankin’s Springs Public School as at the end of 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative Manager</td>
<td>0.496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two adults—School Administrative Manager</td>
<td>0.504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Assistant</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.19</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Roles and Responsibilities of SASS Staff

At Rankin’s Springs Public School the teaching staff are assisted by a School Administrative Manager and a General Assistant.

Mrs Michele Prince is now appointed to Rankin’s Springs Public School as the School Administrative Manager in a full-time capacity. Her responsibilities include preparing and distributing the newsletter, preparing and managing teaching and library resources, supporting the principal in the management of school finances and miscellaneous office and reception tasks.

Mr Christopher James is employed part-time as the school’s General Assistant. His responsibilities include general maintenance and minor repairs.

In 2009 we decided to employ a School Learning Support Officer for 20 hours per week to support the delivery of literacy and numeracy programs. Mrs Karen Jolly was employed in this capacity. Her responsibilities included delivering teaching and learning programs to individual students and small groups, promoting positive interactions amongst students in the playground and minor administrative tasks. This initiative was funded by Rankin’s Springs Public School and the P&C. The impact of this initiative on the learning outcomes of students was outstanding. Refer to the evaluation of the School Learning Support Officer on page 23 of this report for more details.

Staff Retention

There were no changes in the staffing of permanent positions at RSPS in 2009. There was also a high degree of continuity among temporary staff with Mrs Barbara Luelf and Mrs Claire Sedola continuing to fill the temporary teaching positions and Mrs Karen Jolly moving from a casual to temporary capacity in her role as a School Learning Support Officer.

Staff Attendance

Staff have access to a range of leave entitlements including Family and Community Leave and sick leave.

There are also occasions when staff are absent from school on professional learning activities. These occasions are not considered ‘leave’ or ‘absence’.

Staff attendance at Rankin’s Springs Public School is outstanding however it is not possible to report attendance figures due to the small number of staff and requirements surrounding confidentiality.
Professional Learning

Staff and parents both recognise the importance of the ongoing professional learning of staff. In 2009 professional learning focused on the development of skills required by staff to fulfil their role at Rankin’s Springs Public School and learning related to the focus areas identified in the school plan.

In 2009 staff undertook professional learning in the following areas:

- Connected Classroom training (using interactive whiteboards and video conferencing equipment in teaching and learning);
- use of the Quality Teaching Framework for evaluating and improving teaching practice;
- developing consistency in teacher judgement; and
- using Newman’s Prompts to promote mathematical thinking.

All teaching staff continued their professional learning journey through collaboration with other teachers. Staff also participated in the appropriate professional network meetings.

Mandatory training completed by staff in 2009 included:

- the NSW DETs Code of Conduct;
- Occupational Health and Safety;
- child protection;
- CPR and first aid as appropriate; and
- anaphylaxis training.

On average $1089 was spent per staff member on professional learning. This figure includes the cost of employing staff for training purposes, course fees and the cost of travel and accommodation.

(N.B. The above figure has been calculated by dividing the total amount spent by five to account for the professional learning undertaken by the teaching principal, two casual / temporary teachers, the School Administrative Manager and the School Learning Support Officer).
Significant Programs and Initiatives—2009

Aboriginal Education

In 2009 Rankin’s Springs Public School joined staff and students from Beckom and Binya Public Schools at Binya for NAIDOC Week celebrations. An Aboriginal perspective is embedded in the content of all key learning areas.

- Learning to play the didgeridoo
- Performing various dances
- Showing off our face painting
Multicultural Education

Students participated in the Country Women’s Association’s (CWAs) International Day, performing songs about aspects of Egyptian culture and displaying art works related to the history and culture of Egypt. Primary students also researched various aspects of Egypt, completing mini projects on their chosen topic which they displayed and read at the CWAs celebration day.

Students learnt about aspects of Indonesian and South American culture through Tim Harding’s Samba workshop and a musical workshop presented by Musica Viva.

A multicultural perspective is embedded in content across the curriculum.

Programs for students with additional educational needs

Staff at Rankin’s Springs Public School seek to ensure all students are given the opportunities and support required to be successful, and that every opportunity is provided to enable individual students to fulfil their potential.

The success of our programs for students with additional educational needs is funded in effective use of school resources and a strong partnership between staff and parents and community members.

