School Context
Mount Ousley Public School is situated close to Wollongong on the south coast of New South Wales. It is a member of the Keira Community of Schools. The school was opened in 1959 and enrolments have fluctuated since that time as local demographics have changed. The student population has grown by over 30% in the last six years. The school community values education and is supportive of the school’s ethos, to provide equity and excellence for all students in a 21st century learning environment.

Student Information
It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Student Enrolment Profile
In 2014 children were organised into eight classes; four K-2 classes and four 3-6 classes.

<table>
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Student Attendance Profile

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Management of Non-Attendance
The school requests that all student absences are explained in writing and that, where possible, are kept to minimum. Any families taking holidays during school terms are asked to apply for an exemption from school attendance. Families are reminded of the need to arrive at school on time and avoid being late for class. Attendance will remain a school priority in 2015, with patterns of absenteeism and late arrivals our focuses.

Workforce Information
It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Workforce Composition
Mount Ousley Public School has a non-teaching Principal and eight full-time teaching positions, including two Assistant Principals. This is supplemented by part-time teachers who provide relief from face to face teaching and library. The school employs two Learning and Support Teachers, and English as a Second Language teachers and a school Counsellor on a part time basis. The school has one full-time School Administrative Manager, along with two part time School Administrative Officers and a part time General Assistant. Five Support Learning Staff Officers are also employed part time. There are no Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff members.

Teacher Qualifications
All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools. New Scheme Teachers must be accredited with the NSW Institute of Teachers in order to teach in NSW schools.

Staff holding a diploma or degree: 50%
Staff holding a postgraduate qualification: 50%

Professional Learning and Teacher Accreditation
All fourteen full-time and part-time teachers participated in various professional learning activities throughout 2014. Training occurred in ICT, literacy, numeracy, quality teaching, environmental education, library, administration and English as a Second Language. A total of almost $20,000.00 was spent on professional learning, representing an average expenditure of approximately $2,000.00 per full-time teaching position. Six days were designated as School Development Days, where staff shared with colleagues and participated in a broad range of professional learning activities. Topics included the Australian Curriculum, Aboriginal education, literacy, numeracy, administration, child protection, NAPLAN, student reports, mentoring and departmental initiatives.

Three new scheme teachers were working towards Board of Studies Teaching and Education Standards accreditation. A further three new scheme teachers maintained their accreditation at proficient.
Financial Information

Financial Summary

The information provided in the financial summary is current at the date shown. This summary includes reporting from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2014.

Academic Achievements

NAPLAN

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing (NAPLAN). In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10.

The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in the assessments.

Yr 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)

Yr 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)
Significant Programs & Initiatives

Aboriginal Education
Mount Ousley Public School is committed to improving educational outcomes for indigenous students and developing an understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal Australia for all students. We did this in 2014 by:
- developing a Personal Learning Plan for each Aboriginal student;
- acknowledging the traditional owners of the land at all assemblies and special functions;
- ensuring Aboriginal Education is an integral part of Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE) units of study;
- proudly displaying a framed copy of the Federal Government’s 2008 apology; and
- all staff completing No Gap, No Excuse training.

Multicultural and Anti-Racism Education
Key initiatives in multicultural education and anti-racism at Mount Ousley in 2014 included:
- integrating a multicultural perspective in classroom curriculum studies;
- teaching units of study across the school focused on world religions and cultures;
- incorporating African drumming into the curriculum;
- training staff in ways of supporting our 34 students with an English as a Second Language background;
- celebrating Harmony Day;
- supporting and raising awareness of disadvantaged racial groups around the world;
- promoting the role of the Anti-Racism Contact Officer among staff;
- assisting newly enrolled families with translators when appropriate; and
- raising awareness of racial tolerance through study of our Australian identity.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)
Our school has incorporated ICT into its routines and organisation in many innovative ways. Key initiatives in 2014 included:
- involvement in Global Youth Debates, conducted online with teams from the USA;
- the continuation of our 1 to 1 laptop initiative for all students in Years 3 to 6;
- the expansion of iPads in junior classrooms;
- staff presenting at ICT teacher training days in Wollongong, Kiama and Sydney;
- the use of class blogs to communicate with families and to share homework;
- the integration of Twitter into classroom routines to make educational connections and practise literacy skills;
- being recognised as an Apple Distinguished School;
- the growth of our school website to showcase student work, provide access to information and photo galleries, and give interactive opportunities to parents and visitors;
- video conferencing and Skyping with other classes around the world;
- maintaining a whole school television show, MOPS FM The Week That Was; and
- hosting visits from other teachers and school executives to see first hand how our school integrates ICT.
Learning Assistance
Throughout 2014 the school supported students experiencing learning difficulties in many ways, including:

