SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR 2011

Under the Schools Assistance Act 2008 for the period 2009 to 2012, Australian Government funding is provided to Strathcona, as to other schools and school systems. Associated compliance requirements include:

(i) Participation in national testing.
(ii) Collection of information on student background characteristics for national reports.
(iii) Provision of information published by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) on the My School website.
(iv) Reporting to parents on student progress.
(v) Publication of information relating to the School, including key student outcomes and information on satisfaction.

An Annual Report was distributed in December 2011 and is accessible on the School website. This report provides a comprehensive overview of Strathcona’s activities and achievements.

The following report in response to (v) above reiterates some key aspects of the Annual Report and includes details not available at the time of publication of the Annual Report in December 2011, in particular VCE results for the 2011 cohort of students and further details determining the level of satisfaction of parents, students and staff.

I trust that you will enjoy reading these details and join with me in celebrating the outstanding progress and achievements of Strathcona.

Our School – an overview

Strathcona, established in 1924, provides a distinctive education in a Christian environment for students throughout Melbourne's east and north. Strathcona has grown to become one of Melbourne's leading girls' schools.

The School has three campuses, Senior School and Early Learning Centre in Scott Street, Canterbury, Junior School in Prospect Hill Road, Canterbury and the Year 9 Campus in Yarra Street, Hawthorn.

Every student receives individual care in a friendly, supportive environment, while being challenged through innovative programs to achieve to the highest possible level academically and in her co-curricular pursuits.

There is extensive choice in subjects with the VCE program offering all prerequisites for tertiary courses and a wide selection of studies in Mathematics, Sciences, Humanities,
Business and Creative Arts. Languages studied at Strathcona are French, Italian and Mandarin Chinese.

Strathcona’s diverse co-curricular program encourages participation in a wide range of activities including drama, music and sporting activities, debating and public speaking. An extensive International Links Program enables students to participate in tours to France, Italy and China and to take part in exchanges with schools in the USA, South Africa, New Zealand, Korea, Japan and China. Additionally, Strathcona is registered to enrol 30 international students.

Strathcona’s inclusive educational philosophy and extensive curriculum and co-curricular programs are complemented by outstanding facilities. The most recently completed building works involved the extensive renovation of the Aquatic and Fitness Centre, supported by a Federal Government “Building the Education Revolution” grant of $2 million. The Year 9 student facilities were refurbished and the Year 7 level refurnished for the commencement of the 2012 school year. Current work involves the renovation of Featherstone Hall due for completion in August 2012.

2011 Income and expenditure

Strathcona is a not for profit organisation that is primarily funded by School Fees 84%, Recurrent Government grants 15% and 1% from other sources. (Please refer to the Income 2011 pie chart below).

Maintaining current student enrolments, combined with ongoing government grant support will ensure that we are well placed to maintain and further develop our School. The current Australian Government review of school funding could have an effect on 15% of our total income.

All of Strathcona's income is directed towards providing the best possible educational staff, programs and facilities for our students. (Please refer to the Expenditure 2011 pie chart below).

During 2011 we spent $1.4 million on improving our facilities, furniture and equipment (Please refer to the Capital Expenditure pie chart below). 20% of these funds came from the Australian Government Capital Grants as part of the Building the Education Revolution and Digital Education Revolution schemes. These grants, combined with generous donations to our Building and Maintenance fund, enabled Strathcona to undertake these improvements (Capital Expenditure) without having to borrow funds.

The School Board endeavours to keep School fees as affordable as possible for parents each year without sacrificing the educational service provided. We strive to maintain the financial discipline of ensuring that operating expenditure does not exceed income. If, in any year, a surplus is achieved, it is reinvested in the School to maintain and enhance the facilities.
**Teacher standards and qualifications / Professional development**

The Strathcona staff are highly qualified and committed to the achievement of best practice. They are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching. In 2011, 22 men and 72 women made up our teaching staff and 8 men and 33 women our teaching support staff and extra subject teachers. A full list of qualifications of staff is available on the School website. For 2011, it is noted that 55% had achieved qualifications of Post Graduate Diplomas, Masters degrees and Doctorates beyond the basic teacher training.