In 2009 all students participated in individual reading programs supported by either a classroom teacher, the Support Teacher Learning Assistant (STLA), community volunteers or the School Learning Support Officer (SLSO). Nearly half of the students received additional, individualized support from the STLA in 2009. Furthermore, modifications were made to learning tasks for all students on a daily basis according to their needs.

Our commitment to supporting students with additional educational needs is highlighted by our commitment to employ a SLSO for 20 hours per week in 2009. This initiative was funded by Rankin’s Springs Public School’s global funds and donations from the P&C.

Respect and Responsibility

The staff at Rankin’s Springs Public School recognise the importance of cultivating a school environment in which respect and responsibility are valued and consistently displayed by all.

At Rankin’s Springs Public School staff model respectful behaviour in their interactions with colleagues, parents, students and visitors. School and class rules are underpinned by the principle of mutual respect. The school’s behaviour management system also regularly recognises and rewards students demonstrating respect and seeks to address and modify disrespectful behaviour.

At Rankin’s Springs Public School students have extensive opportunities to develop a sense of responsibility. This is supported by a range of student leadership initiatives (refer to Student Leadership on page 12 of this report) and the school’s behaviour management system which recognises and rewards students behaving responsibly and seeks to address and modify irresponsible and inappropriate behaviour.
Student Welfare

Staff, students and parents at Rankin’s Springs Public School recognise the strong connection between student welfare, good discipline and effective learning. Rankin’s Springs Public School has implemented a number of measures to promote students welfare, for example:

- Gardener’s framework of Multiple Intelligences is used to help students value and celebrate differences.

- Weekly assembly awards and awards presented at the end of term and the end of year assemblies provide opportunities for staff and students to acknowledge the achievements and strengths of others.

- The school rules and discipline and reward systems, which have been developed in collaboration with students and endorsed by parent and community bodies, are implemented in a manner that is fair and consistent.

- Students are consulted in regards to most negotiable elements of school including the structure of breaks, curriculum content (where flexible) and curriculum delivery in order to maximise their enjoyment at school.

- An extensive Pre-school to Kindergarten transition program was implemented in Term 4 (one day / week for seven consecutive weeks) to facilitate a smoother start to school (see Preschool to Kindergarten Transition on page 14 of this report for more details).

- Programs related to student leadership and supporting students with additional educational needs also contribute significantly to student welfare (see pages 10 and 12).

The success of these strategies is demonstrated through outstanding student attendance rates (see Student Attendance on page 5), excellent student behaviour and improvements in learning outcomes (see Academic Achievement on page 15).

Also see Progress on Targets 2009—Student Leadership' on page 18 of this report.

Staff and students from Rankin’s Springs Public School
Student Leadership

In 2009 opportunities for student leadership included Peer Support and the Halogen Young Leaders’ Conference, peer tutoring, the office of school captain and election as a student leader. Also see Progress on Targets 2009—Student Leadership on page 18 of this report.

Miss Natalie James with 2009 School Captain, Brandon Prince

Mrs Luelf with the 2009 Peer Support leaders (from left): Kelsie Parsons, Brandon Prince and Jarrod Clarke

Year 5 and 6 students at the Halogen National Young Leaders Conference in Sydney
From left: Nicole Williams, Kelsie Parsons, Natalie Williams, Jarrod Clarke and Brandon Prince
Parent and Community Involvement

Strong partnerships between staff, parents and community members is valued by all stakeholders at Rankin’s Springs Public School. The strength of these relationships is demonstrated through:

- the contributions of the School Council and P&C Association to school planning, policy development and evaluation included consultation around the use of government funding including the ‘Building the Education Revolution’ program, consultation and collaboration around the grading and reporting procedures and the school’s self-evaluation;
- the attendance and participation of parents and community members at school functions and events;
- the regular presence of community volunteers, supporting the delivery of individual literacy and numeracy programs, special activities and events and Special Religious Education (Scripture);
- ongoing service of parents and community members to the school through volunteering in the canteen and providing transport for excursions when required;
- the school’s participation in community programs and events including the CWAs International Day and ANZAC Day commemorations; and
- the participation of parents and community members at training and development opportunities.

Students with parents and community members who joined us for our Footy Colours Day and Father’s Day celebrations.

