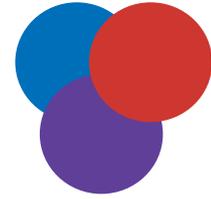


Brewongle Environmental Education Centre Annual Report



2015



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Introduction

The Annual Report for 2015 is provided to the community of Brewongle Environmental Education Centre as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the school plan. It outlines the findings from self-assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.

Mark Edwards
Principal



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Message from the Principal

Environmental Education Centres have a long history of contributing to the environmental awareness of schools and their communities. We achieve this by involving students and teachers in a change process that increases knowledge, improves skills, explores attitudes and values and motivates changed behaviour.

2015 has been a productive year fostering the spirit of active citizenship via our new leadership programs and respecting and reflecting on local Aboriginal culture and heritage as part of the Aboriginal student leadership program 'Warrawi Yana Nura' - Stand Tall Walk Tall In Country.

In 2015 we further developed our collaborative practice with colleagues from the EZEC network through the sharing and joint development of resources and programs. A new logo was developed to improve recognition of the EZEC network and assist in marketing.

In 2015 the EZEC network developed a Reconciliation Action Plan that has been approved by Reconciliation Australia. It will guide and strengthen our commitment to building relationships, respect and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Collaboration between and commitment from local government has led to the development of a new catchment iBook teaching and learning resource centred around water sensitive urban design in the city of Blacktown.

<http://brewongleeec.com/resources/stage-3-resources/>



This collaborative approach to education and engagement for sustainability was also evident in the 3 workshop series for K-6 Science and Technology teachers delivered in conjunction with Longneck Lagoon EEC and Department of Education Science Curriculum Advisors. These workshops successfully showcased 21stC learning promoting critical thinking, problem solving and action.

School background

School vision statement

Brewongle EEC provides a real life context for students to apply their literacy and numeracy skills to enhance their understanding of, and influence on our land, water, wildlife and communities.

School context

Brewongle Environmental Education Centre is one of 25 Environmental Education and Zoo Education Centre's supported by the NSW Department of Education.

The Centre supports NSW BOSTES curriculum implementation across a range of key learning areas K-12.

The Centre designs and implements relevant and contemporary teaching and learning programs within the context of the natural, cultural and built environments. There is a strong emphasis on student centred /inquiry based learning programs utilising a range of current information and communication technologies.

Our educational setting is the former Sackville North Public School featuring an 1878 sandstone classroom and residence. The Centre is located on a south facing ridge 70 meters above the Hawkesbury River at Sackville North.

We offer day or residential school based programs with the motto – 'Explore, Experience and Discover'

Self-assessment and school achievements

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

This year, Brewongle EEC undertook self-assessment using the elements of the School Excellence Framework. The Framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading. Professional development on the School Excellence Framework was undertaken by the Principal within the Hawkesbury Principal Network with the Director and Principal School Leadership Officers. Permanent staff at Longneck Lagoon EEC then received professional development exploring the elements of the framework prior to a staff meeting during which the strategic directions of the 2015 – 2017 School Plan were mapped against the School Excellence Framework Domains. During subsequent meetings, staff engaged in professional dialogue identifying the processes/projects for each strategic direction, progress made towards the achievement of each and the evidence available to support the decisions made. In consultation, the Principal and permanent staff also completed the School Self-Assessment online survey.

Learning **Element: Curriculum and Learning**

Self-Assessment Findings

The centre is sustaining and growing curriculum provision through learning alliances with other schools and organisations.

Our School Achievements

The centre developed 2 projects supporting this domain.

'Photo Voice' is a program which aims to build literacy skills by focusing through an iPad using the natural world as a guide. It allows students to use their visual literacy skills to create imaginative, informative and persuasive Photo Voice statements in the hope that they go viral on the worldwide web.

'What happens to the Rain' is an iBook resource developed in collaboration with Blacktown City Council and provides opportunities for students to actively connect to learning through meaningful learning experiences.

Next Steps to be pursued.

Photo Voice will be marketed and trialled as an in-school program in 2016.

The centre will continue an active partnership with Blacktown City Council to effectively develop catchment/water quality knowledge, understanding and skills of students and teachers. The iBook resource will be published on the iTunes store and will be implemented in schools across the Blacktown LGA. A teacher workshop showcasing the resource and 2 catchment field days for students will be conducted in 2016.

