

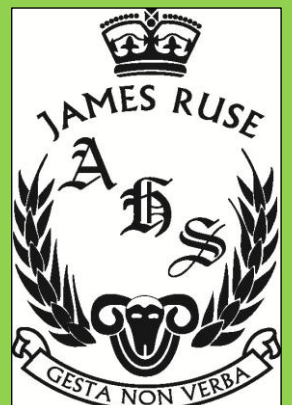


Education &
Communities

8235

James Ruse Agricultural High School

Annual School Report



Our school at a glance

Students

James Ruse Agricultural High School is a selective secondary public school that endeavours to nurture the academic, physical, social and emotional well-being of students; instil the core values of integrity, excellence, respect, responsibility, fairness, wisdom and compassion among all students; and promote the importance of Agriculture in the school and the wider community.

The school offers a differentiated curriculum with a wide range of enrichment, extension, student leadership and extracurricular programs for highly gifted students. Our success across all areas of school life is recognised by our high profile in the International Olympiad teams, a multitude of competitions, drama and musical pursuits, presence in Art Express and Encore,



Regional and State Shakespeare festivals, debating and public speaking awards and zone, regional, state and national sporting representation. Student wellbeing and the recognition of students as global citizens are catered for by numerous proactive welfare initiatives across all years and a highlight has been the development of a highly successful High Resolves leadership program in the middle years of schooling to complement traditional programs such as a highly effective and visible Prefect body and Student Representative Council.

Staff

The school had 60.4 teaching positions in 2011. This included 15 executive staff, 46 classroom teachers, a school counsellor, librarian and a careers advisor. Over 50% of the staff have been teaching at James Ruse Agricultural High School

for more than 10 years. All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools. The number of support staff in 2011 was 13.

Significant programs and initiatives

In 2011 the school implemented a wide variety of programs to cater to the needs of our highly gifted students. These included the Gifted and Talented program, Student Leadership and High Resolves programs, the James Ruse Award Scheme, Cadets, Duke of Edinburgh, extensive music programs, fitness initiatives, student clubs and our Agriculture initiatives and programs.

Student achievement in 2011

The 2011 Higher School Certificate cohort was extremely successful where we again topped the honours list in the HSC with 786 Credit marks over 90. 94 students were considered top all rounders making the Premier's List of achieving 10 units or more in subjects with a mark over 90.

In Year 7 and Year 9 100% of students achieved the highest band in numeracy and in the School Certificate our students performed above the state means in all subjects.

Messages

Principal's message

James Ruse Agricultural High School is now positioned globally as an outstanding learning community which provides for the holistic needs of gifted and talented students. In 2011 the academic curriculum continued to be supported by a proactive well-being curriculum, an exciting sport and fitness program and a wide range of leadership and social justice extracurricular programs to cater for the growth of our students as truly global citizens.

Our NAPLAN results, whilst a very narrow measure which does not discriminate value adding at the top range, are the best in the country.

We have had the best HSC results now for the past 15 years continuously. All the students have accepted university placements, a significant number with scholarships, in Australia, in the United States and in Great Britain.

As a result of a concerted collaborative effort over five years we have worked with our gifted underachievers and raised the standard significantly, such that we no longer have a tail of low achievers.

As demonstrated elsewhere in this report, our higher achieving students have achieved remarkable successes: in international competitions such as the Olympiads in Thailand, Israel, The Netherlands; in national competitions concerning languages, visual arts, poetry and essay writing; in international conferences such as the ones in Hong Kong and Lord Howe Island; in numerous examinations.

They have brought back awards, medals and peace prizes. Students have reached high standards in swimming, cross country, pole vaulting, table tennis, taekwondo and chess.

They have been acknowledged for leadership, citizenship and service in national arenas. They have won scholarships to attend courses in Japan, the United States and China. They have shared their musical and drama prowess in numerous performances, festivals and rural tours.

Our challenge now is moving the middle. Whether the student is in Year 7, or in an HSC course, our vision is to motivate all of them to set themselves higher goals, to work collaboratively and creatively to achieve these, and to challenge them to achieve aspirational targets. Our task is to be very explicit as to what the highest achievement of outcomes looks like to our middle performers, and bring them along with us in a planned way.

With excellent success in 2011 in eradicating the lowest performances by moving them up, and in having the highest achievers continuing to blossom, we have a very solid foundation from which to move the middle up.

This will only be possible through our continued successful partnership with our parents, the school's focus on the development of the whole student (catering for the emotional, social, spiritual and physical needs as well as the academic) and student participation in all the formal and extra-curricular programs offered, in and out of the classroom.

"You can't get to wonderful without passing through all right" (Bill Withers) Because we are a reflective, intelligent school community with an international reputation for excellence, we will always have an area where we are working on being "wonderful" .

I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous school self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school's achievements and areas for development.

Larissa Treskin
Principal



Community of James Ruse (COJR) message

The past twelve months have been a challenge for *The Community of James Ruse* with there not only being a need for us to meet our regular financial commitment to the School for such things as the provision of Student Diaries, catering at Information Nights, support for the Gifted & Talented Program and payment of books for the School Library but also the provision of air conditioning in several of the School's main buildings. In total, *The Community* was able to contribute in excess of \$90,000 towards the cost of running the School and while this was only a fraction of total operating costs, it was gratefully received.

Raising such a significant sum of money requires the contribution of a small army of people and the support of many Community members - parents, students, staff, ex-parents and ex-students - through the organising and running of raffles and International Food Days. To all who have contributed to the success of The

Community in 2011 goes my appreciation for not only what you have done for the School in 2011 but for the on-going legacy that will last for many years to come.



Parent groups such as ours cannot have their greatest impact without the ongoing support of the School Executive and staff. To all in this category, I extend my thanks for your support and encouragement throughout 2011. Without this, much of what has been achieved this year would not have been possible.

As always, the COJR takes great pride in the diversity of the academic and sporting achievements of James Ruse students, particularly those who may not have achieved the highs of success but have registered personal best achievements. As parents, your continuing efforts to excel truly make us proud.

In conclusion, *The Community of James Ruse* looks at 2012 as a year to further extend the strong relationship between the School and parents and to continue the advancement of James Ruse Agricultural High School as a centre of excellence in all spheres.

Trevor Allison
COJR President



Student Representative Council's message

In 2011 the JRAHS SRC approached new frontiers of student leadership as we committed ourselves to addressing the school's environment and welfare concerns and increasing representation of the student body.

A new school-wide water filtration and cooling system was introduced, providing free filtered and chilled water to all students and staff. This project was fully funded by SRC's fundraising efforts from SRC Week and its ongoing costs will be funded by future SRC. Two microwaves for student use were purchased and installed in the school canteen so students could heat up their lunches from home, while canteen congestion was significantly eased with the introduction of the exact change line. As part of our first ever *Funky Tie and Socks for a Tissue Box Drive*, students donated hundreds of tissue boxes on the first day of winter. These were distributed to all classrooms and staffrooms in the school to reduce the impact of the flu season. SRC also introduced electronic textbooks for student use, overhauled the school's noticeboard, decorated the main corridor with large photographic prints on canvas of James Ruse students and school life as part of our *Ruse on Camera Project*, and performed regular *Classroom Clock Clean Ups* throughout the year to replace old batteries and clocks in the school.

Other than addressing the students' environment and resources needs this year, SRC 2011 was also active in terms of student welfare. This year the school executive challenged SRC to create a brand new school-wide welfare program, to come up with values we thought were uniquely important and significant to James Ruse. Our answer was the *ASPIRE Values Project* - acceptance, service, participation, integrity, respect and endeavour. These values will form the basis of the new values program at Ruse to be initiated in 2012. This year also saw the debut of the school's own happiness campaign, Project Positive and the reintroduction of the Year 8 and year 10 Mentoring program.

Along with these projects, SRC focused on improving communication channels around the school. *Friday Forum*, a new initiative to promote student voice, saw representatives address students one-on-one in a personal and approachable manner during recess time

throughout the year. Student opinion was then voiced in various forums with staff and parents regarding the school curriculum, finance, technology and welfare.

In terms of events and fundraising, this year saw the amazing success of SRC Week 2011. The much loved *James Rice That's Nice* merchandise made a comeback, with shirts and gym sacks being sold and *James Rice* pens distributed to every student and staff member. Events held throughout the five days included the *Ruse Unplugged Concert*, *Spaceball Tournament*, *Go Go Eat Challenge*, *Ruse Runway* and the annual SRC Dance *The Moonwalk*. Altogether, \$7000 was raised for the SRC Fund to fund future projects and \$1000 was raised for Cystic Fibrosis NSW. SRC supported *Jeans for Genes Day* in August and raised \$1300 through the sale of Krispy Kreme donuts. SRC also hosted *World Vision's 40 Hour Famine* at Ruse, raising \$6000, while \$500 was raised for *White Ribbon Day* through the sale of merchandise in support of Australia's campaign to prevent violence against women. In response to the 2011 Japanese Disasters, SRC was also instrumental in the launch of the *Cranes for Hope Project*, a youth-led non-for-profit initiative started by James Ruse students. Sponsored by *FedEx*, *Officeworks* and the *Australian Red Cross*, the Project involved 6000 high school students across Sydney and raised \$12,000 and 30,000 folded paper cranes for a local primary school in Sendai, Japan affected by the disasters.

With the phenomenal success of 11 projects and 6 major events that raised funds in excess of \$27,800 for SRC initiatives and various charities, the James Ruse SRC continues to exemplify outstanding student leadership and embody the school's principles of creativity, communication and collaboration. In doing so, 2011 saw the SRC enriching student life, improving the school environment and promoting the spirit of James Ruse more than ever before.

**Sharon Mo
President**



School context

Student information

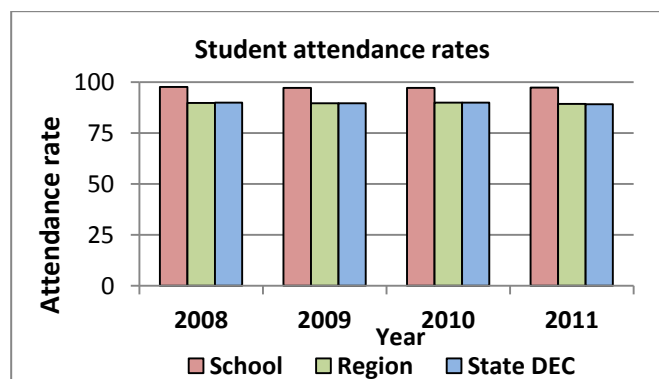
It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Student enrolment profile

Gender	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Male	484	479	481	470	473
Female	355	365	362	375	383

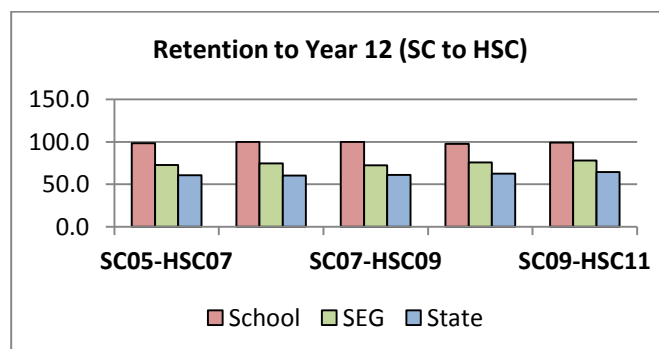


Student attendance profile



Student attendance is very high at JRAHS. Parents of students that are partially absent are sent an SMS to ensure awareness of the situation.

