

Blacktown Youth College



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ANNUAL REPORT

2010

Blacktown Youth College Inc

ABN 82 125 846 982

Y 2693842

Campuses at:

Bidwill, Blue Mountains and Broken Hill

CONTENTS

Section

1. **CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL**
2. **PHILOSOPHY**
3. **OVERVIEW OF 2010 - Student Outcomes**
4. **EDUCATIONAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTING**
 - 4.1 **Message from Key School Bodies**
 - 4.2 **Student Performance in Statewide Tests and Examinations**
 - 4.3 **Professional Learning and Teacher Standards**
 - 4.4 **Workforce Composition**
 - 4.5 **Student Attendance & Retention Rates in Secondary Schools**
 - 4.6 **Post-School Destinations**
 - 4.7 **Enrolment Policies and Profiles**
 - 4.8 **School Policies**
 - 4.8.1 **Student Welfare**
 - 4.8.2 **Discipline**
 - 4.8.3 **Complaints and Grievances**
 - 4.9 **School-Determined Improvement Targets**
 - 4.10 **Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility**
 - 4.11 **Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction**
 - 4.12 **Summary Financial Information**

1. Contextual Information About School

Blacktown Youth College is a non-government school and during 2010 operated from three campuses located at Mackellar Rd Bidwill, Oxide St Broken Hill and Yileena Ave Lawson. The school was first registered in 1997 and aims to meet the educational and social needs of troubled adolescents excluded from, or not coping with, mainstream schooling. Blacktown Youth College is registered as a 'special assistance school'. The Broken Hill campus was deemed compliant in all areas of inspection in 2010. Our Lawson campus was registered and accredited in February 2009 and has like the Bidwill Campus until 2013 before undergoing it's next inspection.

The school differs from mainstream schools both in respect to the students it accepts and the manner in which it operates:

- pupils undertake a flexible, partial life-skills learning program which leads to the School Certificate with no exams.
- most pupils have either been expelled, suspended from or dropped out of mainstream schooling
- many are referred by Home School Liaison Officers, Deputy Principals, school counsellors and the NSW Department of Community Services
- some have already been in trouble with the police
- some have been bullied at previous schools
- there is a focus on literacy and numeracy
- the school operates on shorter days, with 4 days a week of on-site schooling
- volunteers, student teachers and parents are encouraged to participate
- the school charges no fees and its primary source of income is through government grants and per capita funding from both the state and federal Government.

Blacktown Youth College has a large number of indigenous students. Like the great majority of our students, our indigenous students have rejected mainstream schools and in some cases their mainstream schools have rejected them.

The percentage of indigenous students varies, on average, between 30-40% in any given year. Some of our indigenous students have gone on to study Year 11 in mainstream schools.

20% of the school's staff are indigenous, and some are involved with further training at their local TAFE and at universities.

2. PHILOSOPHY

Our school's philosophy can be summarized by the Mission statement below:

Blacktown Youth College, an alternative community school, will develop **hope** of a brighter future for young people through a new beginning in education and a diverse holistic program. The college fosters the opportunity for **change** by nurturing individual talents, personal growth and the full potential of each student.

School Motto: **Hope Through Change**

The essential features of bringing about positive change through our program are:

- No exams
- Students have a say in a number of decisions made by the school
- A hands-on approach to learning
- Streaming of classes to challenge bright students and assist those with learning difficulties
- Encouraging part-time work and volunteer work for our year 10 students who graduate each year.
- Good working relationships between staff, parents and students
- Respect for self, others and property is instilled
- Access to a fully qualified counselor on site.

Students must have a committed approach to learning and they can be asked to leave if they undermine their own learning or the learning of other students. The day is roughly divided into 70% class time and 30% recreation time:sport, pool, music, craft, gardening and gymnasium are all available. Students encounter a high level of freedom here, but they have additional responsibilities too. Students assist in cleaning the school, monitor and report excessive bad language or inappropriate behaviour, supervise the pool room, help struggling students in the classroom through our mentoring program.

