

Merredin College Annual Report 2023



Acknowledgement of Culture



Merredin College respectfully acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which our school sits. We value the traditions and knowledge the Noongar people have and acknowledge their contributions to the education of all children and people in this country, we all live in and share together, Australia.

School Context

Background for the Annual Report

The 2023 Annual Report provides student achievement information against the business plans targets established in the 2020-2022 Business Plan. In 2024 a substantive Principal has been appointed. A new business plan will be formulated during the year to guide the school's improvement journey moving forward.

The 2023 school year is recognised as a difficult year for the school with staffing shortages greatly impacting the school's operations and strategic intentions.

About Merredin College

Located 256 kilometres east of Perth in the Central Wheatbelt, Merredin College commenced in 2012 as a result of the amalgamation of three schools including Merredin Senior High School, South Merredin Primary School (along with the Westonia Annexe) and North Merredin Primary School. Initially on three sites, students moved to the Merredin College site at the end of Term 1 2012 when the building programme was completed.

For example, our motto is "Advance Together" and is based upon the old motto of "Advance" used by both Merredin Senior High School and North Merredin Primary School. The crest features three heads of wheat – one head of wheat for each school and recognizes the agricultural history of the district.

Annually the 18th September is set aside to honour the Merredin Senior High School students who lost their lives in a bus accident in 1982.



Principal Reflection

For Merredin College 2023 has been a challenging but overall wonderful journey with several incredible events, achievements, remarkable moments and unforgettable memories. From the first day of kindergarten where students embarked on their educational journey to our Year 12 students, who have reached the pinnacle of their time at Merredin College, it has been a year of growth, learning, and celebration.

Our school community has come together to deliver numerous events that have left an indelible mark on our hearts. We have witnessed the incredible talent and creativity from our students that have captivated and inspired us all. We have cheered on our sports teams as they competed with passion and determination, showcasing not only their athletic abilities but also their teamwork and sportsmanship.

Throughout the year, our students have also engaged in numerous community service activities, demonstrating empathy and compassion for others. From fundraising events to volunteering at local charities, our students have shown that they are not just learners but also responsible citizens who strive to make a positive difference in the world.

We have celebrated cultural diversity through events such as NAIDOC Week, where our students proudly showcased their heritage and traditions. It is through these events that we foster a sense of unity and respect, embracing the richness of community diversity.

Academically, many of our students have achieved outstanding results. We have witnessed the joy and pride on their faces as they received awards and recognition for their accomplishments. These achievements are a testament to their perseverance, resilience, and commitment to excellence.

It is a result of countless hours of learning and growth that have taken place within our school walls. With support and guidance of our dedicated teachers and staff that our students have flourished academically, socially, and emotionally.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to our parents and families for their unwavering support and trust in our school. Your partnership is invaluable, and it is through our collective efforts that we provide the best possible educational environment. I would like to thank the dedicated School Board and P&C Executive members for their guidance and counsel.

Our student's enthusiasm, creativity, and resilience continue to inspire us all. I hope that as they move forward in their educational journey, they continue to develop values and skills that will shape their future success, embracing the challenges that may lie ahead and making a difference.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of all our staff. Your dedication, passion, and commitment to our students is truly commendable. Your unwavering belief in their potential has played a vital role in their growth and achievements.

As we close this chapter of 2023, let us look forward to the future with hope and excitement. Together, we will continue to create a nurturing and inclusive environment that empowers our students to reach their full potential. I am grateful for the privilege of being part of this incredible community, and I am excited to see what the future holds for all.

Tracy Pickering

School Board Review

2023 has been a challenging year for the Merredin College School Board.

With several teachers leaving at the end of 2022, there was a scramble to fill vacant positions and sustain the number of teaching staff. This has continued throughout the year with short-term staff filling positions making continuity in the classrooms difficult. It has also placed extra burden on the principal to manage these staffing challenges. It was a tough year for everyone, and she did a commendable job in trying circumstances, even taking on a teaching load with some of the other Executive members to cover the shortfall.

The Board had hoped to accomplish many tasks in 2023, however, the staffing issues, meant that the time needed to develop the Merredin College Business Plan, was not available, and unfortunately the plan has been delayed. Despite this, a draft Business Plan was produced late in the year and its approval and implementation will be one of the first jobs for the Board in 2024.

This year, a new Year 7 transition program was implemented. It was a blend of primary and high school class structures designed to help smooth the transition from primary to secondary. The students had regular contact with specific teachers, as well as dedicated quad with recreation equipment for break times. Thanks to the P&C for donating an outdoor table tennis table. The changes to transition were very successful and the initiative will continue for next year's group.

