


2008 Annual Report to the  
School Community

# Strathmore North Primary School



**Mission Statement**  
To support the social, emotional and academic growth of all Strathmore North students, so that they are able to:  
make informed, responsible choices throughout their lives  
and make meaningful contributions to the community.

**Vision Statements**  
*Our Students*  
Engaged, resilient students who embrace learning.  
*Our Curriculum*  
An innovative curriculum, that promotes self directed and independent learning for all.  
*Our Staff*  
A positive, professional staff committed to the challenges of teaching and learning.  
*Our Environment*  
A safe and stimulating environment, where all students and staff have the opportunity to learn and develop to the best of their ability.  
*Our School Community*  
A valued and continually developing partnership between home, school and the local community.

LEARNING AND GROWING TOGETHER

## School Overview

Strathmore North Primary is situated along the Moonee Ponds creek adjacent to the Essendon Airport. Enrolments are mainly drawn from Essendon, Airport West, Strathmore, Strathmore Heights, Oak Park and Pascoe Vale.

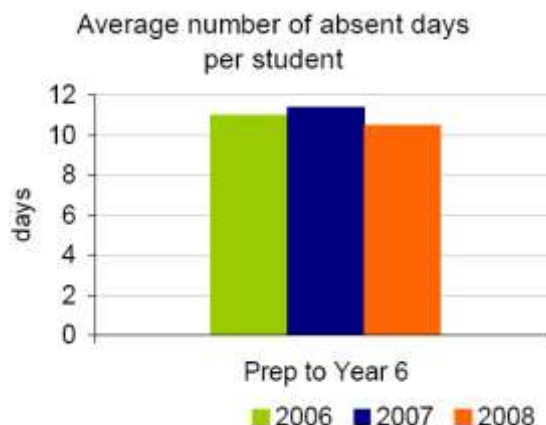
Our 14 grades are organised into 4 professional learning teams. In 2008 the school had 24 staff. Our P-2 classes are straight classes and the remaining composite groupings structured around the Victorian Essential Learning Levels. In 2008 specialist classes included Reading Recovery, Physical Education, Japanese, Art and ICT.

The school goals and initiatives for 2008 included Implementing the George Booker Maths Program P-6, Improving Listening and Speaking and Writing Domains, improving our teaching pedagogy and Inquiry Based Curriculum.

To support and enrich our school programs we offered:

- Soundhouse Music – keyboard, singing and performance, introductory music and Guitar.
- Camps 3-6
- Swimming P-2
- You Can Do It
- Life Education/Drug Education
- Interschool sports/Sports programs
- Perceptual Motor Program
- Strong Kinder – Prep Transition

**Student enrolments** – During 2008 the student enrolments peaked at 356. In Prep to 6 more boys enrolled than girls. We had 15 late enrolments which increased our class size to much larger than normal. Prep classes remained at 2 groups. Because of our enrolment ceiling numbers were only accepted from within the neighbourhood zone, unless they were a sibling.

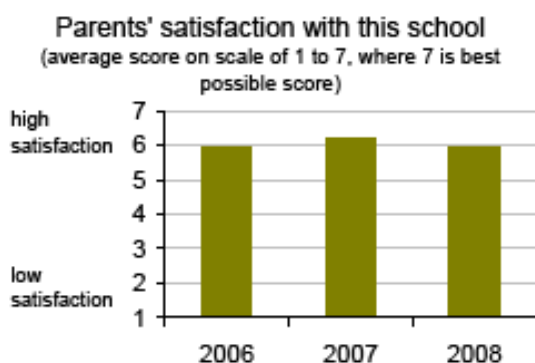


Parent Satisfaction – Each year the survey is implemented with a different parent cohort. The school maintained a high level of parent satisfaction in 2008 in the majority of variables the general parent satisfaction variable is considerably above the state.

There has been a marginal decline in the 2008 sample parent perceptions of student motivation, school connectedness and what the school offers as extra curricula activities. These results correlate with the year 5/6 student attitude data.

The school has targeted improving student engagement in 2008. The average score for parent satisfaction was 5 to 6 on a 7 point scale.

The strongest variables were general satisfaction, stimulating learning, teacher morale and approachability.



### Commonwealth Requirements

- **Teacher Satisfaction** – The school trend line has improved in every indicator from 2006 to 2008. The school was generating at or above the state mean in the staff satisfaction survey in 13 of the 20 variables.

With the introduction of many new DEECD initiatives our staff implemented many new changes. Although there has been significant improvement in these results, we still have some challenges ahead in improving individual morale.

- **Teacher Absence** – Absences were higher in 2008 than the previous year with several staff members who had long term illnesses. The DEECD absence data and state mean will not be released until April.
- **Teacher Retention** – Of the 21 teaching staff in 2007 we retained 86% of these in 2008. Unfortunately, in 2008 we lost 3 staff during the year. When compared to all government schools this was .02 above the state.
- **Teacher participation in professional learning** – All teaching and non-teaching staff have participated in extensive Professional development during the year. This was co-ordinated by Libby Alexandraki. Maria Koulas and Damian Oliver were granted Professional leave which was an AGQT initiative. The school supported our new staff with a comprehensive induction, mentoring and registration support program.

In support of building our leadership capacity, we conducted teacher days and attended Statewide regional leadership programs.

- **Teacher Qualifications** – All teachers in Victorian Government schools are registered with the Victoria Institute of teaching. The requirements for registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching can be found at; [http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/content.asp?Document\\_ID=241](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/content.asp?Document_ID=241).

## Principal's Report

2008 was the first year of our new Strategic Plan. Our team culture, leadership development and data indicated that we achieved so much. I believe we developed stronger instructional pedagogy in our classrooms.

The schools leadership teams included the professional learning team leaders, our two leading teachers, our Principal and our Assistant Principal. They met on a regular basis to manage our day to day organisational arrangements, professional development, participate in leadership development and to deliver the annual implementation plan. My sincere congratulations and thanks to the team for their input and drive.

The teaching and learning team consolidated their understandings of the new Victorian Essential Learning Curriculum. In 2008 for the first time the staff were expected to report on all 16 Domains. The staff moderation days led to more consistent assessment judgements by staff.

Anne Patralakis our Assistant Principal led a most comprehensive program for our special needs students. Her level of commitment in this area is to be commended. Our thanks to our aides for their flexibility, passion and support for our students. The You Can Do It Program, student welfare and individual learning programs co-ordinated by Anne Patralakis have been exemplary in underpinning successful learning.

Parent involvement in 2008 expanded. Our parents made a strong contribution to our classroom programs, extra curriculum activities such as camp, excursions, swimming, uniform, fundraising, buildings and grounds and school council.

Our Out of School Hours team Olanda and Dee continue to provide a stimulating and safe environment for our students.

In conclusion I would like to thank the enthusiastic team of School Councillors for their support in 2008. A special note of thanks to Jodie Knox our School Council President for her guidance, leadership and objectivity in 2008.

My thanks also to Terry Lawless our Senior Education Officer for his professional support for myself and Strathmore North in Terms 1-3 in 2008.

Some of our highlights of the year included:

- Extended Grade 5/6 Leadership
- Review of all ICT/Internet policies
- Introduced Year 5/6 Transition Program
- Installed new Interactive Whiteboard in many rooms
- Successful Community Water Grant implemented (Toilet upgrade/Water savings taps/toilets)
- New school mural opened
- Built the "House Sports Teams" and sports culture
- Successful school concert
- Soundhouse Music Performances in Guitar, Keyboard and Singing
- First Canberra Interstate Tour highly successful
- Successful Green Vouchers \$50,000 tank submission
- Introduced new Year 5/6 Sports shirts to build a sense of pride and 'team'

# School Council President's Report

In presenting this report to you as School Council President I would like to congratulate Jenni Lewis, our school Principal, Anne Patralakis, our Assistant Principal and the wonderful teaching staff for their leadership and commitment to all the students and families at Strathmore North Primary School. It's great to be a part of a strong school community that is so committed to learning and growing together.

The School Council has had the privilege of working alongside the staff to ensure the school continues to provide ongoing quality education and development for each of our students. Our commitment to enhancing learning pedagogy includes providing our students with an inclusive environment. These are the key goals of the School Council.

We have been continually supported by the fantastic sub committees who work tirelessly to ensure that the school enrolment is enhanced. In 2008 we have seen a significant increase in the number of families giving up their weekends to be a part of the school's working bees. These events together with the family nights, bi-annual school concert, Christmas concert, grade 6 graduation and the opening of the mural and grade 6 mosaic trail all demonstrate to our students the commitment their families and the wider community have to the Strathmore North Primary School.

To our finance sub committee, fundraising sub committee and the buildings and grounds sub committee we thank you for all of the time you give up to ensure our school has the facilities needed to enhance student's learning. The Education sub-committee has worked tirelessly in 2008 to review and refine the homework policy, the internet policy and many other policies and procedures. We would also like to acknowledge the continual commitment of Damian Oliver, Libby Alexandraki and Sofie Xinopoulos who teach all day and then find the time to lead the subgroups and attend our council meetings. Your input and leadership is valued and assists in enhancing our school community.

In 2008 our Grade 5 & 6 students had the opportunity to visit Canberra as a part of their learning. This trip was such a huge success that it is planned as part of the school curriculum for future years. As a school Council we valued the presentation given to use by the students and we received a great insight into all the fun (and learning) as well as friendships formed.

In 2009 the Strathmore North School Council is committed to ensuring our school continues to grow. We are also working to ensure our oval and buildings are state of the art to enhance student learning and outcomes and we look forward to working with our community to learn and grow together.

Jodie Knox – School Council President.

# Student Progress & Achievements

## Student Learning

Strathmore North developed specific Student Learning Targets for each year level in all dimensions of English and Mathematics. In comparison to previous years, these targets were measured against previous results for each Year Level at a State and National level rather than against Like School Group.

### In English,

The targets set by the school for 2008 were achieved by all year levels in each discipline area except for the Year 6 cohort, who did not meet our school target but achieved the State mean levels.

### Reading:

The 2008 Early Year's Reading data supports teacher assessment with 93% of Prep students, 96% of Year 1 and 97% of Year 2 reading at or above the target book level for their year level and performing better than students across the state.

88% in Year 4 achieved the expected Reading standard but not the school target.

97% in Year 5 exceeded the expected National and State standard as well as achieving the school target.

86% in Year 6 reached or exceeded the expected standards, passing the previous year of 82%.

### Writing:

91% or more students in Years Prep to 3 reached or exceeded the expected standard in Writing and also met or exceeded the target set by the school.

82% in Year 4 achieved the expected Writing standard but did not achieve the school target.

95% in Year 5 exceeded the expected National and State standard as well as the school target.

86 % in Year 6 achieved this result and the school target.

### Speaking & Listening:

98% or more students in Years Prep to 3 reached or exceeded the expected standard and school target.

90% in Year 4 achieved this result. Our target of 100% was unrealistic given the cohort.

100% in Year 5 achieved the standard and the set target.

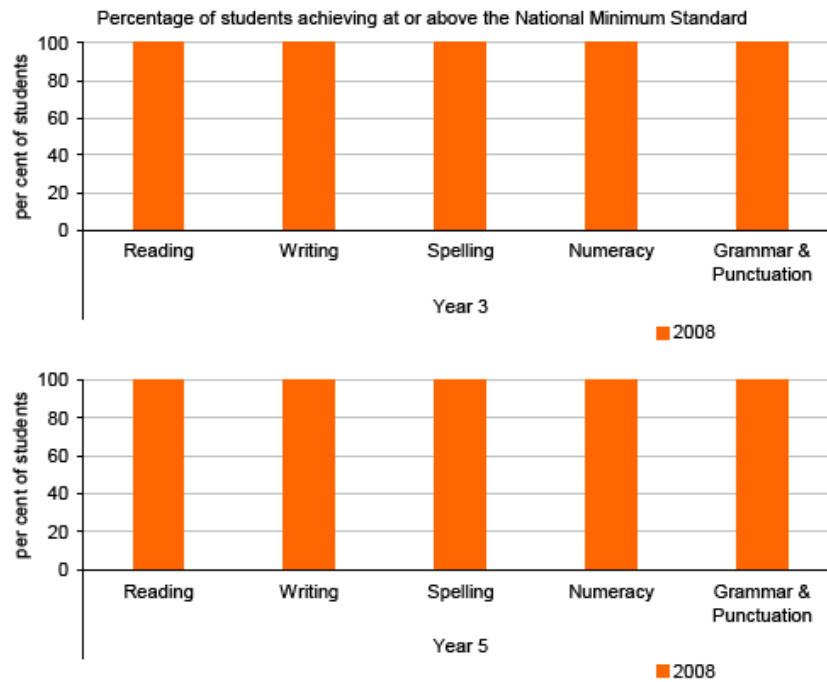
86% in Year 6 achieved the standard. The result was well below the target of 95% and an area for consideration and discussion.

### In Mathematics,

100% of students in Years 3 and 5 achieved at or above the National Minimum Standard. At State level, we are not able to compare our performance to the State Mean as the mean has not been provided yet. When comparing to the State Mean in previous years our data for 2008 indicates that we are either at or above the State Mean in both Number and Measurement, Chance and Data in all year levels.

When analysing our own (At and Above the Expected Level) school targets for 2008, in Number we reached the set targets in Years Prep, 3, 5 and 6. All other year levels missed the targets marginally, meaning 1 student in the each year level did not achieve the expected level. In Measurement, Chance and Data the set targets were achieved in Years 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6. Year Prep and 4 missed the target marginally.

When analysing (Above the Expected Level) school targets for 2008, Number data was significantly higher than Measurement, Chance and Data results. This can be explained due to the large amount of time spent on the Number dimension with the George Booker Curriculum Day for all staff, the development of Number teaching and learning sequences and also the Numeracy Coordinator providing classroom support throughout the whole 2008 year.



**NAPLAN Results:** Prior to 2008 we reported on AIM results. The AIM results supported and in most cases exceeded teacher judgement. With the introduction to NAPLAN [National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy] our school performed above the State and National Mean in all areas of Literacy and Numeracy. Victorian Curriculum Authority is yet to release a correlation of the NAPLAN Bands with VELs progression levels. The following School Summary Reports show our **school results** against the **state mean**. The National data have not yet been made available however it is reported that our school has performed above the National and State mean. According to the 2008 NAPLAN results our students at Strathmore North in Years 3 and 5 performed above the State Benchmark for all assessed areas. The structured numbers indicated beside each dimension are related to the number of questions asked for each dimension. Our attention was drawn in particular to the Year 3 Reading, Grammar & Punctuation where our school varied significantly to the State.

Overall, both teacher judgements and external assessment indicates Strathmore North Primary School is clearly demonstrating continual improvement in Student Learning.

# Student Engagement and Wellbeing

Student Engagement and Connectedness has been an identified area for improvement as a result of Student Attitudes to School data some years now. The school's self review process facilitated significant and valuable discussions about Student Engagement and Wellbeing, not only at Year 5 and 6, but across the school and our Annual Implementation Plan outlines the process for continued improvement during the next three years.

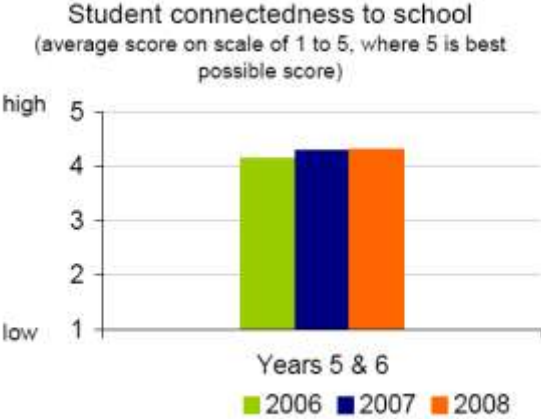
In 2008, the plan to maintain the Year 5 and 6 classes centrally has been sustained. School Captaincy and Young Leadership Programs were undertaken involving a range of staff including the Principal. The Principal continued a second year of a Year 6 interview process where she met with each Year 6 student individually to discuss their role as a senior student in the school and their thoughts about the school. During the year a concerted effort was made to actively involve the senior students in a range of areas of school life and in the community. Twelve students again attended a leadership program at Vodafone Arena and others spoke at parent forums including School Council giving a Camp Report. The introductions of School Awards in 2007 were continued in 2008. These awards were for academic achievement, sport, creativity and citizenship aiming to encourage aspirations of excellence. These are well received by all students.