Blacktown Youth College is a drug-free and alcohol-free place and this policy is strictly enforced.

3. Overview of Student Outcomes and Performance – 2010

Blacktown Youth College is a non-exams school and therefore, does not undertake standardised numeracy and literacy testing (NAPLAN).

Students received grades for 3 subjects only – Personal Development/Health/Physical Education/Physical Health, Art and Design & Technology. The average grade was “C” the category for “substantial” knowledge of a subject.

In all other KLAs students are measured according to having achieved the prescribed outcomes with or without assistance.

Over 50 adults attended the graduation ceremonies in December. A total of 35 school certificate awards were presented across all three school campuses.

The number of students receiving the School Certificate declined as the school enrolled a large number of students in year 9 (14 years of age). These students will receive their year 10 certificates in 2011.

Currently, more than half of those enrolled for their School Certificate are still receiving that award.

4. EDUCATIONAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

The following information has been compiled for submission to the NSW Board of Studies to comply with legislative requirements for the continuing registration of the school.

4.1 Message from Key School Bodies

Message from the Principal – Anne Ridgway

2010 was a year of positive changes for Blacktown Youth College. My time with our Broken Hill campus was very productive. It was wonderful to meet staff and students and to have the opportunity to speak with each teacher and student individually. The overall atmosphere of this small campus is a friendly and positive one. The staff are very committed to the young people here and I commend them all for their efforts!

With a new premises on the horizon at the Art Exchange, 2011 promises to be an exciting and innovative year, with Jamaican artist Mervin Jarmin set to work with these young people as they participate in his digital film making project.

Our new college motto “**HOPE THROUGH CHANGE**” aptly describes our aim at Blacktown Youth College. Recently, staff brainstormed ideas and came up with the following Mission Statement for the school:

Blacktown Youth College, an alternative community school, will develop *hope* of a brighter future for young people through a new beginning in education and a diverse holistic program. The college fosters the opportunity for *change* by nurturing individual talents, personal growth and the full potential of each student.

2010 has also been a positive and productive year for our Bidwill and Lawson Campuses. Both campuses are attracting many more young people and we eagerly anticipate assisting them with their education, personal development and goals in 2011. As a result of some funding for National Partnerships, we have an exciting plan in place geared towards enhancing teacher quality, developing a Learning Resource Centre, helping students reach their full potential in numeracy and engaging the local community with parent education courses and monthly luncheons.

With the purchase of a college minibus, we hope to open up more opportunities for student engagement in our post-school certificate Bridging Program.

Across all 3 campuses, we have approximately 35 students who graduated with their Life-skills School Certificate. We are very proud of these students and wish them all the very best for their futures.

The spirit of our school continues to be one which fosters in our students a sense of self and empowerment to overcome adversity and achieve their greatest potential. Teachers were successful in continuing to provide a nurturing, yet challenging learning program for our students.

Message From the School Board – by John Dacey (Chair of Board)

The Board of Blacktown Youth College is made up of community representatives and parents of past students, and includes people of Pacific Is and Aboriginal background. The Board meets every two months and receives reports from the Principal on the overall running of the College, across its three campuses. Financial reports are received from the Senior Administrator and an annual budget is approved at the AGM. The Board assists the Principal in her decision making on issues that affect the College as a whole, including property, funding and major expense items, as well as some HR matters. The Board advises on policy and procedure relating to management and overall educational outcomes of the College. The Board collaborates with the Principal and Senior Administrator in direction setting. The Chairperson and Secretary of the Board, along with the Principal, form an Executive which can meet and make decisions or give advice in between the Board meetings.

4.2 Student Performance in Statewide Tests and Examinations

Blacktown Youth College is a “no-exams” school. Our School Certificate program is a modified program and students must complete 145 days from the year they turn 15 years of age (including work experience) to graduate and they must undertake some volunteer work in the community.