The College received an 80kW solar array installed this year worth \$150k, funded by the State Government through their Clean Energy Technology Fund. Once connection and commissioning has been completed in early 2024 this upgrade will help reduce electricity costs, allowing more funds to be directed into the educational aspects of the school.

Merredin College was also allocated \$2M to upgrade some of the ageing STEM Facilities. Concept plans have been finalised and tenders for the project will be advertised in February 2024. Construction is scheduled for the second half of 2024. A welcome upgrade for the students and teachers.

The position of principal has been filled by fixed term positions since the beginning of 2021. The substantive Leigh Nelson, has now taken a position as the Director of Education in the Goldfields, creating an open vacancy. The appointment process was conducted toward the end of the year and Kylie Cattaway was awarded the role. The Merredin College Board welcomes Kylie and looks forward to successfully working with her in 2024 and beyond.

The Merredin College Board would like to thank the P&C Committee, the teachers and all the EA's and support staff at the college for their hard work this year. It has been a challenging year that would have been impossible without a collective effort. We would also like to thank outgoing Principal Tracy Pickering for all her efforts over the last two years and wish her well.

We're all looking forward to a positive and productive 2024.

Gareth Davies
Board chair
Merredin College Board

Student Enrolments

Student Enrolments

Student enrolments are relatively stable with 540 students attending in 2023. In addition to this, there were 30 students enrolled that did not attend school prior to the February census date and are therefore 'unfunded'.

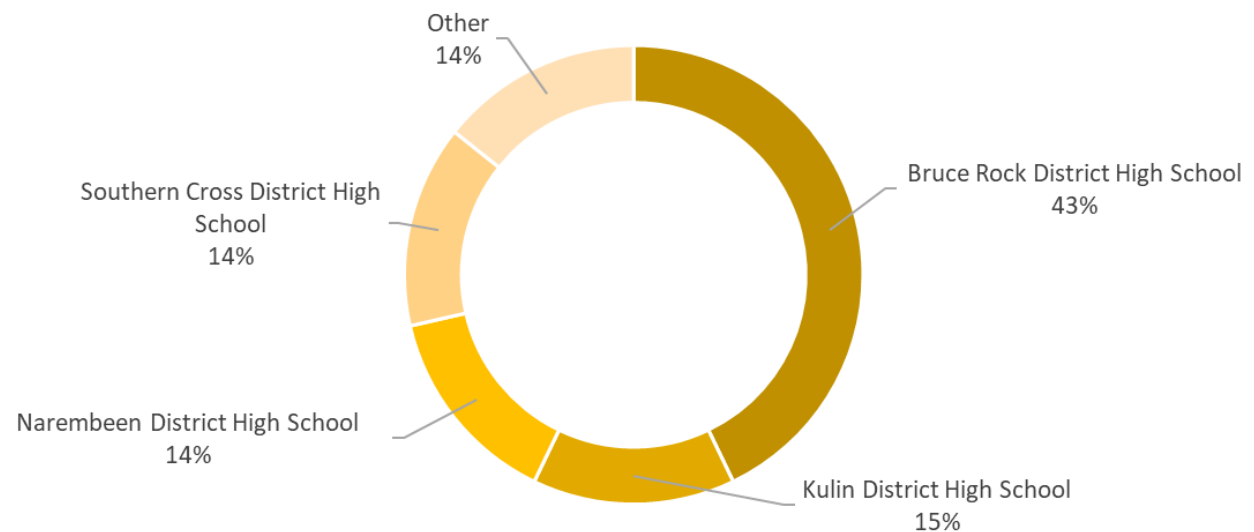
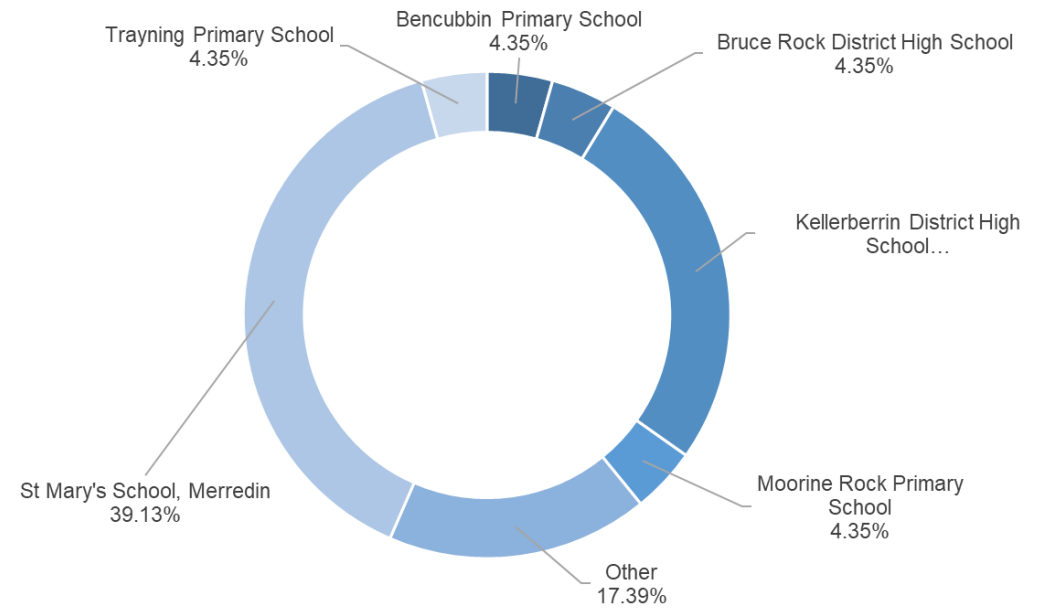
	2021	2022	2023
Kindy – Year 6	224	222	226
Years 7-10	246	211	218
Years 11-12	93	98	96
Total	558	531	540

