School context statement

Gunnedah Public School provides quality education in a caring environment. Students come to our school with the expectation that they will learn. All school staff members are committed to professional standards of education and a duty of care for the safety and learning of all students. All students are treated equally and have the opportunity to participate in all activities. Our school differentiates the learning program for students based on needs. Every student has the right to access all that the school has to offer.

Principal’s message

Gunnedah Public School is serious about learning. Students and staff are committed to doing their best. High expectations from everyone involved in learning means we are achieving the best possible outcomes for student learning. Committed and caring teachers, who are constantly reflecting on and improving their professional abilities, deliver our curriculum. The needs of students and the school community are catered for through inclusive planning within the context of State and Regional priorities. Parents and carers are invited to reflect upon our achievements and read about our plans for the future.

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.

Student leader’s message

2014 was an exciting year for us and everyone in Year 6.

Everyone had the opportunity to participate in lots of once in a lifetime activities including sport events, performances and excursions. Montana and Lydia had the chance to go to the citizenship ceremony and all of the leaders went to the leadership conference.

Six students from our school had the chance to go to Sydney to play the recorder on the 23rd June in the Festival Of Instrumental Music at the Sydney Opera House. Ms Singleton from Gunnedah High School taught the group and we would like to thank Ms Singleton for her help.

We continued to do interest groups but hopefully next year students will be able to suggest the activities they can do.

We hope that there are more canteen days, a bigger sports shed and we hope the new kitchen can be used more often.

On behalf of the 2014 leaders we would like to hand over our responsibilities and hope the new leaders proudly accept them.

We wish them all the best for 2015.

Raymond Smith, Lydia McInnes, Montana Fortier, Reece Davies, Madi Milgate, Blake Whitfield

Students at Gunnedah Public School have many opportunities to lead.

Student information

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

Student absences are noted on class rolls and the school requests that parents and carers explain absences by written communication or contacting the school by telephone.

Any unexplained absences are followed up with a standard note requesting an explanation. The school will then issue a letter reminding parents and carers of their obligations under the Education Reform Act and the possible course of action if absences continue. The school makes referrals to the Home School Liaison Officer if a student's attendance is still unacceptable.

Workforce information

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

All staff met the professional requirements for teaching NSW Public Schools.

The Australian Education Regulation, 2014 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce.

In 2014 five members of staff identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.
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>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Professional learning and teacher accreditation
Teachers at Gunnedah Public School maintain accreditation at proficient level by undertaking professional learning. All teachers are meeting accreditation requirements.

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>30/11/2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>$177,891.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>$152,070.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>$446,191.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>$211,292.27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>$6,366.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>$46,311.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>$849,960.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Expenditure**
- Teaching & learning
  - Key learning areas: $139,488.83
  - Excursions: $9,427.97
  - Extracurricular dissections: $38,604.82
- Library: $3,262.62
- Training & development: $499.26
- Tied funds: $406,507.87
- Casual relief teachers: $23,333.68
- Administration & office: $43,315.58
- School-operated canteen: $0.00
- Utilities: $44,256.39
- Maintenance: $19,166.22
- Trust accounts: $55,076.83
- Capital programs: $156,066.31
- **Total expenditure** $673,006.38
- **Balance carried forward** $176,954.43

A full copy of the school’s 2014 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the P and C. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2014

Sport
Gunnedah Public School continued to embrace the challenges and opportunities that sport provides. We enjoyed the different carnivals, cross country, zone events, PSSA school knockouts, infants and primary sport and finished the year off with Teachers vs. Year Six game.

Our first event of the Year was the Stage 2 and 3 Swimming Carnival. A great day was had in the sun, with plenty of participation from everyone. The house with the most overall points at the end of the day was Mooki. The junior age Champions were Cody MacAulay and Taleiah Donnelly, 11 Year age Champions were Lilli Ferguson and Sebastian King and Senior Champions were Raymond Smith and Kaitlyn MacAulay. Several students represented the school at the Zone Swimming Carnival in Gunnedah.

Students are supported to do their best at Gunnedah Public School.

Our annual School Cross Country race was successful with participation from Stage 2 and 3 students. Miss Baker travelled to Mullaley with 29 students to compete at the Zone level. Blake Whitfield and Takita Shoobert made it to Area Cross Country in Coolah.