In December 2004, the NSW Board of Studies recognized our “no-exam” School Certificate as an innovative approach to the School Certificate in NSW. It was agreed that our students would study a combination of Life Skills courses and optional grade courses. Grades are available for Personal Development/Health/Physical Education, Visual Art and Design & Technology.

However, the school did conduct a situational Analysis for our National Partnerships School Plan for 2011, focussing on the abilities of our student cohort in numeracy and literacy and came up with the following findings.

Student performance 2010

- **Spelling:** A Daniels and Diack standardised spelling test is administered as students start at BYC. The test indicates a top spelling age of 12.3 years but the test is short enough and relatively easy, so the students will actually complete it. Allowing a margin of error, if a student scored 37 (10.5 years) or less, then they are of concern. 56% of students scored 37 or below. The range of spelling ages in this band of concern were spelling age 6.1 years – 10.5 years. 35% of students secured a spelling age of less than 10 years. 5% of students scored in the spelling age of 6 years. All BYC students are aged 13 – 21 years.
 - **Reading Comprehension:** Students are given a Stage 3 English Text. The text is not scaffolded. If students are unable to read this text or do not attempt any questions, a separate reading test is carried out to determine reading levels. 4% of students scored 100%. 57% of students scored 50% or more. 43% scored less than 50%. Many students were able to answer some of the literal questions. Some students were able to answer the inferential questions. When monitored in class, where reading comprehension is scaffolded, all students participating in the large classes are able to perform reading comprehension. The students unable to read a high school novel are placed into one-to-one tuition or small groups until their skills are developed enough to move into the larger classes.
 - **Mathematics:** Students are given a Stage 3 Maths Test. It would be expected that most students in stage 4 and 5 would be able to score close to 100% against each basic skill tested. However, the results show that between 55% of students can add 5 digits but only 15% of students can subtract 5 digit numbers. In fact, only 31% can perform 2 digit subtraction, with trading, accurately. 58% can perform 2 digit multiplied by a single digit but only 15% can perform 2 digit multiplied by 2 digit numbers. 42% of students are able to convert equivalent fractions and 48% can convert fractions to decimals. 36% of students can calculate perimeter. 58% of students can convert 24 hour time to 12 hour and analog time. 43% of students can convert mls to litres.
 - 49% can calculate change from \$5. 70% can interpret a graph. 21% can calculate discounts based on percentages. 45% are able to estimate temperature. 43% are able to calculate mass using grams. 37% recognise acute, obtuse and reflex angles. 82% recognise fractions as parts of shapes. 52% are able to convert
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seconds, hours, weeks, days and minutes. 42% are able to perform word problems involving addition.

- **Individual assessments:** 40 students have been individually assessed as their initial tests provided evidence of a lack of reading skills. 9 individual education programs have been implemented to assist students with significant deficits in phonics, sight word vocabulary, levelled reading and writing of personal details such as full names, addresses and phone numbers. Some students have made great progress on their individual education programs. Other students have not had regular attendance and therefore, are unable to make progress.
 - **Writing assessments:** Initial writing assessments are carried out and observation of writing is carried out each lesson. Most students are reluctant writers and write the minimum required. Many find spelling and phonemic awareness limits their writing ability. The various writing genres are addressed in the English lessons and recounts and procedures are written in Science and Geography. Some classes rely on copying text from the board rather than applying problem solving skills or completing a rubric from research which may be more stimulating and a move toward quality teaching
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4.3 Professional Learning and Teacher Standards

Teaching staff at Blacktown Youth College satisfy NSW Board of Studies requirements for qualifications. Of the 14 teaching staff employed at the end of the 2010 school year, 12 were fully qualified registered teachers and another 2 were indigenous teachers both of whom are undertaking teaching degrees.

The following table lists the categories specified by the NSW Board of Studies, and the number of teachers in each category.