Merredin College has intakes of students at Year 7 and 11 as students transition from local primary schools and district high schools.

	2021	2022	2023
Year 7	30	16	23
Year 11	11	6	7

Majority of the incoming Year 7 students attended, Kellerberrin DHS, St Mary's School - Merredin, Bruce Rock DHS and Nungarin Primary School.

Majority of the Year 11 students attended Southern Cross DHS, Narembeen DHS and Bruce Rock DHS.



Self - Assessment

Self-Assessment Practices

Merredin College maintains a rigorous, reflective self-assessment process on a continuous basis. We collect and utilise relevant data which is then used to make comparisons with previous performance such as like school data and state achievement levels.

Our self-assessment data is constructed through the analysis and reviewing of:

- Student Performance
- Program effectiveness
- Staff performance
- Feedback from families, staff and students.

Each phase of development, learning area or school-based program completes a self-review assessing student performance to inform the strategies in their operational plans.

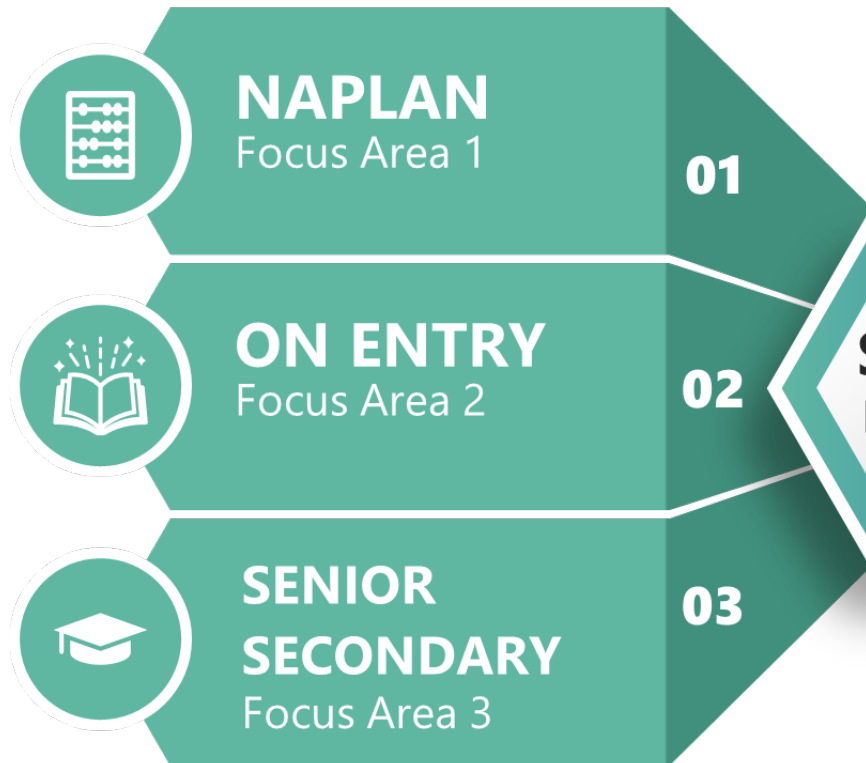
Furthermore, the School Board regularly reviews school data offering a community perspective to improving students' learning.

Every three to four years the school is externally reviewed by the Department of Education WA. The last review was conducted in August 2021. The Report can be found on the school's website.