Stage 1 trialed their first annual Stage One Cross Country, running around Kitchener Oval. All the
students participated and had a great time, ribbons for places and encouragement were given out and it prepared Year Two students be ready for the school cross country next year. This will definitely be an annual event.

The Athletics Carnival is a busy day, therefore Miss Baker ran the field events Shot Put and High Jump at school at lunch times leading up to the carnival. On the day, the house with the most points was Namoi. The junior age Champions were Brayden Sands and Josie Luckel, 11 Year age Champions were Cobie Winsor and Takita Shoobert and Senior Champions were Raymond Smith and Ebony Beasley. Many students were selected to represent the school at the Zone Carnival held in Gunnedah and we were fortunate enough to get Raymond Smith through to Area Carnival in Tamworth for High Jump, Long Jump and 100m. Raymond was successful in Tamworth coming 2nd in the High Jump where he produced a Personal Best. He went on to Sydney to compete in the State Carnival in Sydney.

Our school enthusiastically entered many PSSA teams, including; netball, League, Cricket and Touch football.

Our school loves Rugby League; we went into the first round against Gunnedah South with great enthusiasm. We unfortunately went down 38-0. Our boys showed their skills at the Legends of League and the Captains Cup gala days throughout the year.

Netball was more popular this year with the girls. We entered our girl team into the Anne Singleton Cup to gain some extra practice. A lot of fun was had on this day. Our team was unfortunately defeated in the first round of the PSSA knockout, although three of our girls were selected for the Zone Netball team; Lydia McInness, Montana Fortier and Ebony Beasley. The girls played in the Zone carnival day in Tamworth and were given valuable new skills.

Our boys competed in the first round of the PSSA Cricket knockout, and although we didn’t make it to the second round the boys became very enthusiastic about the game of cricket afterwards. More enthusiasm for Cricket was found when we were fortunate enough to be involved in some T20 Milo Cricket Development Days.

Our attitude to sport was evident in our enthusiasm and good sportsmanship. At presentation day Raymond Smith was presented with Sportsman of the Year. Montana Fortier was awarded the Good Sport award.

Choir

In 2014 our school choirs continued the tradition of performance we have established for many years. We entered the Gunnedah Eisteddfod and presented performances in musical performance and choir. Our students perform in a range of settings.

Chess

Gunnedah Public School values the strengths and skills students gain by understanding the rules and strategies involved in playing chess. Our students compete with other schools in tournaments around the district.

Public Speaking

Gunnedah Public supports students to speak clearly, confidently and with purpose. Our students performed at the first ‘Speakfest’ competition organized and held at our school. Students from schools around the local area competed in a variety of criteria.
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)

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 and enter the school name in the Find a school and select GO to access the school data.

Alternatively:

NAPLAN Year 3 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)

Excursions to support learning form an important part of the school curriculum.
Gunnedah Public School values the support of the community.

NAPLAN Year 3 - Numeracy

NAPLAN Year 5 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)
Gunnedah Public School supports community initiatives.

**Significant programs and initiatives – Policy**

**Aboriginal education**

Gunnedah Public School prides itself in providing opportunities and support for Aboriginal students through innovative programs designed to develop educational, social and sporting skills and abilities. Community members were involved in, and supportive of the various programs implemented. Such programs included: the "Early Birds" program; targeted literacy support through Accelerated Literacy; one-to-one support of students by Norta Norta funding and; cultural activities and initiatives during NAIDOC week. All students at the school learnt about Aboriginal history, culture and modern Aboriginal Australia. Raising awareness of Aboriginal culture continues to be a focus of the school.

**Multicultural education**

The school continued to foster Multicultural education through the curriculum and celebration of special days. These special days along with Studies in Human Society and its Environment (HSIE), in particular, provided the students learning experiences to enhance skills and develop attitudes acceptable in a culturally diverse society.
Significant programs and initiatives – Early Action for Success (EAfS)

In 2014 our school began the first of a three year initiative. The purpose of the initiative is to improve students learning in Literacy and Numeracy in the first three years of school. An Instructional Leader was appointed as additional staff. Additional funding was also provided for extra teacher hours to provide more support for students and teacher professional learning.

