Introduction

The Annual Report for 2018 is provided to the community of Awabakal 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.

Peter Jones
Principal

School contact details

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School background

School vision statement

Environmental and Zoo Education Centres NSW (EZEC)

Leading environmental learning to empower learners for a sustainable future.

At Awabakal Environmental Education Centre we believe in the importance of students engaging with the environment as part of a life–long learning process. Our guiding principles are Discover, Investigate, and Learn. We endeavour to build student knowledge and skills about the environment through investigation in the field in order to equip them to become active and confident citizens who are ready to embrace a more sustainable world.

School context

Environmental and Zoo Education Centres (EZEC)

The 25 NSW DoE Environmental and Zoo Education Centres (EZEC's) are leaders in environmental and sustainability education.

Our Centres provide authentic, curriculum–based fieldwork learning experiences for exploring, investigating, understanding and connecting with the natural and made environments.

Our programs provide opportunities to understand concepts and systems and develop values that empower learners to become environmentally sustainable citizens.

By building strong partnerships and developing teacher capacity, Centres enable schools to integrate sustainability education into all aspects of school operations including curriculum, teaching and learning, physical surroundings and relationships with the local community.

Awabakal Environmental Education Centre (established 1976) located at Dudley NSW, is one of the 25 Environmental Education Centres and Zoo Education Centres supported by the NSW Department of Education (DoE). Although located in the Hunter we are a state wide resource with schools benefitting from the provision of the services provided from locations across NSW. Students from all three school sectors are accommodated.

Visiting students benefit from access to a range of ecosystems and high quality educational programs directly linked the NSW Curriculum. The focus is on learning through practical fieldwork experiences in order to build a depth of understanding of various curriculum areas.

Support for local school staff is also an important function central to Awabakal Environmental Education Centre. Professional learning for school staff and networking opportunities as well as in–school support and incursions all form part of the overall focus on building understanding and awareness of environmental sustainability for teachers and students.

Awabakal EEC does not have enrolled students. Community partners include local teachers and schools, local groups and organisations such as environmental groups, local council, Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, National Parks and Wildlife Service along with interested individuals. These groups play an important role in delivery of environmental education services.

Self-assessment and school achievement

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

This section of the Annual Report outlines the findings from self–assessment using the School Excellence Framework, school achievements and the next steps to be pursued.

This year, our school undertook self–assessment using 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.

This year, staff at Awabakal Environmental Education Centre have discussed the School Excellence Framework and its implications for informing, monitoring and validating our journey of excellence. Staff reflected on the progress being made across each school based on expectations identified in the framework. This provides an important overview to
ensure our improvement efforts align with these high level expectations.

In the domain of Learning, our efforts have primarily been focussed on Curriculum and Learning Culture. Our staff have worked very hard to ensure that our programs are compliant with curriculum developments and that staff have received professional development so they are confident to deliver high quality programs every day. Feedback and evaluation from visiting teachers has been extremely positive regarding the program changes which followed a consultation process with many teachers from our local schools. Staff have actively driven the expectation of productive learning and a learning culture for all students visiting our school each day. The result of this cultural change has been evident in the engagement of visiting students in learning and the value placed on our programs by visiting teachers. A focus on program evaluation, improvement and development throughout the year by all staff has enabled the production of further high quality fieldwork experiences which are engaging for students and embed quality educational outcomes. Continuous program evaluation, improvement and improvement is now part of our core business.

In the domain of Teaching, staff have continued to demonstrate a commitment to collaborative practice, particularly when striving to develop quality teaching and learning programs along with quality teaching pedagogies. Staff working together in cooperative teams has been a key feature of this process. Staff have engaged with team teaching opportunities to observe, reflect and improve on their own teaching practice. Quality teaching pedagogy is a key element at our school as it ensures high levels of student engagement and educational achievement. EEC teachers are also modelling teaching best practice on a daily basis for visiting teaching staff.

In the domain of Leading, our priority remains the promotion of environmental education by developing and providing opportunities for student leadership and modelling best practice for our local teachers. Staff have continued to evaluate, refine and develop new opportunities for local schools to embrace environmental education and learning. Local students and teachers are supported in their leadership journey by committed staff at our schools. Throughout 2018, refinement of our systems and structures has continued to enable a superior and more efficient way of conducting our business. The rollout of the SAP system has provide the opportune time to revisit and rethink systems and processes and identify where improvements can be made.

Our self-assessment process will assist the school to refine our school plan, leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

For more information about the School Excellence Framework:
Strategic Direction 1

Empower Learners

Purpose

To develop students environmental knowledge, skills, values and attitudes in creating environmentally literate citizens. This is accomplished through providing engaging and stimulating learning environments and by developing the capacity of staff as empowered learners, teachers and leaders to think and communicate creatively, collaboratively and critically to achieve positive environmental impact.

Overall summary of progress

Significant progress has been made in this strategic direction during 2018. The fast pace of curriculum change and implementation throughout NSW has ensured a focus on this area for Awabakal Environmental Education Centre. Teaching and learning programs from K–12 have been reviewed and evaluated with either adjustments made or totally new programs developed. In each case the aim was to ensure that all programs were aligned to NSW curriculum outcomes, particularly in the focus area of Science and Technology. New sites for conducting fieldwork were discussed and programs will be developed for these locations. All teaching and learning programs now focus on student engagement through learning and the development of global citizens. Throughout 2018, staff have engaged in and delivered professional learning to keep themselves and local teachers abreast of curriculum changes and educational developments.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)</th>
<th>Funds Expended (Resources)</th>
<th>Progress achieved this year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase the number of students engaged in environmental education and leadership programs run by Awabakal EEC from 2017 baseline data.</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>The number of students engaged in environmental education programs throughout 2018 has increased significantly on 2017 data. This has occurred due mainly to new and improved program offerings and opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the variety of environmental education learning experiences for students by developing further programs at various locations.</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>The variety of environmental education learning experiences and programs available has changed throughout 2018 due mainly to curriculum change. New locations will be added in 2019.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next Steps

Further curriculum changes are still occurring prompting the need to continue the teaching and learning program evaluation, review and development process. Associated with each new program development is the need to professionally develop staff (including casual staff) so that they are confident in delivery and deliver quality educational opportunities. The need to investigate and implement programs at new locations to conduct fieldwork with students continues following requests from visiting teachers and the evolving curriculum. Developing new learning and leadership opportunities for students will also be a focus in 2019.
Strategic Direction 2
Strengthen Partnerships

Purpose
To extend and strengthen partnerships with our networks and communities through effective communication and a culture of collaboration. The impact of these relationships drives the provision of authentic, relevant and unique experiences, which enable students to be confident and creative environmental citizens.

Overall summary of progress
During 2018, a focus on strengthening partnerships has been apparent. Staff have evaluated current partnerships and the benefits of these to our school. New partnerships were discussed and staff actively sought to engage with local agencies and groups. A particular areas of success is our partnership with local AECG groups and other Aboriginal organisations. Our school is now seen as pivotal for the delivery of Aboriginal education thanks to the ties developed with AECG. Our partnership with the EZEC community of schools continues to grow in various ways. During 2018, we have worked closely to build ties and relations among the teaching and non–teaching staff. An EEC School Administration Manager's conference was hosted by us this year with great success to provide PL to non–teaching staff and develop collaborative relationships. Teaching staff across the EZEC community have continued working collaboratively on curriculum PL and organisational matters to the benefit of all.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

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<th>Funds Expended (Resources)</th>
<th>Progress achieved this year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased participation and engagement by all Awabakal EEC staff and local teachers.</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>Local teachers have been increasingly engaged with Awabakal EEC via professional learning, network events and support opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter area school staff and those in our partner Environmental Education Centres are engaged and benefitting from learning and network opportunities.</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>Awabakal EEC staff have engaged in and benefitted from collaboration and network events and opportunities. This has led to capacity building for all staff involved.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next Steps
Our next steps will be to continue seeking effective and relevant partnerships which enable us to develop and deliver quality educational opportunities for students. EZEC staff will seek to build upon the gains made and strengthen this mutually beneficial partnership further. Our local teachers and students will be involved and benefit from the partnerships we develop.
**Student information**

There are no enrolled students at Awabakal Environmental Education Centre.

**Workforce information**

*Full Time Equivalent*

There are no permanent Aboriginal staff members at Awabakal Environmental Education Centre. One casual teacher identifies as Aboriginal.

**Teacher qualifications**

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

**Teacher qualifications**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate degree or diploma</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate degree</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Professional learning and teacher accreditation**

During 2018, staff participated in professional learning in the following areas:

- curriculum
- quality teaching
- ICT
- Aboriginal education
- sustainability education
- financial and management systems
- work, health and safety

All teaching staff are now deemed as proficient.

**Financial information**

**Financial summary**

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018.

Awabakal Environmental Education Centre does not receive any school funding or SBAR. Funds are raised via excursion charges on visiting schools. Funds from Wetlands Environmental Education Centre are also used to support the day to day expenses of Awabakal Environmental Education Centre such as staff costs, utilities, consumables and maintenance.

A financial statement cannot be attached as there is no funding received for this school. All funds raised via excursion payments are managed by Wetlands Environmental Education Centre.

**Financial summary equity funding**

The equity funding data is the main component of the 'Appropriation' section of the financial summary above.

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

A full copy of the school's financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent and/or community groups. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

**Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction**

Each visiting school teacher at Awabakal Environmental Education Centre is asked to complete an evaluation of the program they participated in. These evaluations provide feedback on the booking process, relevance of activities to the curriculum and program delivery by EEC staff. This information is used by Awabakal Environmental Education Centre staff to evaluate, modify and improve teaching and learning programs.

A **Net Promotor Score** in the evaluation is used to gauge teacher and student satisfaction with the educational programs. The New Promotor Score specifically asks how likely they are to recommend this program to a colleague.

The total Net Promotor Score in 2018 for Awabakal Environmental Education Centre was 89%

PROMOTERS 59
PASSIVE 7
DETRACTORS 0

**Policy requirements**

**Aboriginal education**

Awabakal Environmental Education Centre does not have enrolled students and therefore does not receive Aboriginal equity funding.

All Awabakal Environmental Education Centre school programs embed Aboriginal perspectives and Aboriginal community members are consulted where possible on program development and delivery.

**Multicultural and anti-racism education**
Culturally inclusive classroom and school practices are embedded in teaching and learning programs at Awabakal Environmental Education Centre. A trained Anti–Racism Contact Officer is on staff.

**Other school programs**

**Hunter Schools Environmental Network (HSEN)**

This group, facilitated by Awabakal Environmental Education Centre, is a support network for local teachers, other school staff, and interested community partners. Meetings are held once per term after school. Teachers discuss matters relevant to Environmental Education in schools by sharing ideas and plans. Guest speakers are at times included to allow discussion of topics of interest. During 2018, meetings were held at Awabakal Environmental Education Centre, Wetlands Environmental Education Centre and other local schools. Those attending the meetings are interested, engaged and keen to share.

**ClimateCam**

ClimateCam is a well–established program supporting local schools in developing rich, environmental practices within their school. Participating schools receive a ClimateCam plaque to recognise their achievements. As each milestone is achieved, the school is recognised with a ClimateCam star. During 2018 EEC staff supported ClimateCam schools and provided training days for teachers and students along with in–school support. Five new schools joined ClimateCam in 2018.

**Planet Savers**

Planet Savers once again ran in Term 2, 2018. Approximately 160 Stage 2 and 3 students attended and participated in a series of workshops on environmental sustainability to celebrate World Environment Day. These workshops were presented by Awabakal Environmental Education Centre and Wetlands Environmental Education Centre teaching staff, local environmental education experts and students from Callaghan College Waratah Technology Campus. This was the final year for Planet Savers with a new student learning and leadership program to be rolled out in 2019.

**Incursions and In–school support**

Awabakal Environmental Education Centre staff have continued to provide support for schools during 2018. Support has been provided to schools when conducting environmental audits, holding environmental events such as Green Days, meeting curriculum needs around the cross curriculum area of sustainability and to initiate student leadership opportunities for students and teachers. Schools have also taken advantage of EEC staff visiting their school and conducting educational programs for students with our Energy Trailer. EEC teachers have also held professional learning events to assist teachers develop teaching and learning programs in Geography and Science. Awabakal Environmental Education Centre has supported and