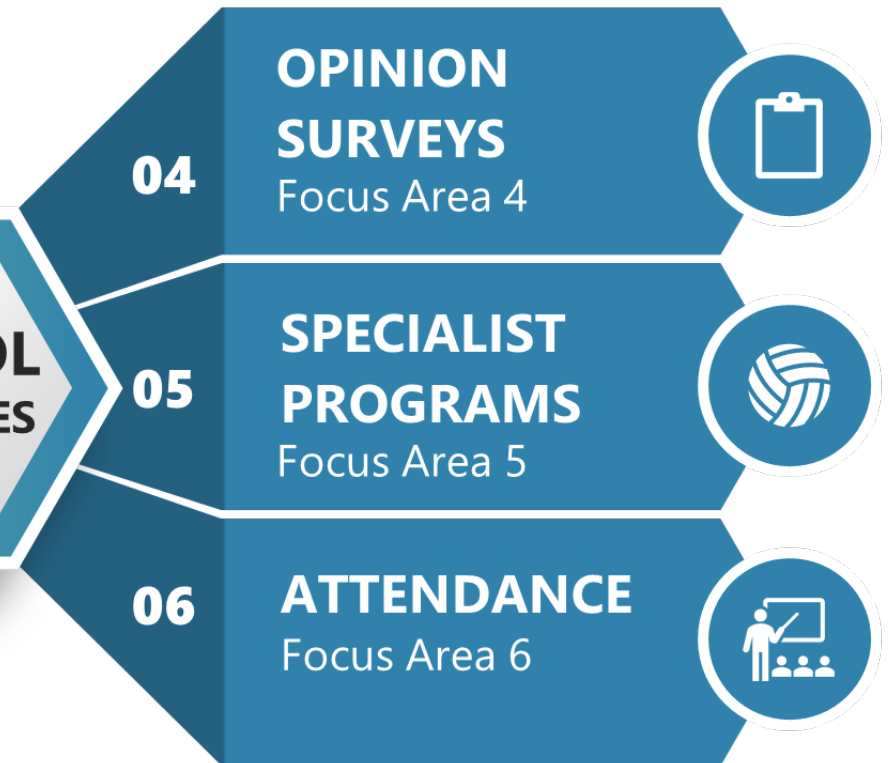


School Priorities and Achievement Targets

1. Teaching and Learning



2. School Community & Culture





grow



Progress towards the Achievement Targets

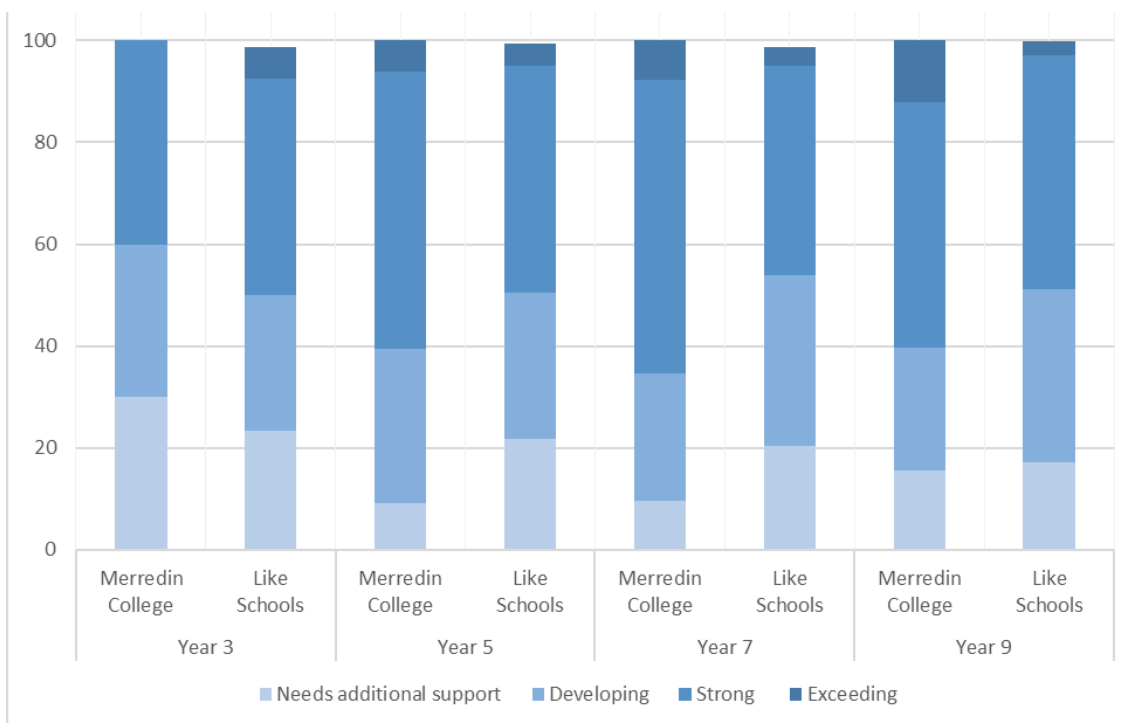


NAPLAN 2023

- The shading in the table below indicates progress in comparison to students with a similar background.
- In Year 3, students performed lower than expected, except in spelling.
- In secondary (Years 7 and 9), students performed within the expected range.

	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
Year 3	307	354	340	336	357
Year 5	457	439	419	434	460
Year 7	510	501	511	507	528
Year 9	553	549	535	528	561

- Well above
- Above
- Close to
- Below
- Well below



Change in Achievement Level – Progress data

In 2023, NAPLAN achievement levels changed from:

- Very High, High, Satisfactory, Needs Improvement TO
- (Exceeding, Strong, Developing and Needs Additional Support.