The focus of the Early Action for Success initiative is to use the Literacy and Numeracy continuums accurately to inform teachers of student achievement and to allow teachers to plan for future learning. Our school uses PLAN software to record student progress and uses the information in PLAN to assist in providing effective differentiated learning opportunities.

In 2014 teachers of students in Kindergarten, Years 1 and 2 increased their effective practices by:

- Regularly assessing student achievement in literacy and numeracy using a range of assessments. Judgements are made using cluster markers as a guide.
- Teachers regularly meeting to discuss student assessment data and to make valid judgements using the markers.
- Teachers analysing PLAN data to determine and plan for future learning.
- Research based professional Learning delivered by the Instructional Leader assisted teachers to deliver more effective learning to students where they needed it most.
- Teachers practice in literacy and Numeracy lessons shifted from a whole class focus to smaller groups due to the research based professional learning provided by the instructional leader.
- The extra time allocated to each class due to the Instructional leader and the additional staffing allocation from the EAfS program meant that individual students could receive more assistance, teachers could have feedback about student learning as it happened and the Instructional Leader had the opportunity to observe where additional help could be given.
- Teachers using PLAN data to determine learning needs including additional targeted support for identified students.

Technology skills taught to our students and are an important strategy to ensure our students learn.

Aboriginal background

In 2014 Gunnedah Public School received significant funding through the Resource Allocation Model (RAM). Gunnedah Public School has a culture of inclusivity. Parent consultation continually supports this value. We operate initiatives for all of our students but the learning of Aboriginal students is at the centre of the following initiatives.

Initiatives to improve the learning outcomes of students with Aboriginal background included;

- Community participation through Personal Learning Plan meetings, both formal and informal. A community forum was held to discuss the future funding directions for our Aboriginal Background funding.
- Staff undertaking training in effective learning with an educational consultant based on the research of John Hattie and focused on strategies that are proven to improve the learning of Aboriginal students and all students. The executive team worked closely with the educational consultant developing consistent lesson plan content and strategies for assessing the learning of students.
- Developed and strengthened the readiness of our preschool students starting Kindergarten through the development of our established Early Birds (readiness for school program) in 2015. Information sessions about school and being ready for
school were delivered. Learning support plans for students were prepared and implemented for 2015 students and a comprehensive understanding of student abilities compared to PLAN data allowed 2015 Kindergarten students to start school successfully.

- Aboriginal Education Officer (AEO) supported the learning of all students. Students with needs received individual and group support with literacy and numeracy. Parents and community members developed stronger links with school through regular contact, additional help when needed and developing closer contacts with community agencies.
- NORTA NORTA initiatives were implemented in our Stage 3 class. A Student Learning Support Officer delivered interventions designed by the teacher and Learning and Support Officer to improve the learning of students in Literacy and Numeracy as identified through ongoing assessments.

**Socio-economic background**

Improving the learning outcome of our students continues to be the focus of all of our initiatives.

Research supports the role of the Principal in guiding the success of the school. A teacher was engaged to allow the Principal to have a non-teaching role in the school. Community and staff supported this action so that parents could have access for assistance and guidance when needed. By being off class the Principal could more accurately evaluate the success of the professional learning undertaken by staff and determine future priorities. Extra teacher time was provided to the Assistant Principal to work with the Principal and consultant to lead the change in teaching practice. The work done by the executive team and the educational consultant ensured a clear plan for improving the ability of teachers to differentiate learning experiences and to assess the learning of students. Working with the knowledge gained through EAfS initiative ensured teachers gained a more accurate understanding of the learning needs of our students and the strategies used to successfully teach students.

Creative and stimulating learning environments give students more confidence in their learning. Incorporating technology into learning meets the nature of learning in the 21st Century. Research shows that 21st century learners need a variety of different learning spaces and ways to communicate their learning. Creating classrooms with innovative furniture designs and creative use of learning spaces developed student confidence and engagement with the learning involved in the task. Student use of iPad technology allowed for differentiating of learning to meet individual needs and provided multi-media opportunities for literacy.

**Learning and Support**

The support of learning needs of students through individual support and group work is a focus for our school.

