

2007 Showcase Awards for Excellence in Schools

Description

The Leadership Team at Northern Beaches SHS identified a need for the implementation of a Middle School at NBSHS in 2003. The behaviour of students in Years 8 and 9 and their disengagement from learning signalled the need for a fresh approach. Middle School reform was trialled in 2004 with the interdisciplinary teaming of two teachers who were assigned to the same group of trial students across the key learning areas of Maths/Science or English/SOSE. The reform process was extended in 2005 to include all students in Year 8 (incorporating Year 9 students in 2006). This multifaceted reform was informed by middle school philosophy (Ediger, 1998/1999; Kellough & Kellough, 2003) and involved not only organisational change, but also a developmentally responsive approach to the distinctive and varied needs of students in the middle phase. The result was the very successful program RAPS (**R**elationships, **A**chievement, **P**urposeful learning, and **S**upporting transitions). RAPS is underpinned by a comprehensive developmental mentoring program which manages the essential characteristics of an effective middle school (EQ, MPL Action Plan). As illustrated in the



figure on the left, mentoring harnesses the essential elements of a middle school as articulated in Education Queensland's: *See the Future. The Middle Phase of Learning State School Action Plan*. RAPS embeds and makes explicit Essential Learnings, Common Curriculum Elements (CCE's) Employability Skills and Resilience. Through its organisational structure of interdisciplinary teams and core classes and its integrating device of a Portfolio, RAPS delivers a curriculum that is authentic, relevant, integrated and academically challenging.

U2U and Mentoring

At the core of this program is the provision of an adult advocate (mentor) for every student. U2U classes consist of a small group of students (15 or fewer) and are timetabled each day during Access and one dedicated 70 minute lesson each week. The U2U program is designed to meet the specific developmental needs of students in the middle phase. For example, middle school students tend to be socially awkward and easily wounded emotionally (Ediger, 1998/1999), particularly as a result of criticism from peers (Knowlton & Garner, 1997). U2U provides a context for students to meet with the teacher in a

peer setting to discuss common issues and concerns. This time each day allows students to form a significant relationship with a staff member while interacting with peers. It also provides the foundation for academic and career mentoring and life skills. Thus, U2U is a developmental advisory program that provides students with social, emotional and academic support within a futures orientation framework and includes the practices tabled below.

RAPS Practices and Strategies	Connection to 2010 and/or ETRF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptive evaluations of student academic and personal growth including observational records, conferencing, performance assessment rubrics through the RAPS Portfolio (LE2, ETRF – Action 3). • Counselling on goal setting and goal attainment including literacy and numeracy needs and outcomes (LE1, ETRF – Action 3). • Programs that foster health, safety and well being underpinned by "Mind Matters" which is coordinated by a core group of highly trained Level 1 and 2 Mind Matters Facilitators • Comprehensive guidance and support on the State Educational and Training (SET) planning process (at NBSHS, this process begins in Year 8) ETRF – Action 4. • Mapping and monitoring of achievement of CCEs and Essential Learnings through the RAPS portfolio (LE2, ETRF – Action 3). • An active working relationship between U2U mentors and parents to help our students reach their potential as evidenced in the reporting methods – U2U mentors formally report to parents on the progress of individual students across all KLAs (SC2). • U2U mentors coordinate with members of Student Support Services Team to provide targeted intervention and support to 'at risk' students (students in care, SWDs, ATSI and students with high needs for social support). LE1, ETRF – Action 3. • Connected curricular activities such as a Year 8 camp and a Year 9 camp steered by relevant U2U mentors with outcomes connected to the U2U curriculum (Teamwork in Year 8, Personal Growth in Year 9). ETRF – Action 3, SC3, LE2. • 'Looping' of U2U mentors whereby students are kept with the same mentor as they move through the middle school and beyond. ETRF – Action 3. 	<p>LE1: Improved learning outcomes for a diverse range of students LE2: Improved integration of curriculum, teaching, assessment and reporting</p> <p>SC2: Schools have productive partnerships with their community SC3: Schools provide safe, supportive and discipline learning environments</p> <p>ETRF – Action 3: a new approach to teaching and learning in the middle years of schooling ETRF – Action 4: schools develop individual student plans</p>

Supporting Transitions

The RAPS model is designed to 'bridge the gap' between primary school and Year 8 and from Year 9 into the Senior Phase of Learning. RAPS involves several whole school and cluster initiatives to smooth transitions. The Year 7 to 8 transition involves a comprehensive program built around interdisciplinary connected units. All partner schools participate in 8-10 whole day transition programs which are developed collaboratively with primary partner teachers to enhance their curriculum. RAPS also caters for the transition from the MPL to the SPL by treating Year 10 as the first year of the Senior Phase. The development of coherence across and within learning is achieved through the explicit link between QCAR Essential Learnings in Year 9 and learning in Year 10. Preparedness for Year 10 is also achieved through the continuation, remediation, acceleration and specialisation of learning in Year 9. Additionally, the transition from the middle phase to the senior phase is strengthened through the U2U mentoring program which provides courses on career development in the middle phase. RAPS supports transition through the following practices:

RAPS Practices and Strategies	Connection to 2010 and/or ETRF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular cluster school meetings to share information and ensure alignment of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment practices in MPL (SC1, LE2). • Collaboratively working with P-7 schools in the Northern Corridor Cluster to provide purposeful transition programs including the introduction to the RAPS portfolio in Year 7 through the "WHO I AM" task (SC1, LE2). • Cluster collaborative development of interdisciplinary connected units to support transition programs from year 7-8. (ETRF – Action 3) • Successful grouping of students in Middle School classes based on information provided by students in the "WHO I AM" task (SC1, LE2, ETRF – Action 3). • Teachers from NBSHS work-shadow primary school teachers in the cluster and provide expertise in specialist curriculum areas (SC1). • Essential Learnings (QCAR) are made explicit in Middle Schooling curriculum and student progress monitored through the RAPS portfolio. These essential learnings are linked with Year 10 curriculum. (ETRF – Action 3) • Catering to the different needs of students in Year 9 including targeted literacy and numeracy intervention, a G&T program and the structuring of electives in Year 9 to allow for specialisation. (LE1, SC1, ETRF-Action 3). • Year 9 students retain their U2U mentor in Year 10 to create a smooth transition into the SPL (SC1, ETRF – Action 3). • SET planning commences in Year 8; by the commencement of Year 10, students are familiar with the SET planning process and are already career oriented. This provides a successful transition into the SPL (SC1, ETRF – Action 4). 	<p>LE1: Improved learning outcomes for a diverse range of students LE2: Improved integration of curriculum, teaching, assessment and reporting</p> <p>SC1: Schools have innovative and distinctive strategies responsive to community and student needs ETRF – Action 3: a new approach to teaching and learning in the middle years of schooling ETRF – Action 4: schools develop individual student plans</p>