- continuing the Rocket Reading program, with parents trained as reading tutors, helping to improve reading skills in six of our younger students;
- continuing the Multilit program, utilising parent tutors to support four of our older students with literacy development;
- engaging parent reading helpers with Kindergarten and Year 1 children;
- utilising a support teacher and five staff learning support officers to provide additional support in class to students identified as having literacy or numeracy needs; and
- convening regular Learning Support Team meetings to create and implement action plans for students with identified needs.

L3 (Language, Learning & Literacy)
2014 was the third year of L3 in our K-2 classrooms at Mount Ousley. L3 is a literacy initiative where students are engaged in high quality teaching and learning experiences and achieve marked progress in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Students receive daily individual and small group intensive guided instruction in reading and writing in the ‘Engine Room’. Students are immersed in a language-rich environment every day full of opportunities for problem-solving, independent learning and gaining a strong sense of personal success in literacy. We have seen impressive results in reading and writing levels since adopting the L3 initiative, and students have gained a high sense of achievement and self-esteem as their skills have increased throughout the year.

Robotics and Rocketry Clubs
An extracurricular robotics club for Years 3-6 students ran during Term 4 and five students in teams used LEGO Mindstorms NXT kits to design, build, program and test standard and custom designs. Robotics promotes scientific thinking and incorporates the engineering design process, test and retest procedures, mathematical programming and teamwork. A model rocketry club operated during Term 3 and nine students investigated rocketry, the physics of flight and the engineering design process. Students built and flew a model rocket to heights of over 80m and the whole school was able to participate in the excitement of the launches.

Library
In addition to weekly borrowing, the library operates a number of programs designed to complement existing student literacy strategies. All students 3-6 complete assessable research projects, while students K-2 complete literacy activities. In each case, the activities are based around HSIE topics of study in class. A website is maintained by the teacher-librarian, containing overviews, downloadable worksheets and assessment rubrics for each topic. A separate teaching resource collection is available for staff and offers levelled guided readers, a variety of texts and a selection of kits and audiovisual materials. A library refurbishment program is currently underway, as a joint initiative between the school and the P&C. Pinboard covering has been fixed to all walls, with the purchase of new shelving and furniture planned for coming months. Other library initiatives included:

- Premier’s Reading Challenge - in 2014, 105 students K-6 completed the challenge, with 84 standard certificates, 19 gold awards for completing a 4th challenge and 2 platinum awards for completing 7 challenges.
- Library lunch program - students were able to come to the library during lunch from Monday-Wednesday and complete activities including art, lego construction, iPad
activities, board games and reading. Throughout 2014, an average of 20 students attended each session.

Book Club - students have the opportunity to purchase books from Scholastic Book Club every two months.

Book Week/National Literacy initiatives, such as Simultaneous Storytime - all students are introduced to the relevant books for these events. A special activity day is held as part of Book Week, involving all staff and students.

Book Fair - held twice a year. Students have the opportunity to purchase books for personal use and to donate titles to the library. Commission raised from these fairs is put towards library refurbishment.

Respect and Responsibility
The Mount Ousley Public School community actively models and teaches the values of public education through the school's programs, organisation and approach to learning. Key initiatives in 2014 included:

- reinforcing our Dignity and Respect Charter, which outlines appropriate standards of behaviour for all staff, parents and students;
- teaching a program of social skills to all students in Term 1;
- celebrating White Ribbon Day with a focus on making pledges of respect;
- using mediation to resolve student conflict and teach empathy;
- consistently addressing and responding to acts of inappropriate behaviour;
- involving students in the decision making process through the Student Representative Council;
- taking a strong stance against all forms of bullying;
- Year 6 students attending a leadership conference;
- buddying Year 6 with Kindergarten students; and
- giving responsibility to students for various jobs and leadership roles.

Research Group
Twelve students from Years 3-6 were nominated by their class teachers to participate in this program, which operated on a withdrawal basis once a week. In 2014, the theme was “go global”. Each student identified a problem that existed in the world and examined it from different sides. The challenge was to design a plan of action that could make a difference and assist in solving the problem. Along the way, students were encouraged to make connections outside the school, resulting in them using a variety of methods such as emailing, tweeting, Skyping, video conferencing and interviewing, to contact members of the community. At the conclusion of the program, students were given the opportunity to present their ideas to other classes in a research expo.