Initiatives developed and enhanced through the additional funding received included:

- Providing additional learning support for students in the Kindergarten class. To gain maximum outcomes for student learning a Student Learning Support Officer was given additional hours aiding the work of the EAfS initiatives. Results updated on PLAN data showed students reaching milestones, where appropriate, due to the extra support given to students with specific learning needs to improve their learning outcomes.
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:

- A parent’s forum to discuss our successes and to work on areas that need to be developed.
- All families were contacted by phone and given the opportunity to provide feedback about what they thought was going well at school and where they wanted to see improvement.
- The school leadership team provided direction for developing the strategies for improving learning for students.
- Meetings with staff provided feedback on what was working well, what needed to be improved and our goals for school improvement.

School planning 2012-2014:

School priority 1

Literacy

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Raise Literacy and Numeracy standards of all students providing an increase in state wide benchmarking through specific teaching of reading, spelling, grammar, punctuation and writing skills.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

- All teachers are using the Literacy continuum as an assessment tool and to plan for future learning.
- Instructional Leader established cultural change in consistent teacher judgement.
- The Learning and Support team planning interventions adopted a system that was based on measurable and accountable data.
- Samples of NAPLAN style questions will introduce students to the language used in NAPLAN testing.
- Assessment for Learning practices are developing a culture of learning for both students and teachers.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Professional learning for teachers of Kindergarten Year 1 and 2 focused on gaining a full understanding of Aspects of Numeracy and the Literacy clusters detailed in the Literacy and Numeracy Continuum. Teachers were able to judge the performance of students according to the markers of each cluster. Teachers could extend the learning of each student due to the extensive knowledge they had about the ability of each student.
- Students referred to the Learning and Support Team had their learning needs accurately described so that interventions were targeted accurately. Student ability was assessed according to the Literacy Continuum clusters or the aspects of Numeracy in the Numeracy continuum. A clear expectation to the Learning and Support Teacher was communicated about the learning that was to take place in subsequent learning interventions.
- Professional learning in Assessment for Learning (A4L) initiatives allowed teachers to develop more understanding about the importance that feedback about learning has in a successful learning experience. Teachers developed more understanding about the use of learning goals and success criteria and the role of providing specific lesson content has in students learning. By developing an understanding of how NAPLAN style assessments can be used to demonstrate learning teachers are more able to accurately set learning goals and measure student learning.

School priority 2

Numeracy

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Raise Numeracy standards of all students, providing an increase in state wide benchmarking through specific teaching of all mathematical strands.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

- Teachers undertake training in the use of data (including SMART) to inform planning for teaching and learning.
- Conduct Best Start assessment of all Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2 students in the first 5 weeks of 2014.
• All teachers either used or beginning to use the Numeracy continuum as an assessment tool and to plan for future learning.

• Establish Assessment for Learning practices that develop a culture of learning for both students and teachers.

• Develop consistent assessment practices where student are evaluated against state wide benchmarks to inform individual and cohort teaching practice.

• The Learning and Support team planning interventions based on measurable and accountable data.

• Using NAPLAN style assessments to introduce students to the language used in NAPLAN assessments.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

• Teachers of Kindergarten, Year 1 and 2 students completed professional learning on the content of the Numeracy continuum. This enabled teachers to accurately judge the level of attainment of each student compared to the standards expected. The professional learning also enabled teachers to differentiate the learning opportunities for students.

• Analysis of student data on SMART resulted in teachers developing more knowledge of the needs of students in Years 3 to 6. Links to samples of work allowed teachers to accurately judge the level of achievement of students and to revise the learning needed to lift student achievement.

• Learning and Support referrals used current data from PLAN to accurately describe the level of achievement of students being referred and to describe the level of achievement needed at the end of interventions.

School priority 3

Student Engagement, Attendance and Retention

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Attending school is important to the educational and social success of students. Students take responsibility for their decisions and recognise the effect that their decisions have on others. Students develop and use strategies to solve conflicts and become friendlier when at school.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

• Student attendance in 2014 showed improvement by 1.8% from 91.8% in 2013 to 93.6%.

• Discussion about student, staff and parent expectations showed that the school’s commitment to the ‘You Can Do It’ (YCDI) initiative was still strong but we needed to develop our own interpretation of YCDI to suit the school’s culture.

• Regular telephone contact with parents and carers of students who were absent allowed the school to remind parents that students are required to be at school unless they are unwell or have leave approved by the Principal.

• The end of term rewards day program continued to acknowledge the efforts of students who continually come to school with a positive attitude to learning.