In 2008 the 'Transforming Learning Project' which invited student feedback and aimed to improve student satisfaction and engagement continued to be used and be a major focus in all Learning Teams. In 2008 the process was discussed as review on how to best gather information to support student goal setting, self assessment and engagement with student's learning. A new survey design will be created in 2009.

### Students' school connectedness:

The following graph places student connectedness at Strathmore North at slightly above 4 on a 1 – 5 point scale and shows slight improvement again since the 2006 and 2007 results.

The Attitudes School Survey also indicates an improvement in School Connectedness since 2007 with a result above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile, thus achieving our AIP target. This also places us above the state mean for school connectedness. The longer term target of achieving the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile or above will be focus for 2009 and beyond.

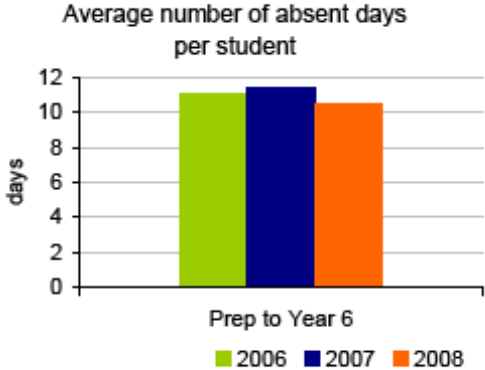


The 2008 absence data shows the Strathmore North PS average absence per student is **10.5** days. This has shown improvement since 2007 **and** 2006. The state mean itself showed an increase of absence as compared with its previous year from 13.2 to 13.4 days.

Absence rates for all year levels at SNPS were below the state mean “for their equivalent level”. The exception was the Year Prep with a slight 0.1 day increase.

A significant improvement was noted with the Year 5 data. The school was aware of the reason for the absences in 2007 and took action to monitor the situation in 2008. Whilst achieving our target of remaining below the state mean, we came close to achieving our second target of reducing absences to a mean of 10 days absent per student. (10 days of absence equates to 1 day absence per month).

In 2009 the school will continue to monitor absences, including late arrivals and early departures closely and aim for our target days of student absence.



## Student Pathways and Transitions

In 2008, the school continued to build upon practices commenced in 2007; to improve internal student transitions and increased collection of transition related data.

For the first time, a whole school transition coordinator was appointed, in addition to the K- P and 6-7 coordinators; with the responsibility for developing a transition action plan across the school and leading the process.

Surveys were introduced to monitor parental perception of K-P and 6-7 transitions as well as student perception of the 2007 to 2008, primary to secondary transition.

As in previous years our incoming Preps participated in 4 transition day activities to familiarize them with school. Year 6 transition was again supported by the annual local transition expo and students had on site visits from transition officers of secondary college to prepare them for the year ahead.

Survey results were very positive, indicating that our well-established programs are perceived as supportive of both our students and parents at either end of our school. No major issues were identified, confirming that the area for our continued focus needs to be on transitions within, rather than those to or from the school.

To support internal transitions, specific days in 2008, as in 2007, were allocated across the year for transitional year levels to participate in activities together. The traditional Orientation Day in December where incoming Preps visit and Year 6's spend the day at the Secondary School was extended to include a whole school transition day, targeting all year levels.

Cross team meetings and moderation sessions were again implemented to support the development of common staff understandings and expectations across year / team levels.

Feedback on internal transitions is anecdotal rather than formal, but nonetheless important to act upon. Both parents and students indicated that the traditionally difficult internal transition from Prep to Grade 1, might have been compounded for some students, by the departure of their Prep year buddy to secondary school.

Subsequently, in 2008, a change to the schools 'Buddies' program was implemented. Instead of year 5/6 buddies, the 2008 Prep classes were matched with year 3/4 buddies in an endeavour to provide them with continued support in their transition not only to grade 1 in 2009 but also to grade 2 in 2010.

Feedback also indicated that transition from Year 2 to 3 was compounded for many, by the differing homework expectations. To support our 2008 Year 2's, in Term 4, 2008 homework was introduced in a similar format to Year 3 in an aim to prepare the students and parents and alleviate this concern.

Despite the above strategies and the positive indications from our newly introduced surveys, the transitions variable of the 2008 Parent Opinion Survey with a mean of 5.64 showed a marginal decline from the 2007 result of 5.82. This meant that we did not achieve our Annual Implementation Plan target of maintaining a mean above 5.80. In both 2007 and 2008, we had an 86% response rate, well above the state rate, so our 2008 result was a little disappointing.

Further review of the data, however indicates that the State Mean for the transitions variable also showed a decline between 2007 and 2008 of 0.39, more than double the 0.18 recorded by our school, a small reassurance that we are not the only ones facing challenges in this area.

We believe that some of the improved practices introduced in 2008 may have supported the 2008-2009 transitions process rather than the 2007-2008 and therefore may not be reflected in the Parent Opinion Survey until 2009.

Despite this, improved Student Transitions remains a challenge for the 2009 coordinator and the school in the coming year.

## Future Directions

- To manage major Building Projects to improve the learning environment of our students.
- Development of Professional Learning teams as key drivers of pedagogical understandings and consistent practices.
- Leadership program to support team leader development with a focus on formative / developmental feedback and coaching
- Further development of the use of ICT across all areas of student learning at all year levels, including extending the use of Interactive Whiteboards.
- Further development of P-6 Inquiry Approach to learning
- Development of effective assessment processes with a focus on Assessment 'for and 'as learning'
- Continue to implement the 5 school pedagogy principles.
- To further develop the SNPS Maths program based on George Booker methodology and the Maths Continuum.
- To further develop the SNPS Writing and Spelling program.
- To develop Speaking and Listening.
- To implement WMR Blueprint Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.
- To improve/build staff understandings and programs to address needs of boys.
- Continued development of our YCDI program with a specific focus on school connectedness
- To develop the roles of School House captains through the introduction of a lunch time 'Sport' program
- To further develop 'student voice' through our student leadership programs and Junior School Council
- Introduction and implementation of a school based student survey as vehicle for student feedback to staff.
- To further develop whole school understandings of the learning needs and social needs of our middle years students.
- To Improve K-P, Year 6 to 7 and internal transitions.
- Improved challenge and extension of top cohort students.
- Extend parent participation.
- To implement water and energy savings measures and education programs
- Installation of Water Tanks.

## Financial Performance and Position

On behalf of the School Council I would like to thank Amanda Baseggio and Tim Hatherley for their excellent financial support. Also to Karyn Lynon and Tina Moody who manage the day to day financial accounts in the front office.

2008 was an exceptionally busy year with many grants being received and several DEECD changes.

The school secured grants for:

- a) Telstra Grant for sports equipment (\$1200)
- b) A Telstra Grant for an outdoor table (\$1200)
- c) Bendigo Bank Disadvantaged Fund (\$2000)
- d) Community Water Grant Implemented (\$45,000)
- e) Green Vouchers Tanks Grants (\$50,000)
- f) The Better Schools Today Impending Grant of \$450,000

In 2008 some of the achievements of the year were:

- a) School book pack levy process
- b) Successful finance audit
- c) Regular finance meetings
- d) Regular budget monitoring
- e) Good internal control
- f) Effective use of monies in investment accounts
- g) Reviewed internet policy
- h) Reviewed internet banking policy
- i) Workforce plan developed for long term staffing
- j) School Resource Package - Closed with small surplus
- k) The fundraising Team raised approx \$30,000

In 2008 there was increased expenditure which included:

- a) Expenditure on relief teachers due to a large number of absences
- b) Hired a new maintenance person
- c) Implementation of Community Water Grant

### Changes in 2008

- a) Changed our banking to Bending Bank from Commonwealth Bank
- b) Audits moved to Tri-annual Cycle
- c) Computer purchase plan – added hub replacement
- d) Bank accounts increased marginally
- e) New DEECD state wide funding model introduced for schools

### Goals:

To save for synthetic grass playing field  
To implement Better Schools Today Building Project  
To identify a project for Federal Governments \$2-5 million  
Develop new EFTPOS policy  
To improve profit margin of Uniform shop

## School Contact Information

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