Relationships

According to Education Queensland's: *See the Future. The Middle Phase of Learning State School Action Plan*, the relationship between teachers and students is crucial in the MPL. The RAPS program looks after the students' distinctive needs in the MPL by offering an organisational structure that supports meaningful relationships and learning. These structures include:

RAPS Practices and Strategies	Connection to 2010 and/or ETRF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Middle School team of teachers, selected for their willingness and commitment to meeting the distinct and diverse needs of learners in the MPL (LE2, ETRF– Action 3). • Timetabling the Middle School as a first priority which is a significant departure from traditional timetabling approaches which usually focus on the senior school first. (LE2) The use of block scheduling allows for a longer time with students and fosters long-term student-teacher relationships. (SC3). • Interdisciplinary teaming or the use of core teachers in the middle phase – the same teacher for English and SOSE and the same teacher for Maths and Science. to provide a source of identity and belonging essential for this age group. Teachers of Year 8 teach the same students when they progress to Year 9 (LE2, SC3, ETRF – Action 3). • The same U2U mentor through both phases of learning (from Year 8-12) to ensure connection with and intrinsic understanding of students' needs (SC3, LE2, ETRF – Action 3). • Year 11 mentors of students in Year 8 – PEER Support Program (SC3, ETRF – Action 3). 	<p>LE2: Improved integration of curriculum, teaching, assessment and reporting</p> <p>SC3: Schools provide safe, supportive and discipline learning environments</p> <p>ETRF – Action 3: a new approach to teaching and learning in the middle years of schooling</p>

Purposeful, Intellectually Challenging Learning

The need for 'uncluttering' the middle phase curriculum and providing in-depth and authentic learning has been addressed by RAPS in the following ways:

RAPS Practices and Strategies	Connection to 2010 and/or ETRF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review by core teachers of middle phase curriculum and development of an integrated and authentic curriculum that challenges students to explore ideas, identify problems, generate solutions and evaluate their work (LE2, ETRF – Action 3). Planning for continuity of learning by mapping Essential Learnings, CCEs and a constructivist curriculum from Years 7-9 (LE2, ETRF – Action 3). Implementation of portfolios to map student outcomes and facilitate student reflection of their learning with the provision of goal setting and deep metacognition (LE2). Periodic review of course work by interdisciplinary teams and engagement in self-reflection to facilitate continuous improvement of the middle school curriculum (LE2). 	<p>LE2: Improved integration of curriculum, teaching, assessment and reporting</p> <p>ETRF – Action 3: a new approach to teaching and learning in the middle years of schooling</p>

Achievement

Aware of the fact that students make the least progress in the MPL (The Middle School of Learning State School Action Plan, p. 10), RAPS is designed to provide targeted support to students with identified needs and to ensure high academic achievers continue to engage in relevant learning. This achieved through the following:

RAPS Practices and Strategies	Connection to 2010 and/or ETRF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAPS incorporates a highly structured literacy and numeracy intervention program whereby students with high literacy and or numeracy needs are identified. Students are tested for literacy and numeracy at the beginning and end of both Years 8 and 9. Students with identified needs are provided support through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialised literacy classes in both Years 8 and 9 (3 sessions each week) facilitated by two highly qualified teachers. Teacher aide support in the majority of their remaining classes (LE1, LE2, ETRF – Action 3). As well as identifying those students with high literacy needs, the testing process identifies students who are gifted and talented. The school runs a program for Gifted and Talented students in the middle phase (one dedicated session each week) which offers a range of extension and extra-curricular activities (LE1, LE2, ETRF – Action 3). 	<p>LE1: Improved learning outcomes for a diverse range of students</p> <p>LE2: Improved integration of curriculum, teaching, assessment and reporting</p> <p>ETRF – Action 3: a new approach to teaching and learning in the middle years of schooling</p>

Outcomes and Evidence

RAPS has enjoyed considerable success at improving the outcomes and experiences of middle school students. This is evident in all elements of the RAPS program and is revealed by a longitudinal analysis of School Opinion Data (Appendix A). In 2006, 63% of Year 9 students indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the statement "that they were happy with this school". This represents a 38% improvement since 2004. Furthermore, 58% of respondents in 2006 indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied that NBSHS is a good school, representing a 41% increase from 2004. Year 9 item responses in 2006 were more positive than previous years as indicated in the overall rating to all questions which represented a 24% improvement in satisfaction with the school. Overall Year 9 School Opinion Data showed 18/29 item responses are now above like schools means including the General Satisfaction item, "that this is a good school" and 13/29 item responses, above state means. A detailed outline of outcomes and evidence of the RAPS program is presented in the form of a schematic diagram on pages 5 and 6.

Personnel Involved in the Project (names and roles)

Joanna Stewart	Deputy – Middle School	Susan Stevens	HOD – Maths/Science
Tracey McAskill	HOD – English/SOSE	Natalie Taylor	HOD – Senior Schooling