Connected Classrooms - Video Conferences

In the holidays at the end of Term 2 we had our Connected Classroom installed. We have thoroughly enjoyed using the interactive whiteboard and have found the video conferencing equipment particularly beneficial in overcoming some of the challenges presented by our isolation. In 2009 staff participated in advanced anaphylaxis training via video conference. Students participated in a presentation by children’s author, Frances Watts and had a number of opportunities to connect with students from other schools to demonstrate and expand their learning.
Excursions, KLA Days and Interschool Interactions

Excursions, KLA days and interschool interactions have continued to play a key role in the teaching and learning programs at Rankin’s Springs Public School. These occasions provide opportunities for students to apply and continue their learning in different contexts, build significant relationships with other students their own age and participate in stage-based learning activities, focusing on content from specific key learning areas (KLAs).

In 2009 students from Rankin’s Springs Public School visited Euabalong West Public School for International Women’s Day and for a ‘star-gazing sleepover’, Binya Public School for NAIDOC Week celebrations, Naradhan Public School for a Musica Viva performance and Weethalle Public School for a Maths Fun Day. They also participated in a range of sports carnivals at various venues.

Staff and students from Rankin’s Springs Public School hosted students from other small schools for the Small Schools Round Robin, a PDHPE stage-based learning day, Life Education and the Samba performance.

Other excursions this year included our major excursion to Canberra, visits to Pioneer Park, Griffith Regional Theatre (for the performance of Letter’s End), Griffith Regional Library and a trip the Murrumbidgee Catchment Management office for an environmental education day.

Preschool to Kindergarten Transition

Rankin’s Springs Public School offers an extensive transition program for students enrolling in Kindergarten there for the following year.

In 2009 our transition program consisted of seven transition days held on consecutive Mondays during Term 4. This program enabled teachers to assess the academic and social skills of incoming students, provided opportunities for older students to demonstrate and further develop their leadership skills through the Peer Support program and allowed transition students to become familiar with staff and students as well as the expectations, routines and rules of the school.

Beyond this program, there were other opportunities for pre-school aged children to participate in the activities of Rankin’s Springs Public School through participation in the athletics carnival and our Book Parade, once again helping them become familiar with, and comfortable in, the school environment.
Achievements—2009

Academic
Students have made pleasing progress in a number of academic areas this year. Staff and students have continued to focus on the development of a range of fundamental literacy and numeracy skills.
In 2009 students from Rankin’s Springs Public School participated in the School Spelling Bee. Four students, Brandon Prince, Kelsie Parsons, Brooke Streat and Samuel Prince, went on to represent the school at the regional final for the Premier’s Spelling Bee. They enjoyed the experience and were pleased with their efforts and performance.
All students participated in the Premier’s Reading Challenge with most students completing the challenge.
All students from Years 3-6 participated in the ICAS tests. Kelsie Parsons was awarded a credit in the Computer Skills and Writing assessments.
The development of literacy and numeracy skills has been identified as an ongoing focus for 2010. For further information regarding the academic achievements students from Rankin’s Springs Public School refer to Progress on Targets 2009—Literacy and Progress on Targets 2009—Numeracy on page 18 of this report.

National Minimum Standards
The Commonwealth Government sets minimum desirable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular stages of education. These are referred to as National Minimum Standards. Students in Year 3 and Year 5 are assessed in relation to these standards through NAPLAN (National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy).
In 2009 students from Rankin’s Springs Public School generally performed slightly better in numeracy than in literacy. In numeracy, student performance was marginally stronger in the areas of measurement and data than it was in number, patterns and algebra. In literacy, Year 5 students performed best in the Writing assessment and Year 3 students performed best in the grammar and punctuation components.
Due to the small number of students participating in these tests it is not appropriate to report more specifically on student achievement.

Value Added
‘Value added’ refers to the amount of demonstrated improvement students make towards (or beyond) the minimum standards between Year 3 and Year 5.
Staff at Rankin’s Springs Public School will continue to strive to maximise the ‘value added’ each year.
Due to the small number of students participating in these tests it is not appropriate to report more specifically on student achievement.
Creative Arts

Music, visual arts, dance and drama programs provide students with opportunities to develop and demonstrate a variety of important skills including self-confidence and self-esteem. For most students these programs provide a welcome interlude from intensive literacy and numeracy programs.