Performing arts is a priority at Gunnedah Public School.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

• Each term the effort students demonstrated to their commitment to learning and meeting school expectations was rewarded with a rewards day. Student reward days consisted of movie and popcorn afternoons, picnics at the park and fund days.

• The school fete was reintroduced due to increased interest from teachers, students and parents.

• The popular breakfast cooked by the staff for Mother’s day and Father’s day allowed for informal interaction between teachers and staff.

• Student engagement in learning increased due to the efforts of teachers in developing a more
Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

A school based evaluation was conducted in November 2014. The purpose of the evaluation was to understand the level of School Community Satisfaction in regard to the school’s achievements in 2014.

For the purpose of the survey our school community was determined to be the staff, parents and carers and the Stage 3 students. The community was asked to comment about the school’s successful achievements and areas where the school could continue to improve.

Staff indicated that the professional development they had undertaken in Assessment for Learning strategies was valuable in leading students through their learning. The contribution made to the learning of students in Kindergarten, Year 1 and 2 under the Early Action For Success initiatives allowed teachers to have a greater understanding of student abilities and then to extend those abilities. Staff felt that the system introduced this year for class support with the Learning and Support Teacher (LaST) was successful. Staff believed that the consistency of our LaST referral system supported them and their students. Staff were appreciative of the commitment shown by parents who assisted in the classrooms and around the school.

Staff members indicated that the use of SENTRAL would assist them in monitoring students’ level of achievement. SENTRAL is an electronic system that tracks attendance, enables whole school communication and tracks student behaviour. School staff indicated Assessment for Learning was valuable and that they would like the Professional Learning to continue. Staff were also interested in seeing how other schools are implementing the strategies. (see Professional Practice target)

Teachers believed that the Early Action for Success strategies used in the Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 classes needed to be continued onto the Stage 2 and 3 classes. (see Systems target)

Our school has a strong commitment from parents who are helping regularly and they would like to develop more opportunities for more parents to interact positively with the school (see target community engagement).

Staff were concerned about the rates of attendance of a minority of students and felt that we could develop more effective strategies to encourage all students to keep on attending school. (see systems target)

All families from our school were contacted by phone. They were asked what we were doing well and what we could improve on. The majority of responses indicated they were pleased with the direction the school was taking in relation to students learning. The community believed the small enrolment of students allowed for more personal relationships with students and greater contact with home. Many responses from the community indicated that their children had made significant improvement in their learning.

The community were also asked where the school could improve. There were many positive suggestions; most involved trying to encourage more parents to become involved in our school (see target community engagement).

Community members also indicated that better communication between school and home would allow families more time to plan for events at the school. Community members indicated that bullying was a problem that we had not been able to eliminate. (see target Systems improvement). The impact of headlice on students was an issue for our community (see target Community Engagement) Community members believed that our school could improve by implementing strategies to develop the students who show high potential at school. It was suggested that an improvement to the environment for students would be the Installation of small fridges into classrooms.
Students in Stage 3 were asked the same questions as the staff and community. Students appreciated the effort the school applied to making sport a focus at their school. They indicated that our interest groups initiative was also a good idea. Students believed that excursions should continue. They liked that teachers helped them to learn. Students believed the new kitchen in the hall was going to be a great resource all students should use. They appreciated the range of technology the school gave them access to.

Our students gave feedback in how to improve things at our school. They felt that the school could change the range of activities being offered in interest groups and that teachers could allow them to come up with a few ideas as well. Students also believed that we could give a variety of awards at our weekly assemblies that reflected school expectations and You Can Do It values. (see systems improvement target) They felt that there should be more canteen days and greater choice in the products offered. They felt that more parents should be involved in our school. Our students believed that if students had a better attitude towards school, it would make it better. Students also believed that if school attendance improved there would be more learning. They also indicated that the school needed more sports equipment.

Future Directions
2015-2017 School Plan

NSW DEC is implementing a new school planning process for 2015-17. The new plan will be published on the school’s website from the beginning of Term 2 2015.

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.

Stephen de Roos - Principal
Jenny Hewitt - Assistant Principal
Shauna Stoker - Instructional Leader
Emma Baker - Teacher
Linda Smyth - School Administration Manager

School contact information

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Parents can find more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the report and have the opportunity to provide feedback about the report at:

Gunnedah Public School students are confident, resilient, organized and respectful.