Concluding Statement

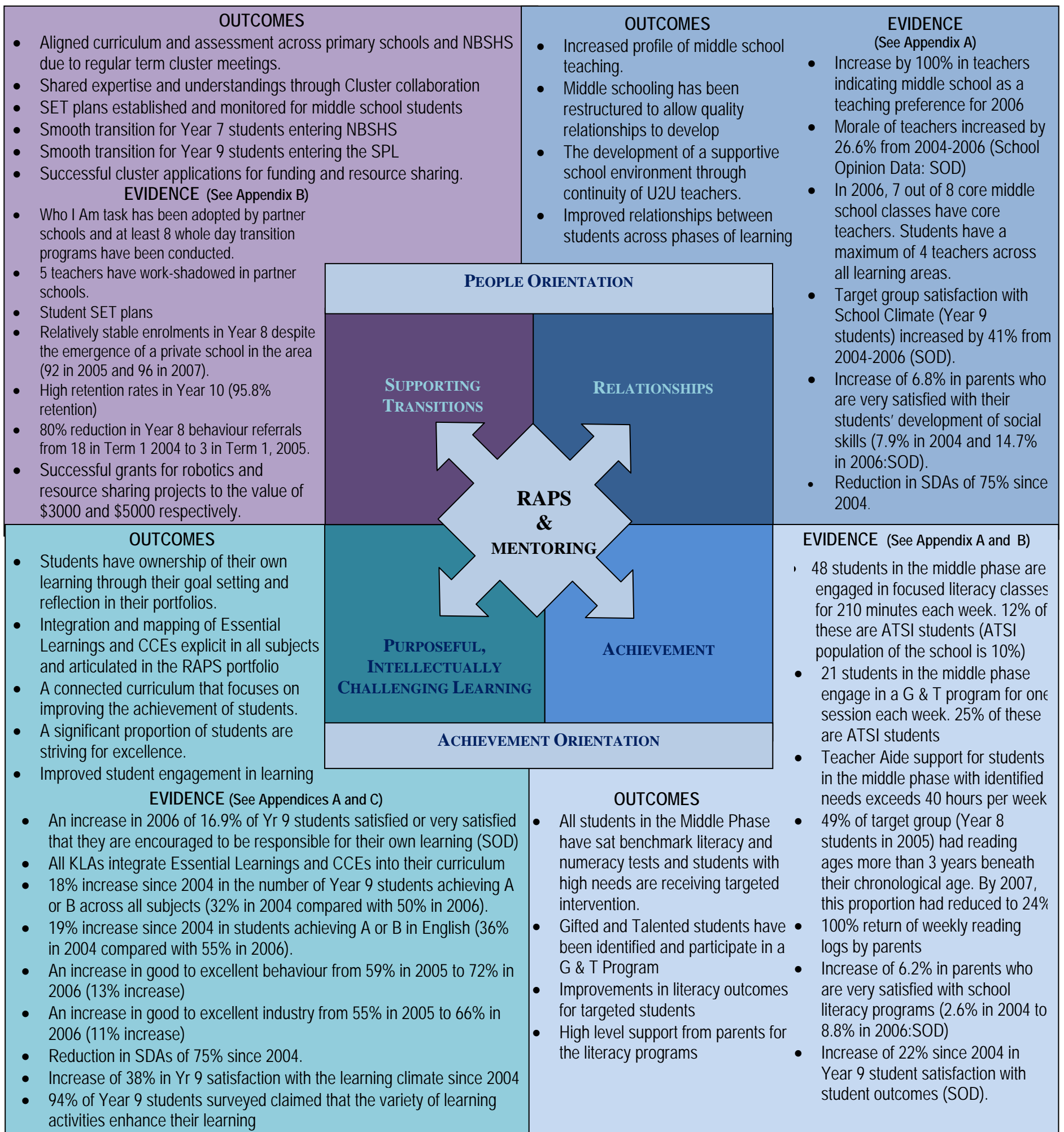
RAPS is based on sound educational philosophy that combines key elements of an effective middle school model including achievement, engagement, relationships and transitions. This model is underpinned by a comprehensive developmental mentoring program that nurtures students through the middle phase and prepares them for the senior phase. It embeds and makes explicit Essential Learnings, CCEs, Employability skills and Resilience. Through its organisational structure of interdisciplinary teams and its integrating device of a Portfolio, RAPS delivers a curriculum that is authentic, relevant, integrated and academically challenging. This structure can be transferred to any context to achieve similar success. RAPS is an innovative and sustainable approach to the MPL through its empowerment of both staff and students. Students are explicitly equipped with the skills of life-long learning through an academically challenging and authentic curriculum, the promotion of metacognition and ownership of their learning. They are supported by a team of passionate, committed and willing teachers who have participated in professional development and constantly engage in substantive professional dialogue. RAPS is designed to meet the distinctive and unique needs of middle phase learners by providing emotional, social and academic support, particularly to students identified with high needs.

RAPS – An Innovative Middle Schooling Reform



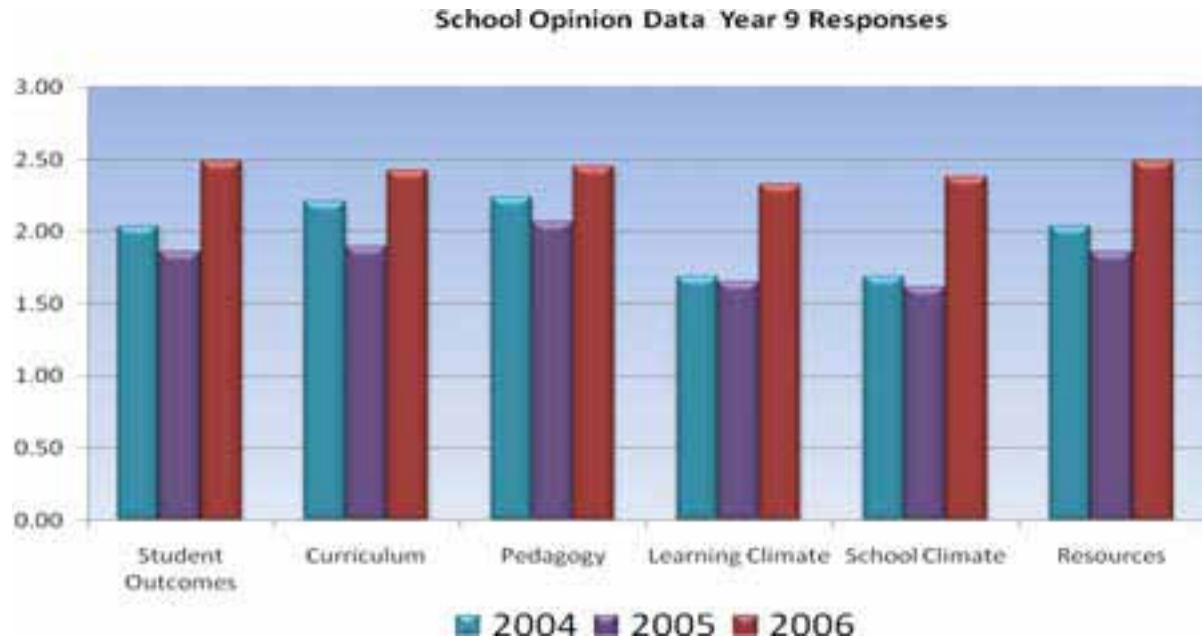
HIGHLIGHTS

- Significant improvement in academic excellence (58% increase in number of "A's" and "B's" attained by students - 2004 compared to 2006)
- Significant improvement in Year 9 student behaviour (22% increase in "Excellent" or "Good" class behaviour – as indicated on teacher reports, 2005 to 2006)
- Marked improvement in the number of middle school students who are happy with Northern Beaches State High School (from 25% in 2004 to 63% in 2006).
- Considerable increase in the number of middle school students who believe that NBSHS is a good school (from 17% in 2004 to 58% in 2006).
- Overall improvement in satisfaction with the school (24% increase in overall satisfaction from 2004-2006).