A requirement of registration is the completion of 100 hours of professional development over a five year period. Our staff willingly undertake professional development, recognising the benefits of ongoing learning and professional sharing. Such development includes Staff Days with whole staff activities. In addition to external speakers there is regular sharing of skills and knowledge from within our staff. This occurs in Staff Meetings and Department Meetings. In 2011, staff participated in and ran in-services in ICT centring on Blackboard, iWise and e-portfolios. They were updated on IT skills for the classroom; Code of Conduct; cybersafety; mindsets; Middle School SEED Program and Year 9 I-Learning. Teachers were also engaged in renewing or completing their certification in the treatment of anaphylaxis, epilepsy, diabetes, asthma, first aid and Austswim. In 2011, $67,528 was spent on professional learning representing $500 per teaching staff member.

Schools are rich places of learning, both for students and staff. Great teachers are great learners: they learn about their students and from their students; they learn new things about their disciplines and new technologies and resources for teaching. Strathcona has membership with the key teacher development associations and maintains a library of the journals that they publish for staff reading and reference. Teachers have attended many conferences conducted by their respective subject associations and other interdisciplinary educational bodies. Two examples are the Australian Council for Educational Emerging Leaders Conference and the Hawker Brownlow Teaching & Learning Conference.

The staff at Strathcona actively contribute to the profession in many ways, for example, leading workshops in conferences or in other forums for teachers, having articles published in professional journals and assessing for the VCE examinations. In 2011, many staff were involved in subject associations and other professional bodies that provide both vital professional development sessions and connection with the broader educational community. 14 staff were involved in VCE assessing and lecturing to VCE students state-wide.

Teaching staff and all staff in positions of responsibility participated in Strathcona’s Professional Standards Scheme, benefiting from a professional partnership with a mentor and undertaking a special project to further develop a curriculum topic, resources for the subject or area of specialisation.

The commitment of our staff is further attested to in the attendance and retention rates. In 2011, the average rate of absence of teaching staff for health reasons or carer’s leave was 1.69 days. Such absences were covered by other teaching staff and relief teachers.

Six staff took Long Service Leave for one term or less and four staff were on maternity leave for part of the year. Suitably qualified replacement teachers were employed to cover these periods of leave.

In 2011, teaching staff turnover (of ongoing staff) was 8.9%. Three staff filled short-term replacement contracts. Positions vacated at the end of 2011 were filled by well qualified staff.
There were no indigenous staff employed by the School in 2011.

**Student attendance at school**

Student attendance records indicate commitment to involvement in school programs. Absences were generally due to ill health, appointments and opportunities for overseas travel.

Average days present for Prep – Year 12:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Level</th>
<th>Attendance rate %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prep</td>
<td>98.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>95.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>95.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>90.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>94.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>95.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 7</td>
<td>95.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td>96.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td>95.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>92.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td>95.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 12</td>
<td>98.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parents are required to account for absences, contacting the School on the day of absence and submitting a note of explanation on the day of return to school. Unaccounted for absences are followed up by class teachers (Mellor House) and Form Tutors and Year Coordinators (Years 7 – 12). Accurate records noting reasons for absences are maintained. Student attendance is overseen by the Dean of Students, who coordinates assistance for students with medical or pastoral concerns.

Student retention rates are excellent. As an example, of the 87 students who were enrolled in Year 9 in 2008, 84 of these students completed Year 12 in 2011 within a total year group of 93 (with new enrolments received into Year 10, 2008 and Year 11, 2009). Relocation of families and specific course choices were the predominant reasons for change.
Senior Secondary outcomes

VCE Data

The 2011 cohort achieved impressive results consistent with the high standard of academic achievement seen in the School for many years.

- 10.7% of students achieved ATARS of 98 or over
- 24.2% of ATARS were over 95
- 40.7% of ATARS were over 90
- Median ATAR score 87.4
- Median Study score 35
- 5 students achieved a perfect score of 50 (English (4 students) and Theatre Studies)

(ATAR – Australian Tertiary Admissions Ranking)

The tertiary courses and destinations of our students:
**Student outcomes in national literacy and numeracy testing**

**Key student outcomes**

*NAPLAN*

NAPLAN is the National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy, which assesses students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. 2011 was the fourth year that this testing has been undertaken. On average our students perform approximately one year above the average score for students in the State. On most of the tests, at least 50% of Strathcona students were in the top 25% of students in the State.

The data reinforces our focus on differentiation, as the range of achievement on the tests is quite broad. Analysis of the NAPLAN data for those students who have been at Strathcona for 2 testing periods reveals a general trend of strong growth, particularly in students performing at the lower levels. Our approach at Strathcona is to make use of the extra diagnostic data that the tests provide. Detailed analysis of the data is provided to the staff for this purpose. We also believe, as research supports, that a broad curriculum is advantageous in developing literacy and numeracy skills in all students, and that it is not just in Mathematics and English that these skills are learnt and reinforced.

At Years 3, 5 and 7 all students who sat the tests met the National Minimum Standard on all tests. At Year 9 one student fell below the National Minimum Standard on one of the tests. Even at Year 3, many of our students performed above the National Minimum Standard for Year 9. By Year 5 this was true of nearly all students as shown in the following table.

Percentage of students achieving above the National Minimum Standard for **Year 9**.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Punctuation</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parent, student and teacher satisfaction with the School

In 2011, Strathcona conducted Exit Surveys with the parents of Year 12 students, Year 12 students and staff who left the School. These were conducted in two ways: written online surveys and face-to-face discussion.

Year 12 Student Exit Survey

In this survey, Year 12 students were asked to respond to a variety of questions about life at Strathcona.

Responses were sought on satisfaction with specific subjects with the responses “Satisfying” and “Highly Satisfying” bringing the highest percentage scores. Year 12 students could respond in short answer form and many spoke of the positive attitude, and tireless commitment of their teachers. Constructive feedback from students is helpful in informing staff on preferred approaches in the classroom. Similarly, feedback on preferred approaches to academic and careers advice will help inform our directions in catering for students at the VCE level.

The co-curricular program of the School scored highly within all areas. The high participation rate of Year 12 student is also to be noted, a balance with the academic program having been maintained.

On the Opinion Scale requesting feedback on Strathcona meeting the needs of the Year 12 leavers, the vast majority of responses were in the categories “Well” to “Very Well”.

Year 12 Parent Exit Survey

In this survey, parents were invited to respond to a variety of questions about life at Strathcona. It was very pleasing to note the overwhelming positive response to the question, “Do you feel that you made the right decision to enrol your daughter at Strathcona?”.

The survey indicated overall a high level of satisfaction with the pastoral care and co-curricular activities of the School. Similarly, appreciation was expressed for the extra time given by many teachers to assist students. Constructive comments on areas for improvement, for example, communication of year level matters, have been acted upon.

The surveys, together with individual parent and student comments, and feedback from staff representatives and the School Board, help to inform ongoing planning in the School and, in particular, areas to emphasise in our procedures.

Year 9 Feedback

Feedback was sought from parents and students on the Year 9 program. This was integrated into an extensive review undertaken in 2010-2011, resulting in new directions, including the provision of Art, Performing Arts and Food Technology in the core program and the undertaking of the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh’s Award by all students. A new enquiry-based, interdisciplinary program, I-Learning, was devised for 2012.
**Strategic Plan 2011-2015**

Surveys and anecdotal feedback reinforce the School’s emphasis on a balanced education including strong academic programs, pastoral care and co-curricular and leadership opportunities. Our commitment to supporting a wide range of abilities and talents and developing strong values in a Christian environment is also recognised as being significant in parent decisions to enrol their daughters at Strathcona and sons in the Early Learning Centre.

As we move forward, the new Strategic Plan underpins the areas of curriculum, teaching & learning, pastoral care, the co-curricular program, teacher satisfaction, resourcing of staff and having the School operating at an optimum enrolment level.

We have much to celebrate and be grateful for and I sincerely thank and congratulate all who have contributed to the advancement of our School for the benefit of the young people in our care.

Helen Hughes  
PRINCIPAL  
June 2012