As such, there is no measure of student progress from 2021 to 2023.

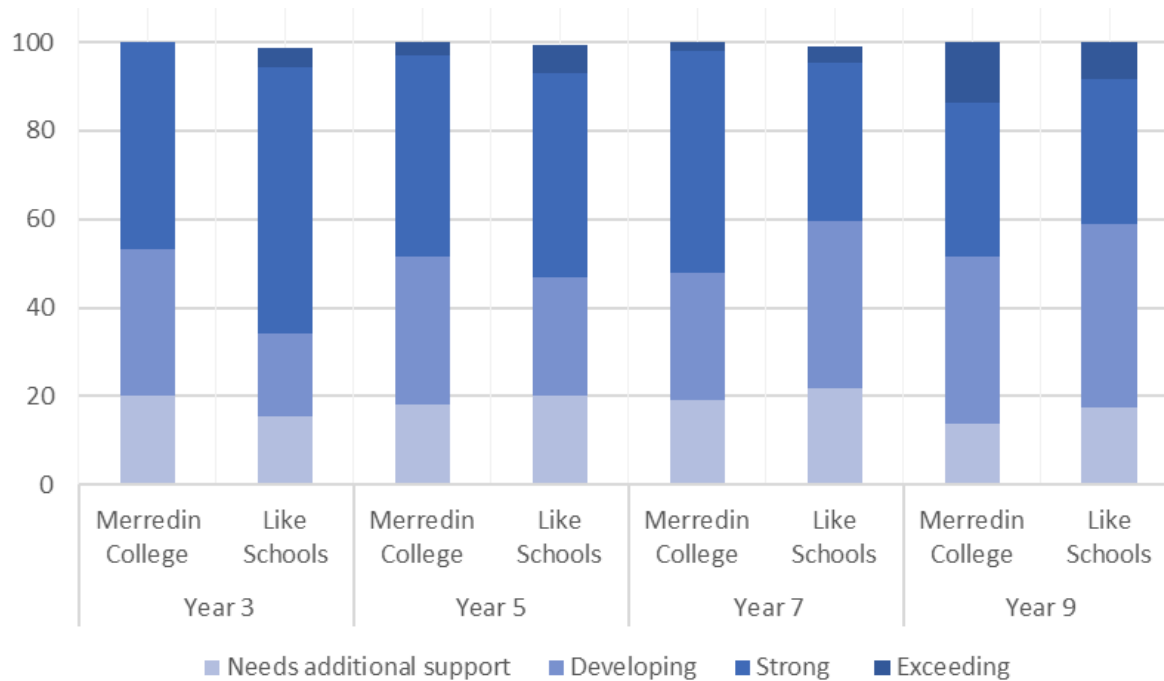
Numeracy Targets

- Increase the percentage of stable cohort students whose progress is high or very high for Year 5, 7 and 9 NAPLAN Numeracy.
- The progress rate of the stable student cohort and the achievement rate of the whole school cohort will equal or exceed like schools in NAPLAN Numeracy.

Numeracy

- Students in Year 5, 7 and 9 exceeded like schools in the Exceeding and Strong achievement levels.

Progress towards the Achievement Targets



Writing Targets

- Increase the percentage of stable cohort students who achieve Good and Excellent in Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 NAPLAN writing.
- The progress rate of the stable student cohort and the achievement rate of the whole school cohort will equal or exceed like schools in NAPLAN writing.