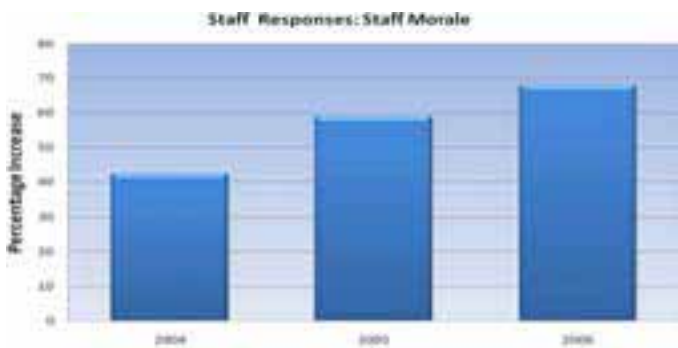


Appendix A: Outcomes

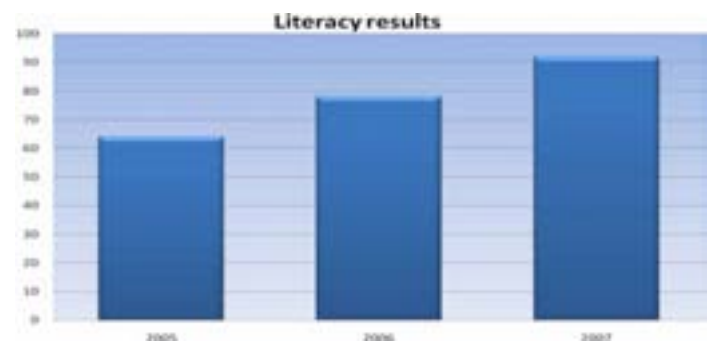
RAPs has enjoyed considerable success at improving the outcomes and experiences of middle school students. The Year 9 data illustrates the outcomes for students after two years in the Northern Beaches RAPS program.



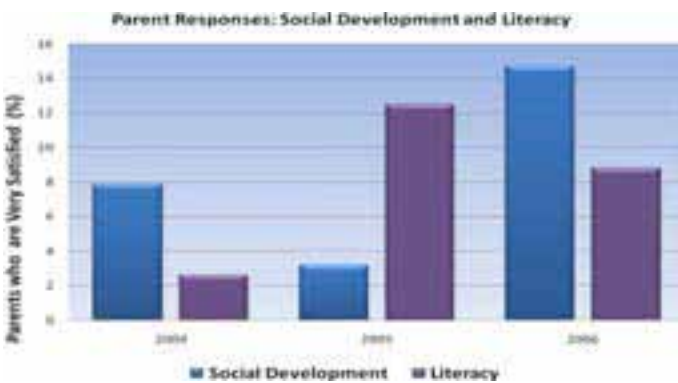
The Year 9 2006 students were the first cohort to experience the full RAPs model at Northern Beaches SHS. Their responses in the School Opinion Data are significantly more positive across all dimensions.



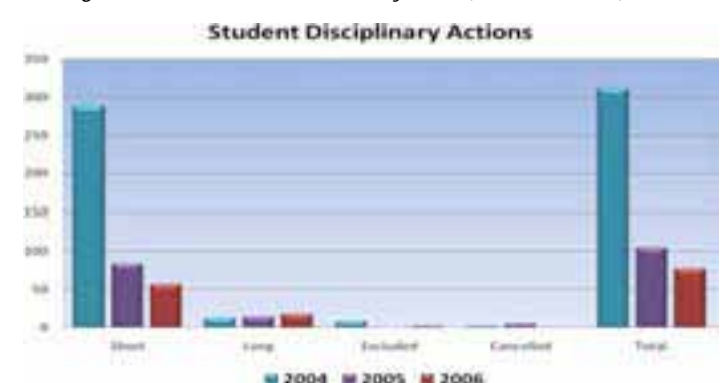
Staff Morale has improved over three years (SOD 2006)



The percentage of Year 9 students who are "reading above their age" has increased over three years. (Schonell Test)



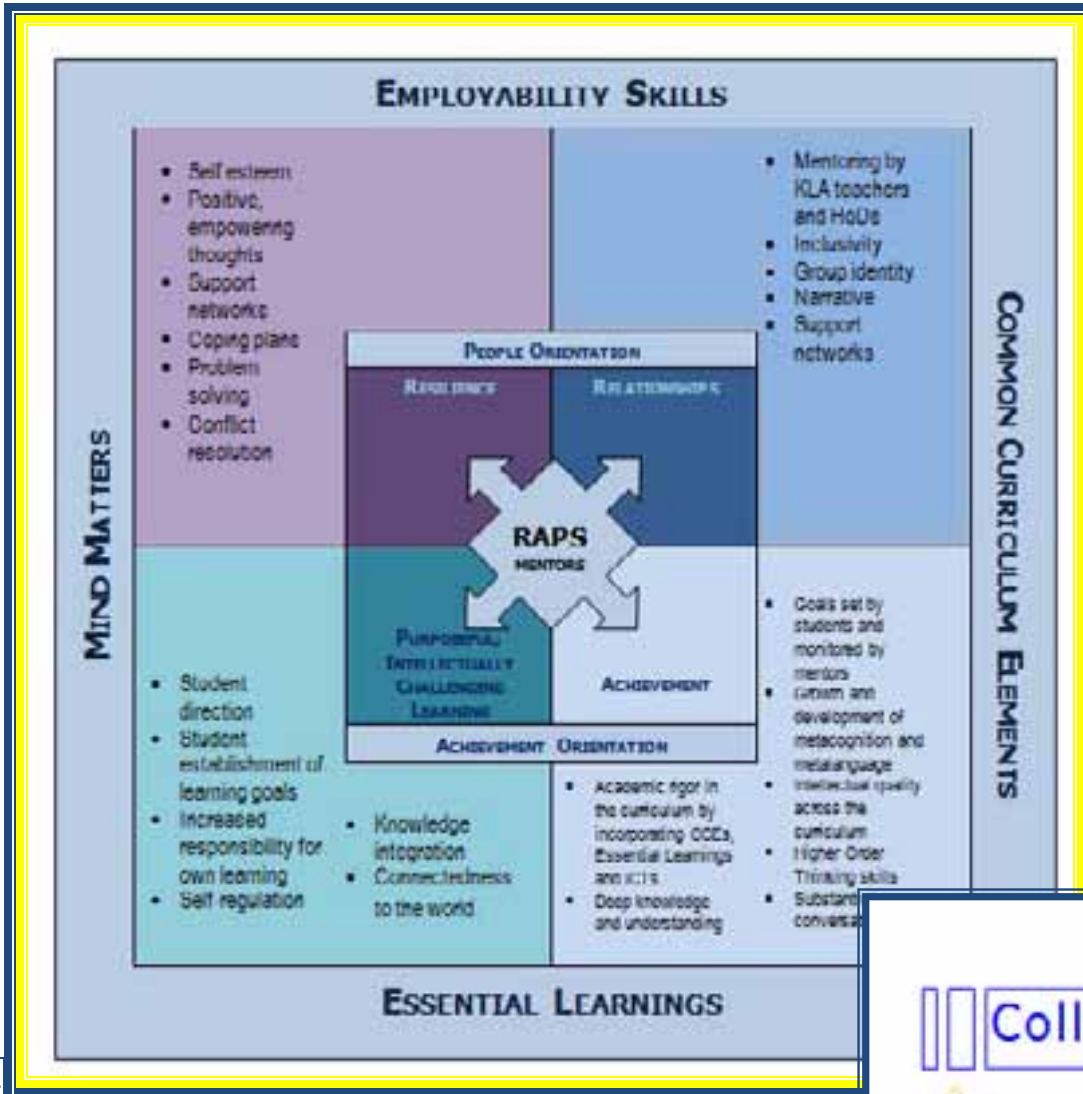
Parents who are Very Satisfied with the Social Development and Literacy of their student, has improved over three years. (SOD 2006)



All categories of Student Disciplinary Actions have decreased over three years. (SMS)

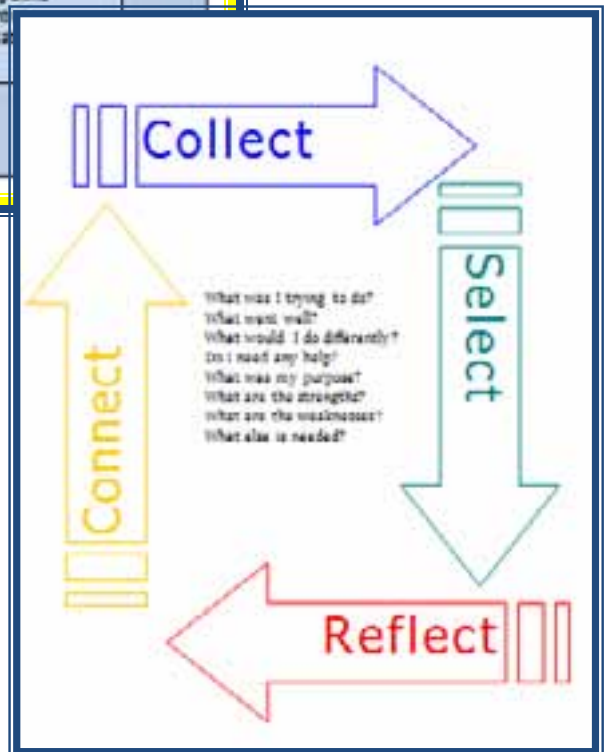
Appendix B: The RAPS Portfolio

All Middle School Students have a RAPS Portfolio. The Portfolios contain descriptive evaluations of their academic and personal growth including observational records, conferencing, performance assessment rubrics. The students map and monitoring their achievement of CCEs and Essential Learnings.



The RAPS Portfolio is an integrating device for a curriculum that is authentic, relevant, integrated and academically challenging. RAPS embeds and makes explicit Essential Learnings, CCE's, Employability Skills and Resilience.

The RAPS Portfolios facilitate student reflection of their learning with the provision of goal setting and deep metacognition.



Literacy	Year 8 Semester 1		Year 8 Semester 2		Year 9		Year 10	
	Result	Goal	Result	Goal	Result	Goal	Result	Goal
Spelling								
Grammar								
Understanding of whole text								
Understanding of language in context								
Style								
Overall result								

Numeracy	Year 8 Semester 1		Year 8 Semester 2		Year 9		Year 10	
	Result	Goal	Result	Goal	Result	Goal	Result	Goal
Number								
Space								
Measurement								
Chance and Data								
Patterns and Algebra								
Overall result								

Year 8 Results	Term 1	
	Result	Goal
English		
SCSE		
Maths		
Science		
Health		
The Arts		
Technology		
ITe		
Literacy		

Year 9 Results	Term 1	
	Result	Goal
English		
SCSE		
Maths		
Science		
Health		
The Arts		
Technology		
ITe		
Literacy		

Student Name _____

Comprehensive guidance and support on the SET planning process begins in Year 8. Middle School students identify their preferred learning styles and interests. With Teacher consultation, students record their literacy, numeracy and Subject results and set goals. By the commencement of Year 10, students are familiar with the SET planning process and are already career orientated. This provides a successful transition into the SPL.



SENIOR EDUCATION & TRAINING PLAN

Name: _____ Access: _____ D.O.B: _____

Mentor: _____ Address: _____ Phone: _____

<input type="checkbox"/> Recommended visit to Guidance Office Date: _____ Concerns: _____	Special Circumstances: <input type="checkbox"/> Ascertained category _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Access to Learning Support <input type="checkbox"/> ATSI <input type="checkbox"/> NESB <input type="checkbox"/> GAT / Accelerated Curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> Living Arrangements
<input type="checkbox"/> Recommended visit to Guidance Office Date: _____ Concerns: _____	

Middle Schooling

Gardner's Multiple Intelligences	Year 8 /40	Year 9 /40	Memlebe Learning Styles	Year 8 /20	Year 9 /20
Intrapersonal			Visual		
Naturalistic			Aural		
Picture/Spatial			Verbal		
Body/Kinesthetic			Physical		
Verbal/Linguistic			Logical		
Logical/Mathematical			Social		
Interpersonal			Solitary		
Musical/Rhythmic					
My strengths are:			My strengths are:		
I need to develop:			I need to develop:		

INTEREST INVENTORY

The following are areas I might be interested in as a career.

Common Curriculum Elements, CCEs, are made explicit throughout the Middle School Curriculum. Students reflect on their understanding of the CCEs in their subjects and record this in their RAPS Portfolio

Profile of Common Curriculum Elements across all subjects Term 1 Year 8						
Learning Area	Interpreting the meaning of tables or diagrams or maps or graphs	Summarising /condensing written text	Comparing, contrasting	Perceiving Patterns	Observing systematically	Manipulating, operating, using equipment
English						
SOSE						

Summary of Common Curriculum Elements Covered in Middle School						
YEAR 8						
Term 1	Recognising letters, words and other symbols	Finding Material in an indexed collection	Recording/noting data	Generalising from information	Searching and locating items/information	Compiling results in tabular form
Term 2	Interpreting the meaning of tables or diagrams or maps or graphs	Summarising /condensing written text	Comparing, contrasting	Perceiving Patterns	Observing systematically	Manipulating, operating, using equipment
Term 3	Interpreting the meaning of words or other symbols	Compiling lists, statistics	Substituting in formulae	Classifying	Visualising	Sketching, drawing
Term 4	Recalling, remembering	Interpreting the meaning of	Using correct spelling,	Calculating with or without calculator	Setting out, presenting,	Identifying shapes in two and three

One Employability Skill is focused on each term during Middle School. Employability Skills are embedded in the Middle School Curriculum and form part of the learning in U2U classes.