Category	No. of Teachers
(i) Teachers who have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognized within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines	12
(ii) Teachers who have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognized within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications	1
(iii) Teachers who do not have qualifications as described in (i) or (ii) but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context.	1

4.4 Teacher Attendance and Retention

The average teacher attendance rate or average number of days attended per teacher and the proportion of teaching staff retained from the previous year. These can be reported in the most appropriate way according to each school's circumstances.

Average teacher attendance rate	3 1/2/per week
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4.5 Student Attendance and Retention Rates

50 students were retained by Blacktown Youth College from 2009 to 2010. That is approximately 50% of the 2009 student population.

Many of our students gain part or full time employment after graduation and some go on to further study at either TAFE or a mainstream school

4.6 Post-School Destinations

Post-School Destination	No. of Students
Workforce	25
Further study	6
Retained for Bridging Course or unknown	6 and 8 respectively

4.7 Enrolment Policies and Profiles

Our students are referred to the school by Home School Liaison Officers, Deputy Principals, school counselors, through word-of-mouth, or by the NSW Department of Community Services.

Prospective students and their parents attend group interviews where our unique program is explained. Parents and carers must produce a current Birth Certificate and if possible a letter from the student's previous school.

About 60% of our intake is indigenous. As we are a "no-exams" school students can begin studying for their School Certificate at any point in the year without disadvantage to themselves academically.

Our school has been given “special assistance school” status. Students attend group interviews with parents and caseworkers. The nature of our school is explained and student representatives, as well as teachers, answer questions.

Students may enroll at any point in the year. A significant number suffer from extreme anger, depression or phobias.

Student enrolment

- Enrolments from 2009 to 2010 have increased by 15%. The school now caters for 115 students at the Bidwill Campus.
- The school has recently taken over the Council lease and this has allowed better fencing, signage and greater care of the environment. The school is promoting itself within the community and the community are responding positively.
- Blacktown Youth College has 35% indigenous students. It also caters for 36% of students who have learning disabilities.

Student attendance

- Attendance rates are increasing. 788 students attended during August 2010. 473 indigenous students were included in the total attendance figure. An average of 50 students attended daily in August 2010 and an average of 30 indigenous students attended daily. This is a total of 60% of our daily average.
- To improve attendance rates, Blacktown Youth College encourages student attendance. A Counsellor and Youth Worker do home visits to secure attendance. Case workers are notified of their client’s absence and Centrelink is advised when absences persist.

4.8 School Policies

The school has copies of detailed policies and procedures at each campus. However, a summary of each area is outlined below.

4.8.1 Student Welfare

Introduction

Student Welfare refers to the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of the student. Accordingly, the provision of student welfare policies and programs is essential in developing a sense of self-worth and fostering personal development. Because of the comprehensive nature of the school curriculum, student welfare will be affected by a range of matters.

It is noted that some school-based activities will be subject to a variety of ‘policy areas’. It is also noted that each policy is not mutually exclusive, that is, there are implicit and explicit interrelationships between many policies.

Safe and Supportive Environment

All staff members must ensure students have a safe and supportive environment.

Safe Environment

A safe environment for students is one where the risk of harm is minimised and students feel secure. Harm relates not only to dangers in the built environment, involving such matters as architecture and construction, lighting, space, facilities and safety plans, but also refers to violence, physical threats, verbal abuse, threatening gestures, sexual harassment and racial vilification.

(Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW) Manual Section 3.6.2)

Supportive Environment

A supportive environment facilitates and enhances the social, academic, physical and emotional development of students. A supportive environment strives to be one in which:

- students are treated with respect and fairness by teachers, other staff and other students
- members of the school community feel valued
- effective teaching and learning takes place
- positive support and encouragement are provided by members of staff and students
- non-discriminatory language and behavioural practices are defined, modelled and reinforced by members of the school community
- consultation takes place on matters relating to students' education and welfare.

(Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW) Manual Section 3.6.2)

Student Welfare Policies

The following policies relate to student welfare. All staff must be aware of, and apply these policies to ensure students are not placed in a position where their mental, physical, emotional or spiritual welfare is put at risk. In addition, where such policies have been implemented by way of procedural documents, the procedures stipulated must be applied.

Staff are to sign the attached proforma indicating they have read each of the policy documents stipulated in this Student Welfare Policy.

Sect 7 – 12	Child Protection Policy
Sect 13 – 16	Code of Conduct
Sect 23	Complaints and Grievances (Conflict Resolution) Policy
Sext 24 – 30	Critical Incidents and Disaster Management Policy
Sect 42 – 48	Excursions Policy
Sect 74	Homework Policy
Sect 75	Managing Student Behaviour (MSB) Policy
Sect 50 – 73	Health Care Policy
Sect 76	Pastoral Care Policy
Sect 81 – 82	Risk Assessment Policy
Page 222	Student Leadership Policy
Page 173 – 200	Occupational Health and Safety Policy

2010 saw the continuance of employment of a full-time counselor who is on site at all times during school hours. As well as being 'case- managed' some students have family mediations with our school coueslor whioch has proven to be invaluable. A priority for the school is to provide a safe and supportive environment for students, particularly as they are at risk of not obtaining a basic education because they have been expelled from or dropped out of mainstream schooling. Processes are in place to ensure the safety of students and these are coupled with a focus on the social and educational development of our students, in order to promote their welfare.

Final decisions on all student matters are made by a full staff meeting or school executive meeting. Our drug-free/alcohol-free policy is strictly enforced.

4.8.2 Discipline

The school aims to be fair and open in relation to discipline and disciplinary procedures. Final decisions on matters pertaining to discipline are made by the school executive. The school has a detailed approach to this outlined in the Policy and Procedures Handbook. (See Below)

Managing Student Behaviour Policy

It is reasonable to expect that the procedures for Managing Student Behaviour (MSB) will change in response to changing circumstances as students' needs vary from year to year. As methodology becomes stale or routine, teachers and administrators may vary their approach to dealing with students. However, this policy document sets out the 'non-negotiable' aspects of approaches to MSB. The underpinning philosophy for MSB procedures is based upon the policy statements below.

Approach to discipline

Accordingly, all staff members are expected to demonstrate patience, kindness and good manners towards others. In dealing with students, staff endeavour to not be irritable or resentful, nor glad when a student is caught out doing wrong. Rather, staff members are glad when a person, who did wrong in the past, seeks to improve their attitude and behaviour. Staff members retain optimism for all people and are prepared to forgive wrong that has been done and forget the past. We aim to praise the good behaviour of others.

It is noted a wise person will establish a good relationship with others and supportive Staff will be prepared to listen to what another has to say. In particular, Blacktown Youth College is committed to the principles of natural justice, which includes the 'hearing rule' and the 'right to an unbiased decision'.

This does not mean staff ought to be naive or easily deceived. Staff members are approachable and available and seek opportunities to praise and encourage students.

Aim of discipline

The aim of discipline is to help correct and develop behaviour so that self-discipline may develop. To this end, staff and students commit themselves to the following principles.

A self-controlled person:

- does not resort to idle threats and blustering;
 - will understand why certain behaviours are considered wrong;
 - will take time to listen to others
 - will be patient with explanations;
 - expect others to be well behaved;
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We all need to show respect to each other, because what we do will always influence others. Discipline should recognize the age and maturity of the person and not belittle the person through word or deed. Staff and students should recognize the importance of talking politely to those in authority, and peers. Students are expected to obey those placed in positions of authority. If a student does not understand, or agree with an instruction that has been given by someone in authority, it is expected that the student will comply with the instruction and then approach the teacher or administrator respectfully, at a time convenient to him or her.

Principles of natural justice and procedural fairness

Natural justice is a basic right of all when dealing with authorities. Authorities will not act in a capricious or unethical manner.