Writing

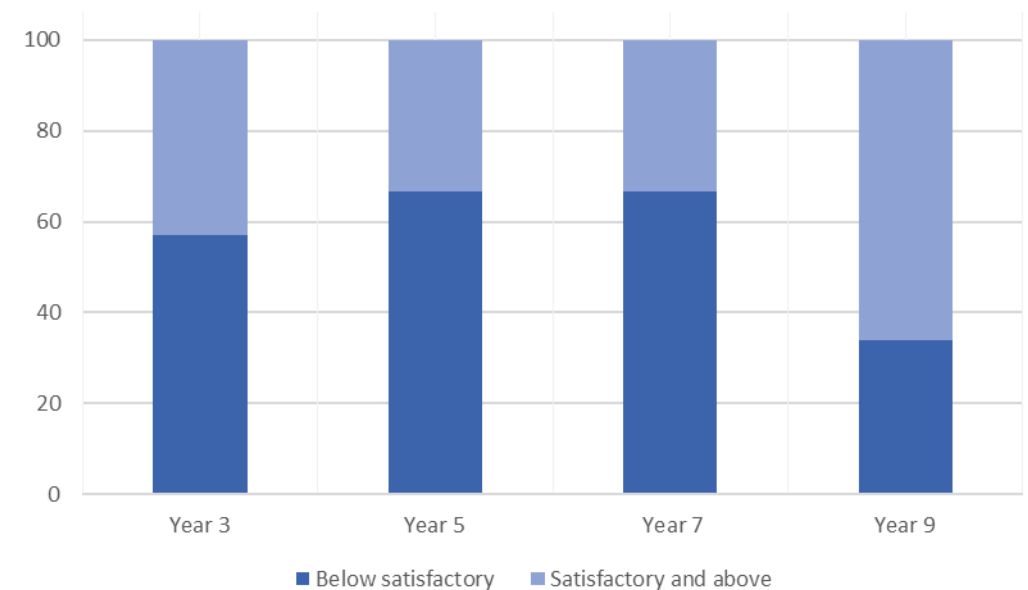
- Students in Year 7 and 9 exceeded like schools in the Exceeding and Strong achievement levels.

Reading Targets

- In each year of the Business Plan 60% of Aboriginal students will achieve satisfactory or better achievement in Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 Reading.

Reading

- The target was met in Years 5 and 7 with more than 60% of Aboriginal students meeting satisfactory achievement levels in Reading.



Progress towards the Achievement Targets

Focus Area 2

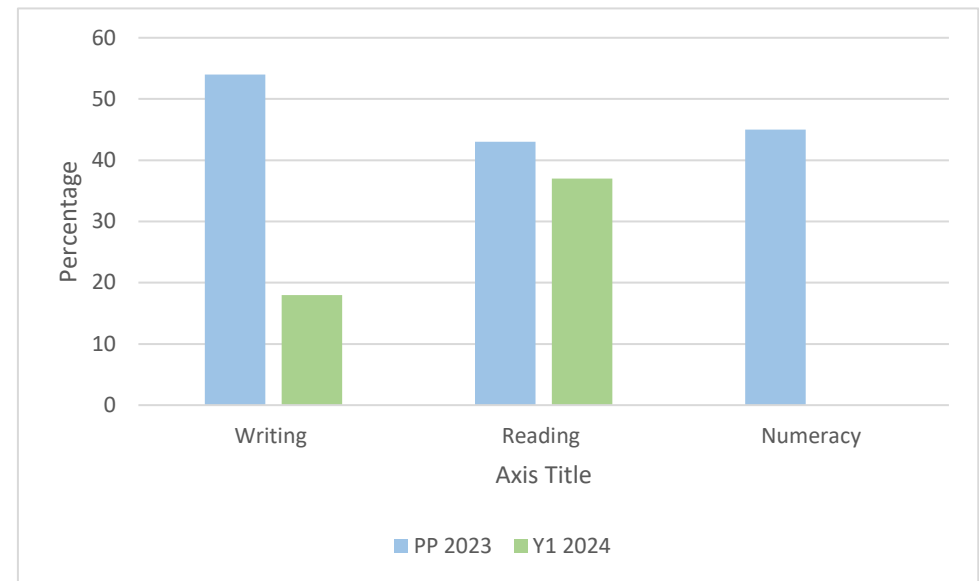
ON ENTRY

TARGETS

- Increase the percentage of students achieving above the ICSEA 8-10 median score in On Entry Reading for PP and Year 1.
- Increase the percentage of students achieving above the ICSEA 8-10 median score in On Entry Numeracy for PP and Year 1.

ON ENTRY

- In Year 1, we have experienced a reduction in the number of students achieving the ICSEA 8-10 median score.