Profile of Employability Skills across all Subjects								
Employability Skill	Team Work	Communication	Technology	Initiative and Enterprise	Learning	Self Management	Planning and Organising	Problem Solving
Learning Area	Year 8				Year 9			
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
English								

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS FRAMEWORK				U2U Class	
Personal Attributes that contribute to overall employability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loyalty Commitment Honesty and Integrity Enthusiasm Reliability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Presentation Common sense Positive self-esteem A sense of humour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A balanced attitude to work and leisure An ability to deal with pressure Initiative Adaptability 		
Self	Standard: (Students will be able to independently identify and prioritise the mix and priority of these facets as will vary from job to job)				
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and understanding Speaking clearly and directly Writing to the needs of the audience Negotiating responsively Reading independently Empathising Speaking and writing in languages other than English Using numeracy Understanding the needs of internal and external customers Persuading effectively Establishing and using networks Being assertive Sharing information 	that contributes to productive and harmonious relations across employees and customers external customers	Planning and organizing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing time and priorities - setting time limits, co-ordinating tasks for self and with others Being resourceful Taking initiative and making decisions Adapting resource allocations to cope with contingencies Establishing clear project goals and deliverables Allocating people and other resources to tasks Planning the use of resources including time management Participates in continuous improvement and planning processes Developing a vision and a proactive plan to accompany it Predicting - weighing up risk, evaluate alternatives and apply evaluation criteria Collecting, analysing and organising information Understanding basic business systems and their relationships 	
Team work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working across different ages and respective of gender, race, religion or political persuasion Working as an individual and as a member of a team Knowing how to define a role as part of the team 		Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having a range of basic IT skills Applying IT as a management tool Using IT to organise data 	

Students have continuity of learning by mapping Essential Learnings and CCEs from Years 7-9. Students map and monitor their achievement of CCEs and Essential Learnings in their RAPS portfolio.

MATHS Year 8 Term 2 2007		
<u>Overview of Unit</u>		
<p>The focus of this term is to continue to build mathematical meaning and thinking over a wide variety of contexts through mental computation strategies, explorations of mathematical language and hands on learning experiences, with opportunities for students to work in pairs, groups and individually. Some elements of Mathematics and Science will be integrated together to enhance students numeracy skills.</p>		
<u>Essential Learnings</u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rates represent comparative relationships between unlike quantities. • Ratios represent comparative relationships between like quantities. • Formulae are used to develop efficient ways to quantify attributes. • Experimental and theoretical probabilities are used to make judgments about the probability of outcomes of an event. • Use mathematical language logically to explain, debate and evaluate thinking and reasoning. 		
<u>Foci</u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rates, ratios and direct proportion • Length, area and volume 		

Essential Learnings	Evidence 1	Evidence 2
	Provide the codes of assessment tasks that demonstrate essential learnings or a direct link to them.	
Rates represent comparative relationships between unlike quantities.		
Ratios represent comparative relationships between like quantities.		

[RAPS incorporates a highly structured literacy and numeracy intervention program whereby students with high literacy and/or numeracy needs are identified. Students are tested for literacy and numeracy at the beginning and end of both Years 8 and 9. Students with identified needs are provided support through:

- Specialised literacy classes in both Years 8 and 9 facilitated by two highly qualified teachers.
- Teacher aide support in the majority of their remaining classes

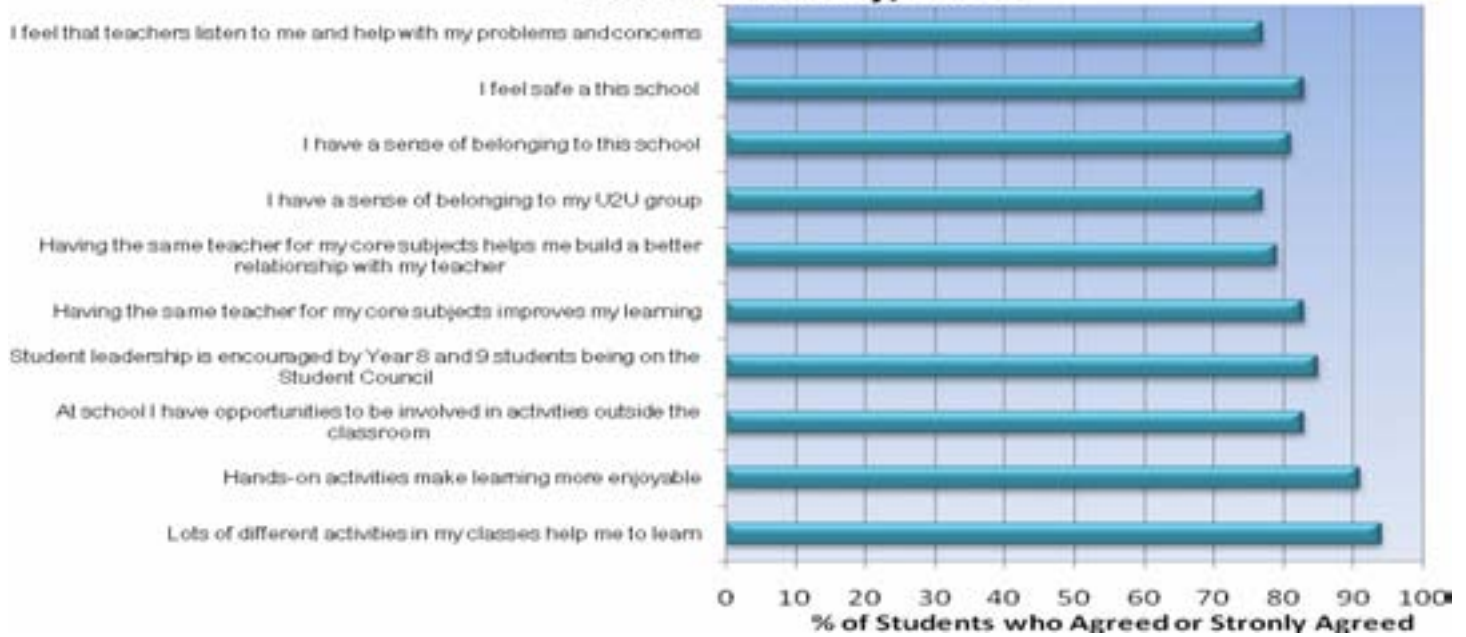
As well as identifying those students with high literacy needs, the testing process identifies students who are gifted and talented. The school runs a program for Gifted and Talented students in the middle phase which offers a range of extension and extra-curricular activities