In 2009 students had the opportunity to display their artworks at the CWAs International Day and the Weethalle Show. A number of students received prizes for the work they entered in the Weethalle Show.

Beyond the weekly music program, students had the opportunity to further develop their musical knowledge and skills through the Musica Viva and Samba workshops. They had opportunities to perform musical items in school assemblies, at the CWA International Day and in Griffith Central. Students developed their appreciation of drama by travelling to Griffith Regional Theatre to watch Letter’s End. They had opportunities to present a dramatic performance of The Eleventh Sheep to a live audience and via video conference.

Students had the opportunity to display skills in music, drama and dance in their end of year performance. The performance was thoroughly enjoyable. Staff and students are to be commended on their efforts.

The Musica Viva team teaching us about Indonesian culture and music

Learning about South American culture and music in Samba
Sport

Sporting programs and competitions provide opportunities for students to develop a range of skills including gross motor skills, hand-eye co-ordination, communication, problem solving and decision making skills. Students also develop an appreciation of the importance of rules, cooperation and teamwork.

Students participated in a number of school-based sporting activities including a sport and fitness program, the school swimming program, the RSPS Athletics Carnival and Footy Colours Day. They also participated in a variety of interschool sporting activities including our Round Robin, the Goolgowi Cross Country, tabloid sports with students from Euabalong West, the Griffith District PSSA Small Schools athletics and swimming carnivals and the Griffith District PSSA cross country. Students from Year 3-6 had the opportunity to participate in the Trent Barrett and Mortimer Shields (Rugby League and Aus Tag) and those students who qualified were able to participate in the various district, regional and state carnivals.

Staff, students, parents and community members at the RSPS athletics carnival

Playing netball at the Round Robin

Celebrating our achievements in the Goolgowi Cross Country
Progress on 2009 School Targets

Target 1 Creating Quality Writing
At least 50% of students demonstrate sound achievement in relation to the writing outcomes of the NSW K-6 English Syllabus.

Our achievements in this area include:

- an increased willingness of students to write independently;
- improved student understanding of the purpose and structure of various text types;
- introduction and supported use of a variety of planning processes;
- introduction and supported use of a framework for evaluating writing;
- improved student awareness of, and understanding of a range of effective literary techniques;
- increasing use of various literary techniques in student work samples; and
- 78% of students demonstrated sound achievement in writing by the end of the year.

Target 2 Numeracy
At least 50% of Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 students demonstrate facile skills when assessed using Count Me in Too (SENA 1).

A reduction in the number of enrolments in Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 meant this would not be an appropriate target. Our achievements in the area of numeracy this year have included:

- outstanding improvements in students’ ability to recall multiplication facts quickly and accurately and to use this knowledge in completing multiplication and division tasks;
- introduction and use of Newman’s Prompts resulting in pleasing improvements in student’s ability to solve problems; and
- vast improvements in a variety of ‘Working Mathematically’ skills particularly communicating and applying strategies.

Target 3 Student Leadership
All Stage 3 students participate in student leadership programs and initiatives.

Indicators of our success in this area include:

- all Stage 3 students attending the Halogen Young Leaders Conference;
- all Stage 3 students participating in the Peer Support program in a leadership capacity; and
- all Year 6 students accepting a student leadership position (school captain or student leader) and fulfilling responsibilities capably and willingly.
Target 4 Quality Teaching

All teachers use the Quality Teaching (QT) Framework to evaluate the connectedness of at least one unit of work or teaching and learning activity.

Indicators of success in this area of teacher use of the QT Framework include:

- professional learning developing teacher understanding of the three dimensions of the QT Framework;
- introduction and explanation of 10 of the 18 elements of the QT Framework through professional learning activities;
- the use of the QT Framework by all teaching staff to evaluate their Term 2 programs.

Indicators of a high level of connectedness in the teaching and learning programs of Rankin’s Springs Public School include:

- a high proportion of students choosing to research a local environment which has significance for them for their Term 3 projects;
- regular opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning beyond the classroom including presentations at Griffith Central and the CWAs International Day celebrations, the School Spelling Bee, the Book Parade, video conferences with Euabalong West Public School and Presentation Night;
- the incorporation of educational television programs, internet searches and experts (including a community health nurse, Life Education staff and musicians) to support learning using resources beyond the classroom;
- use of the Behind the News program to link learning in various key learning areas to current issues; and
- using video conferencing facilities to engage in learning with peers and adults beyond the classroom.