Progress towards the Achievement Targets

Focus Area 3

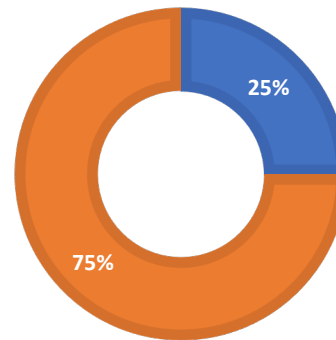
SENIOR SECONDARY

TARGETS

- WACE achievement rates will be above like schools whilst striving to above 88%.
- By the end 2022 our average ATAR results (52.7% in 2019) will increase by 20%.
- At least 80% of students enrolled in a VET Certificate II or higher will achieve a full qualification by the completion of their Year 12 studies.
- The percentage of Year 12 students satisfying the OLN requirements will be above 87% whilst striving for 92%.

VET QUALIFICATIONS

■ Incomplete ■ Completed 1 or more



SENIOR SECONDARY ACHIEVEMENT

Western Australia Certificate of education (WACE) achievement rates have exceeded like schools although did not reach the target of 88%. Ninety-four percent (94%) of students achieved OLN which has a direct impact on WACE achievement. A future focus area will be to reduce the gap between OLN and WACE achievement.

The median ATAR score is below the state and like school medians. Further support is needed to maximise success for students choosing a direct pathway to university.

	WACE	Median ATAR	OLNA
Merredin College	85%	56.63	94%
Like Schools	79%	65.65	
DoE Schools	89%	82.80	



Progress towards the Achievement Targets

Focus Area 4

SATISFACTION SURVEYS

NATIONAL SCHOOL OPINION SURVEY

Staff and parents were given the opportunity to provide feedback in November 2023 using the National School Opinion Survey. Students were not surveyed at this time. The table shows the average results for each response group.

The average responses fell short of achieving the rating of 3.8 in all but two areas (highlighted in green). Behaviour management process will be reviewed in 2024 using independent experts.

A similar survey will be completed with staff, students, and parents at the end of 2024 for comparison.

TARGETS

- At least 90% of K-12 students feel that their classrooms are safe and orderly.
- Survey results indicate a rating of 3.8 or above on the Parent, Staff and Student National Survey Tool.

	Staff	Parents
Number of responses	58	110
<i>My teachers expect me to do my best</i>	3.9	3.7
<i>My teachers provide me with useful feedback about my school</i>	3.5	3.2
<i>Teachers at my school treat students fairly</i>	3.6	2.9
<i>My school is well maintained</i>	3.5	3.7
<i>I feel safe at my school</i>	3.4	3.2
<i>I can talk to my teachers about my concerns</i>	3.6	3.7
<i>Student behaviour is well managed at my school</i>	2.4	2.4
<i>I like being at my school</i>	3.3	3.1
<i>My school looks for ways to improve</i>	3.3	3.2
<i>My school takes my opinions seriously</i>	2.5	2.8
<i>Teachers at this school motivate me to learn</i>	3.6	3.1
<i>Teachers at this school are good teachers</i>	3.7	3.4
<i>Teachers at this school care about their students</i>	4.0	3.4

5 = Strong agree 4 = Agree 3 = Neutral 2 = Disagree 1 = Strongly Disagree

Items relating to "Safe and Orderly Environment"