Teaching Element: Collaborative Practice

Self-Assessment Findings

Sustaining and Growing

Centre teachers work together to improve teaching and learning to students K-12.

Sustaining and Growing

The new Performance and Development Plan (PDP) has embedded explicit systems for classroom observation, the modelling of effective practice and feedback to drive and sustain school wide improvement.

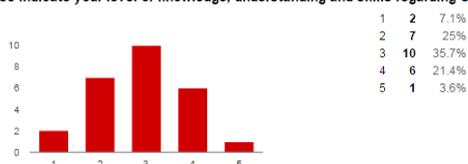
Centre Teachers collaborate extremely well with other organisations to ensure the ongoing development of all staff.

Our School Achievements

2 projects were delivered to support this domain.

'Place, People, Pedagogy: A Story for All Learners is a 5 hour course for teachers delivered in March 2015 for 48 teachers. The evidence of impact is revealed in the teacher evaluations.

Please indicate your level of knowledge, understanding and skills regarding Cultural Competencies in Aboriginal cultures prior to the course



Please indicate your level of knowledge, understanding and skills regarding Cultural Competencies in Aboriginal cultures following the course.



'Checking the Pulse of the Hawkesbury River' is a Stage 6 Geography and Science program. An accredited 5 hour course was delivered to 12 teachers in November.

Next Steps to be pursued

Citizen Science elements will be incorporated into 'Checking the Pulse of the Hawkesbury River' whereby students will upload water quality data to Western Sydney University HarWEST site (http://www.uws.edu.au/harwest/harwest/share_your_story/enter_your_data)

Leading Element: Leadership

Self-Assessment Findings

The centre is sustaining and growing leadership opportunities for students so that they may thrive as learners, leaders, and responsible, productive citizens.

The centre actively solicits and addresses feedback on school performance and is evidenced by student and teacher evaluations.

The centre has productive relationships with external agencies such as universities, local councils and community.

Our School Achievements

Throughout 2015 the centre consolidated its camp leadership program. A highly successful day program was conducted for Year 6 leaders of the Hawkesbury Small Schools in Term 1. All schools were introduced to and encouraged to undertake the 'Brewongle Leadership Award. In 2015 42 students completed this award from 2 schools.

Brewongle EEC is committed to a culture of organisational improvement through a collaborative approach to student progress, quality teaching and local leadership capacity in sustainability education. This is evidenced by new evaluations developed for Day visits, Writers Camp, Leadership, 'Checking the Pulse of the Hawkesbury River' and the Aboriginal student leadership program 'Warrawi Yana Nura'.

These evaluations are providing the centre with an improved data to evaluate our effectiveness in curriculum design and delivery so that all students have access to a rigorous, dignified and meaningful curriculum.

In 2015 the centre has 5 strong and productive partnerships. These communities of practice and networks assume shared responsibility for promoting the development of Brewongle EEC and the Department of Education system.

Next Steps to be pursued.

Continue with Google forms to collect data to improve analysis and strategic planning as part of the School Excellence Framework.

Continue with the leadership program.

Our self-assessment process will further assist the Centre to refine the strategic priorities in our School plan leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

Strategic Direction 1

Empowering Learners

Purpose

Engage and empower students to effect a positive change for sustainable futures through learning experiences that are authentic and model quality teaching.

Facilitate quality learning so students are informed, active and responsible citizens with the necessary 21st century skills capable of positively influencing their future.

Overall summary of progress

Progress towards Strategic Direction One is evidenced via the following programs and milestones reached in 2015:

Partnership with Blacktown City Council to develop a stormwater resource for stage 3 Science and Technology. iBook design completed with input from teachers in the Blacktown area. Tested by staff and students during one of three Catchment Field Days that were held. Extremely positive feedback and schools to implement in 2016. 10 week teaching program to complement iBook completed – a student centred learning approach to improving water management in schools. 4 Centre Staff attended ‘Plugging into Nature’- a 20hr professional learning program on using technology in the outdoors. 3 iBook teaching resources created and published via Field of Mars EEC.

Photovoice program designed and successfully trialled as part of the Hawkesbury Enrichment program.

Class Movie on Brewongle EEC completed. The centre assisted 7 schools across the Sydney region in filming Class Movies for NSW Environmental Trust grants.

These programs show that we have achieved our plans to upskill staff in digital technologies, collaborate with outside agencies like Blacktown City Council and increase the diversity of excursion and in-school programs offered by Brewongle EEC.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures		Resources (annual)
Improvement measure (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	<\$>
A 10% increase in the diversity of differentiated excursion and in-school programs and activities offered by the Centre	An audit of Centre programs revealed we offer 20 programs K-12. In 2015 the Centre added 1 new program to its suite, a 5% increase in 2015.	\$1000 school funds
Student feedback reflects skills, knowledge and positive values towards the environment	Students trialed new Storm water iBook teaching resource during catchment field day – overwhelmingly positive feedback and evidence by hands on engagement of students while using iBook.	\$450 school funds

Strategic Direction 1

Next steps

Next steps for Strategic Direction One include:

- Continuing collaboration with Blacktown City Council on implementing stormwater teaching resource/iBook in more schools.
- Continue to provide teacher professional learning on water management/iBook resource.
- Promote/market the iBook as an example of quality sustainability education.
- Consolidate Photovoice program by advertising and delivering with more schools.
- Continue the use of digital technologies through Primezone funded Ag Mystery digital resource for stage 5 Agriculture and Geography.
- Integrate Geographical Inquiry Skills into an authentic climate change project focusing on Stage 5 Geography Environmental Change and Management.

Strategic Direction 2

Building teacher capacity through quality teaching

Purpose

Engage and empower teachers to effect a positive change for sustainable futures for themselves and their learning communities.

Build and enhance staff capacity as learners, teachers and leaders in education for sustainability by improving knowledge, understanding and values in sustainability content and pedagogies to enable 21st century citizenship in students.

Overall summary of progress

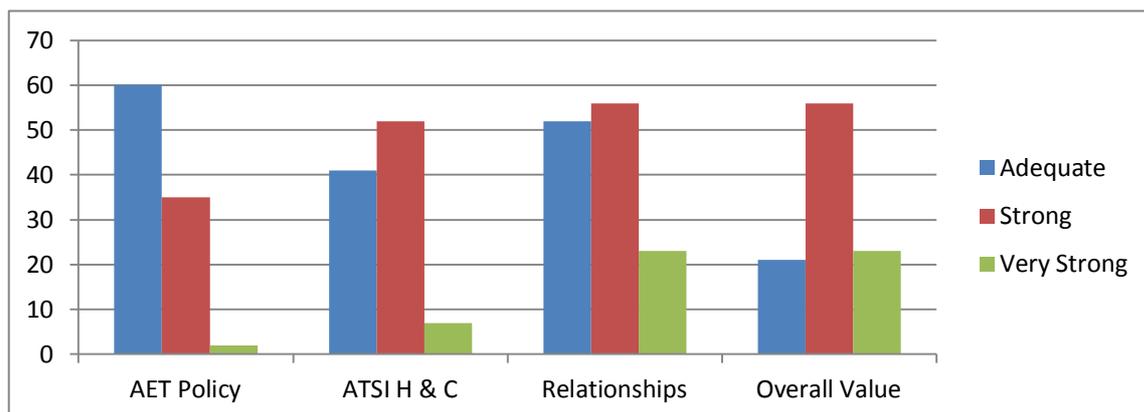
Quality teaching is essential to the success of our students.

In 2015 the Centre focused on building knowledge and skills of teachers in the Cross Curriculum priority of Aboriginal Education and in the key learning area of Science Stage 6.

For Aboriginal Education the centre planned to deliver its highly popular and successful teacher workshop 'Place, People, Pedagogy: A Story For All Learners'. This was achieved in March 2015 when the workshop was delivered to 48 teachers from across Macquarie Park.

This workshop is a collaboration with the School Of Education Western Sydney University and our local Aboriginal community. The workshop supports schools in the implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cross curriculum priority as part of the Australian curriculum. This priority area provides opportunities for all learners to deepen their knowledge of Australia by engaging with the oldest continuous living cultures. Incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures into teaching and learning will build knowledge and understanding, whilst also enhancing the ability of learning communities to participate positively in the ongoing development of Australia.

The impact of the workshop is clearly evident in the teacher evaluations. The following graph indicates teacher outcomes regarding their ability to implement the Aboriginal Education Policy, incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures into curriculum, their ability to form relationships with the local Aboriginal community and the overall value of the professional learning workshop.



A very pleasing and unexpected outcome was that 79% teachers rated their ability as strong to very strong with regard to forming relationships with their local Aboriginal community. The potential for this to support improved student outcomes in learning communities is significant.

The centre is committed to leveraging our strength and intellectual resources to enable quality teaching. 'Checking the Pulse of the Hawkesbury River' is a Stage 6 Science program delivering better results through

Strategic Direction 2

a collaborative partnership with Western Sydney University.

In 2015 the centre planned to conduct a BOSTES accredited teacher workshop showcasing this leading, high quality program. In November a successful accredited workshop was delivered to 12 teachers.

The impact of the workshop is clearly evident in the teacher evaluations. With regard to;

Application to the Workplace- 63% of teachers rated very high their intent to engage students in citizen science activities with students

Improved student outcomes – 63% of teachers rated very high their ability to apply knowledge of content and teaching strategies in an engaging manner

-63% rated very high their experience to contribute to collegial discussions.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures		Resources (annual)
Improvement measure (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	<\$>
Increased range of registered and accredited teacher professional courses offered	In 2015 there was a 100% increase in the number of BOSTES accredited/registered courses offered by the Centre.	\$450 Western Sydney University
Increased number of teachers participating in professional learning courses	<p>During 2015 the Centre increased by 56% the number of teachers participating in professional learning courses; 132 teachers participated in 4 separate workshop series.</p> <p>Science and Technology Stage 3 (60)</p> <p>Place, People, Pedagogy: A Story For All Learners (48)</p> <p>What Happens to the Rain? iBook Resource(8)</p> <p>Primezone: Stage 4/5 Agriculture teaching and learning resources (4)</p> <p>‘Checking the Pulse of the Hawkesbury River’ (12)</p>	<p>\$77 course fee</p> <p>\$70 Course Fee</p> <p>\$10,000 Blacktown City Council</p> <p>\$10,000 Primary Industries Education Foundation Australia</p> <p>\$870 Western Sydney University</p>

Next steps

- Key strategies in 2016 will be to continue to engage staff in professional development that is relevant, syllabus focussed and shaped by research, evidence and feedback to build teacher capabilities as learners, teachers and leaders.
- High quality professional learning will be developed supporting the new History syllabus focussing on Stage 2.
- Develop a Stage 4/5 Agriculture teaching and learning resource in cooperation with local teachers.

Strategic Direction 3

Enabling sustainable partnerships

Purpose

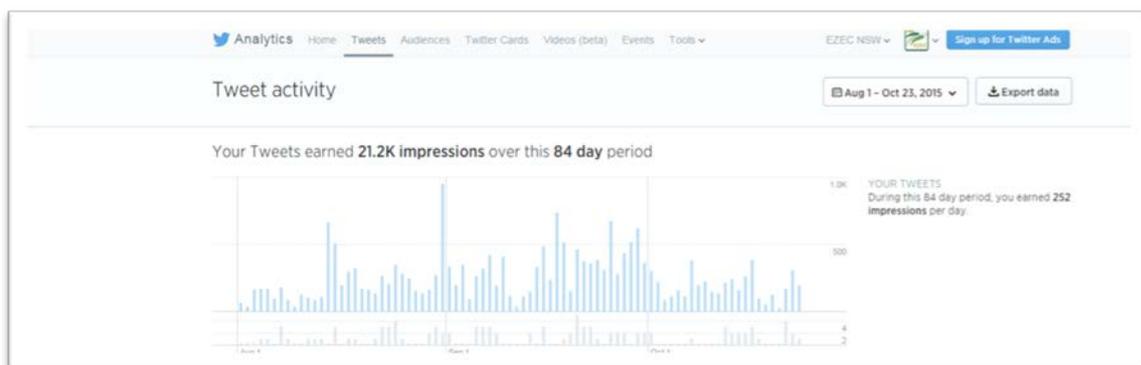
Ensure innovative and strategic support to schools in learning for sustainability.

Demonstrate sustainable operations through collaboration and innovation, thereby building capacity of learning communities/regional offices for sustainable futures

Overall summary of progress

Progress towards Strategic Direction 3 is evidence via the following:

Staff leadership during 2015 to implement the EZEC Communication and Engagement Plan. Staff from Brewongle EEC designed and managed social media platforms for EZEC including Facebook, Twitter and Yammer. Audience size is building and we are gaining exposure as time progresses. As a sample here are some Twitter statistics:



Brewongle staff collaborated with Botany Bay EEC to run a video conference for EEC teachers on how to use social media, presented at the 2015 Science and Maths Conference on using Yammer, created a Class movie on the EZEC network, developed logos for EZEC and published a Web portal to replace the old EZEC curriculum development portal.

Brewongle staff are on the committee for the Hawkesbury Environmental Educators Network (HEEN), have delivered 4 meetings in 2015 and have administered the HEEN Facebook group which now has over 90 members. Staff also attended Blacktown City Council and The Hills Council teacher network meetings providing program updates and sustainability education consultation and advice.

Strategic Direction 3

Progress towards achieving improvement measures		Resources (annual)
Improvement measure (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	<\$>
Increased number of partnerships with schools and non-DEC organisations	<p>An audit of 2014 partnerships revealed the Centre has 4 significant and strong partnerships with other agencies. These partnerships are a collaboration ensuring innovative and strategic support and reflects local and systemic priorities.</p> <p>In 2015 the Centre added 1 new partner, Blacktown City Council, to ensure support to schools in learning for sustainability.</p>	<p>\$0</p> <p>\$10,000</p>
10% increase in the range of events and projects delivered in collaboration with partners.	An audit of 2014 events/projects delivered in collaboration with our partners revealed 3 events/projects were delivered creating communities of practice where learning success is evident.	
Increased engagement with DEC Communication and Engagement portfolio	In 2015 4 events/projects were delivered to schools. This reflects a 30% increase in the range of events delivered in collaboration with partners.	

Next steps

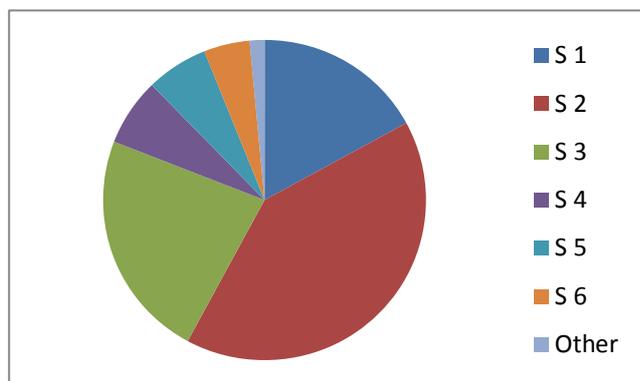
Next steps include:

- Continuing to promote EZEC to schools, community, parents and other agencies via implementation of the EZEC communications plan. Utilise social media to enhance our reach and engage more people in partnerships with our centres. Present at the Inspire Innovate conference.
- Show leadership in increasing partnerships with other councils, organisations, schools and universities.
- Work with EZEC network to implement the 2016 GoMAD student leadership challenge.
- Develop short videos to promote education for sustainability programs conducted at Brewongle. Our target is to produce videos promoting 20% of Centre programs in 2016.

Student Information

Student Visitor Profile

Brewongle EEC hosted 5728 students in 2015, encompassing a total of 272 schools.



S 1	S 2	S 3	S 4	S 5	S 6	Other
977	2344	1322	390	355	264	85

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	Number
Principal	1
Classroom Teacher(s)	1
School Administrative & Support Staff	1
Other positions General Assistant	1
Total	4

No members of staff have an Indigenous background; however we do employ members of the local Darug community to assist in the development and delivery of our Aboriginal Education programs.

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Qualifications	% of staff
Undergraduate degree or diploma	100
Postgraduate degree	50

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Regional Principal Meetings - Term 1

Primary Principal Association Conferences - Term 1 & 2

Annual Environmental/Zoo Education Conference – February

Place People Pedagogy: A Story for All Learners - Teacher TPL - March

Primezone Teacher Day March

Hollows For Habitats Local Land Services - April

Managing iPads with Configurator 2 - October

Checking the Pulse of the Hawkesbury River –teacher TPL- November

Primary Connections Training August

Training of new casuals in all programs - Terms 1 to 4

Financial information

Financial summary

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

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STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS - ARCHIVE ACCOUNT Year ended: 30th of November, 2015

	NOTES	\$ 2015	\$ 2014
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD		190,275.66	243,426.55
Receipts from:			
GLOBAL FUNDS	3	37,741.97	38,065.73
TIED FUNDS	4	8,397.62	51,682.59
SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SOURCES	5	124,295.23	111,796.50
SCHOOL OPERATED CANTEEN		0.00	0.00
INTEREST		4,366.84	4,816.94
TRUST RECEIPTS	6	24,020.00	4,930.00
TOTAL RECEIPTS		198,821.66	211,291.76
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE		389,097.32	454,718.31
Payments Applied to:			
Educational Programs			
KEY LEARNING AREAS	7	19,890.12	12,234.23
LIBRARY		253.53	220.82
EXCURSIONS	8	0.00	0.00
EXTRA CURRICULA	9	31,846.60	38,446.59
PROFESSIONAL LEARNING	10	1,535.39	1,362.63
TIED FUNDS	4	41,900.13	78,057.20
SHORT TERM RELIEF	11	383.40	3,916.28
		<u>95,809.17</u>	<u>134,237.75</u>
Administrative Programs			
ADMINISTRATION AND OFFICE	12	22,640.05	29,492.04
SCHOOL OPERATED CANTEEN		0.00	0.00
UTILITIES	13	8,837.46	10,375.70
MAINTENANCE	14	8,514.73	45,757.84
TRUST PAYMENTS	6	29,916.32	9,579.32
		<u>69,908.56</u>	<u>95,204.90</u>
Capital Programs			
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMS	15	0.00	35,000.00
TOTAL PAYMENTS		165,717.73	264,442.65
BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD	16,17	223,379.59	190,275.66

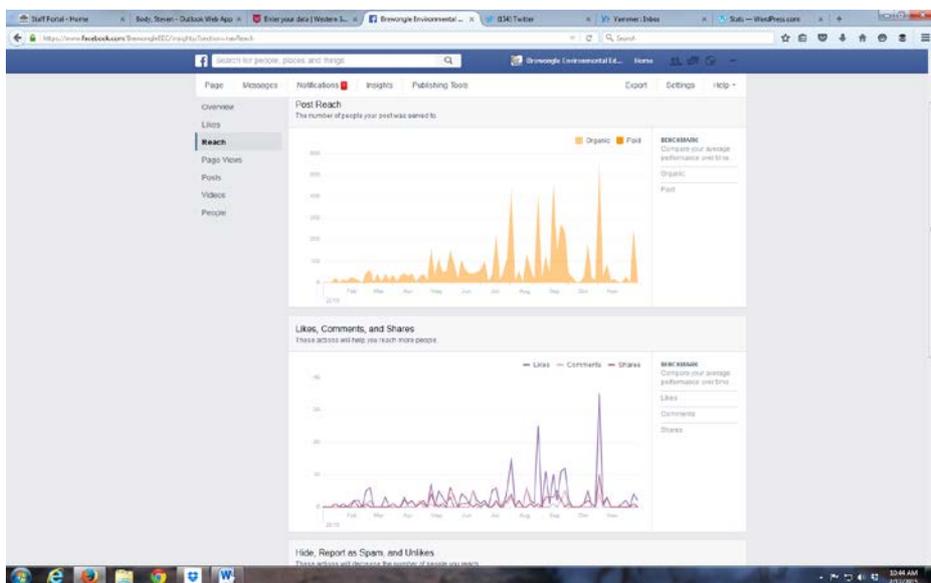
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Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Each year schools are required to seek the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their responses are presented below.

The use of social media has created new opportunities to communicate more effectively and frequently with visiting teachers, students and parents.

This was highlighted during our annual 'Writers in the Environment Camp' by extremely positive parent feedback coupled with 8,529 views of our blog for the month of September.



A series of blogs with amazing photography enabled parents to track their child's progress over the course of the 3 day camp.

The leadership shown by the Centre's teacher is a shining example of our school being seen as a hub for innovation within a culture of organizational excellence, building pride in public education.

Policy Requirements

Aboriginal education

The Centre conducts a very popular Aboriginal education program. This program is run in partnership with members from the Darug community. Activities are offered for primary and high school students on-site and at several Aboriginal heritage sites throughout the Hawkesbury district.

This program is held in high regard by the community, we feel we are doing well with Aboriginal education and acknowledge that this is an area of ongoing learning in terms of professional learning and practice.

Multicultural Education and Anti-racism

The programs at the Centre enable students from all cultures and communities to identify as Australians within a democratic multicultural society and to develop the knowledge, skills and values for participation as active citizens.

The Centre promotes positive community relations with feature articles in local newsletters and via our blog and social media accounts.

Brewongle EEC is committed to making respect and responsibility a core part of our ethos. The Centre's vision and values reflect the goal of supporting schools and their communities in making positive and realistic steps in the creation of a sustainable future.