FAMILY NAME	GIVEN NAME	MATHS	Number /10	Space/8	M'ment /8	C&D /7	P&A /8	Total /41	Percentile
Bainbridge	Jayden	9D	1	2	3	3	1	10	24
Burch	Connor	9D	6	4	2	3	5	20	49
Carruthers	Luis	9B	2	5	3	2	0	12	29
Carty	Jennifer	9B	0	4	1	3	2	10	24
Ethan Bacon	Ethan	9D	2	2	1	2	1	10	24
Ferns									
Frase									
Fry									
Grant									

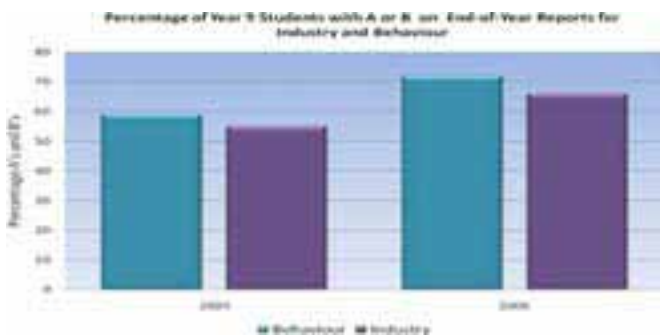
STUDENT INFORMATION						54	54	56	41	49	Raw	Stand	%	
Yr	ENC	Gdr	Family Name	Preferred Name	Date of Birth	A.TI	Spelling	Grammar	Comprehens	Vocabulary	Style	Score	Score	Rank
1	08	D	F	AITCHESON	AIMEE	28-Sep-94	31.3	0.0	28.6	22.2	20.0	12.0	79.0	8.0
2	08	D	F	AITCHESON	CHANTELLE	28-Sep-94	37.5	42.9	21.4	33.3	40.0	20.0	87.0	20.0
3	08	C	F	ALBERT	AMANDA	11-Apr-94	31.3	14.3	42.9	22.2	0.0	15.0	80.0	9.0
1	8	A	M	BARANY	JAKE	3-Sep-93	82.5	50	57.1	55.6	80	34	97	42
2	08	B	M	BEHRENDORFF	DAVID	31-Jan-94	87.5	50.0	28.6	55.6	40.0	32.0	96.0	40.0
3	08	D	M	BENNET	ZACHARY	14-Dec-94	31.3	28.6	42.9	0.0	0.0	15.0	83.0	13.0
4	08	B	M	BILLING	MITCHELL	30-Sep-93	75.0	71.4	50.0	77.8	100.0	41.0	106.0	66.0
2	8	A	F	BRENDECKE	SHARNA	14-Nov-94	87.5	82.9	84.3	66.7	100	47	122	93
3	08	C	M	BRUCE	ZAC	23-Oct-94	62.5	21.4	42.9	0.0	0.0	19.0	83.0	13.0

Appendix C: Year 9 Students

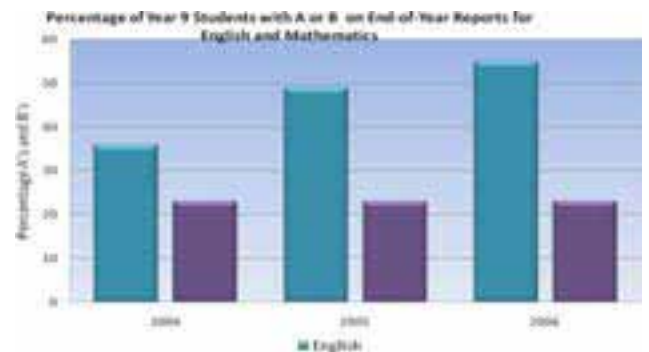
Year 9 Survey, 2007



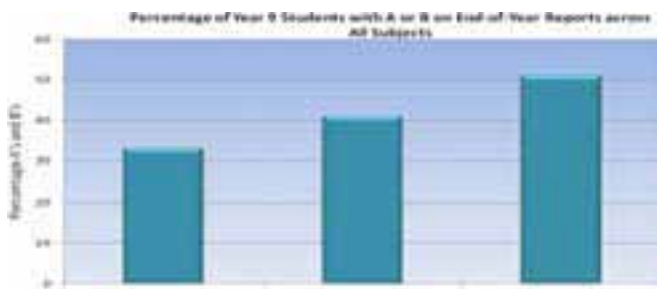
Year 9 Students indicate agreement to the significant objectives of the RAPS program.



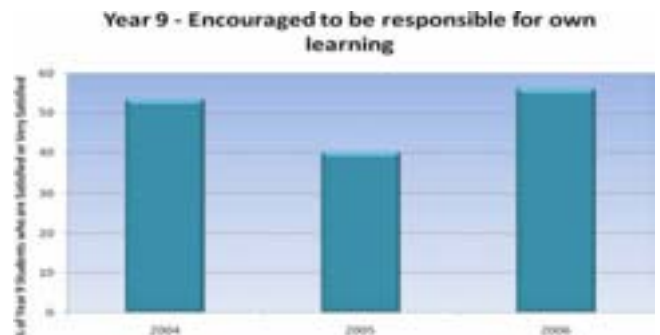
Middle School Teachers have reported an improvement in both the Behaviour and Industry of Year 9 students.



Year 9 English results have improved over three years.



Year 9 students have shown an improvement in their results across all subjects,



Year 9 Students have taken more responsibility for their own learning over three years.

Appendix D: Letters of Support



17/4/07

To the Showcase Committee

Joanna Stewart has led the development of Middle Schooling at Northern Beaches State High School since 2003 when the school leadership team recognized serious issues with disengagement of students, poor student - student and student - staff relationships and poor student learning outcomes. Under Ms Stewart's leadership the school embarked on a trial of middle schooling principles essentially focusing on building positive and meaningful relationships between students and their teachers. Since then the successful trial has extended to all year 8 and 9 classes and also includes strong links with our cluster partner schools extending the Northern Beaches Middle school from year 6 to year 9. This model strongly reflects and addresses the MPL Action plan.

