School context
Mount Hutton Public School is a P4 school between Warners Bay and Charlestown in the Lake Macquarie School Education District. Of the school’s 161 students in 2013, 8% were indigenous and just 2% had a language background other than English. The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) gives Mount Hutton a value of 939, compared to an average ICSEA value of 1000. The school works purposefully to improve learning outcomes for its students and together the school and its community have made significant improvements to the school’s physical environment over the years.

A rigorous, whole-school evaluation process in 2013 identified whole school systems and recognition of student achievement as priorities for development. In semester 2, 2013 Mount Hutton P.S. formalised its union with neighbouring schools through the official launch of the Waiyarang Community of Schools. The Early Action for Success (EAFS) project will continue to be a major focus along with preparation for the implementation of the New National Curriculum.

Principal’s message
I am very proud to say that in my first full year as Principal of Mount Hutton P.S. there have been a number of significant gains made across all areas of teaching and learning. We continue as a school community to explore new ways in which we can provide the best possible educational opportunities for our students during a period of great change, whilst at the same time maintaining the traditions and values which have made the school successful for many years.

The advent of new curricula, which changes in the way in which schools are resourced and funded, will mean that we will need to prepare ourselves for meeting the needs of 21st century learners in a way which keeps us at the cutting edge of teaching and learning. I am pleased to say that our team of dedicated professionals has set themselves to meet this challenge through hard work and a strong commitment to professional learning.

Our community, once again, have been at the heart of the school and their ongoing support and encouragement is greatly appreciated. Events such as our Mothers Day Morning Tea, Carols on the Green and Presentation day ceremony were highlights. Our thanks go to our tireless P&C for their continued support of these and other school projects and events.

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.

Steve Gately

P & C message
I am pleased to provide what will be my last president’s report for the 2013 school year. This year the P & C continued in its efforts to raise funds to assist in the ongoing development and support of our school both in and outside of the classrooms. We are delighted every time we come to the school to see the big, black security fence that surrounds us today; something that we never dreamed would be possible in our time. A big thank you to Member for Charlestown, Mr Andrew Cornwall, for making this possible through Federal funding.

We have once again this year seen events such as the Mother’s Day high tea, Father’s day BBQ, Easter raffle, Trivia night, Election day BBQ, Canteen Red days, Discos and, for the first time in quite a while, Carols on the Green. Anyone who was here on that night will agree that it was a fantastic night which will remain firmly planted on the calendar for many years to come. A huge thank you to all those who generously gave their time to support these events.

We are continually looking for new ideas and ways to fundraise and are always appreciative of input from our school community. I would encourage you all to become involved in the P & C in whatever capacity you are able to whether it be by attending monthly meetings or just lending a hand.

My enormous thanks to Mr Gately and his staff, particularly Mrs Mullen and Mrs Hedley in the office, for their never ending support.

To the incoming 2014 President, this is a role which will sometimes test you and push you out of your comfort zone, but take a look around the school
and the faces of the children will tell that those moments will fade away to be replaced by a feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction that you have done something really terrific to enrich the lives of those around you.

Paula Greentree

Student information

In the 2013 school year 161 students (81 girls and 80 boys) were enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6. The total included eight children (five boys and three girls) enrolled in the multi-categorical class.

Student enrolment profile

![Enrolments chart]

Student attendance profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>94.6</td>
<td>95.9</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>94.5</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>94.8</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Management of non-attendance

Student attendance is registered by marking the class roll as soon as students begin morning classes. Each week the principal formally checks attendance rates and trends. Teachers work with families to devise improvement plans for students whose attendance is impacting on their learning. When high levels of absenteeism persist families are referred to the Home School Liaison program. The school community is informed about the importance of regular school attendance through the newsletter, in parent-teacher interviews and in student progress reports.

Workforce information

The Mount Hutton school staff is made up of a principal, two assistant principals and six full-time teachers (including one shared position). Part-time teachers included a teacher/librarian, a school learning support teacher, other learning support staff and a school counsellor. In addition, the school has an administrative manager who is responsible for the office, supported by a part-time school administrative officer. A full-time learning support officer works in the multi-categorical classroom, two part-time learning support officers, including one with an Indigenous background, work with teachers and families to enhance students’ literacy and numeracy skills, improve attendance and support the enrolment of students with disabilities in mainstream classes. A general assistant works at the school for three days each fortnight.

The average length of service of our teaching staff is just over 18 years.

Workforce composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Mild Intellectual Disabilities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on Indigenous composition of their workforce. One member of staff at MHPS identifies as being an Aboriginal person.

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.
## 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>30/11/2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Income

- Balance brought forward: $48,327.82
- Global funds: $112,678.71
- Tied funds: $84,675.45
- School & community sources: $45,912.43
- Interest: $2,252.33
- Trust receipts: $3,290.75
- Canteen: $0.00

Total income: $297,137.49

### Expenditure

- Teaching & learning
  - Key learning areas: $113,105.55
  - Excursions: $20,678.07
  - Extracurricular dissections: $10,078.97
- Library: $3,042.04
- Training & development: $3,632.58
- Tied funds: $7,569.13
- Casual relief teachers: $22,502.17
- Administration & office: $25,988.37
- School-operated canteen: $0.00
- Utilities: $26,618.17
- Maintenance: $10,477.06
- Trust accounts: $3,290.75
- Capital programs: $0.00

Total expenditure: $213,309.86

Balance carried forward: $83,827.63

A full copy of the school's 2013 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Parents and Citizens body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

### School performance 2013

#### Academic achievements

##### NAPLAN

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.

- Year 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)
- Year 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)
- Year 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)
- Year 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing (NAPLAN).

Click on the link [http://www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au) and enter the school name in the Find a school and select GO to access the school data.

#### NAPLAN Year 3 - Literacy

Data shows that the areas of concern are still inferential comprehension, visual literacy and making connections. It is anticipated that with the continuation of the Focus on Reading initiative, improvements will be evident in the coming years.

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![Percentage in bands: Year 3 Reading](image-url)
NAPLAN Year 3 - Numeracy

Year 3 NAPLAN data shows 73% of students achieved band 3 or higher. Areas of concern include fractions and decimals and multiplication and division questions. Improvements, compared to 2012 results, were noted in data, measurement and space.

NAPLAN Year 3 - Literacy

Year 5 students scored above the state average in the aspect of reading. However, they scored below state average in the aspect of writing.

NAPLAN Year 5 - Numeracy

In 2013: 36% of Year 5’s reached expected growth or greater and 33% of Year 7’s reached expected growth or greater. Both figures are lower than 2010 – 2012 average.

- In NAPLAN Numeracy 75% of Year 3 students achieved Band 3 or higher.
- 36% of Year 5’s reached expected growth or greater. These figures are lower than 2010 – 2012 average.

Other achievements

In 2013 M.H.P.S. had two Yr 6 students selected for NSW across three sports. One student was selected in the NSW PSSA girls football team and successfully competed in Richlands, QLD.

Another student was selected in both the NSW PSSA Rugby League and NSW PSSA touch football teams. The NSW PSSA Rugby League team competed in Perth and came 5th in their
competition. The NSW PSSA touch football team competed in Darwin and came second. The Mount Hutton student also received the coach’s award for this competition. These are huge achievements for our school and we hope to continue to build on this success.

**Significant programs and initiatives**

**Early Action for Success**

Early Action for Success is the strategy through which the Department of Education and Communities is implementing the NSW Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan. The strategy combines high quality leadership, a focus on individual students and early intervention to ensure students at risk of not achieving expected outcomes are identified and receive additional support. A feature of the strategy is the appointment of Instructional Leaders, Literacy and Numeracy to strengthen leadership capacity and teaching expertise. Our school has been lucky enough to have an instructional leader appointed for the next 3 years, who will work with K-2 teachers and students.

Through the Early Action for Success program this year, teachers have formed a K-2 Professional Learning Network, where they meet regularly with the Instructional Leader to develop their knowledge and skills in delivering high quality literacy and numeracy lessons to their students. Teachers have also participated in 1-1 mentoring sessions, where they are provided with specifically targeted professional learning.

Having an instructional leader to work closely with staff has helped teachers to become strong reflective practitioners. It has built their capacity to cater for all students' individual needs and has built their knowledge of curriculum, planning and programming skills and teaching strategies to differentiate the curriculum and to track and monitor student progress.

Some highlights have been:

- An increase from 11% to 80% of teachers who strongly agree that they are regularly reflecting on data and linking this to the effectiveness of their teaching practices.
- 100% of teachers strongly agreeing or agreeing that they now regularly participate in structured learning conversations to critique their teaching practices.
- An increase from 68% to 100% of teachers providing regular quality feedback to students, based on explicit learning intentions from the continuum.

**Premiers Sporting Challenge**

The Premier’s Primary School Sport Challenge aims to engage young people in sport and physical activity and encourages them to lead healthy, active lifestyles. 2013 is the fifth year that Mount Hutton has participated in the Premiers Sporting Challenge. It allows students to track their physical activity each day and encourage them to participate in more physical activity, and creates a team environment within the classes. The Premiers Sporting Challenge has also provided Mount Hutton PS with a grant to purchase sporting equipment to assist with the implementation of the challenge.
**Active After School Sport**

The Australian Government’s Active After-school Communities (AASC) program is a national initiative that provides primary school children with access to free sport and other structured physical activity programs in the after-school time slot. The program aims to engage traditionally inactive children in sport and other structured physical activities and through a positive and fun experience develop a love of sport that inspires them to join a local sporting club. 2013 is the fifth year that Mount Hutton has participated in the AASC program and approximately 28.5 per cent of all students participate and enjoy the activities such as surfing that they may not otherwise have had the opportunity to do so.

**Programs for Students with additional educational Needs**

The School Learning Support Team meets weekly and ensures support for students who have family, social or learning issues that are affecting their performance at school. The team, which includes teachers on a roster basis, discusses any adjustments that are in place or any additional adjustments that may need to be made for a student. The team also monitors the progress of students who are on Individual Education Programs and plans for their ongoing support.

Students who are identified by the classroom teacher as requiring additional support are referred to the Learning and Support Teacher (LAST). The staff use a broad range of data to identify students with additional learning needs and students are assessed pre and post intervention. This intervention is highly successful for the majority of our students. Some students require ongoing support or referrals made to outside agencies.

Our Wellbeing and Support Program (WASP) this year has focused on a number of social skills programs K-6, including the positive resolution of conflict, transition to high school and skills to enable students get along with others. We also ran a “Seasons for Growth” program for a small group of children who have experienced significant loss or change. It examined the impact of change and explored how we can learn to live with and grow from these experiences. The core intention of the program is the development of resilience to promote social and emotional wellbeing.

Mount Hutton P.S. enjoys an inclusive culture where students are happy to take on a caring/fostering role with our K/6W and younger students. This culture is evident in roles such as School Captains and Vice Captains, Student Councilors, peer support groups, school buddies, peer tutors, House Captains and Vice Captains and tabloid sports day leaders.

**Aboriginal education**

All staff at Mount Hutton are committed to reducing the achievement gap between Aboriginal students and the wider school population.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan and The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy are mandatory documents currently being implemented at MHPS. We continue to provide high expectations of all students, including Aboriginal students.
Cultural activities were scheduled at different times in the year, including NAIDOC Day, a school-wide celebration of Aboriginal culture. On this day our students participated in a range of learning experiences focusing on and raising the profile of Aboriginal culture. All staff participated in Stronger Smarter training which increased our awareness of developing a positive sense of cultural identity and using dynamic approaches and processes, anchored by high expectations. The President of the Mulloonbinba Local Committee of the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) once again generously gave of her time to attend the annual Awards Presentation Ceremony in December. At this ceremony, the acknowledgement of Country was performed by one of our Year 4 Aboriginal students.

**Multicultural education**

The school policy, “Cultural Diversity and Community Relations”, guides staff in decisions about school activities. Each year the school plans programs and activities that foster cultural and religious tolerance and acceptance, including student and staff participation in special events such as Harmony Day.

Mount Hutton has an Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO) who is trained to address issues in this important area. In 2013 the ARCO received one complaint about racist language from a student which was resolved to the satisfaction of the school, student and family.

**School planning and evaluation 2012—2014**

**School evaluation processes**

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used include:

- Parent and Community focus group.
- Student surveys and class forums.
- Staff surveys.

**School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013**

**School priority 1 - Literacy**

**Outcomes from 2012–2014**

Improved levels of literacy achievement for every student

**Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:**

- 78% of Early Stage 1 students have achieved regional reading target as a direct result of the introduction of L3.
- 70% of students in Year 1 have achieved regional reading target as a result of the Early Action for Success initiative.
- Alignment of K-2 programming with that of the other schools in the WCoS LMG through training in and implementation of L3.
- Alignment of Primary literacy programs with that of the other schools in WCoS LMG through training in and implementation of Focus on Reading program.
- Updating primary resources guided reading to include current and engaging material relating to student interests.
- Use of visual, digital and multi modal material to upskill teachers in effective comprehension teaching and learning strategies.
- Increased teacher awareness of the importance of implementing strategies to differentiate the curriculum through the use of visual and digital media.
- Building team capacity to implement Early Action For Success (EAFS) initiative by clustering RFF and collegial visits across schools in WCoS LMG.
- Introduction of a speech program across schools in the WCoS LMG lead to improvement in vocabulary knowledge of students in K-2.

**Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014**

- Build teacher capacity to understand and implement the new National Curriculum in English (K-10) through professional learning and dialogue.
- Embed a common framework to support the management of literacy teaching and learning.
- Review teacher skills in comprehension teaching and learning. Ensure quality teaching practice includes effective comprehension teaching and learning strategies.
• Continue to imbed explicit teaching of comprehension and inferential skills through L3 initiative and Focus on Reading.

• Improve teacher capacity in Stage 1 through L3 training available to all teachers.

• Commitment of executive release to allow for mentoring of teachers in the explicit literacy instruction.

• Continue 'lesson study' approach to professional learning across the other schools in the WCoS LMG.

• Strengthen teacher capacity in the implementation of strategies to differentiate the curriculum.

• Professional development for Stage 2 and 3 teachers in PLAN data.

• Focus on Literacy continuum at team meetings and staff meetings to ensure assessments align with the aspect and cluster outcomes.

• Strengthen teacher capacity through the Early Action for Success (EAFS) initiative by increasing Executive release and clustering RFF to build team capacity to implement this initiative.

• Executive and Instructional Leader to strengthen teacher capacity to analyse data that aligns to the Literacy Continuum.

• Increase the percentage of Stage 2 and 3 students achieving sound (C) or better in the A-E scale in Working Mathematically strand to 72%.

**Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:**

Target: 69% of Stage 2 and 3 Students achieved C or better in Working Mathematically

- 44% of Year 3’s reached C or above.
- 79% of Year 4’s reached C or above.
- 50% of Year 5’s reached C or above.
- 91% of Year 6’s reached C or above.

Target: 80% of Kindergarten students reach perceptual Level or beyond. 90% of Year 1 reach Figurative level or beyond. 90% of Year 2 reach counting on and back level or beyond. 85% of Year 3 reach counting on and back level or beyond. 50% of Year 5’s reached C or above

- 94% of Kindergarten reached Perceptual.
- 79% of Year 1 reached Figurative.
- 71% of Year 2 reached counting on and back
- 80% of Year 3 reached counting on and back.

**Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:**

• Track cohorts K-3 in the Early Arithmetic Strategy, as outlined in Targeting Efficient Numeracy Program, to ensure continued growth of each student and increase the percentage of the cohort reaching the target each year.

• Executive release and Instructional Leader time to maximise the support given to all teachers (K-6) in the implementation of best practice in mathematics to ensure curriculum differentiation and student assessment and continuum tracking is maximised.

• Maintain and implement Targeting Early Numeracy Intervention Program(K-2) and Taking Off With Numeracy (3-6)

• All teachers K-6 to utilise PLAN software as a means of tracking student achievement on the continuum.
• Begin planning explicitly a K-6 Scope and Sequence and support documents for the New Mathematics Curriculum (K-10)
• Revisit consistent teacher judgement for assessing students work in alignment with the A-E assessment scale and the Mathematics Curriculum (K-10)
• Conduct Parent Information Sessions to seek parental support in the teaching of Mathematics

School priority 3 - Student Wellbeing and support

Outcome for 2012–2014
Create safer and more harmonious learning environments for teachers, students and the school community.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:
• Student attendance improved from 92.6% in 2012 to 93.5% in 2013
• A variety of new structured playground programs were successfully implemented resulting in students being more actively engaged in the playground
• All students in years 4-6 participated in transition to High school programs across the community of schools (WCoS)
• A comprehensive framework for the implementation and launch of the Positive Behaviour for Learning program in 2014 was established in term 4 with a view to commencing in Term 1 2014.
• The whole school Peer Support program, implemented by year six students, received extremely positive feedback from all stakeholders.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:
• Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) will provide the cornerstone for welfare and management systems across the school. The PBL team will undertake extensive professional learning in order to embed systems and practices.
• Peer support program to continue and evolve in 2014 as part of the school’s welfare program.

The school, in partnership with the P&C and school community will continue to explore avenues to improve the quality and quantity of playground resources.

Professional learning
At Mount Hutton Public School all staff members take part in professional learning to support the implementation of key priority areas and plans.

During 2013 the school spent approximately $9394 ($2932 Tied for the New Curriculum Development) on professional development. An average of $934 was spent per staff member. This investment in our teachers and support staff ensures we effectively implement quality programs and effective teaching and learning activities across all key learning areas.

A significant amount of the professional learning occurs after school hours in professional learning sessions held every Wednesday and during set aside Staff Development Days at the commencement of term 1, 2, 3 and the last two days of term 4. This year the staff of Mount Hutton Public school had permission from the Department of Education to hold a professional learning day for Focus on
Reading in the July school holidays. This allowed staff to access greater information from the program to implement in second semester.

**Key Initiatives**

**Literacy**

Our Kindergarten teacher trained in the implementation of Language, Learning and Literacy (L3). L3 is a research-based, Kindergarten classroom program, targeting text reading and writing. It has been designed to complement the daily Literacy program. Students receive explicit instruction in reading and writing strategies in small groups of three to four selected students. Students then rotate to independent individual or group tasks. This occurs in the daily Literacy session.

Program commitments ensured our Kindergarten teacher:

- Attended 12 half day workshops throughout the year
- Participate in a minimum of four half day collegial visits, involving classroom observation and discussion with the L3 regional trainer.
- Complete between session tasks, collect and submit student data every 5 weeks.

During term 4, one teacher attended an information day for L3 in Stage One. This was followed by a hand over day for Early Stage One and Stage One teachers.

All teachers attended training session’s equivalent to 26 hours for Focus On Reading as mentioned earlier in this report. This has been a significant investment in our school to lift the reading comprehension results of all students. The program focuses on systematic planning, assessment and evaluation of our reading comprehension programs.

Mathematics

One teacher had attended professional learning on the new Mathematics Syllabus via online learning modules. This area will be a focus of Professional Learning in 2014 with the implementation of the New Curriculum in 2015 being mandatory.

**Learning Support**

Our Learning Assistant Support Teacher and two other teachers completed three online sessions for Understanding Dyslexia and Significant Difficulties in Reading. This focused on the identifying aspects of Dyslexia, setting goals for learners and curriculum differentiation in reading.

Our LAST attended professional learning sessions throughout the year focusing on supporting students in Out of Home Care, Using York
Assessment of Reading for Comprehension and Learning and Support Teams (Module 2).

SLSO’s attended two days of Staff Development specifically designed for the SLSO and support staff role.

Other Professional Learning

Other significant professional learning included the introduction of Positive Behaviour for Learning into our school in term 4, 2013. A PBL team consisting of 4 teachers, 1 School Learning Support Officer (SLSO) and Principal was formed. These teachers attended two whole day sessions which provided a strong foundation for success of the program in 2014. These staff members continued to meet each week to fine tune practices for implementation in 2014. Regular feedback to all staff members was provided.

School based professional learning included the mandatory participation of all staff members in online emergency care/asthma training, child protection updates, first aid and resuscitation and WH&S emergency planning procedures.

Staff Development Days were utilised to work within the Waiyarang Community of Schools. In term 3 all staff from the five schools attended a professional team building day at Hunter Sports High School which then led to the formal launch of the WCoS in term 4.

Through application and acceptance of a grant, two teachers attended training in term 4 for Live Life Well @ School Program which is designed to improve nutrition and physical education of all students. An action plan has since been developed which incorporates a $2000 grant and will be put in place term 1, 2014.

New Scheme Teachers

At the conclusion of 2013, Mount Hutton Public School had one full time teacher and one temporary full time teacher accredited with the Institute of Teachers. Both teachers have accrued hours towards maintaining accreditation throughout the year, with the two teachers attaining significant Professional Learning hours to maintain accreditation. One temporary teacher undertook accreditation by working with a mentor throughout the year to document achievements in attaining Professional Competence levels.

Findings and Conclusions

Teacher surveys indicate that the majority of teachers at Mount Hutton Public School prefer acquiring professional learning through attending DEC run courses, participating in stage planning sessions, being involved in lesson observations and team teaching sessions to further their understanding of new concepts in key priorities. Teachers indicate that they believe professional learning sessions are successful when it leads to improved student outcomes through being imbedded in teaching practices, creates increased teacher moral, collegial discussion and motivation.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2013, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented below.

Parents were surveyed on the five-point scale and asked to respond to fifteen statements relating to school tone, recognition of student achievement and engagement and other welfare related issues. Parents were able to indicate whether they “Strongly Agreed”, “Agreed”, were “Unsure” “Disagreed” or “Strongly Disagreed”. All parents responded either “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” to each of the dimensions of the survey. All Parents surveyed “strongly agreed” that “Our teachers and support staff are passionate about what they do” and that “Our school environment is in need of more colour and energy”. Areas of concern raised by parents included “Student expectations are not clearly defined and visible in the school” and that “Teacher expectations of student behaviour are not consistent across all settings”.

A survey of the entire staff was undertaken in Term 3 in order to gather baseline data which would support, or otherwise, the implementation of...
Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) as a whole school systems approach to student management. An evaluation of the data found a number of positive trends in classroom settings. However, there were a number of concerns identified across the areas of non-classroom systems and individual student systems. The data indicated that less than 10% of staff believed that comprehensive management systems were fully in place according to the following statements.

- A small number (e.g. 3-5) of positively and clearly stated student expectations or rules are defined.
- Expected student behaviours are taught directly
- Expected student behaviours are rewarded regularly
- Problem behaviours (failure to meet expected student behaviours) are defined clearly.
- Consequences for problem behaviours are defined clearly.
- Data on problem behaviour patterns are collected and summarised with an on-going system
- School-wide expected student behaviours are taught in non-classroom settings.
- Rewards exist for meeting expected student behaviours in non-classroom settings
- Student rules and expectations are clearly represented throughout the school.

This data was also reflected in student's surveys where 42 out of 50 students surveyed were unable to clearly identify or articulate the school's core rules and expectations. As an outcome of this data and further discussion, staff voted unanimously to implement PBL from the commencement of the 2014 school year. This decision was also supported and endorsed by the P & C.

Program evaluations

Literacy: Focus on Reading

In 2013 Mount Hutton Public school took part in Focus on Reading (3-6), an intensive professional learning program that supports teachers in understanding and explicitly teaching reading strategies that enable students to access the range of texts they are required to comprehend throughout their schooling. With emphasis on meta-cognitive skills including predicting, summarising, making connections, monitoring, questioning and visualising, the program aims to increase student motivation for reading beyond the middle years.

One Assistant Principal and the WCoS instructional leader trained as facilitators for the Focus on Reading (3-6) program and Leading Focus on Reading (3-6). Both attended four professional learning days and regular network meetings throughout the year. All teachers (K-6) were trained by the facilitators, attending school based workshop modules (26 hours), completing between module tasks and becoming involved in across the school support structures. The program focused on engaging teachers and having them continually examine, reflect on, implement, refine and practice new learning with the support of school based trainers.

Key features of the program include:

- Strengthening teacher capacity to use a range of texts in classroom literacy
programs including literary, factual and multimodal texts

- Ensuring all teachers develop expertise in the key meta-cognitive skills readers draw upon
- Training teachers in utilising literacy continuums and classroom learning plans to track student progress and analyse data for future planning
- Commitment to reflective practice which is essential professional learning
- Working collegially to plan and evaluate lessons
- Establishment of a Wiki to share resources

Findings and conclusions

- A school scope and sequence was established to ensure all students (K-6) were explicitly taught meta-cognitive skills associated with reading in 2013
- All teachers (3-6), librarian and LAST participated in Lesson Studies throughout the year where the focus was on building capacity to examine, refine and plan for future learning in reading
- All teachers (K-6) utilised class learning plans to plot student achievement and plan for future learning

Staff Survey on impact of program on teaching and learning

All staff felt that the Focus on Reading program:

- Deepened their understanding of comprehension strategies
- Increased their confidence and ability in explicitly teaching reading in their classroom
- Improved their ability to question students in a way which draws deeper understanding of texts

Teachers were asked to list the key changes that have occurred to their teaching practice as a result of Focus on Reading. Common threads were:

- Designing and making walls that teach
- Utilising a wider range of visual literacy and multimodal texts
- Explicitly using the continuum to guide and plan for comprehension
- Explicit teaching of metacognitive comprehension strategies
- Reflecting on teaching and learning practice to enhance student learning outcomes

Future Recommendations

In 2014, we will need to complete Module 4 of the program and ensure that any new or returning teachers are trained in all modules. A focus for the beginning of the year is to revise the scope and sequence relating to the super six and link this scope and sequence to the new English Syllabus.

Teacher surveys indicate that the key elements that need to be revised or embedded into school planning are:

- Sharing sessions in team meeting for strategies to support the Super Six and to ensure consistency in teacher judgement when plotting students on continuum or classroom learning plans
- Establish a scope and sequence of meta-cognitive skills for reading in line with the new English Syllabus
- Collegial time to plan lessons for explicit teaching of comprehension
- Track through data comparisons improvement to student outcomes over time as a result of Focus on reading (FoR) using the literacy continuum

Debating

Background

In 2013, ten Stage 3 students and one teacher were trained in formal aspects of debating. The students and teacher attended a Lake Macquarie Debating Workshop. Debaters’ continued to meet weekly with Mrs Phillips to hone their skills in forming
arguments, rebuttals, use of palm cards and debating etiquette.

The Year 6 team competed in the *Premier’s Debating Challenge*. This competition required students to prepare their arguments in an hour timeslot just prior to each debate. Although they did not win any of their four debates in the competition the students gained confidence in manner, team work and the use of palm cards. The Year 6 team then competed in a round robin competition as part of the *Lake Macquarie District Debating Competition*. This gala day was hosted at Mount Hutton Public School and resulted in the team making it through to and winning the Grand Final of their Division Pool against Barnsley. They successfully debated the topic *Single gender classes/schools would improve student outcomes*. Stage 3 students also had the opportunity to watch many of the debates hosted at Mount Hutton P.S.

The combined Year 5/6 team competed in the *Lake Macquarie District Debating Competition*. A gala day took place with 2 other Hunter/Central Coast Schools at Mount Hutton in Term 3. All students gained confidence and an understanding of their roles and responsibilities when planning and delivering debates, winning one debate from two.

### Findings and conclusions

100% of the 10 students and 1 teacher who participated in debating this year indicate:

- a) They have a significantly higher understanding of the format of debates and have improved their speaking and listening skills.
- b) They have gained confidence in presenting planned and impromptu speeches debated to an audience.
- c) In particular, they indicated a greater understanding of rebuttals and the importance of team work.

### Future directions

Teachers from Stage 2 and Stage 3 will continue to implement the scope and sequence with learning activities to explicitly teach aspects of talking and listening. Debating will be the focus for term 3 in all Stage 2 and Stage 3 classes. Debating skills will be once again addressed in conjunction with discussion writing.

### Sport

#### Background

Sport and physical activity in schools is becoming increasingly more important in today’s society. Adolescence is a time when the trend to inactivity is a concern. Efforts to encourage young children to be more active provides optimum health and allows some scope for reducing activity later in life. Physical activity is important in contributing to quality of life. Participation in active pursuits can be an enjoyable, creative and social outlet that has the potential to build self esteem. School programs at all levels have a responsibility to encourage the physical growth and development of all students, support the acquisition of movement skills and nurture positive attitudes towards physical activity and sport.

At Mount Hutton P.S. we strive to provide students with a wide range of sporting activities. This gives students an opportunity to participate in; and try sports that they may not otherwise have the opportunity to.

- Students in Kindergarten to Year 2 participate in a sports program that focuses on the development of the fundamental movement skills (FMS). The students rotate around different groups to ensure that all 12 FMS are covered. Students in years 3 – 6 then use these skills in an actual sporting situation. Over the last four years we have endeavoured to provide students with a wider range of Friday afternoon sport activities available to them. Some inclusions this year have been;
- interschool rugby league competition where approximately 35.1 per cent of all senior students participate in our senior team
- 40.5 per cent of year 3 and 4 students participate in our junior rugby league team.
- We also provide swimming lessons that cater for all students’ ability levels and students from Years 2 – 6 are invited to participate. This year 25 students participated.
- These sporting opportunities allow students to practice skills learnt in PE lessons and ensure that they compete more competitively in PSSA knockout competitions.
- To assist families with cost and organisation we send out a sport planner at the beginning of the year that outlines what sports will be available and the cost involved for primary students.
- We compete in many knockout competitions throughout the year; again to provide students with as many opportunities as possible in their school lives. This has increased parent involvement within the school. Parents have the opportunities to drive students to their sporting events, assist with coaching teams and supporting their children and their community. This year we participated in cricket, netball, soccer and rugby league knockout competitions.
- We also held our annual swimming, athletics and cross country carnivals. These events are always aimed at 100 per cent participation. This year we held very successful carnivals and many students went on to compete at the zone level. Mount Hutton students competed very well at these carnivals. We had several students place in their heats at the zone athletics carnival, and one student moved onto compete at the regional level in the 100m sprint. We also had one student place 6th at zone cross country and went on to represent the Eastlakes zone at regional cross country.
- One student was selected to play for the Eastlakes Zone Netball team.