Students at the 2009 Book Parade
Key Evaluations

In 2009 Rankin's Springs Public School conducted four major evaluations. We combined our evaluation of educational and management practice and curriculum, evaluating planning in the areas of curriculum management and professional learning. We evaluated two major programs this year: student leadership and the employment of a temporary School Learning Support Officer for 20 hours / week.

This report summarises the findings, conclusions and recommendations for each of these evaluations. For more details regarding the findings, conclusions, recommendations and strategies resulting from these evaluations please contact the school.

Curriculum Planning and Professional Learning

Background

The focus of this evaluation was to gauge the effectiveness of current leadership and management practice and identify areas for improvement.

Most feedback was sought through surveys and consensograms. All staff were given the opportunity to complete the survey and consensograms as were all parents and community members. Only students in Years 3-6 were surveyed this year. They did not participate in the consensograms.

Both School Council and P&C meetings were used as forums for further discussion. All parents and community members were invited to attend these meetings to participate further in this evaluation.

Findings and Conclusions

- There was a high degree of confidence that the school's priorities and targets focus on improving student learning outcomes, are developed in consultation with staff, students and parents and are informed by planned evaluations.
- A high degree of confidence that curriculum planning reflects the school priorities and targets and is responsive to student needs was demonstrated.
- In initial surveys parents revealed some uncertainty regarding the process of resource allocation, the relationship between resource allocation and the school's priorities and targets and whether there was a direct link between resource allocation and improvements in student learning outcomes. After further discussions, parents indicated a high to very high degree of satisfaction and confidence in this area.
- Confidence that professional learning is closely related to the school priorities and targets and is responsive to emerging needs was very high.
- There was a level of uncertainty regarding the extent of input staff, students and parents have into the curriculum and professional learning of staff at Rankin's Springs Public School.
- Some uncertainty regarding whether the professional learning undertaken by staff at Rankin’s Springs Public School directly resulted in improvements in the quality of education and/or learning outcomes was evident.
- Some concerns regarding the ability of staff to cover the content from all key learning areas in the given two-year cycle in the K-6 learning environment was expressed.
Recommendations and Strategies

- Include a Budget / Resource section in the Principal’s Report given in each P&C meeting to ensure parents are kept up-to-date with the purchase of resources, the manner in which they are used and the impact of their use on student learning;
- At the end of the financial year present a budget report to the P&C outlining the main areas of expenditure in the budget and an overview of the impact of the purchases (of goods or services) on student learning;
- Discuss budget priorities and commitments with P&C during the budgeting season of Term 4 each year and again at the beginning of the school year;
- Include a Professional Learning section in the Principal’s Report given in each P&C meeting to ensure parents are kept up-to-date with professional learning of staff, the way in which staff have applied their learning and the impact of those changes on student learning;
- Use the From the Principal section of the weekly school newsletter to highlight significant purchases and / or professional learning opportunities, how teachers have used the resources or their new knowledge and skills and the impact the changes have had on student outcomes; and
- Invite parents to ‘Show and Tell’ days where staff and students demonstrate the ways in which new resources are being used and the professional learning of staff is being applied.

Student Leadership

Background

The focus of this evaluation was to identify what was driving effective student leadership at Rankin’s Springs Public School and ways we can further improve the quality of student leadership. Below are the finding, conclusions, recommendations and strategies.

All students participated in this evaluation through a class discussion. Feedback from staff, parents and community members was sought through surveys and consensograms. Staff meetings, School Council and P&C meetings were used as forums for further discussion. All staff, parents and community members were given the opportunity to participate in the evaluation in these ways.

Findings and conclusions

There was generally a very high level of satisfaction in the level of leadership demonstrated by students at Rankin’s Springs Public School.