Since the implementation of the full middle school model at Northern Beaches State High School in 2005 there have been dramatic improvements in student outcomes in year 8 and 9. These have included dramatic improvements in student engagement, behaviour, and achievement. These improvements are evidenced in Middle School reporting data, attendance data, School Opinion data (Year 9 2006).

At the commencement of 2007 the leadership team named the various components of the Middle School model, "Relationships, Achievement, Purposeful learning, and Supporting transitions" (RAPS), this now also encompasses a structured student portfolio model to further enhance the Middle Phase of Learning goals as stated in ETRF.

RAPS (and the Northern Beaches Middle School) is now deeply embedded and accepted in our school culture and is catering for and benefiting all students as they transition from year 7 to year 8 and through the year 8 and 9 middle school at Northern Beaches State High School. I attest to the accuracy of this application. I endorse and fully support this application; this program and the team of teachers involved in its implementation are deserving of recognition.

Yours sincerely

David Morris

David Morris
Principal



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NORTHERN BEACHES
STATE HIGH SCHOOL
P & C Association

ABN: 72 279 508 657



President: Concetta MacGregor
Secretary:
Treasurer: Joy Langford

Ref: GM3.CMG003

19 April 2007

Showcase Judging Panel 2007

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is a letter of support for the RAPS program. Since 2004 we have seen a marked improvement in the socialisation of children into the high school environment. The way this has impacted on our community is that the children have had a much smoother transition from one teacher at primary school to only four teachers at high school. This has enabled the students to forge real lasting relationships with the teachers and the teachers have an opportunity to follow the progress of students and provide consistent long term mentoring. This program has also given students the capacity to work through relationship difficulties and develop resilience.

The students have also shown a deeper level of knowledge as the learning seems to flow through subjects seamlessly, so learning is reinforced in a number of contexts. Because students with literacy needs are targeted early, we are seeing an improvement in student performance and a narrowing of the gap between low and high achieving students. But where this outcome really impacts is the raised level of self-esteem in students which has had amazing results. Students are having better relationships with each other and are happier which makes the whole school environment a better place to be.

The P & C fully supports this showcase submission for RAPS and attest to its accuracy.

Yours sincerely

Concetta MacGregor

CONCETTA Mac GREGOR
Hon. PRESIDENT

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Northern Beaches SHS

Showcase Submission 2007: RAPS



Education Queensland

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Principal – Allison Greenaway

April 2007



Showcase 2007 Letter of support

To panel members of the Showcase 2007.

As a representative of the Northern Beaches Corridor cluster, I hereby forward my letter of support for the Northern Beaches Showcase Submission for Middle School Reform. In liaison with Northern Beaches State High School, Bohlevale State School, Bluewater State School and ourselves at Rollingstone State School, our cluster has created and maintained positive and fundamental partnerships and interrelationships to enhance teaching and learning across, and through all middle phase of schooling agenda. Professional dialogue and learning occurs at student, staff, administrative and community levels and as a cluster we embrace and share in the successes of these relationships.

Participation in the Northern Beaches transition program has resulted in our students smoothly crossing into secondary school with ease. Their experiences of working with teachers at any of the Primary schools, or the High School, forge professional and meaningful relationships as students know their teachers in familiar settings.

The Northern Beaches Transition Program allows opportunities for the alignment of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment. Units across the key junctures are planned by all staff and Moderation provides continuity across the curriculum. The Transition program is facilitated by Northern Beaches State High School and the feeder schools of Bohlevale, Bluewater and Rollingstone.

We have been very happy with regular transition days as we engage students in meaningful and authentic learning experiences and prepare them for their transition into secondary school. Rollingstone State School members have had considerable input into the transition program along with other schools and we have noticed a considerable improvement in the way Northern Beaches State High School critically reviews and improves the middle school reform.

Please contact me on the above address for any other information.

Allison Greenaway

Mrs A Greenaway.
Principal
Rollingstone State School



Tuesday, 19 June 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

Bluewater S.S. is a medium sized primary school located in the Northern Beaches geographic area. For the past number of years our school has been actively involved in a cooperative middle phase of learning initiative led by Northern Beaches SHS.

From our perspective, the Middle Phase program offers valuable opportunities for our Year 7 students to participate in meaningful and worthwhile transition activities. Unlike previous one-off middle phase transition visits that I have experience, the program offered by Northern Beaches SHS, is designed around melding the Year 7 and 8 curriculums into purposeful learning opportunities for our students which are spanned across the year. The program provides students with a progressive and smooth integration into their future school environment.

The students visit NBSHS over a period of three school terms and during this time the NBSHS staff work to create individual student profiles. These profiles allow our students an opportunity to express information about themselves as learners and contribute to positive experiences for them in year 8. The individual profiles also allow the NBSHS staff to gain a personal and in-depth knowledge of our students.

The NBSHS Middle Phase transition program is spoken highly of with our students, parents and staff members. It has been a very successful program in ensuring a quality transition from primary school to high school and has contributed to the excellent results that our past students have achieved.

Yours sincerely,

Glenn Forbes

Glenn Forbes
Principal
Bluewater S.S.



BOHLEVALE STATE SCHOOL

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DEP. PRINCIPAL: Mrs. D. Statham
REGISTRAR: Mrs. S. Dilger

6 June 2007

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Bohlevale State Primary School fully supports the Middle Years of Schooling program implemented by Northern Beaches State High School. The partnership between our school and the high school has developed over a period of three years (2005-2007) and has included the following features:

- 1. Regular meetings between Middle Years high school staff and year 7 teaching staff and administrators to discuss and plan for the transition of students to the high school*
- 2. On-site visits to the high school by all year 7 students and their teachers commencing in term 2 each year and running through terms 3 and 4*
- 3. Matching the on-site high school programs to the learning needs of year 7 students to support/extend/enrich unit work being done in our school e.g. an Arts focus, a Science focus, Technology focus*
- 4. Ensuring that year 7 students are introduced to the full high school experience over a well planned and staged period of time, as opposed to a single visit towards the end of a school year. Building and on-going transition to high school through multiple visits over the school year, rather than a single orientation visit*
- 5. High school teaching staff have visited our year 7 primary school classrooms on a regular basis to team/co-teach content in a variety of Key Learning Areas to students e.g. debating, Science, public speaking*

The program is embedded in our practise as a school and is a feature of annual planning between our school and the high school. The program is flexible enough to cater for the needs of different cohorts of year 7 students on an annual basis and is co-planned to cater for the range of year 7 students in a group which averages 90 students.

I commend the program to you as most worthwhile, highly valued and a feature of our year 7 school year at Bohlevale State Primary School.

Frank Greene

Frank Greene
Principal