Retention to Year 12



Post-school destinations

100% of students at JRAHS went on to attend university courses in Australia and Overseas. The UNSW and Sydney University are the most popular choices for students. Olivia Kim was accepted into Princeton, USA and Stacey Law chose to attend Cambridge, UK.

Staff information

Staff establishment

Position	Number
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	2
Head Teachers	12
Classroom Teachers	46
Teacher Librarian	1
Counsellor	1
School Administrative & Support Staff	13
Total	76

The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on Indigenous composition of their workforce. 100% of the James Ruse Agricultural High School staff are of non-indigenous background

Staff retention

Ms Annetta St Louis was promoted to the position of Deputy Principal and two teachers were promoted to Head Teacher positions in other schools. Five teachers retired in 2011.

Teacher qualifications

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

Qualifications	% of staff
Degree or Diploma	80
Postgraduate	20

Financial summary

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

Date of financial summary:	30/11/2011
Income	\$
Balance brought forward	594,840.32
Global Funds	551,036.29
Tied funds	137,580.16
School & community sources	1,482,301.91

Interest	28,611.92
Trust receipts	141,938.50
Canteen	<u>237,046.77</u>
Total Income	<u>3,173,355.87</u>
Expenditure	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	186,851.71
Excursions	269,724.05
Extra-curricular dissections	755,430.84
Library	32,827.65
Training & Development	52,175.56
Tied funds	206,633.54
Casual relief teachers	113,682.86
Administration & office	354,575.21
School-operated canteen	210,072.41
Utilities	129,006.09
Maintenance	60,989.30
Trust accounts	147,613.75
Capital programs	<u>125,920.10</u>
Total expenditure	<u>2,645,503.07</u>
Balance carried forward	<u>527,852.80</u>

A full copy of the school's 2011 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school. The funds carried forward include tied funds, earmarked for specific purposes as well as funds allocated for curriculum needs and school improvements.



School performance 2011

Achievements

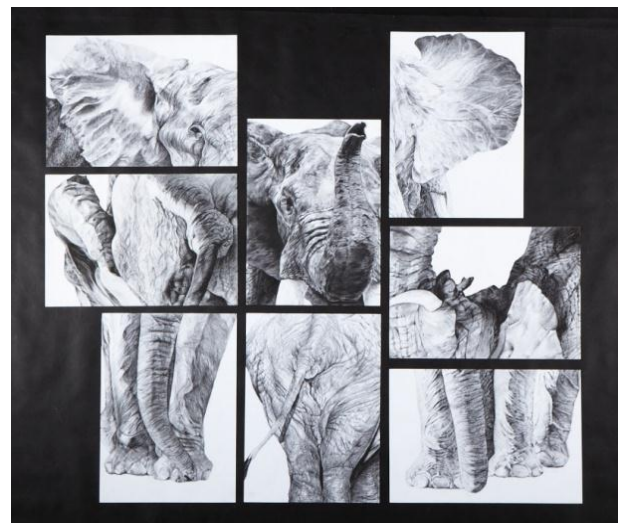
Creative Arts

- Two students Edward Lo-Cao and Joshua Zheng were nominated for the *Encore* music concert based on their HSC

- performances (piano), both achieving 50/50 in Music Extension
- The *String Orchestra* and *Woodwind Ensemble* undertook a successful inaugural tour to the Blue Mountains
 - The choir performed at the *Celebration Concert* in the Town Hall
 - A successful series of concerts were held through the year – *Multi-cultural Night* and *Dance Festival*; *Cabaret Night*; Performers’ Evenings; Elective Music Class Performance Evenings
 - The school’s 49th successive Musical Production was staged, this being *The Boy Friend*, with 120 students on stage and as many again involved in the orchestra, stage, lighting, sound, make-up crews, and front of house
 - Three successful band tours took place in 2011 with the *Senior Wind Ensemble* touring Scone, *Senior Concert Band* visiting Orange and the *Intermediate Concert Band* travelling to the South Coast and in particular Mogo
 - Once again we entered and supported the Sydney ANZAC March going around twice for the first time!
 - Our Junior Band was awarded a Gold Medal, and the Intermediate Band a Silver Medal in the *Waverley Band Festival*
 - The Visual Arts HSC Bodies of Work of four students were nominated for *Artexpress* and two were selected. Anna Zhong’s paintings “Healthy Living” were displayed at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, and Anna Ye’s drawings “Thick Skinned” were displayed at the Armory Gallery, Sydney Olympic Park.



- Bryan Zhu and Anna Ye completed the Intensive Studio Practice HSC Extension Course at the National Art School.
- Lena Li and Eunice Lim were selected for the *Dobell School* program at the *National Art School*.
- Charmaine Lo won both the *International Women’s Day Poster Competition*, and the *Harmony Day Poster Competition* and her work was distributed to NSW government departments across the state.
- Andre Lo was a prize winner in the junior section of the *Mosman Art Awards*.



Languages

- Kelly Wu was awarded a Gold Certificate in the *Language Perfect World Championship*
- In the *Language Perfect World Championship*, our students achieved 16 gold medals, 4 silver medals, 8 bronze medals and 6 credits
- 7 teams competed in the state finals of the *Computational Linguistics Olympiad*.
- The James Ruse *OzClo* team were runners up in the *Australian Computational Linguistics Competition*
- 16 students achieved High Distinctions in the *Australian Languages Competition* in Japanese:
 - Certificate 1: Irene Fan, Kenneth Hui, Kynan Ngai
 - Certificate 2: Echo Deng, Naushin Khan, Sophia Song, Anqi Teng, Chelsea Valentin, Cindy Wang

Certificate 3: Jenny Liu, Clarence Ma, Jane Ma, Ben Nam, Sydney Tang, Rong Zhai, Julia Zhu Wei

- 8 students achieved High Distinctions in the *Australian Languages Competition* in French

Certificate 1: Kevin Ly, Bernice Zhu

Certificate 2: Sing-Young Chen, Julia Liang, Michelle Wang, Rachel Wang, Kelly Wu, Ceci Yu

- Annette Onodi achieved a High Distinction at Certificate 1 level in the *Australian Languages Competition* in German
- Emily Hall, Clarence Ma and Sydney Tang won *Genesys Scholarships* and spent 10 days in Japan

Human Society and its Environment

- 6 High Distinctions in the *UNSW Australian Economics Competition* were awarded to Kevin Guo, Jodic Chan, Esther Lee, Proteek Chowdhury, Richard Du and Kajal Verma.
- 5 High Distinctions in the *UNSW Business Studies Competition* were awarded to Cheuk Lam, Melissa Lee, Jason Ye, Jaffly Chen and Bruce Huang
- Alexander Yeung came in the top 5% of all students in Australia for the *National Geographic Geography Competition*
- Jason Ye came 3rd in NSW in the *Australian History Competition*
- Four Year 7 students: Harry Dong, Eric Tan, Daniel Yan, Simon Yang won the History Teachers' Association of NSW *History Mastermind Competition*. This was the first time our school has won this competition
- Year 11 students participated successfully in the *Mock Trial* competition
- 3 Year 11 students were finalists in the Polytechnic University's *Innovation and Entrepreneurship Student Challenge* in Hong Kong: Beryl Lin, Johnny Huang and William Huang

Science

- To celebrate International Year of Chemistry, James Ruse students from Year 11 were invited to the inaugural

Towards Global Artificial Photosynthesis International Conference at Lord Howe Island in August. Twelve JR delegates made fabulous presentations to an audience that included world renowned speakers in this field



- Jinghang Luo was selected to represent Australia at the *International Physics Olympiad* in Bangkok, where he was awarded a Bronze medal for his performance. He also represented Australia at the *Asia Pacific Physics Olympiad* in Israel
- *Science Olympiads Qualifying exam*: 158 students participated in the National Qualifying examinations in Biology, Chemistry and Physics and received these results:

High Distinctions	40
Distinctions	66
Credit	46

- Following this exceptional result, 9 students were invited as scholars to the Summer School at Monash University.
 - Biology – David Roshan and Victor Yang
 - Chemistry – Brian Gao, Bonita Gu, Marco Lee, Jim Ng and Tahsin Ali
 - Physics – Brian Gao, Steven Xu and Johnny Huang
- 84 students from Year 7 completed a 9-week enrichment program as part of the Junior Science Enrichment program
- *FAST*: 22 profoundly gifted students from Year 7 completed a holiday program in accelerated Science and Informatics

working with a mentor. They had experiences which aimed to catapult them to the frontiers of these fields

- *Prof Harry Messel International Science School (ISS)*: Three students won scholarships to attend this very prestigious school
- *International Science Competition (UNSW)*: 584 students competed with 2 students being placed First in the State, receiving their medals at a ceremony at UNSW

• High Distinctions	• 180
• Distinctions	• 298
• Credits	• 102

- *Rio Tinto Big Science Competition*: 14 students attended a formal presentation to receive “top scorer” awards at Australian Parliament House in Canberra
- *National Youth Science Forum*: 14 Year 11 students were invited to participate in a 12-day program after being selected through a vigorous and highly competitive process involving Rotary
- *US Space Academy* - Jason Chen and Michelle Wang took part in a one-week program at the Space Academy in Huntsville, Alabama in September
- 12 students made it to the final round of the *2011 Brain Bee* challenge
- Our students achieved great results in the Science Teacher’s Association of *NSW Young Scientist Award*
 - Avan Zeng – Special Award
 - Daniel Feng – Third in Chemistry
 - Eklavya Wangoo –Third in Earth and Environmental Science
 - Mudith Jayasekara – UWS Greater Western Sydney Science Award
- 32 Year 10 students competed in the *Science and Engineering Challenge* at *Macquarie University*, where they received 2nd place.
- A school team consisting of eight Year 11 students competed at the *Science and Engineering Challenge* at UNSW, having

to build bridges that could withstand the greatest load



English

- Alexander Au was selected to the *Fresh Ink Young Writers Ensemble*.
- Charmaine Lo was awarded the International Prize winner for her essay on peace for the *Radiant Peace Foundation International Peace Education Competition*
- Our Year 12 debating team were regional winners
- The Year 11 debaters were semi-finalists in the *Premier’s Debating Challenge*
- Our James Ruse Year 8 debating team were highly successful reaching the State semi-finals
- Thanya Sritharan was chosen to be a member of the regional debating team
- Yoshua Selvadurai was awarded a highly commended certificate for his entry in the *2011 Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Competition*
- ICAS medal winners in 2011 were:
 - Simon Yang – Writing
 - Belinda An – Writing
 - Danny Xu – English
- We had a large number of students across all grades who competed in a variety of public speaking competitions including; *Legacy, Plain English* and *Toastmasters*

- Many students were selected to compete in the *Regional Shakespeare Festival*.
Achieving 1st place in their section:
Photography – Michael Ma
Costume Design – Jason Wen and Bryan Zhu
Dance and Movement – Shefali Chaukra
Music A – Natalie Li and Michelle Wang
Music B – Karen Gong, Elizabeth Hsu, Jessie Zhang, Sarah Chang and Vivian Ng
- Kiran Kancherla was selected to compere *PULSE* at the Sydney Opera House