The following principles are identified by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC)

- The person who is the subject of concern must know all the allegations in relation to their behaviour.
- They must have a full opportunity to put their case
- All parties to the complaint must have the right to be heard
- All relevant submissions and evidence must be considered
- The convening authority must not take into account matters that are not relevant.
- The person who lays the charge must not determine the charge.
- The decision-maker must be fair and just

These principles are commonly understood to elaborate the process of natural justice and they form the basis of training of employers by HREOC for the provision of natural justice.

Procedural fairness refers to what are sometimes described as the 'hearing rule' and the 'right to an unbiased decision'.

Punishment (or consequences) should be appropriate to the type of misconduct; and be seen by all parties to be appropriate, fair and consistent for the individual child. Discipline should always fairness and justice and should always consider the individual and the situation.

The 'hearing rule'

The hearing rule includes the right of the person against whom an allegation has been made to:

- know the allegations related to a specific matter and any other information which;
- will be taken into account in considering the matter;
- know the process by which the matter will be considered;
- respond to the allegations; and,
- know how to seek a review of the decision made in response to the allegations.

The 'right to an unbiased decision' includes the right to:

impartiality in an investigation and decision-making;
an absence of bias by a decision-maker.

All parties to an investigation are also directed to maintain in strictest confidentiality the matters under investigation.

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is not an acceptable form of managing student behaviour at Blacktown Youth College. Also teachers are not to explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school.

Suspension, expulsion or exclusion from school

The Principal has delegated responsibility for all discipline at Blacktown Youth College. In this context, the Principal will use this policy document as a guide in making determinations about the suspension, expulsion or exclusion of students. Where after due process, the Principal determines a student should be suspended from the school, such a determination will include consultation with senior staff. Where after due process, the Principal determines a student should be expelled or excluded from the school; such a determination will include consultation with the Deputy Principal. Expulsion from the school does not necessarily mean that a student may never be accepted back. In rare cases, after a period of time, a parent or guardian may request that their son/daughter be accepted back into the school. Only after an extensive interview and reasonable evidence of a change of attitude; will the school consider re-enrolment.

Restorative Discipline

Correction and discipline should always be *restorative*. It should be consistent with the school's task (directed towards protection and enhancement of the learning environment) and appropriate to the nature of the offence, if possible, restoring any damage to work, property or relationships.

If a student is disciplined students he or she should be encouraged to seek forgiveness and to make restitution and apologies where appropriate in order to restore normal relationships.

4.8.3 Complaints and Grievances

Grievances are dealt with under Procedural Fairness by school meetings or the school executive. When a matter reaches a critical stage the Board is then notified and decisions are made at the Executive level. (See Summary below)

Complaints & Grievances (Conflict resolution) Policy

At Blacktown Youth College, people are encouraged to resolve disagreements amongst themselves. If we have a concern about, or complaint against another person, the first step is to take it to the person directly and deal with it in a respectful manner. If the matter is still not resolved another staff member may be called upon to assist in finding a resolution to the issue. People must act respectfully to others, discreetly, maintaining confidentiality in all circumstances.

Our community in the school comprises students, parents and staff. Any organization has a network of interrelationships: the school community is no different. For the purpose of clarity, these interrelationships in the school are:

students & students;
students & parent(s);
student & staff;
parent & parent;
parent & staff; and
staff & staff.

There is room in the school community for differences: we do not all see things in exactly the same ways. While able to cause tensions, differences need not be threatening, they are often a way of enriching the school.

Generally, most issues can be resolved amicably by following these principles.

- Step one: Talk to the other person.
- Step two: Take someone else with you.
- Step three: Take it to the designated authority. (Depending upon circumstances, this may be a home room teacher, a staff supervisor, the Principal or the Board.)

However, it is inevitable that at times, the school may need to institute more formal procedures to resolve a conflict.

Complaints, Disagreements or Grievances

The manner in which complaints, disagreements or grievances are handled can mean the difference between harmony and tension in a community.

All steps must be taken in a true spirit of reconciliation. If a teacher has a complaint about a parent, the same steps may be followed. Complaints should be dealt with promptly and not be allowed to fester. *A Board member must never be the channel for particular complaints.* If Board Members are approached by parents with a complaint, they must always insist that the parent speak with the staff member concerned, and if still not satisfied, then the matter must be taken up with the appropriate senior staff.

Grievance resolution is an integral part of teachers', supervisors' and managers' duties, which also include responsibility for identifying, preventing, responding to and readdressing problems in the classroom or workplace.

- Grievances should be treated seriously, expeditiously and sensitively, having due regard to procedural fairness, confidentiality and the potential for victimization.
 - Grievances should be handled quickly and as close as possible to their source. This may be influenced by the nature of the complaint and the complainant's wishes.
 - Staff, students or parents should raise concerns as early as possible after the incident relating to the complaint has occurred.
 - Wherever possible, grievances should be resolved by a process of discussion, cooperation and conciliation. The aim is to reach an acceptable outcome that minimizes any potential detriment to ongoing work or study relationships.
 - Both the complainant and the respondent will receive appropriate information, support and assistance in resolving the grievance.
 - Staff, students or parents should not instigate grievances that are frivolous or malicious. Staff, students and parents are expected to participate in the grievance resolution process in good faith.
 - Requirements relating to confidentiality and privacy extend to the use and storage of any information and records related to a grievance.
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Conflict Resolution

Where a question, grievance, complaint, claim or dispute which relates to the association's employees arises the following procedure will apply:

- The person discusses the matter directly with the person concerned with a view to reaching agreement regarding the matter.
- If agreement is not able to be reached, the matter should be referred to the immediate supervisor for resolution through discussion with the party/parties concerned.
- If agreement is not able to be reached following this step, the matter should be referred to the Principal for resolution through discussion with the party/parties concerned.
- If the matter is not resolved within ten (10) days or the person feels the matter is inappropriate to be discussed with the immediate supervisor, the employee may refer the matter, with full details, to the Principal.

The Principal will endeavour to resolve the dispute to the satisfaction of all parties. The Principal must give the complainant a response within seven (7) days of it being referred or notify the complainant that the Principal is referring the matter to a dispute resolution mediator.

Conflict Resolution – Mediation

The dispute resolution mediator will be a person nominated by the Board or the Principal and agreed by the aggrieved party(ies).

A matter may be referred, in writing with full details, to the mediator by:

the complainant: if the complainant is not satisfied with the Principal's response referred to in point above:

the complainant: if the matter relates to a direct supervisor(s); or

the Principal: if the Principal determines to refer the matter.

The mediator shall, in determining a dispute:

give both parties an opportunity to be heard;

not be bound by the rules of evidence but may inform himself or herself on any matter in any way that is just;

will make a decision on the matter within fourteen (14) days of the matter being referred.

Harassment Committee – student/student conflict

At BYC, we have in place a procedure whereby students can resolve their own difficulties and issues. If an issue or conflict between students arises, the matter is automatically referred to the 'Harassment Committee' (voted by students to represent them). The procedure is as follows:

- Each party is heard individually with a staff member and members of committee present
- A discussion is held as to a judgement of the situation and relevant consequences.
- Both parties are brought in to attempt an amicable reconciliation.
- Consequences are delivered.

4.9 School-Determined Improvement Targets

Graduation rates are one way that the school can measure performance and track improvements over time. Our graduation rates have improved in the last 12 months. Whereas, only 60% of students were finishing Blacktown Youth College with the School Certificate 2 years ago, in 2010 65% of students graduated. We expect around 70% to graduate in 2011.

