



Modbury Special School

ANNUAL REPORT 2010

Chairperson: Geoff Grantham
Principal: Julie Aschberger

“MAKING THE DIFFERENCE”

Dampier Avenue
Hope Valley SA 5090

Telephone: 8263 4449
Fax: 8395 0332

ANNUAL REPORT 2010

March '11

A Year of Consolidation & Challenge

Modbury Special School's mission is the provision of the highest quality education for students with disabilities from Reception to Year 12 focusing on strong values, quality learning and rigorous teaching.

Our commitment to this mission in 2010 was evidenced by:

- Continuous development of a school culture committed to Positive Programming as the core behaviour management approach.
- Successful transitions of students to senior secondary and post school options including supported employment.
- High Attendance Rates

- Staff attending Spectronics Conference in Queensland
- CLDD research with Professor Barry Carpenter
- Winning SERU grants for iPad, iPods and software
- 2 members of staff completing aspiring leaders courses (Northern Adelaide Region Aspiring Leaders Program and Q School)
- Exchange of teacher Nathan Garner from the UK
- North Eastern District Learners Network
- Communication group
- New SACE workshops
- New SACE moderation
- TAFE & Uni SA students working with students in health & P.E.

Highlights

Some of the many highlights of 2010 include:

Curriculum/Student Learning:

- DER computer roll out for senior secondary students
- Premier's Reading Challenge
- New SACE implementation for senior secondary
- New SACE learning and assessment plans being used as exemplars across the state
- Successful implementation of SACE canteen
- Development of SACE gardens in Grevillea
- Festival of Music
- Whole school understanding of comprehension
- Mentoring projects with students from Modbury High School
- Recycling across the site

Working As Teams:

- Modbury Special School Expo

Facilities:

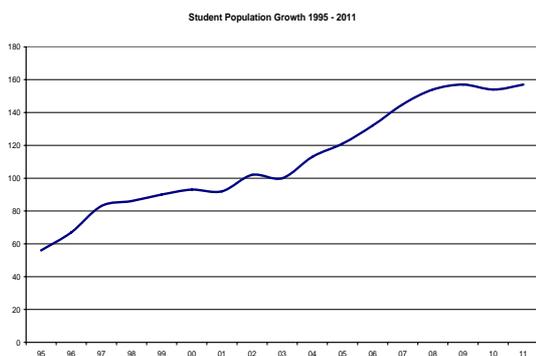
- Gym/General Purpose building opening
- New Dianella
- Purchase of hall/gym equipment with fundraising money

Other:

- 3 contract teachers gaining permanency
- Teacher winning a leadership position at Para Hills H.S.
- 2 successful discos organised by the Governing Council
- Quiz Night organised by the Governing Council

Enrolments Firm at Record Levels

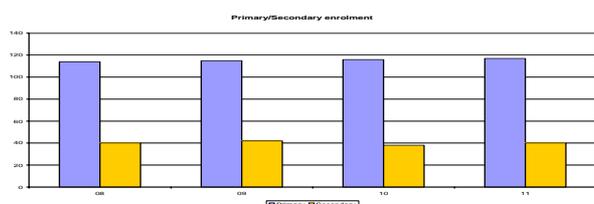
Following the rapid acceleration of student numbers from '03 to '07 student numbers have stabilised at around the record level achieved in 2009. This level is likely to be maintained in the medium term due to student accommodation being fully subscribed and demand for places remaining high. Pressure on class space was further exacerbated by the need to accommodate 5 extremely behaviourally challenging students over the course of 2010. These students will again require special class space and/or program arrangements in 2011.



Enrolments remained robust in the Reception and Junior Primary age groups reflecting the continued effectiveness of established transition processes with feeder pre-school programs. The population 'bubble' caused by the rapid growth in junior enrolments from '03 to '07 will begin to have an effect on accommodation arrangements in 2011 with the creation of two new class groups in the Grevillea unit.

An area of continuing concern for us is the small but significant number of students (5) with extreme behavioural issues who require 1:1 teaching support and, for a couple, separate accommodation. Access to funding to adequately provide for these students has remained problematic. Our funding applications for 2010 were significantly discounted by the Resource Allocation Adjustment Panel causing the need to subsidise arrangements from the school budget (eg. extra SSO hours and reallocation of leadership administration time). This has affected other school programs. Detailed funding applications were made (and ultimately were mostly successful) for 1:1 teaching for 2011 however adequate accommodation will remain an issue.

2010 commenced with close to maximum capacity enrolment. The ratio of primary to secondary aged students has remained fairly static for several years and should stay so in 2011. From 2012 however the number of secondary aged students will begin to increase.



Recommendations:

- **Early negotiations with Regional and Central Offices to establish funding requirements for 1:1 students before the end of the school year.**

- **Review of accommodation arrangements for students in middle and upper primary age groups.**

New Facilities Online:

The new Dianella building accommodated a class through 2010 and will accommodate two classes in 2011. The Hall/Gym came into use during Term 2 and after some initial teething problems developed into a well used resource. The official opening took place in Term 4 with local Federal member Tony Zappia conducting the formalities.

Parents Have High Regard for the Quality of Teaching & Learning at MSS.

For the 2010 Parent Survey we participated in the centrally coordinated process again after a couple of years coordinating the process ourselves due to our concerns with the very poor return rate previously. This time we negotiated with the Educational Measurement Section and with our sampled families (all 100 of them) to ensure a good rate of return. The resultant return rate was over 60% which is among the best in DECS. In terms of actual numbers this translates to 39% of all our families completed a survey meaning the validity of our results is very high.

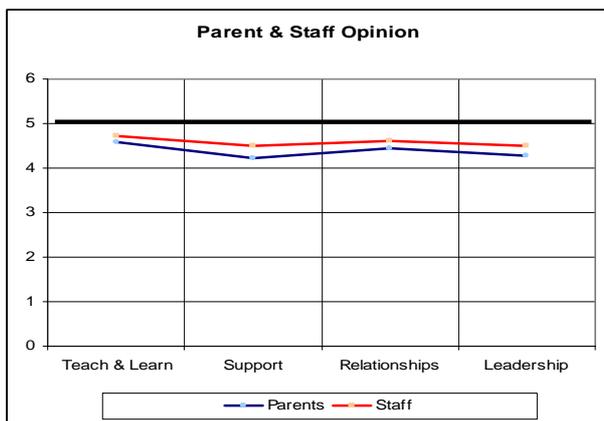
Across all four areas reported in the surveys:

- *Quality of Teaching & Learning*
- *Support of Learning*
- *Relationships & Communication*
- *Leadership & Decision Making*

families rated the school on average at 4.4 out of a possible 5 with the highest average score of 4.59 for the "Quality of Teaching and Learning" criterion. This indicates an increasingly high level of confidence by parents and carers in the education provided to their children at our school. It also indicates the school's ongoing targeted response to feedback in previous surveys about this aspect of school operations.

The lowest average score was for the "Support of Learning" criterion (4.23). This appears related to a clutch of negative responses to the question about encouragement of a sense of pride by students in their achievements.

The staff average score across all criteria showed a similar pattern to that of the parents (av. 4.58 out of 5) with "Quality of Teaching and Learning" also rating the highest (4.73).



Recommendation:

In the 2009 survey parents indicated a desire for greater involvement in school activities and decision making. In 2010 this aspect rated above the state average. The only survey response below the state average was regarding encouragement of students to have pride in their achievements. Staff will examine this response in greater detail and a whole school response will be included in the Site Improvement Plan.

Student Goal Achievement Continues at High Level

Of the more than 6200 goals set across the school through the NEP process greater than 95% were assessed as being achieved. This is a continuing improvement and more than meets the school's goal of at least 90% goal achievement.

Strategic Directions:

Literacy & Numeracy:

Objective 1: Develop a common understanding of 'comprehension' across the site and a method for assessing students' comprehension.

Comprehension is not easily defined nor measured in a special school setting.

In 2010 staff engaged in a process to create a definition for 'comprehension' at MSS. With a definition established staff began the work to assess 'comprehension'. This will continue in 2011.

Recommendations:

- **Comprehension a priority target for staff meetings in 2011**

Objective 2: Identify a core set of maths practices appropriate to the ranges of intellectual abilities of students across the site.

Students at MSS encompass a very wide range of intellectual ability. Maths practices must be appropriate to their ability and responsive to their wider NEP goals.

MSS has developed a set of numeracy goals to assist in the NEP goal setting process. These goals provide some consistency and continuity across the site. Similarly staff recognise the need for consistency and continuity of practices for teaching and learning of maths across the site.

Recommendations:

- **Maths a priority target for staff meetings in 2011.**

Science:

Objective: Develop a strategy for science teaching and learning appropriate for students with intellectual disability.

Science, along with maths and comprehension is a priority area for DECS. At the end of 2010 MSS began the process of developing a science strategy.

DECS funding is available for the development of a science strategy as well as access to science strategy support personnel.

Recommendations:

- **Science a priority target for staff meetings in 2011**
- **Release staff for development of school science strategy (ie work with consultant)**

Objective: All NEP goals recorded on SAS.

Over 2010 MSS continued working towards standardising goals in order to effectively track student's development throughout their schooling at MSS.

A majority of teachers commenced recording of student goals on SAS. There were a number of technical issues which prevented some teachers from accessing the system. 2011 should see 100% of student goals recorded on SAS.

Recommendations:

- **T&D for all staff regarding the use of SAS in Term 1 2011.**

Objective: Ongoing Development of appropriate units to meet New SACE requirements:

There are a number of SACE eligible students placed both in the Pathways Program and in the Grevillea Unit.

DECS funding was available for the co-ordinator of the Pathways Program and teachers of SACE eligible students to attend a number of meetings and workshops to assist in the development of SACE units.

Recommendations:

- Release staff as required to attend New SACE T&D meetings, moderation etc

Information Technology:

Objective 1: Installation of DEEWR Round 3+ supplied computers for secondary aged students.

10 new computers (additional to the 23 received from Rnd 1) were supplied to the school through the federal government scheme to achieve a 1:1 ratio of computers to students in years 9 to 12.

All the Round 3 computers (all laptops) have been installed at the Pathways program with a number of the original DER desktop models placed in the Grevillea units. Not all DER funding has been expended leaving some scope for additional IT purchases.

Objective 2: Wireless connection of DEEWR computers.

In order for the ratio of computers to secondary aged students to be at 1:1 DEEWR wireless access has been installed at MSS.

MSS was selected to be one of the trial schools for wireless network connection. A new curriculum server was installed along with a number of wireless access points (WAPS) to enable wireless connectivity. As with all IT innovation there are some start-up issues but the system does work and will be refined and possibly expanded over 2011.

Recommendation:

- **A proportion of Round 1 computers to be reallocated to the Grevillea unit to ensure 1:1 ratio.**
- **Wireless connection solution to be refined to allow 1:1 connectivity in Grevillea. Pathways connection to be negotiated with the High School.**

Student Wellbeing:

Objective: Confirm the use of the student wellbeing measuring tool and an intervention process for identified students.

The MSS developed tool for measuring student wellbeing has become an established routine. The tool is applied in Term2 and Term 4.

The tool has been trialled over several years right across the school. The application of the tool has been progressively streamlined to minimise administrative inconvenience and provides additional early information for students who may be vulnerable.

Recommendation:

Apply wellbeing measurement tool to all students in the school and develop and support class teachers to develop individualised intervention. Ongoing.

Other Priority Planning Areas:

Three other priority areas were identified in 2010 for development in 2011 and beyond:

Data Collection: While the school has made great progress in recent years regarding the collection and analysis of data, financial pressures, particularly in regards to students requiring 1:1 support and the difficulties experienced in negotiating with DECS for the required extra staffing, highlighted this issue.

Behaviour Practice: MSS has an established culture of supportive practices for behaviour management. With the rapid growth of the student population and numbers of staff (staff numbers will increase significantly in 2011) continuous T&D in supportive practices (eg positive programming) will be necessary.

Assessment Practice: MSS has a well established process for assessment and reporting. In recent years there has been increasing use of audiovisual tools for reporting. In 2011 the use and format of audiovisual reporting will be standardised across the school.

Staff Balance

The 2010 teaching staff of our school comprised 19 class teachers, 2 Assistant Principals with up to 50% class contact, 1 coordinator with 80% class contact, 1 NIT (non instruction time) teacher, 2 teachers employed for 1:1 supervision and a non-teaching principal.

Five permanent teaching positions were advertised for 2011. Two current teachers won their positions back and three current contract teachers won permanent positions. One long serving teacher won a co-ordinator position at another school and another whose tenure had expired won a teaching position elsewhere.