Mathematics

- Nancy Fu, Victor Khou, Rachel Wong and Jonathan Zheng were invited to attend the April selection school for the *Australian Mathematics Olympiad* team
- Nancy Fu was selected to represent Australia at the *IMO* in Amsterdam and achieved a Bronze medal
- In the *Australian Mathematics Olympiad*:
 - Gold Certificate – Nancy Fu
 - Silver – Victor Khou, Rachel Wong and Allan Zhang.
 - Bronze – Brian Gao, Chris Gu, Jonathan Zheng and Kevin Guo
- Four students were invited to participate in the *XXIII Asian Pacific Mathematics Olympiad 2011*:
 - Silver Award – Victor Khou
 - Bronze Award – Rachel Wong
 - Honourable Mention – Nancy Fu
 - Invited Awardee – Jonathan Zheng
- In the 2011 *Intermediate AMOC* :
 - High Distinctions – Patrick So, Yang Song, Jonathan Zheng, Belinda An, Jack Jiang and Wilson Liu
 - 28 students received distinctions and 35 received credits
- In the 2011 *Senior AMOC*: Victor Khou and Rachel Wong achieved prizes and Nancy Fu received a Distinction

- Our students performed exceptionally in the *Australian Mathematics Competition*:
 - Karen Gong and Megan Zhang achieved a medal and Karen also received the *Prudence Award* for a perfect score in the junior division; all in Hobart

Year	Medal	Prize	HD	D	Credit
7		21	43	53	2
8	2	18	38	50	13
9		45	58	15	
10		12	38	66	18
11		4	52	71	24
12		2	23	29	29

- Students once again achieved fabulous results in the *50th Annual UNSW Mathematics Competition*
 - In the junior division 4 students achieved a high distinction and 7 students achieved a distinction
 - In the senior division, Jinghang Luo achieved 2nd prize, Nancy Fu and Allan Zhang tied for 3rd prize; 3 students received a high distinction and 6 students achieved a distinction
- *2011 Maths Enrichment Series*:

Year	High Distinction	Distinction	Credit
7 Euler	7	12	12
8 Gauss	14	11	4
9 Noether	20	9	2
10 Polya	4	17	18

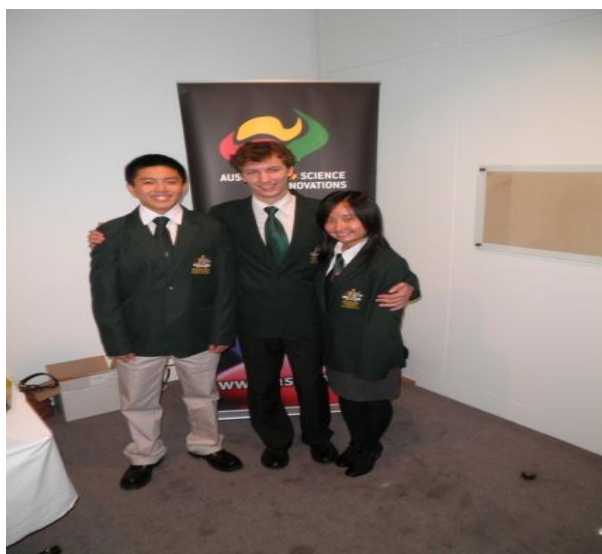
- James Ruse continued to excel in the *Mathematics Challenge for Young Australians*:

Year/ Division	High Distinction	Distinction	Credit
7- junior	2	2	2
8- junior	23	6	9
9 - intermediate	10	5	8
10 - intermediate	20	5	7

- In the *2011 APSMO Year 7*, for the fifth year in a row, won the “2011 Team of the Year – Division S Olympiads”. 7L and 7T were awarded 1st place
- Jinghang Luo, Gerald Mak and Allan Zhang received medals for the *2010 Mathsearch* competition
- Victor Khou, Nancy Fu, Rachel Wong, Jonathan Zheng, Patrick So and Yang Song were selected to attend the *AMOC Mathematics School of Excellence* in December

Informatics

- Evgeny Martynov was selected into the *Australian Informatics Olympiad* team to compete at the IIO which was held in Thailand. Evgeny achieved a Silver medal to add to the two Bronze medals he had won in the previous two years



- Our students performed extremely well in the *Australian Informatics Olympiad*:
 - Gold Medals – Kevin Shi, Joshua Lau, Evgeny Martynov
 - Silver Medals – Ray Li, Sai Muralidaran, Kajan Parameshwaran, Michael Su and Leo Huang
 - Bronze medals – Bruce R. Huang, Daaron Chiu and Morgan Xu
- In the *Australian Invitational Informatics Olympiad* a Silver Medal was awarded to Evgeny Martynov
- We again won the prestigious *UNSW Progcomp*. Team members in 2011 were Evgeny Martynov, Joshua Lau and Ray Li. Our junior team also placed 21st in the competition
- 7 students were invited to the *Informatics School of Excellence*: Michael Su, Leo Huang, Kevin Shi, Joshua Lau, Ray Li, Daaron Chiu and Sai Muralidaran

Sport

- Yale Yi was selected for *Nationals* 50m Breaststroke
- Yoshua Selvadurai was selected to compete in the *State Cross Country*
- Mudith Jayasekara competed in the *2011 Australian Junior Championships* for Athletics and was awarded the U15's *Pole Vault National Champion* title
- Erny Tsao competed in the *NSW Table Tennis Junior Closed Competition*, the *NSW Table Tennis Junior Open Championships* and in Hobart in the *U21 Australian Championships* achieving superior results in all competitions. Erny was selected into the Australian teams to play in Korea, Guam and Bahrain
- Sarah Tan competed in the *NSW Open Junior Championships*, *NSW Closed Junior Championships*, the *Australian Junior National Championships* and in Hobart in the *U21 Australian Championships* achieving fabulous results. Sarah was selected into the *Junior National Table Tennis Team* and competed in Guam and Bahrain

- Our *School Table Tennis Team* won the NSW State Title
- Dominique Chan achieved 2nd place in the *National Taekwondo Titles 2011*



Leadership

- Brian Gao and Vashnavi Ganapathy were selected to attend the *Rising Generations Leadership camp*.
- Sharon Mo and Delian Entchev were selected into the *Director General for a Day* program.
- Leanne Qian and Albert Kartawardana were selected to represent the school at the *Parliament House Leadership Program*.
- Kwynne Yuan won the *Chinese Cultural Knowledge* and was invited to China to take part in the competition.
- Lindy Hua won a *Marie Bashir Peace Award* for 2011.



- Roy Chowdhury received the Minister's Award for *Excellence in Student Achievement*

- Sanji Fernando was awarded the *Order of Australia Community Service Commendation*
- Cheuk Lam and Sophia Song were selected as mentors for Taronga's *Science Week* workshops

Representative Chess

- Five teams were entered in the *NSWJCL Metropolitan Secondary Schools Competition*
- The Intermediate A team (Joshua Lau, Frank Zhu, Mark Lin, Jackie Wu and Lalit Prasad) won their division and regional competitions
- James Ruse was represented by two teams (Open: Joshua Lau, Marco Lee and Suraj Ashok Murthy; Junior: Frank Zhu, Jackie Wu and Lalit Prasad) in the *Secondary Schools One-Day Tournament*. The competition was of a very high standard. The Open team came fifth whilst the Junior team came second
- Many of our students took part in individual player NSWJCL competitions over the school holiday periods. The highlights were:
 - Joshua Lau – 1st Summer 3-day tournament as well as Top Scorer -14 yrs
 - Austin Shen – 2nd Summer 3-day tournament
 - Suraj Ashok Murthy – 3rd Summer 1-day tournament as well as Top Scorer -16 yrs
 - Austin Shen – 3rd Autumn 2-day tournament
 - Jackie Wu – 1st Winter 1-day tournament as well as Top Scorer -14 yrs.
 - Suraj Ashok Murthy- Winter 1-day tournament – Top Scorer 16yrs
 - Lalit Prasad – 4th Winter 1-day tournament
 - Frank Zhu – 4th Winter 2-day tournament
 - Mark Lin – 4th Winter 2-day
 - Lalit Prasad – Winter 2-day tournament– Top Scorer 14yrs



Academic

In the *National Assessment Program*, the results across the Years 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 these assessments.

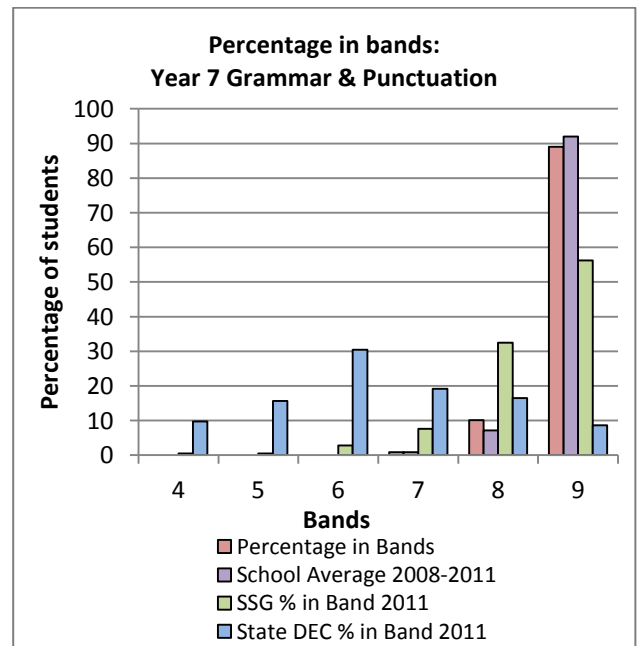
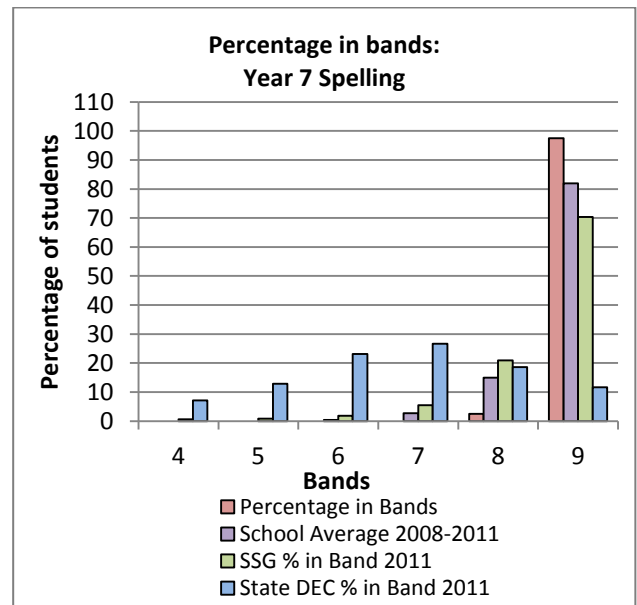
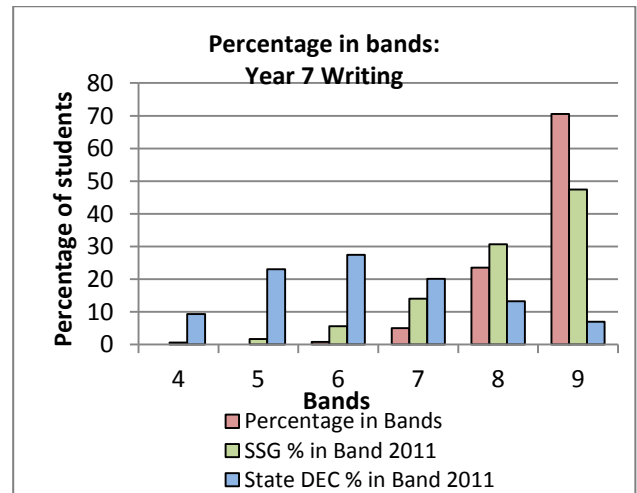
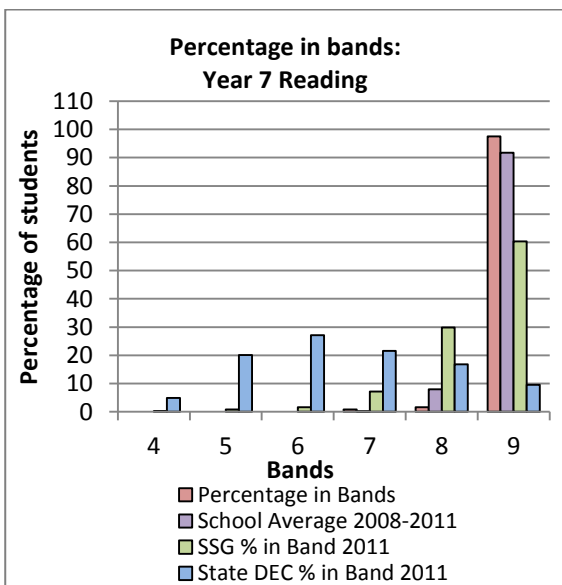
Yr 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)

Yr 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

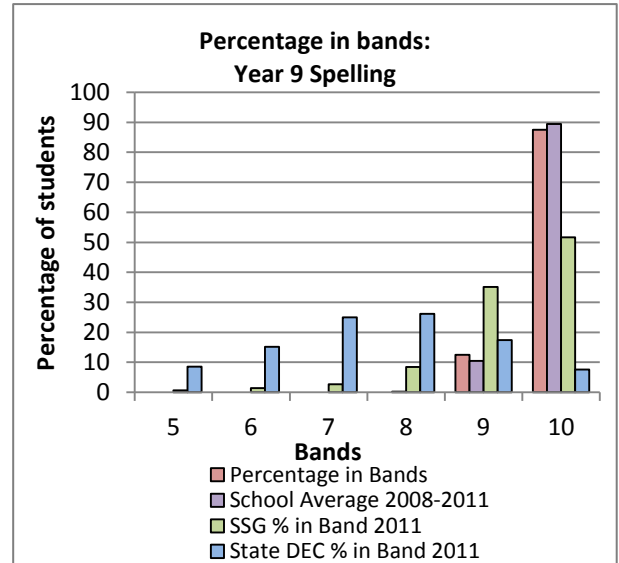
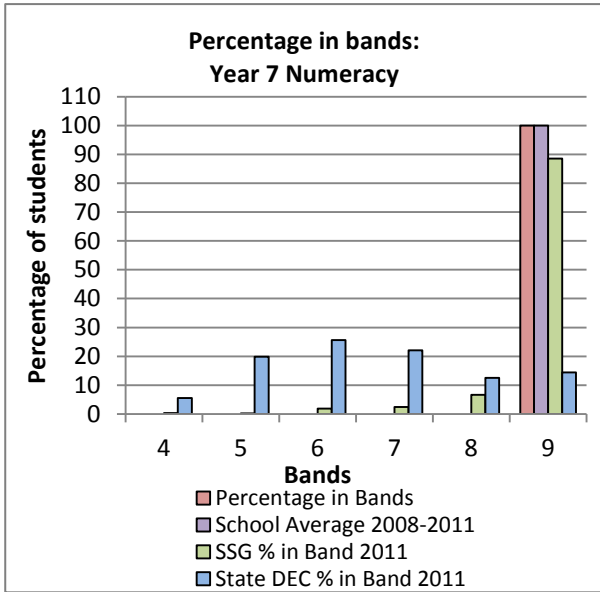
In the School Certificate the performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from Performance Band 1 (lowest) to Performance Band 6 (highest).

All graphs reflect a comparison with the state results and a comparison with our SSG (statistically similar group of schools).

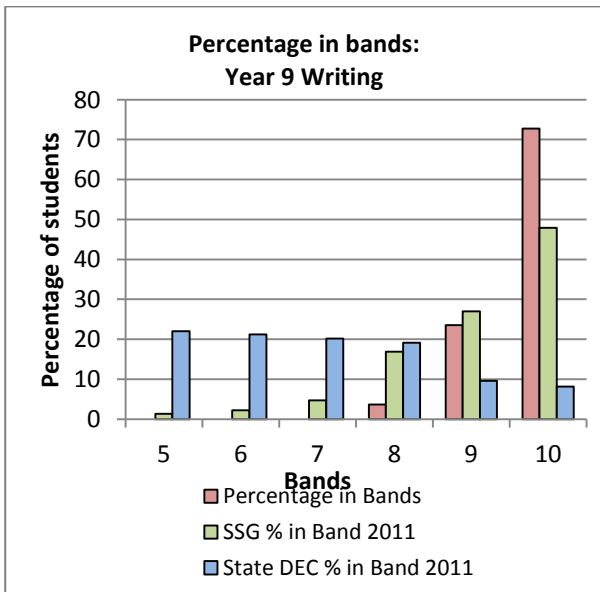
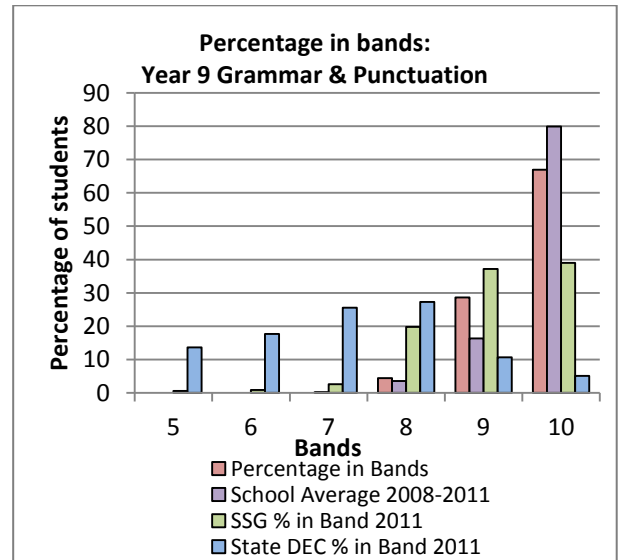
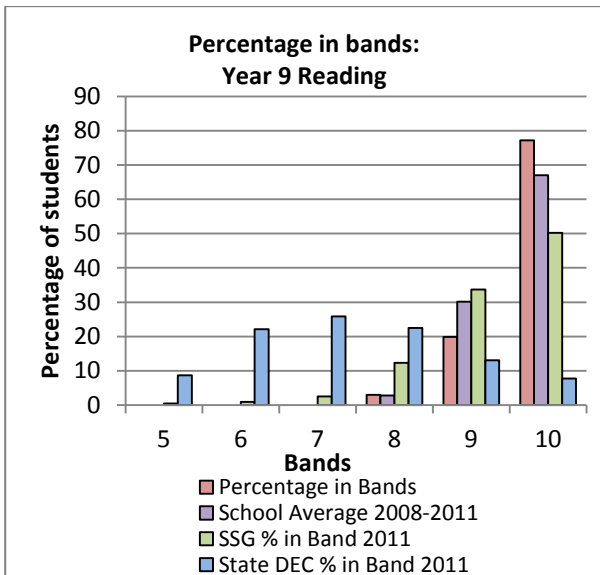
Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7



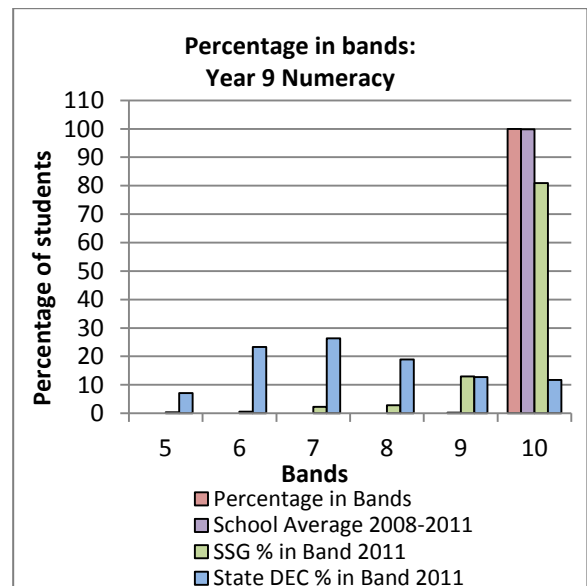
Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7



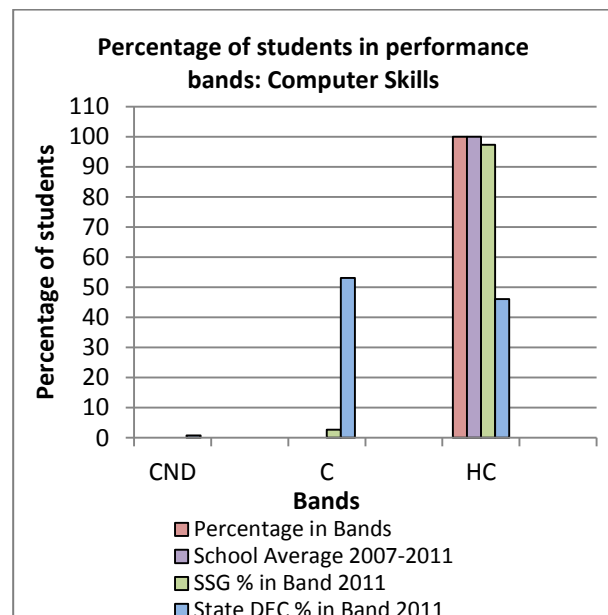
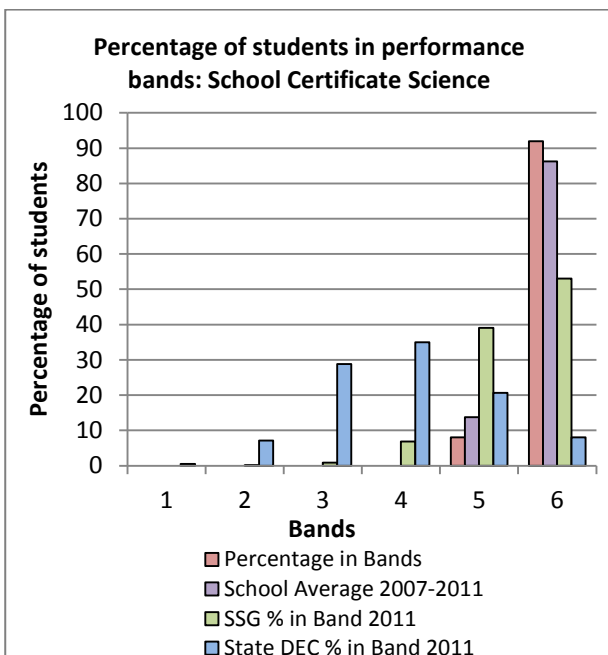
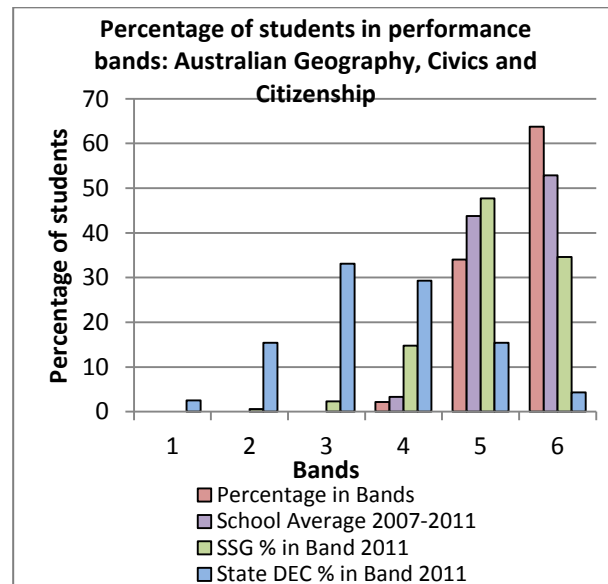
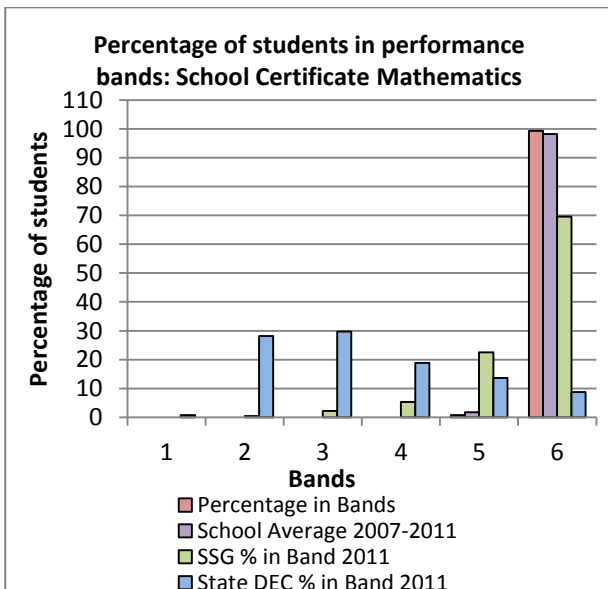
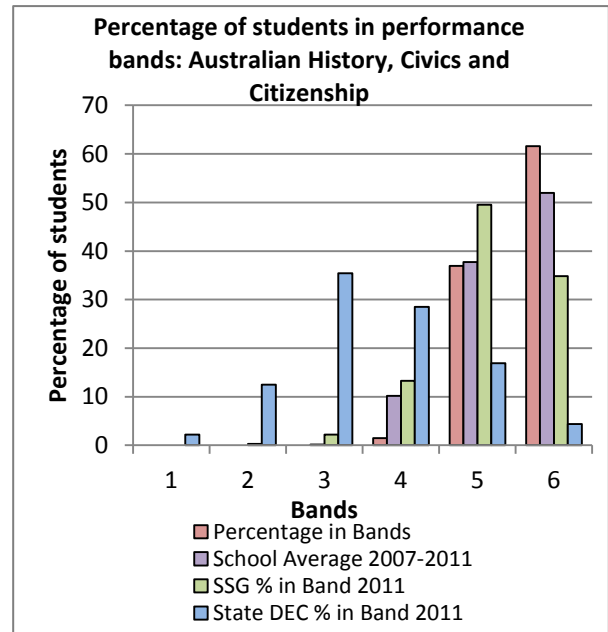
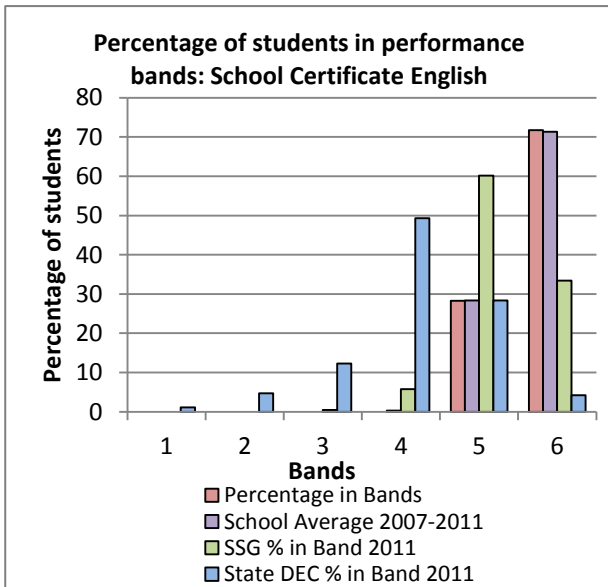
Literacy – NAPLAN Year 9



Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9



School Certificate



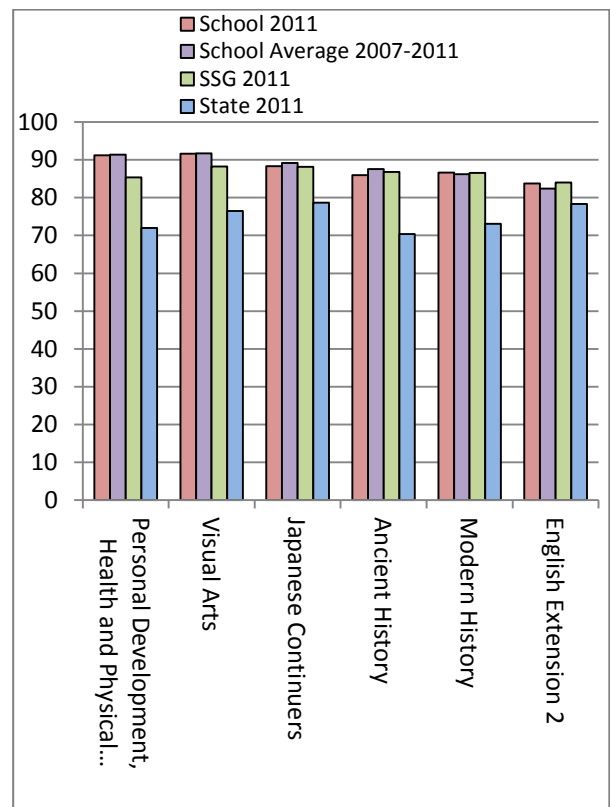
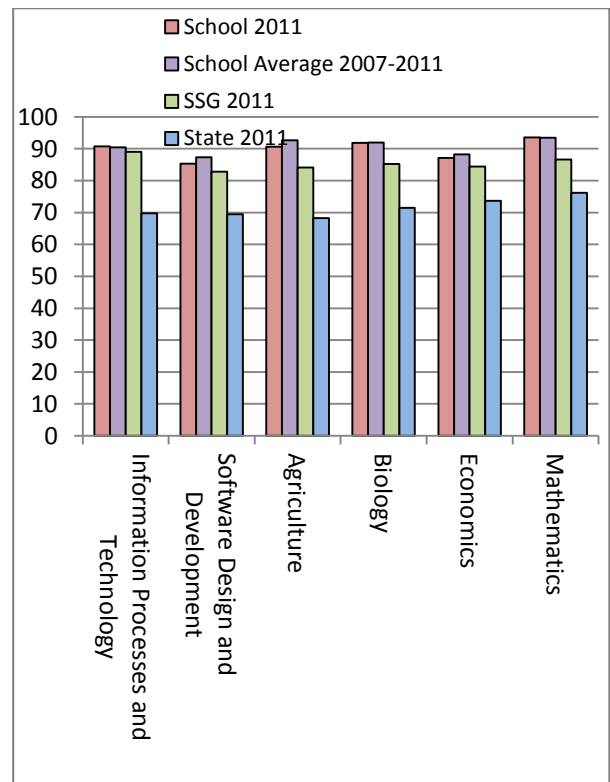
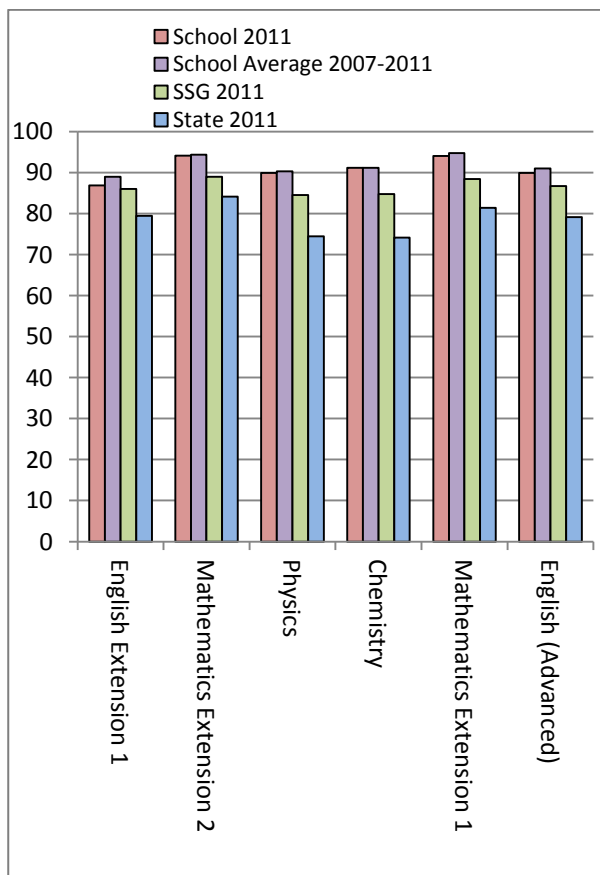
School Certificate relative performance comparison to Year 5 (value-adding)

Course	JRAHS 2011	JRAHS Mean 2007-2011	SSG Mean 2011
English	4.8	3.6	2.7
Mathematics	6.7	5.7	5.5
Science	4.7	3.5	2.5
Australian History, Civics and Citizenship	5.4	2.1	3.9
Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship	5.3	2.1	3.8
Computer Skills	2.1	1.6	2.1

Note: By definition, the State average relative performance is zero

It was very pleasing to see that our Year 10 value adding results were once again outstanding and all were an improvement on our average value adding for the last four years. NAPLAN is not designed to measure high end value adding. Compared to our statistically similar or like schools (eg other selective high schools) our results were also very favourable.

Higher School Certificate

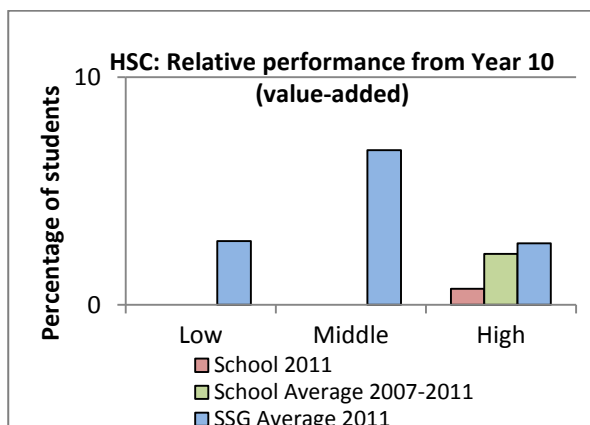


Once again our HSC results were outstanding with a median ATAR being achieved of 99.1.

Nine students received the highest ATAR of 99.95:

- Anna Zhong
- Sherman Siu
- Frank Liu
- Elizabeth Huynh
- Andrew Lee
- Peter Joon Lee
- Babitha Selvananthan
- Carmen Tran
- Timothy Le
- In 2011 we achieved wonderful state rankings across a range of subjects:
 - Biology – Betty Huang 14th, Angela Le 16th, Jeffery Wang 18th and Carmen Tran 19th
 - Chemistry – Peter Joon Lee 4th, Carmen Tran 6th, Andrew Lee 9th, Frank Liu 10th, Shefali Chaukra 11th, Edward Lo Cao and Christine Wu 12th and Jeffery Wang 16th
 - Information Processes and Technology – Sumedh Jayanti 3rd
 - Mathematics Extension 2 – Vincent Kong 5th, Jinghang Luo 9th and Dennis Lam 10th
 - PDHPE – Jason Ko – 2nd
 - Physics – Peter Joon Lee 8th and Andrew Lee 9th
 - Software Design and Development – Joshua Lau 9th

Higher School Certificate relative performance comparison to School Certificate (value-adding)



In comparison with 2010 we saw improvement in Biology, Chemistry, Economics, English Extension 2, Music Extension, PDHPE, Physics and Visual Arts (Z-score analysis).

Minimum standards

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards for reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

The performance of the students in our school in the *National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy* is compared to these minimum standards.

Percentage of Year 7 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)	
Reading	100.0
Writing	100.0
Spelling	100.0
Grammar & Punctuation	100.0
Numeracy	100.0
Percentage of Year 9 students achieving at or above minimum standard (exempt students included)	
Reading	100.0
Writing	100.0
Spelling	100.0
Grammar & Punctuation	100.0
Numeracy	100.0

Significant programs and initiatives

Gifted Education 2011

Our vision at James Ruse Agricultural High School is to effectively educate the 21st century learner. Our students require specific knowledge, understanding, skills, values and capabilities in order to adapt to and to develop their full potential in the overwhelming and constantly evolving world. At the end of our students' formal schooling, the global village demands that our gifted and talented learners think critically, holistically, creatively and imaginatively. In 2011, teachers expertly continued to prepare students

for the world beyond James Ruse and effectively enriched and extended our gifted and talented students through curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Gifted Initiatives, Projects and Achievements

Shakespeare Festival 2011

James Ruse students embraced, yet again, an important twenty-first century skill at the school, regional and state Shakespeare Festivals: creativity. The Youth Festival which is driven by the participants themselves allowed our talented students to explore Shakespeare's work through performance, movement and dance, music, design and photography. It celebrated their response to and interpretation of Shakespeare's plays as they were empowered to manipulate and gain ownership of the Bard's language and concepts. Our students performed extremely well at every level and were congratulated and highly commended by the industry professionals in attendance.



Ideas Forum (IF...?)

IF...? was an extra-curricular Gifted and Talented initiative based on the revolutionary TED Talks. The team at TED believes passionately in the power of ideas – ideas that will ultimately change attitudes and lives. At James Ruse, our aim was very similar. We wanted to provide our intelligent students with a chance to explore their passions beyond the curriculum. *IF...?* aimed to create a safe space where students could be the experts in their chosen areas and share their opinions with confidence. *IF...?* was all about making JR students THINK, question and ultimately construct their own views on the ideas discussed.

An extremely popular and enlightening event with over 100 students presenting, *IF...?*, will definitely be back in 2012.



GATE Newsletter

The GATE newsletter was completed at the end of 2011. The GATE topics presented touched on some of the themes and concerns within the JR 2012-2014 School Plan (namely creativity and perfectionism), explored contemporary movers and shakers in these areas and of course recognised the efforts of James Ruse staff and their commitment to our extensive extra-curricular programs. At the heart of the information presented was the effective education of the 21st century learner.



Agricultural Initiatives

The aim of Agriculture is to develop students' knowledge and understanding of agricultural enterprises and the practices and skills required in producing plant and animal products. Students develop skills in the effective management of sustainable production and marketing practices that are environmentally and socially responsible.

The Agriculture teaching programs and the school Farm provide students with the opportunities to understand and appreciate the essential aspects of agriculture.

On the farm, improvements continue to be made to make it a very useful teaching resource for Agriculture, providing students with invaluable experience. Sustainable practices continue to be used and introduced on the farm. They include; the use of organic fertilizers, reduced cultivation, planned rotation of the vegetable plots, composting, using mulch, mowing between the fruit trees, drip irrigation in the orange orchard, appropriate stocking rates and adhering to the land capability classification system. These sustainable practices are employed on the farm in order to align the management of the farm more closely with the requirements of the syllabuses and modern agricultural practice.

The teaching programs have been designed to allow students to develop knowledge and understanding of the interaction between the components of agriculture and the scientific principles that explain the processes involved in producing agricultural products.

Our bees are thriving under the management of the *Parramatta Amateur Beekeepers* care. There are ten hives and there was a good harvest of honey. The bees and the hives are an integral part of the Year 7 Bee unit.

The *Hydroponics* system is being utilized as a valuable teaching resource especially in the comparison between growing vegetables in a soil environment and a soil- less environment.

The many Agricultural initiatives, including poultry squad and Rural Youth, are an important and integral component of the school and involve many students.

One of the key strategies to enhance authentic learning and make connections between the classroom and the real life application of the knowledge was the initiation of the Agriculture enrichment program. To avoid students missing on their timetabled classes, the program is run outside school hours every second Monday and is offered only to 25 year 10 students. As students are accelerated in the discipline of Agriculture,

year 10 students are actually studying the preliminary course. The program is very flexible and takes into account the students' interests. It does not have a formal assessment and it is not part of any reward system encouraging only those students who have an interest in the subject. The Ag Enrichment program uses James Ruse Farm as the main resource. Most activities are hands on and are closely related to the syllabus without making any direct reference to class work. The activities are very diverse ranging from pregnancy detection in cows to cooking exotic vegetables. The activities are decided upon after robust discussion among students and keeping their interests in mind. The program allows students to explore agricultural concepts in much more depth and encourages lateral thinking. Students are often presented with real life problems and they are encouraged to come up with the solutions. It allows them to make sense of the learning that happens in the classroom and therefore is a very worthwhile complementary learning forum for the students.



Extensive Music Programs

Music programs within the curriculum are supported by an extensive array of music extracurricular activities. All students can showcase their talents at a number of activities throughout the year including cabaret night, multicultural night, dance festival, performers' and composers' competitions. The annual school musical production for 2011 was *The Boy Friend*. Students often perform at school assemblies. The

band program continues to expand, with senior, intermediate and beginners' bands, the marching band performed in the ANZAC Day parade. The choir participated in the Celebration Concert.



Cadets

2011 was another successful and challenging year for the James Ruse Agricultural High School Cadet Unit (JRAHSCU). With a large number of new recruits coming into the unit, staff and senior cadets used their experience to ensure the effective and efficient operation of the Unit. Regular home parades provided opportunities for our cadets to improve their skills in such areas as, navigation, first aid and survival. During these parades cadets also received training in leadership and high performance was rewarded, with many promotions throughout the year.



The Unit also completed bivouacs in picturesque locations such as the Wollemi and Marramorra National Parks. These activities proved to be excellent character building experiences. In addition, members of the Unit enjoyed a day conquering their fear of heights, abseiling in the Blue Mountains. At the end of the year, 37 cadets attended an Annual Camp in Victoria and walked

part of the Great South West Walk along the picturesque southern coastline.

During 2011 the JRAHSCU represented the school and the Australian Army Cadets at a State level. In July, several members of our unit performed exceptionally well in Army promotion courses at Singleton. All cadets involved in these activities, enjoyed themselves and returned to the Unit with new skills that will stay with them through school and throughout life.



Duke of Edinburgh Scheme

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme has operated at the school for many years. There are currently over 100 enthusiastic students engaged in the Scheme from year 9 to year 12. There are three levels of the Award: Bronze, Silver and Gold. Participants set themselves personal challenges at each level in each activity.



There are four sections which are designed to present a balanced program of personal development.

- Service – designed to develop and encourage a sense of community spirit and responsibility to others
- Adventurous Journey – designed to encourage a spirit of adventure and discovery
- Skill – designed to encourage the development of personal interests and practical skills
- Physical – designed to encourage participation in physical recreation and improvement in fitness and performance

At Gold level there is a further requirement to undertake a Residential Project. Participants design their own program and select activities which interest them. There are minimum requirements of time in each section and at each level.



Several hikes were conducted during 2011 for students involved at all award levels. Despite the challenging terrain, frequent rain, and subsequent proliferation of leeches and other insects, students managed to complete the hikes without injury or illness. Bronze practice and test hikes occurred in areas such as the Blue Mountains, Gosford and Hornsby. A Silver practice hike was conducted in October, with students hiking from Somersby Store to Wondabyne, camping two nights.

36 students completed their Awards in 2011, 25 Bronze, 8 Silver and 3 Gold Awards. Special thanks go to Mr Michael Iverach for his coordination of Duke of Edinburgh and implementation of hiking activities over the years.



Fitness Initiatives

Catering to the physical needs of gifted students is a high priority at our school. Students in Years 7 to 10 participated in a fitness program where a student's fitness is evaluated twice a year and programs put in place to assist any student who has a low level of fitness. The program incorporates cardio vascular assessment, multi stage fitness commonly called the BEEP test and flexibility testing. Our canteen also operates on a healthy food policy.

Student Clubs

Extra-curricular activities are numerous at James Ruse Agricultural High School. Our students participate in a large number of clubs and activities including *Interact*, *Amnesty International*, *Rural Youth*, *ISCF*, *Computer Programming*, *Happiness equals Bracket*, *Go Green*, *Chess*, *Animal Handling* and *Poultry Club*. All clubs are led by students with teacher stewardship. Some of these clubs have additional support from outside bodies such as Rotary.

Aboriginal education

James Ruse Agricultural High School is committed to developing cultural competency in Aboriginal Education. In every Key Learning Area, themes incorporating Aboriginal culture have been incorporated. These themes include increasing the knowledge and understanding of the histories, cultures and experiences of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people as the First Peoples of Australia.

The strength, diversity, ownership and richness of Aboriginal cultures and Custodianship of Country

are respected, valued and promoted at all major functions conducted at the school.



Multicultural education

All aspects of school life reflect the richness of the many cultures represented at our school. Embedded into school curriculum is the theme of globalisation and its impact on every level of our lives. Current issues relating to world economics, displacement of people, global peace and the similarities and differences of cultures are explored in our classrooms. Our student groups including the *Prefect* body, *Amnesty International* and *Interact* highlight many social justice issues and offer assistance through fundraising to organisations assisting with global disasters.

Our four Foodfairs in 2011 incorporated the very nature of our multicultural school and increased parent involvement in the school while celebrating various cultures.

Respect, Responsibility and Leadership

The SRC formalised values based education at James Ruse. The student body created ASPIRE – a word which stands for acceptance, service, participation, integrity, respect and endeavour – the values which are important to the whole school. This word has become part of all activities in the school from athletics carnivals to debating and even competing against other schools in sport. These values are embedded in our academic and wellbeing curriculum as well as the *Year 7 Induction Program*.

Co-Curricular activities that operate within the school that are founded on these values include the *Cadet Unit*, *Peer Support Program*, *High resolves*, *SRC*, and the *Resourceful Adolescent Program*. This last program was implemented to

help year 8 students with developing skills in resilience.

Our *Student Representative Council* and *Prefect* body are highly active in not only taking on leadership roles within the school but volunteering for charity events and giving up time to help others. The school leaders led by Roy Chowdhury (Captain), Daniel Xue (Vice Captain) and Helen Chan (Senior Prefect) formed a strong leadership team within the school. The prefects still continue supporting staff, providing, leadership, enhancing school spirit and acting as excellent role models for all years.



The prefects worked diligently at Christmas, Easter, Halloween, Prefect assemblies and especially Valentine's Day. At each assembly Prefect News was a wonderful way of keeping up to date with the prefect events. Basketball, dodge ball and soccer were some of the sporting events that kept the school entertained at recess and lunch. Charities such as *the Cancer Council*, *World Vision*, *Pink Ribbon Day* and *Bandana Day* were also supported. Staff continually appreciate the help and support and tireless energy from this amazing group of dedicated students.



Within the SRC many students were selected for a variety of leadership opportunities in 2011. Most notably, Sharon Mo, the president of the SRC was selected to be *Director General of Education* for a day. Delian Entchev, the treasurer of the SRC, was selected to be *Regional Director* for a day. Chelsea Valentin from year 10 attended the SRC Western regional Camp in 2011. Brian Gao and Vaishnavi Ganapathy, from year 11, attended the SRC leadership Conference in 2011. Annie Lu and Amelia Varua, from year 11, attended the *Women's Leadership Conference* at Parliament House in October.

The SRC met fortnightly this year to plan activities such as charity work, environmental activities and of course SRC week in term 2. The focus of this term was a highlight for a dedicated group of students. The theme of science fiction proved successful from *Martian Monday*, to crazy food day and the amazing *Moonwalk Dance*. One major initiative was the installation of filtered water in the playground and near the oval for all students. Cold water systems were installed in the canteen and now all students are able to fill up their water bottles with cold water.

Three of our year 11 students entered and won an entrepreneurial competition. The final round was at the Poly Technic University in Hong Kong. Mrs Mayers and Ms St Louis accompanied William Lin, Beryl Lin and Johnny Huang to Hong Kong in June for one week. The students competed against teams from around the world and placed in the top 5 for their advertisement and in the top 6 in the world for their presentation. The 3 students had to make a persuasive pitch for a product or service and then create a 15 minute presentation and answer questions from professors from around the world.

Mrs Pooviah accompanied 13 students to Lord Howe Island in Term 4 to attend a conference on artificial photosynthesis. The students researched the topic and participated in a

weeklong series of lectures and workshops with leading scientists.

Year 11 students raised money and awareness of the Tsunami in Japan. Lindy Hua, Isabella Kwai, Roy Chowdhury and Sharon Mo began the project in March, aiming to raise \$10,000. They did raise \$12,000 for the victims of the disaster and made 30,000 paper cranes which were sent as a symbol of prosperity and hope.

High Resolves once again flourished at JRAHS with all students in Year 8 and Year 9 participating in the global identity and collective action programs. Year 9 classes completed school action projects. 40 Year 10 students were selected to complete the community action program. The theme of their project was environmental awareness and education. The Year 10 group developed an education campaign to deliver to primary school children to teach the value of environmental sustainability.

Go Green, an environmental group, was established to raise awareness of sustainability issues. In conjunction with the SRC they were able to organise a major event to swap harmful plastic bottles with new sustainable bottles. To ensure the success of this program, the SRC installed water filtration systems in various locations. Earth Hour was a major initiative which not only raised awareness but reduced our electricity consumption.

Cambodian Social Justice Experience

The Hope for Cambodian Children Foundation and James Ruse Agricultural High School established their fruitful relationship in 2009 with the purposeful and vibrant *Shades for Aids* Campaign. It was during this initiative that we, as a school, acknowledged the need for HIV education both locally and globally.

In 2010, Mark Eldridge approached James Ruse about visiting the *Hope for Cambodian Children Foundation* in Battambang. We were extremely excited and developed a rationale for our experience -

1. As teachers of highly gifted and talented individuals, we are passionate about involving our students in rich, life changing and memorable learning experiences that reflect our school philosophy of creating the 'whole' person. We wanted our students to embrace the skills learned from our current leadership programs namely, social entrepreneurship and global citizenship so they are equipped with twenty-first century knowledge and understanding when they leave the gates of James Ruse.



2. Above all though, we wanted to build a strong, lasting and meaningful relationship with the staff and students from Hope and influence their lives in a positive way.

The Hope for Cambodian Children Foundation is an Australian non-government, not-for-profit organisation situated in the city of Battambang. Many of the children at the orphanage are there as they have been affected in some way by HIV/AIDS, or do not have the means for a proper education, home or family.

Our experience at Hope was special for many reasons;

- *From our initial communication and meeting, we were welcomed into a family. The caring, nurturing and supportive environment that you have fostered at Hope was seen and felt by our James Ruse Team. The beautiful gestures, informative and friendly conversations and hugs and handshakes established our deep connection. To*

achieve this notion of family and/or a community spirit - a challenge for any school but one that was so natural for the Hope Foundation.

- *The positive and effective staff and student leadership inspired us and allowed for a smooth and successful experience. Dy Samrach is a woman with amazing foresight and leadership capabilities. Her attention to detail and efficient direction of proceedings was truly admirable. Chen Ny welcomed us with open arms and astounded us with his excellent interpersonal and charming leadership skills. The entire Student Representative Council was positive, empowered and inspired.*
- *Our experience in the classroom environment was invaluable. As teachers, we were moved by the effective teaching and learning that occurred even with a lack of resources and at times overpowering heat. Our students felt empowered to be able to engage and improve the students' learning on a number of levels.*
- *The constant conversations that the James Ruse students and teachers held with the Hope family allowed us to see into your world which in effect fostered our students' philosophy of wanting to make a difference locally and globally. Your stories and experiences provided us with a license to explore Khmer life and culture but also afforded us a secret pass into the hearts and minds of inspiring young people. These intimate moments were so special and something that will never expire.*

Apart from our five days at Hope, we also had a tourist experience in Cambodia. We visited many extraordinary sites including one of the wonders of the world; Ankor Wat, which was built in the 12th century, and were also lucky enough to be able to ride elephants onsite. However, we were all awestruck by the giant trees supporting the temple of Ta Prohm. Another highlight of the trip, for very different reasons, was when we visited an integral part of Cambodia's history, the Killing Fields and Toul Sleng Prison, also known as S21.

The former high school was converted into a torture and killing centre during Polpot's regime in the 1970's, a dictator who had ordered the genocide of more than two million people under his rule. It was an emotionally draining experience but important to understand why Cambodia was in its current position.

It was an amazing learning journey for all involved.

Progress on 2011 targets

Target 1

Identify gifted underachievers and implement strategies to raise levels of individual achievement

Our achievements include:

- Successful identification via external and internal data of students needing support
- Creation and management of Individual Learning Plans of identified students by Assistant Year Advisors and welfare team
- Establishment of weekly welfare case management meetings of welfare team to devise strategies to assist students needing support
- Implementation of our 7 – 12 wellbeing curriculum eg peer support and resourceful adolescent programs to develop skills in resilience and resourcefulness
- Implementation of mentoring programs for Years 7-12 such as individual mentors in the junior school and peer study groups in the senior years
- Inclusion of student extracurricular achievements in school reports and references
- Implementation of the Resourceful Adolescent program for Parents
- Use of data to counsel students in Years 11 and 12 and the development of effective time management and motivational skills to enhance success
- Implementation of writing development (remedial) lessons in English

- Increased access to professional learning opportunities relating to anxiety, and perfectionism in students
- Attendance by 10 staff members at the *Happiness and Mind and Its Potential Conference*



- Continued development of Welfare and Anti Bullying policies
- Successful implementation of student leadership programs and opportunities including the *High Resolves* program, *Interact*, *Amnesty International* and a social justice initiative; the Cambodian overseas excursion

Target 2

Strengthen teacher capacity to improve student learning outcomes.

Our achievements include:

- Collaborative development of units of work and programs that link strategies to core and extended outcomes to ensure successful curriculum differentiation
- Successful mentoring of early career teachers and the achievement of accreditation for two teachers
- Effective use of professional learning funds to allow 125 opportunities of professional learning to occur for 52 teaching staff and 12 SASS staff
- Professional discussions with all staff as part of the TARS / EARS process to review evidence of programs and student/teacher feedback that reflected implementation of the Quality Teaching model and successful curriculum differentiation

- Increased access and awareness of teachers and school leader participation in programs that build capacity, school improvement and assist the development of the whole child
- Continued development and implementation of the new to James Ruse and early career teacher induction and mentoring program
- Continued support of staff in opportunities to support ongoing learning and expertise development.
- Utilisation of Selective High School and subject specific networks / professional association to increase collaboration and communication
- Promotion and participation in HSC and SC marking to develop skills in explicit feedback by an increased number of staff members
- Relieving by staff in higher positions and participation in internal leadership programs

Target 3

Innovate the use of interactive technologies for learning, teaching and for teacher professional learning.

Our achievements include:

- 18 professional learning opportunities were utilised to enhance application of technology and the use of the DERvices into programs and units of work
- Enhanced access to and use of the James Ruse Intranet which encouraged more effective teaching and learning
- Students developed digital learning resources across faculties using interactive technologies
- Teachers upskilled in the use of digital technologies and in using video conferencing facilities
- Development of programs and units of work to incorporate digital resources and learning tools
- Opportunities provided for critical student use of internet sources in the development of products
- Utilisation of online resources and video conferencing facilities

- Continued evaluation and development of network delivery
- Expansion of *Ruse ID*, a student group which manages the Intranet

Key Evaluations

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 2011 our school carried out evaluations of the Agriculture Faculty and Whole School Leadership and Culture (As One).

Educational and management practice

AS ONE Survey: Leadership and Culture at JRAHS

Due to our close association with the *High Resolves* Organisation and founder Mehrdad Baghai we were asked to participate in the development of an evaluation tool that would examine school culture, leadership style and the strength of collective action in the organisation. The comprehensive survey was completed by all students from years 7 – 11 and all staff. The survey aimed to look at the different types of team members and leaders in an organisation and their preferred models. The survey examined the shared identity of JRAHS and tested stakeholders' commitment to the priorities being developed as part of the 2011-2014 school plan.

Findings and Conclusions

Shared Identity refers to the degree to which individuals share identity with each other and the schools as a whole. The majority of both staff and students at JRAHS identified strongly with the school. However students shared a stronger identity with their year group or class. Of the staff, the executive identified most strongly with the school while other staff identified more strongly with their faculty or subject area. Teachers that had been teaching for less than 5 years but more than 1 exhibited the highest levels of shared identity with the organisation.

The survey aimed to classify the staff and students of JRAHS into the organisational archetypes that AS ONE had developed:

- Landlords and Tenants

- The Community Organiser and Volunteers
- Architect and Builders
- The Conductor and Orchestra
- The Producer and Creative Team
- The General and Soldiers
- The Captain and the Sports team
- The Senator and the Citizens

(Baghai and Quigley, 2011)



Of the staff, the main archetypes found:

- 36.73% Architect and Builder
- 30.61% Community Organisers and Volunteers archetype
- 12.24% Producer and Creative team
- 6.12% Landlord and Tenant

The staff members that fit into the Architect and Builders model believe in collaboration between diverse builders and the visions of the architect. This relationship requires a blueprint to be developed giving direction but then allowing the builders / teachers to work towards the achievement of this vision with trust and freedom.

The Community and Volunteers model is based on volunteers' bottom-up, autonomous, decision making ability. Organisers may have little direct power over the volunteers but through trust and understanding volunteers will strive to the achievement of the current goal.

The Producer and Creative team relies on the producers being able to provide the freedom to do their best work. The Landlord and Tenants relationship is based on top-down strategy that allows landlords to determine the best use of resources and ensuring the tenants are rewarded.



In creating a positive and dynamic culture and successful leadership platform at JRAHS it is necessary to consider the differences and similarities in the various archetypes displayed in the staff. **Communication and Collaboration** were determined to be key themes that needed to be improved and integrated into the future plans of JRAHS. While direction and freedom was very important to the many architects and builders, it was very important that the Community Organisers and Volunteers were given the ability to opt in. The implication of this finding for leaders was to allow these staff the opportunity to have a ballot and thoroughly commit to the purpose of any new decision / direction.

In testing the priorities of the school, a number of observations and recommendations were made:

- Stress, both for teachers and students, was a primary concern and needed to be addressed through a strong student wellbeing curriculum and commitment to staff welfare
- Students desired a voice in student learning and asked for choice in what and how they learn. **Creativity and Choice** need to be central to our future planning.
- Pride in and the positive promotion of one's school by students and staff needs to be addressed
- **Communication** with staff needs to be improved and reasons / purposes for decisions / plans explained
- Access to technology by staff was shown as frustrating and resources need to be dedicated to addressing this need

Future Directions

Creativity, Communication and Collaboration were identified as essential components to

creating a thriving culture at JRAHS that is able to build on individual action and collective power. In developing our 2011-2014 school plan these three themes have become the primary strategies and have been incorporated into all aspects of school life.

References

Baghai, M. and Quigley, J. (2011) *As One: Individual Action and Collective Power*. Penguin Group (USA).



Curriculum: Agriculture

In 2011 the Agriculture faculty was selected for evaluation. The respondents to the surveys were 7 Agriculture staff, 17 parents and 120 students.

STAFF

Curriculum planning and delivery

86% of staff felt that they usually or almost always catered for individual student differences through a differentiated curriculum. 57% of staff believed that they usually or almost always provided opportunities for group or independent learning that promoted depth of understanding. 86% believed that they usually or almost always encouraged students to discover key ideas individually through structured activities and/or teacher/student generated questions.

Problem solving

71% of staff felt that they usually or almost always engaged students in solution finding activities and in problem identification and

definition. 29% of staff believed that they sometimes did this.

Critical thinking strategies

57% of staff thought that they usually or almost always encouraged students to judge or evaluate situations, problems or issues. All staff felt that they usually or almost always provided opportunities for students to gain a deep understanding of agricultural concepts during the study of specific agricultural enterprises.

Creative thinking strategies

71% of staff thought that they usually or almost always engaged students in the exploration of diverse viewpoints in order to think about ideas in different ways. 86% of staff felt that they usually or almost always encouraged students to demonstrate open-mindedness and tolerance of imaginative solutions to problems.

Research strategies

All staff felt that they usually or almost always required students to consider evidence from multiple sources. 14% of staff believed that they almost always provided opportunities to analyse and present data in an appropriate manner and 71% of staff believed that they did this usually. All staff felt that they usually or almost always provided time for students to communicate and use appropriate language for required tasks.



PARENTS

Curriculum planning and delivery

65% of parents felt that the teacher usually or almost always adjusted class work to meet the needs of the students. 82% of parents thought that their child was usually or almost always given opportunities to work with children that have similar interests and abilities. 94% of parents considered the amount of homework that their child completed was usually or almost always appropriate to their learning level.



Problem solving

76% of parents believed that their child usually or almost always engaged in brainstorming ideas and defining problems and felt they were encouraged to identify and apply solutions to problems.

Critical thinking strategies

94% of parents felt that their child was usually or almost always provided with opportunities to judge or evaluate situations, problems or issues and felt that their child was encouraged to gain deep understanding of agricultural concepts from the study of agricultural enterprises.

Creative thinking strategies

71% of parents felt that their child was usually or almost always encouraged to think about situations or events in different ways, 24% felt this was sometimes done and 6% thought rarely. 65% of parents thought that their child was

usually or almost always encouraged to demonstrate imaginative solutions to problems and 35% thought this was sometimes done.

Research strategies

71% believed that their child was usually or almost always provided with opportunities to pursue personal interests through independent learning, 24% thought sometimes and 6% thought rarely. 88% of parents thought that their child usually or almost always engaged in analysing data and drawing conclusions. 76% of parents felt their child was usually or almost always provided with sufficient time to conduct research in order to present findings.

STUDENTS

Curriculum planning and delivery

80% of students felt that they usually or almost always worked on a variety of tasks within topics. 64% of students thought that they almost always worked in pairs or groups during practical work, and 69% thought that they sometimes or rarely worked in pairs or groups during class work. 62% of students believed that they usually or almost always discovered major concepts through structured activities and/or teacher/student generated questions.

Problem solving

11% of students thought that they almost always brainstormed ideas and considered solutions to problems, 82% thought they did this usually or sometimes and 8% thought they did this rarely. 78% of students thought that they usually or almost always were able to identify and apply solutions to problems.

Critical thinking strategies

73% of students believed that they usually or almost always made judgements about, or evaluated situations, problems or issues and 26% thought that they did this sometimes. 78% of students thought that they usually or almost always gained a deep understanding of agriculture through the study of agricultural enterprises and 18% felt they did this sometimes.

Creative thinking strategies

11% of students thought that they almost always were able to explore diverse ways to think about a situation and the cultural context, 83% of students thought that they usually or sometimes did this and 5% rarely. 4% of students felt that they could almost always offer imaginative suggestions as solutions to questions, while 76% felt they could do this usually or sometimes and 18% rarely.

Research strategies

29% of students thought that they almost always considered evidence from multiple sources using the skills of reading, writing and listening. 42% of students felt that they did this usually, 29% sometimes and only 3% rarely. 78% of students felt that they usually or almost always made inferences from data and drew conclusions, with 21% feeling that they did this sometimes. 90% of students thought that they usually or almost always communicated and used appropriate language for required tasks, with 10% feeling that they did this sometimes.

Future directions

The findings of the surveys have influenced the future planning of the Agriculture faculty. In planning for 2012 the faculty will incorporate strategies to address issues of curriculum planning and delivery and creative thinking strategies.

The key strategies will include:

1. Developing differentiated units of work that include extension activities to cater for the individual learning needs of students and increased opportunities for creative thinking and group work within the classroom context
2. Expanding professional learning in the area of creative thinking with the aim of encouraging students to develop confidence in their exploration of a diversity of viewpoints and offering imaginative solutions to problems

Professional learning

Professional Learning featured throughout 2011 as a key strategy to achieve the targets of the school plan and 148 professional learning

applications from teaching and SASS staff were approved.

School priority areas included the creation of a learning environment that is challenging and offers social and emotional wellbeing for every student; enhanced teacher learning in order to promote personal, professional and student learning; and using cognitive technologies as thinking and collaborative tools to meet the learning needs of the 21st century.

Professional Learning has been undertaken by individuals, faculties and cross faculty teams. It has covered a wide range of topics from subject specific, curriculum based content to whole school welfare, leadership and 21st century knowledge age practices.

James Ruse staff participated in a combined *School Development Day* with Baulkham Hills, Girraween and Penrith High Schools at the beginning of term 2. The guest speaker was Dr Tim Sharp who conducted sessions on applying the principles of positive psychology in teaching and learning.

The theme of the School Development Day in term 3 was *Using Technology to Enhance Creativity, Collaboration and Communication*. Karina Smith from DEC presented on *Social Networking with a Focus on Microblogging*, Mark Grady from DEC conducted a session on *Presentation Skills*, and James Ruse staff facilitated workshops on *Blog Ed*, *Using the Intranet*, *OneNote* and *Video Conferencing*.

A highlight of 2011 was the *Planning Conference* held in August at the Carrington Hotel during which Executive staff collaboratively developed the draft 2012-2014 School Plan.

Two School Development Days were held at the end of term 4. On the morning of the first day Dr Margaret Byrne presented to staff on *Understanding Chinese, Indian and Korean Values in Developing Creativity* and to parents on *Understanding the Bamboo Ceiling*. In the afternoon the focus was on Staff Wellbeing and four *Stress Buster Workshops* were conducted which emphasized communication and collaboration with a creative twist.

On the second day Kelly McMahon from the Crisis Prevention Institute presented to the whole staff on *Negotiating Conflict*. This was followed by faculty workshops lead by Head Teachers on *Creativity in the Classroom* and *Programming for Creativity*.

Teacher quality and consequent outcomes for gifted students have been enhanced by the extensive participation of James Ruse staff in professional learning throughout 2011.



School planning 2012—2014

School Priority Area 1: Creativity

Target 1.1

- **Expand the use of creativity in teaching and learning practices throughout the school.**

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Differentiate the curriculum to engage creative gifted students and develop the imaginative intelligence of all students
- Offer staff professional learning opportunities to enhance understanding of creativity
- Explicitly teach creative thinking skills and skills the gifted 21st century learner will require
- Develop units of work that encourage creativity throughout the curriculum and are programmed concurrently across faculties in stage 4 and stage 5
- Develop integrated cross curricular units of work around big concepts in Stage 4 and stage 5

- Employ a variety of personalised creative assessment and feedback strategies both formal and informal
- Develop ways to recognise and reward intellectual risk taking to achieve originality
- Explore possibilities for flexible timetabling, period length and learning spaces to facilitate student choice, independent study and personalised learning
- Encourage the use of external experts and provocative current media articles to link classroom learning to the real world
- Continue to grow our profile as a centre of excellence
- Ensure the implementation of the Department's Aboriginal education policies are monitored and reported on
- Plan and implement links with Aboriginal students from regional NSW
- Incorporate visits to schools with Aboriginal populations in the band tour program

School Priority Area 2: Collaboration

Target 2.1

- **Expand the philosophy of collaboration with students by building collaborative practices into teaching and learning**

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Increase cross faculty exchange of effective ideas and strategies
- Enable student centred and collaborative learning eg group work, forums, edublog, facebook, jigsaw, study groups, study circles, peer tutoring; and share, promote and publish results
- Involve students in planning units of work and assessment tasks
- Expand the use of connected classroom
- Increase awareness of modeling positive behaviour for staff and students

- Develop and publish consistent assessment policies and schedules for years 7 – 10 across the school

School Priority Area 3: Communication

Target 3.2

- **Communicate effectively the well-being curriculum and the values incorporated in these programs.**

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Communicate new anti-bullying policy and strategies to the whole school community
- Implement school discipline and welfare policy effectively across whole school
- Explore and evaluate the most effective means of communication to parents
- Promote regular Year Meetings to celebrate school achievement and promote student wellbeing
- Evaluate effectiveness of parent teacher nights, new student BBQ and parent information nights and implement improvements
- Create a parents' page on the intranet to promote awareness of student well-being programs
- Utilise technology e.g. SMS, intranet and email to create greater interaction between school and parents
- Enhance communication of ILPs to all staff involved and ensure effective strategies are developed to decrease the level of underachievement.
- Implement and evaluate new welfare software to ensure more effective communication re student progress and behaviour.



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.

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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:

<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/asr>