Band
Eleven students participated in the school band, facilitated by the Wollongong Conservatorium of Music. Instrumental instruction occurred weekly in clarinet, saxophone, flute, trumpet, trombone, drums and bass guitar. The band performed at school assemblies and special events.
**Equity Funding**

**Aboriginal Background**
Mount Ousley Public School was provided with $2,288.00 in 2014 to support students from an Aboriginal background. Six Aboriginal students were enrolled in 2014 and their educational outcomes were specifically targeted through the school's mentoring initiative. Student engagement and the appropriateness of lesson content were focus areas in lesson delivery and subsequent discussions between those involved in the mentoring. These conversations identified strategies to improve learning for Aboriginal students. Teachers implemented these strategies and then reflected on them in follow-up mentoring sessions. Aboriginal student results varied in literacy and numeracy, but all students showed improvement throughout the year. No student was graded as having limited achievement. The average attendance rate for Aboriginal students was 90.34%, lower than the school average of 94.5%.

**Socio-Economic Background**
Mount Ousley Public School was provided with $8,190.00 in 2014 to support students from a disadvantaged socio-economic background. Twenty-three students were identified in the lowest quarter of disadvantage across the state, while fifty-five students were identified in the second lowest quarter. In total, over 40% of all Mount Ousley students were represented in this targeted funding. Funds were expended by employing casual relief to run the mentoring initiative and conduct an action research project in numeracy. In both mentoring and action research, the focus was on quality teaching and investigating how lesson delivery could be modified to best meet the learning needs of students. In the action research project, the focus was on substantive communication. Teachers of all classes had lessons videoed and analysed, to determine the types of questions asked, the percentage of teacher dominated conversation, the types and levels of feedback provided, and the amount of student reflection that occurred. This data was used to change teaching practice and improve student engagement.

**English Language Proficiency**
Mount Ousley Public School was allocated one teaching day per week to support students from an English background other than English. This allocation increased to two and a half days per week as new students with English language needs enrolled. The focus with these students was on the development of oral language, as the precursor to reading and writing development. Students were provided with a mix of individual and group learning activities, both in and out of class, which assisted them to learn to speak English. The success of our English language proficiency program is best exemplified in the 2014 girl school captain. She enrolled some years before with no English but went on to represent the school in debating and achieve outstanding results in literacy and numeracy.

**Low Level Adjustment for Disability**
Mount Ousley Public School was allocated three teaching days per week to support students learning and support needs (low level disability). This was supplemented with $10,713 of equity funding, used to employ Staff Learning Support Officers to assist classroom teachers in supporting these students. These allocations were separate from funds received to support targeted students with disabilities. Literacy support programs were implemented, with parent tutors assisting in the Rocket Reading and Multilit programs. Learning and support teachers liaised with classroom teachers to implement effective strategies for students with specific learning needs. In addition, learning and support teachers reviewed student progress and monitored student engagement.
School Planning and Evaluation 2012-2014

School Evaluation Processes
It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations - one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2014 Mount Ousley Public School conducted evaluations of mentoring and numeracy.

Educational and Management Practice: Mentoring Program

Background
In 2014, Mount Ousley Public School continued and expanded its mentoring program for teachers K-6. Executive teachers worked with classroom teachers on improving classroom practice across a range of areas. Teaching practice was observed, notes taken and critically, time was allocated for professional discourse following classroom observations. Practice was reflected upon and areas for improvement were identified. In subsequent rounds of mentoring teachers worked to improve in areas that had been identified.

Findings and conclusions
The teaching staff at Mount Ousley are highly professional practitioners who aim for continual professional improvement. Time put aside for quality discussion with colleagues is invaluable in creating transparency and openness about classroom practice at our school. Teachers reflect on their craft from a practical perspective and draw links to the research that underpins their classroom pedagogy. Observable changes occurred in numerous aspects of teaching including the amount of time spent by teachers talking, the ways in which groups of students were managed, the types of feedback provided to students, the types of questions asked by teachers, the amount of time provided for students to reflect on their learning, the level of student engagement, the ability of teachers to provide differentiated instruction and the relevance of lesson content.

Future directions
We will continue to use the Quality Teaching Framework as a reflective tool in future mentoring sessions. Mentoring will continue as a way of providing opportunities for professional dialogue. Specialised support for beginning teachers will be introduced.