The evaluation revealed a number of programs and strategies deemed to support the development of students’ leadership skills including:

- participation of Stage 3 students in the Halogen Young Leaders Conference in Sydney;
- the Buddy Reading program;
- the Peer Support program;
- the structure of the student leadership system which allows all senior students to assume a leadership role;
- the number and diverse nature of opportunities for students to develop and display leadership skills such as leading assembly, peer support, weekly jobs; and
- the public speaking program.
Students also commented that the instructions given by teachers regarding behaviour in general and specifically the way to be a good leader or a good follower helped improved the quality of leadership at Rankin’s Springs Public School.

A range of behaviours were identified as evidence of the quality of student leadership at Rankin’s Springs Public School including:

- the ability of students to describe the characteristics of good leaders;
- the ability of students to identify leaders from amongst their peers; recognition of all students in Year 4-6 as leaders by their peers;
- the way students help each other and look after each other;
- the example being set by students in terms of work habits and attitude towards learning;
- the general behaviour and manners displayed by students;
- the positive nature of interactions between students and the leadership demonstrated by older students on excursions;
- the way older students make allowances for differences in the level of skills and understanding of younger students in games;
- the ability of students to resolve conflicts themselves most of the time; and
- the manner in which students accept and respond to correction.

Areas identified for ongoing improvement included:

- the behaviour of some students who are bossy at times when given a leadership role;
- the way students speak to each other on occasions (the tone of voice and volume used);
- the tendency of some students to be ‘picky’ about whom they want or are willing to lead;
- some students being left out by others on occasions;
- the need for some students to learn to follow well when appropriate (as well as being able to lead well when appropriate);
- teaching ‘followers’ to support their leaders;
- minimising the occasions when older students are asked / expected to put their work on hold to support the learning of younger students (either by staff or other students); and
- the public speaking skills of students, particularly learning to project their voice.

**Recommendations and Strategies**

- Continue to provide opportunities for students to participate in leadership programs and to develop leadership skills, for example, participation in the Halogen Young Leaders Conference and the Peer Support program.
- Continue to provide opportunities for students to exercise and develop responsibility and leadership skills through activities such as group work, assemblies and ‘jobs’.
- Introduce ‘Teamwork Awards’ to reinforce and reward appropriate behaviour when leading and following.
- Continued opportunities for group work coupled with reinforcement of students displaying appropriate behaviours during group work.
- Provide instruction and correction when required.
- Continue to encourage the development of public speaking skills.
School Learning Support Officer (SLSO)

Background
In 2009 we employed a SLSO for 20 hours / week. This was identified as a key strategy in attaining the literacy and numeracy targets identified in the school plan. It was also a major budget commitment.

The purpose of this evaluation was to gauge the impact (or perceived impact) of this initiative on improving quality of education provided at Rankin’s Springs Public School and student achievement.

All students participated in this evaluation through a class discussion. Feedback from staff, parents and community members was sought through a survey. Staff meetings and P&C meetings were used as a forum for further discussion. All staff, parents and community members were given the opportunity to participate in the evaluation in these ways.

Findings and conclusions
A number of benefits of employing a SLSO to support literacy and numeracy programs were identified. There benefits include:

- allowing for more effective group work;
- supporting the implementation of individual programs;
- allowing all students to have more time in supported and directed learning activities;
- helping the students ‘stay on track’;
- allowing all students to get more attention and support;
- helping the teachers teach and the students learn; and
- enabling infants students to develop stronger foundations in their basic skills.

There was a general consensus that employing a SLSO was very beneficial and helped overcome many of the challenges of a small school environment. The extent of the financial commitment was however noted.

Recommendations and Strategies
- Seek to extend the implementation of the strategy until the end of 2010, budget permitting.

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction
In 2009 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the extent to which they were satisfied with the educational experience offered by Rankin’s Springs Public School.

Background
Information for this evaluation was gathered using surveys and focus groups. The surveys were distributed to staff and parents and completed individually. Students from Years 3-6 were also surveyed.