Findings and conclusions
- Mount Hutton PS has seen significant improvements in sport in the past few years.
- We will continue to provide students with a range of sports and physical activities to keep them engaged, active and healthy.
- We will now work towards ensuring that we program more opportunities for students to practice athletics and cross country skills well before our own carnival so that students are more prepared and can be more competitive at the PSSA level.
- We will continue to work with Hunter Sports High school to borrow their high jump equipment to ensure that the students of Mount Hutton PS have access to high quality and safe equipment.

Future Directions
- While we have worked hard to receive a great deal of new and beneficial sporting equipment there have been a concern amongst staff that it is difficult to get the equipment out and that
the storage area is not adequate for our equipment.

- We will now work towards finding an alternative storage area or making certain the current sports shed is fixed up to remedy these problems.

Peer Support

Background

The Peer Support program provides opportunities and an environment for students to develop skills for building positive relationships and encouraging participation. Enhancing peer relationships, vertical connections and teacher-student interactions may assist our school to create and maintain a positive school culture.

Findings

The 2013 Mount Hutton Public School Peer Support Program was reviewed and analysed using: teacher and student surveys.

- In responding to surveys all staff agreed that the Peer Support program provided an environment for students to establish new friendships
- All staff agreed that the module "Relationships" was important to the needs of the students.
- All staff agreed that the module (Relationships) supported the school’s student welfare policy
- All staff agreed that the Peer Leaders demonstrated authentic leadership skills.
- 71% of staff believe that the Peer Leaders consistently applied leadership skills across all areas of school life.
- All staff believed that the leadership skills developed and shown by the Year 6 students; and the relationships developed amongst all students K-6 were the two most valuable aspects of the Peer Support Program.
- All of the Peer Leaders enjoyed the Peer Support Program and said they found the 2 day training extremely helpful.
- All of the Peer Leaders said that they found preparing for the activities and practising with their co-leaders the most helpful part of the briefing/debriefing sessions.
- Majority of the group members said that the part they enjoyed most about working with their Peer Support group was playing the games and getting to know the other people in their group.

Future Directions

- In 2014 we will need to purchase another module that we feel is suited to the needs of our school and community.
- We will again run Peer Support activities in Term 2.

School Camps and Excursions:

During 2013 Mount Hutton students went on a variety of educational excursions that provided quality learning experiences. All excursions were structured learning experiences that aligned with a specific curriculum focus for that term. Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 visited the Reptile Park in Term 1 and a show at the Civic Theatre ‘Possum Magic’ in term 3.

At the Reptile Park the students walked around the park at their leisure stopping to see kangaroos, lace monitor, bats, birds, tortoise and a very large crocodile. They went to a reptile show and some students were lucky enough to be part of it by holding the reptiles. They enjoyed looking at the snakes, frogs and spiders through glass windows too.
'Possum Magic' was another great experience for the students as they saw a live show and visited the Civic Theatre. This show was a visual delight with superb sets, puppets and costumes, along with the infectious songs and the sweet innocence of the story by Mem Fox, with illustrations by Julie Vivas, made Possum Magic into the most successful children’s musical ever! The students enjoyed seeing the book come to life & loved being able to dance along to the songs.

Stage 2 went a bush excursion to Glenrock Lagoon National Park where they trekked through the park to witness its glory first hand. They saw various plants and animals in the reserve and talked about the negative effects humans and feral animals, as well as introduced plant species could and do have on the park. A ranger explained how the local Aboriginal people used many of the plants as medicines and food. As well as how they could be used to fashion tools and equipment such as carry bags.

Stage 3 went on several different excursions this year. On their visit to Sydney they saw a movie on Space at the IMAX theatre. At Madame Tussauds Wax Museum they had their photos taken with various celebrities’, historical greats, past and present leaders, sporting, film and musical heroes, cultural personalities and TV greats. Sydney Wildlife Park was an animal adventure to see different wildlife species that can be found here in Australia.

Canberra was the highlight of the year for many students as it was their first time to visit the snow fields of Thredbo and see and touch snow. They visited Parliament House, Old Parliament House, Planning Exhibition Centre, Electoral Office, Questacon, a dinosaur museum, Institute of Sport and the Hydro Information Centre. During their visit to CSIRO they were able to make T-shirts that looked spectacular on their return to school. They also had an unexpected stop over at Goulburn Police Academy for one night as their trip was delayed due to bush fires on the Hume highway. This was an experience that made their excursion an unforgettable one.

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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