Curriculum: Numeracy

Background
Despite a sustained focus on the teaching of numeracy over recent years, NAPLAN results have shown no improvement. The trend continued to be below state average for both Years 3 and 5 in 2013.

Findings and conclusions
Action research in numeracy was conducted over Terms 3 and 4 with all classes. The research was aimed at measuring and improving the structure of mathematics lessons, questioning during lessons, feedback provided to students and the amount of reflection time. Overall there was a decrease in teacher introduction time, an increase in student work time and an increase in student reflection time. There was an increase in teachers asking open rather than closed questions and in peer sharing of responses. There was a decrease in the amount of neutral feedback and an increase in the amount of positive feedback, constructive feedback and positive constructive feedback. There was an increase in the amount of individual and peer reflection at the conclusion of lessons. The action research data was presented to the local Community of Schools. Teachers found the process to be engaging, relevant and highly beneficial to their teaching practice.
Years 3-6 students were surveyed on their maths perceptions in Term 1 and the results analysed. The findings show that students like a range of learning environments and activities including ICT and concrete materials. A high percentage of students feel confident in taking risks in maths learning and are prepared for mistakes as a part of the learning process. Students have a range of preferred learning environments including individual and group work, at tables, on the floor and outdoors.

**Future directions**

The research and findings of the action research and numeracy survey will inform mathematics teaching into the future. A strong focus on numeracy will continue in 2015. All students K-6 are now tracked on the numeracy continuum and online using PLAN software. This will prove invaluable in the long term monitoring of student growth across multiple maths aspects and supporting class teachers in planning group work and differentiated learning. Student growth in numeracy in 2014 was consistent with that of statistically similar schools. Our aim is to achieve above average results in numeracy.

**School Planning 2012-2014**

**Target 1: Equity and Excellence For All Students**

- To sustain average school growth in all aspects of NAPLAN at or above the NSW average.
- To differentiate learning for all students and improve student attainment.
- To achieve learning outcomes for Aboriginal students that are consistent with or better than those of non-Aboriginal students.
- To provide learning that is free from all forms of discrimination and disadvantage.

**Our achievements include:**

- Our NAPLAN growth, when compared to statistically similar schools, was above average in both reading and writing. Numeracy growth was in line with that achieved by similar schools. Our reading growth was among the highest in NSW.
- Quality teaching and learning practices were evident across the school, demonstrated through differentiated literacy and numeracy lessons.
- All students were supported and extended through greater teacher understanding of curriculum, increased awareness of individual needs, involvement in a range of support programs, and use of data analysis.

**Target 2: 21st Century Teaching and Learning**

- To provide teaching and learning experiences for all students to be successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens.
- To integrate ICT into classroom activities, enabling students to think and act creatively, think critically, solve problems, make decisions, communicate and collaborate.
- To develop responsibility as local and global citizens.

**Our achievements include:**

- Genius Time, along with a broader inquiry based approach to learning, allowed students in all classes to pursue learning that had relevance and significance.
- Further integration of ICT across the school resulted in increased student confidence, deeper understandings of concepts, greater levels of creativity and higher levels of student engagement.
- Learning practices across the school demonstrated a connectedness with outside individuals and agencies, and children showed a strong desire to effect change in their world through these interactions.
Target 3: Leadership and Management
To have all staff using the metalanguage of quality teaching and demonstrating evidence of its use in teaching practice.
To have new initiatives, including the Australian Curriculum, effectively implemented and woven into the fabric of our school culture.
To maintain a caring, nurturing school environment, in which every member of the school community feels valued and every child reaches their full potential.

Our achievements include:
Teaching staff were involved in a mentoring initiative and an action research project in numeracy. Reflective practice through collaboration led to analyses of how best to deliver a quality education to all students.
The new English and mathematics syllabuses were implemented.
The strengthening of our school culture, with staff wanting to come to work, children wanting to attend school and parents happy with their children’s education.

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction
In 2014 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. The Principal’s Blog attracted a great deal of positive comments, revealing a widespread level of satisfaction.

Future Directions 2015-2017 School Plan
NSW DEC is implementing a new school planning process for 2015-2017. The new plan will be published on the school’s website from the beginning of Term 2 2015.

About This Report
In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school’s practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school's future development.
Peter Holmes, Principal
Neil Bramsen, Assistant Principal
Brad Tate, Assistant Principal

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School Code: 4095
Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at: