PRINCIPAL’S REPORT

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

DECEPTION BAY NORTH STATE SCHOOL

Wednesday, 19 March 2014

It always seems that we can’t believe how fast the year has gone when we come together for the annual general meeting of the P&C Association! Once again we have had a very big year at DBNSS because of the advances we have made in all aspects of the school. We go from strength to strength sometimes incrementally, sometimes in great leaps but our journey forward is steady and purposeful.

Last year there were significant changes to admin with the deputy principal’s position being undertaken by four different people across and while that may seem a challenge, those staff members who took on the role - Ronnie, Leanne, Jackie and Shar – all met these challenges with enthusiasm and energy. Jackie has now been accepted into the Take the Lead program and Leanne is taking on many different leadership roles within the school as she aspires to be a deputy principal. Tim Buckney has come from Kowanyama as acting deputy principal this year. As always, Lorraine Poonan, our Head of Curriculum has been of immense support to all staff and particularly, to me. While our BSM, Sheena Ralph and the admin staff continue to provide quality service to the staff and the community.

Throughout 2013 two teachers left on maternity and family leave and seven teachers took transfers to other schools in the district. Our teaching staff has had a 50% change at the beginning of this year. I am pleased to report that all new staff members are settling in well.

It is my pleasure to provide an overview of our activities and achievements for the past twelve months to the Annual General Meeting of the Deception Bay North State School P&C Association.

During 2013 we made significant gains in achieving the goals we set ourselves as a National Partnership school. In reviewing our progress over the past year I can identify some major initiatives that had significant impact on our school.

• Through a devolved model of leadership, many staff undertook leadership roles in teams that drove the improvement agenda for our school. Action plans were developed by teams of staff members and these were actioned and reviewed at the end of the year.

• The school joined the regional initiative of introducing The Art and Science of Teaching as a framework for improved pedagogical (teaching) practice and school organisation. Through this we established routines and procedures related to before school organisation and after school organisation as well as lining-up procedures and transitioning from one place to another during school time. This has resulted in a complete absence of student or parent altercations before or after school and movements of students around the school with the mantra “walking not talking”. All students now know and use ‘whole body listening’ in classrooms and on assembly. We also began developing learning goals for students so that they had something definite to work towards in their learning.
• Expert teachers joined with Cherie, Lorraine and me to lead other teachers through their performance development plans so that they could be aiming for continuous improvement in much the same way as we expect them to lead students towards continuous learning in classrooms. Sheena and I led teacher aides in the same manner and all performance development plans were reviewed by the end of the year. This is an ongoing annual process from here on.

• All teachers met with Lorraine and me to review their plans and Sheena and I met with all teacher aides.

• Through the work of the curriculum leadership team we have finalised what is now an excellent curriculum to be implemented across the school which clearly defines what is being learnt at each year level and what is being assessed from each unit of work. Unit plans have been written and distributed to teachers in English, Maths, History and Science.

• In addition to the increased support provided by our support teachers for literacy and numeracy, we continued our specialist support for students through our full time guidance officer and our part-time speech pathologist for two days per week. This has proved a very important support for students and teachers as well as parents.

• Staff engaged in many professional development sessions, particularly in the areas of English and Science, which built their capability which was, in turn, transferred into classroom practice.

• A high standard in data analysis was reached by all teachers so that the explicit needs of students in English and Maths can be identified, and strategies can be put in place for students to progress their learning and develop their own goals for further improvement.

• Two staff members attended professional development in Dallas, USA and have brought their extra learning back to the school to assist others.

• Many teachers achieved either their pedagogical licences in recognition of their competence in using computers etc. in their classrooms

• We demonstrated 90% value-added results in our NAPLAN results. This means that we demonstrated improvement in 4 out of every 5 categories across the Years 3, 5 & 7 tests. It is a significant outcome and evidence of the hard work done by all staff at the school.

• Through the analysis of NAPLAN we can demonstrate that the teaching provided to the students is high quality and consistently effective.

• Monitoring guides were developed by class teachers to demonstrate differentiation of students within learning groups and to track student progress. This is an important accountability document and has been used in admin/teacher discussions.

• Strong links with child care centres and local kindergartens were maintained to enable pre-Prep students to come to school better prepared for Prep. Our Prep enrolments for this year exceeded our expectations and we now have four-and-a-half Prep classes this year.
• Attendance of students became a focus and student absences were followed up by teachers and other staff. Our student attendance for 2012 was 88.8% and while we did not reach our target of 90% attendance, our follow-up processes proved very successful and many parents who may not have thought schooling was important are now ensuring that their students attend regularly.

• The Arts and HPE programs were, once again, a feature of our success and continue to bring recognition to our school.

• Our House Cup program has assisted the development of friendships across the school and motivates students to achieve within their classes and generally improve behaviours across the school.

• In 2013 we initiated a public/private partnership with Hope Services to provide social-emotional support for particular students with identified needs for assistance in this area. This has been very successful and Mimi’s House provides two days per week for our students in 2014.

• Other social/emotional programs organised by our chaplain, Bekky and guidance officer, Kathy have provided assistance to students and their families.

Looking forward...

I have recently completed our AIP (Annual Implementation Plan for 2014) and shared this with the executive. I will talk to this at the general meeting today. This has official approval from regional office and will build on the gains we made over 2013 with an even sharper focus of consistency of teaching practice across the school. This year we were expected to have the last six months of the national partnership but this has now been incorporated into the AIP-2014.

As we reflect on the past twelve months and look forward to the next twelve months we must always go back to our school vision of DBNSS as a great place to learn. This will bring us back to our original major focus areas of curriculum, partnerships, our school environment and giving our students the confidence to achieve and the belief in themselves so that they can achieve.

I look forward to the continuation of the strong partnership we have had between the school and the P&C Association towards achieving our school vision. I really do believe that our school is a Great Place to Learn. I congratulate Michelle Crosbie, Sarah Brown, Tammy Mulloy as members of the executive and Ros Benson as bookkeeper and treasurer on the work you have done with such sincerity and goodwill this year.

Thank-you and well done to Lynda Meares and your band of tuckshop volunteers for another great year and to Tanya Tranter for your work in the book and uniform shop.

The community which you serve has every reason to be proud of all of you.

Del Latemore