The school aims to retain students for our bridging course which aims to assist students to enroll in Tafe Courses, participate in Community work and preparation for the workforce. Students are offered a Bridging Course, which promotes the links to higher education and employment. Classes are run to prepare students to seek employment, to establish the type of career they are looking for and to develop skills with the assistance of outside agencies. TAFE have been running an Outreach Course in Computer Skills and Blacktown City Toastmasters have run and will continue to run Youth Leadership courses, which promote public speaking skills. An aim of this course is to increase literacy levels of its participants.

This is the school's response to the school age now being 17 years of age.

4.10 Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Students now participate with the Annual School camp. The school selected 4 students in 2010 to be members of the Harassment Committee. This committee was responsible for monitoring bullying and/or harassment incidences in the school. Through a process of 'Fair Hearing' these student leaders would set forth consequences for offenders and ways of reconciling both offenders and injured parties.

4.11 Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

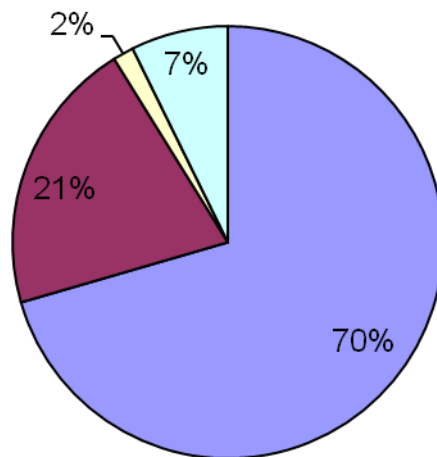
Parents receive reports on student's progress twice year. The report displays the outcomes which have been achieved by students thus far in each of their courses. Parent representatives on School Board give feedback regarding the clarity of reports. Awards are also regularly granted in recognition of student achievement each Term

4.12 Summary Financial Information

The following charts show the percentages of income and expenditure by category, taken from the detailed information provided to the Commonwealth Government in the 2010 Commonwealth Financial Questionnaire.

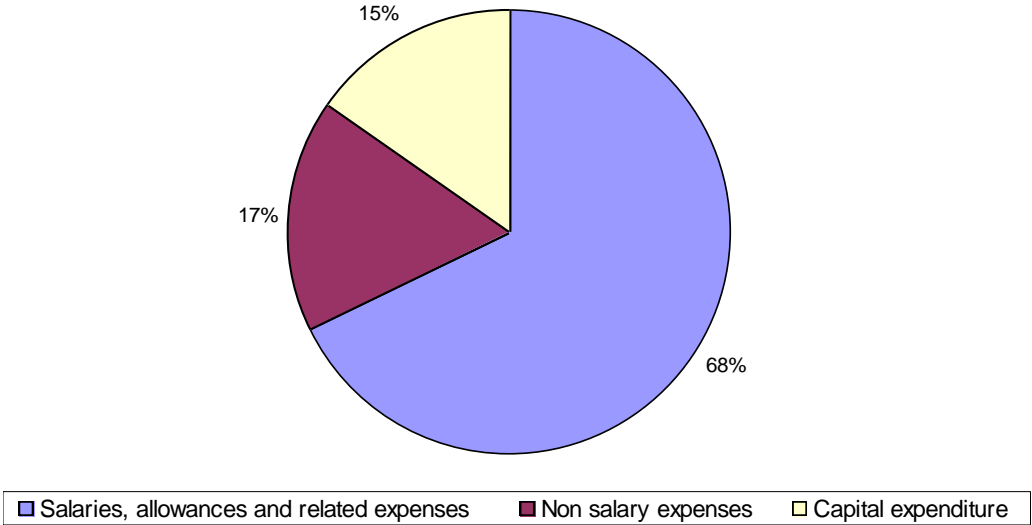
Note that the school is a “no-fees” school and did not have any capital income during 2010.

BYC Income 2009



Commonwealth recurrent grants
State recurrent grants

BYC Expenditure 2010



Anne Ridgway – Principal of Blacktown College – 10th June 2011