The School Council was the focus group for parents and community members. Staff meetings were the forum discussions with staff. All the students were included in the discussion during class.
Findings and Conclusions

- All staff indicated that they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the overall quality of education at RSPS.
- Parent responses ranged from ‘satisfied’ to ‘extremely satisfied’.
- Students responses ranged from ‘dissatisfied’ to ‘extremely satisfied’, with most students indicating they were ‘very satisfied’ and one student indicating each of the other responses – ‘dissatisfied’, ‘satisfied’ and ‘extremely satisfied’.
- Areas identified as going particularly well at the moment include:
  - the level of communication and collaboration between staff and the extent to which staff members are involved in decision making processes;
  - the input and support by some parents particularly in relation to the completion of homework and participation in school activities;
  - the level of leadership demonstrated by students; and
  - the employment of the School Learning Support Officer.
- Areas identified as requiring further improvement include:
  - the level of the academic achievement of students at Rankin’s Springs Public School;
  - communication between parents and staff, particularly in relation to raising concerns with staff;
  - clarification of parental expectations; and
  - communication between school and home in some specific areas (see the evaluation of Curriculum Planning and Professional Learning on page 20).

Recommendations and Strategies

- Continue to foster relationships with staff and students from other schools through interschool activity days and video conferencing.
- Investigate the possibility of joining with staff and students from other schools for the next major excursion.
- Continue to employ a School Learning Support Officer to support the delivery of literacy and numeracy programs.
- Continue to encourage staff, parents, students and community members to actively participate in decision making processes through staff meetings, class discussions, the School Council and P&C.
- Fine-tune communication which occurs through the weekly school newsletter and P&C meetings to address identified areas of concern (e.g. resource allocation and professional learning).
- Use the newsletter to invite parents to raise concerns with the principal as they arise.

Conclusion

The feedback received during these evaluations was generally very encouraging. It also provided excellent feedback that helped determine the direction and priorities of the school for 2010. I’d like to thank the staff, students and parents who participated in these evaluations. I would like to particularly thank the members of the school’s self-evaluation committee for their input and support in this valuable process.
Financial Summary

Below is a summary of the income and expenditure of Rankin’s Springs Public School for 2009. The table on the left provides the actual figures, the comments on the right provide a brief description of the key programs.

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

A full copy of the school’s 2009 financial statement is tabled at the general meetings of the School Council. For further details please contact the school office.

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<th>BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD</th>
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<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
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<td>TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE :</td>
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<td>Educational Programs</td>
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<td>Administrative Programs</td>
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<td>Utilities</td>
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<td>Maintenance</td>
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<td>Sub-total</td>
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<td>Capital Programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
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<td>TOTAL PAYMENTS :</td>
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<tr>
<td>BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD:</td>
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</table>

In 2009, income from school and community sources’ included:
- excursion contributions
- P&C donations
- community donations.

Expenditure of tied funds in 2009:
- covered walkways (Investing in our Schools)
- excursion subsidies (Drought Assistance)
- uniform and excursion subsidies (Student Assistance)
- professional learning (see ‘Professional Learning’ section of this report)
- Connected Classroom training and additional teacher for half an hour / week (Computer Co-ordinator)

Key financial commitments of 2009:
- employment of School Learning Support Officer
- literacy resources – Reading Freedom resources
- excursions – minor excursions, Young Leaders Conference, major excursion to Canberra
- prizes and awards for students (various incentive programs as well as end of year presentations)
- ICAS competition entries
- office and classroom supplies
- maintenance of office equipment (printers, laminator, photocopier…)
- utilities (gas, electricity, waste).
Priority Areas for 2009-2011 School Plan

The priorities for the 2009-2011 School Plan were identified through extensive evaluations in 2008, identifying four priority areas:

- literacy (with a continued focus on writing)
- numeracy (with a focus on number and working mathematically)
- Quality Teaching
- student leadership.

The plan was reviewed in Term 4, 2009. This review resulted in a shift in which Quality Teaching was changed from being a priority area to a strategy to support the achievement of the targets in the remaining priority areas. A complete copy of the revised school plan can be accessed by contacting the school.

Targets for 2010

2010 will be the second year of the three year planning cycle. Targets for 2010 are outlined below.

Target 1 Creating Quality Writing

All students will demonstrate a level of competency at or above their anticipated level of achievement when assessed against the ‘Learning to Write’ outcomes of the English K-6 Syllabus.

Our strategies to achieve this target include:

- the development and implementation of Early Literacy Plans for all students in Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 using the Best Start assessments, learning continuums and software;
- the development of Individual Education Programs as appropriate;
- ensuring the Support Teacher Learning Assistant is used effectively to support the development of literacy skills (particularly writing skills) of students not yet demonstrating a sound level of achievement in this area;
- the employment of School Learning Support Officer to support the delivery of literacy programs;
- developing understanding of various types of writing including their purpose and their structure;
- programs and activities to improve vocabulary;
- programs and activities to develop spelling skills; and
- programs and activities to develop understanding of grammar and punctuation.

Anticipated indicators of success include:

- improvements in spelling demonstrated in standardised tests, school-based and external assessments;
- production of well structured text for various purposes;
- improvements in spelling and grammar demonstrated in NAPLAN assessments;
- growth of students from Year 3 to Year 5 in NAPLAN writing assessments; and
- growth of students from Year 3 to Year 5 in NAPLAN assessments of spelling, grammar and punctuation.
**Target 2 Numeracy**

All students will demonstrate a level of competency at or above their anticipated level of achievement when assessed against the ‘Number’ outcomes of the Mathematics K-6 Syllabus.

Our strategies to achieve this target include:

- the development and implementation of Early Numeracy Plans, Individual Learning Plan and Individual Education Programs as appropriate;
- ensuring the Support Teacher Learning Assistant is used effectively to support the development of numeracy skills of students not yet demonstrating a sound level of achievement in this area;
- employment of School Learning Support Officer to support the delivery of numeracy programs; and
- extensive use of hands on learning experiences.

Anticipated indicators of success include:

- students reading and writing whole numbers at a stage appropriate level;
- students being able to count on and back at a stage appropriate level;
- understanding of mathematical concepts (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) at a stage appropriate level;
- students being able to solve problems at a stage appropriate level; and
- students being able to justify their answer to problems and explain the strategies that they used.

**Target 3 Student Leadership**

All students will demonstrate a level of competency at or above their anticipated level of achievement when assessed against the communicating, interacting, problem solving and decision making outcomes of the NSW K-6 PD/H/PE Syllabus.

Our strategies to achieve this target include:

- the office of school captain;
- development of a student leadership team;
- library monitors, sport monitors, canteen monitors, etc;
- Halogen Young Leaders’ Conference (subsidised by the school);
- Peer Support program;
- group work;
- peer tutoring; and
- a public speaking / debating program.

Anticipated indicators of success include:

- students communicating effectively in a range of social and learning contexts;
- positive social interactions amongst students in the classroom and the playground;
- students making decisions that enhance the participation of themself and others;
- students being able to resolve most conflicts independently; and
- students interacting effectively during group work, both as leaders and followers.

Progress towards these targets will be reported on in the 2010 Annual School Report.
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.

Rankin's Springs Public School Self-Evaluation Committee

Natalie James Principal
Barbara Luelf Teacher
Claire Sedola Teacher; School Council - Staff Representative
Ronald Finch School Council President - Community Representative
Julie Groat School Council Secretary – Community Representative
Andrea Finch School Council - P&C President
Gaye Banfield School Council - Parent Representative
Michele Prince School Administrative Manager

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:

School Contact Information

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Boree Street Rankin’s Springs. 2669.
Ph: (02) 69661206
Fax: (02) 69661296
Email: rankinspr-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au
School Code: 2935
## Appendix – Abbreviations and Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAPA</td>
<td>Creative and Practical Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPR</td>
<td>Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWA</td>
<td>Country Women’s Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DET</td>
<td>NSW Department of Education and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g.</td>
<td>for example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc.</td>
<td>etcetera (and so on)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICAS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KLA / KLAs</td>
<td>key learning area/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAIDOC</td>
<td>National Aboriginal and Islander Day of Observance Committee</td>
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</table>
| N.B.         | Please note / note carefully  
  (The abbreviated form of the Latin phrase ‘nota bene’ which means "Take notice of this very carefully"). |
| NAPLAN       | National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy |
| NSW DET      | NSW Department of Education and Training |
| PDHPE        | Personal Development, Health and Physical Education |
| PSSA         | Primary School Sports Association |
| RSPS         | Rankin’s Springs Public School |
| SENA         | Schedule of Early Number Assessment (a maths assessment, usually most suitable for students in Early Stage 1 – Stage 2) |
| SLSO         | School Learning Support Officer (formally known as a Teacher’s Aide) |
| STLA         | Support Teacher Learning Assistant |
| QT / QT Framework | Quality Teaching Framework |