Progress towards the Achievement Targets

Focus Area 5

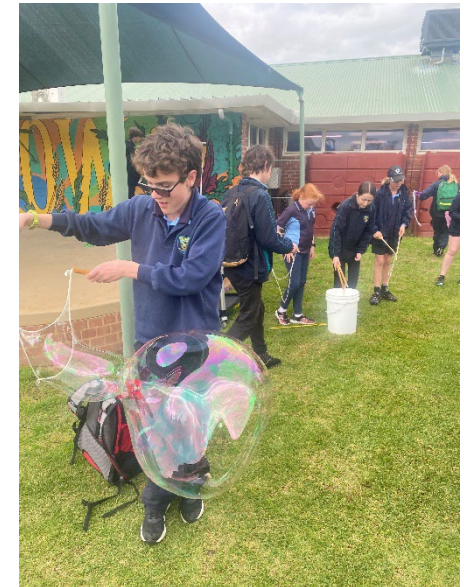
SPECIALIST PROGRAMS

TARGETS

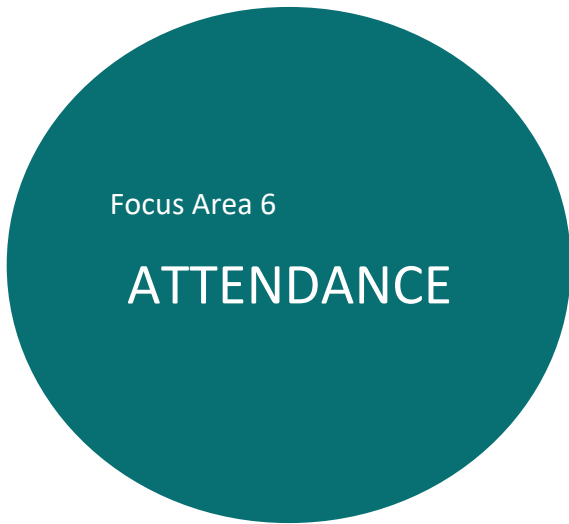
- Implement the Centre of Resource Excellence (CoRE) STEAM program in Year 5-8 and embed the STEM Learning Project program throughout K-5.
- Implement specialist programs to encourage enrolment and marketing in the Eastern Wheatbelt (CoRE, Volleyball & Arts)

TARGETS

The specialist Programs targets have been met. In addition, \$2M has been invested by the Department of Education to upgrade STEM facilities in both secondary and primary.



Progress towards the Achievement Targets



TARGETS

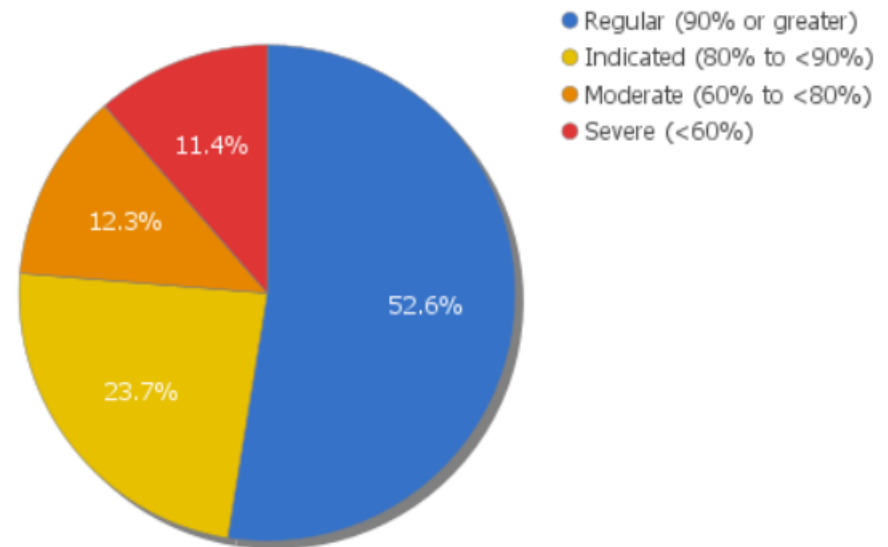
- Annual attendance average will meet or exceed State averages

Student Attendance

Merredin College did not achieve its target of exceeding the state average attendance rate. It has been pleasing to see the gap between Aboriginal attendance and non-Aboriginal attendance in Secondary reduce.

Student attendance remains a strong focus at our school.

Attendance Profile 2024 Semester 1 Compulsory



Semester 1 Secondary Student Attendance Rates	2021	2022	2023
Aboriginal	73%	65%	72%
Non-Aboriginal	92%	86%	87%
Attendance Rate	88%	82%	84%
Like Schools	89%	83%	87%
WA Public School	91%	87%	89%

Semester 1 Secondary Student Attendance Rates	2021	2022	2023
Aboriginal	71%	49%	61%
Non-Aboriginal	89%	81%	85%
Attendance Rate	88%	82%	84%
Like Schools	89%	83%	87%
WA Public School	91%	87%	89%

Merredin College GROW and REAP



Financial Summary

Merredin College 2023 One Line Budget Summary		
	Current Budget (\$)	Actual YTD (\$)
Carry Forward (Cash):	631,348	631,348
Carry Forward (Salary):	641,132	641,132
INCOME		
Student-Centred Funding (including Transfers & Adjustments):	8,581,155	8,581,155
Locally Raised Funds:	419,191	411,382
Total Funds:	10,272,827	10,265,017
EXPENDITURE		
Salaries:	7,065,255	7,065,255
Goods and Services (Cash):	1,924,045	1,627,467
Total Expenditure:	8,989,300	8,692,722
VARIANCE:	1,283,527	1,572,295

Revenue Summary

The school is funded primarily from the Department of Education through the Student-Centred Funding Model, based on student numbers and characteristics as well as a regional allocation and school locality allowance. Funding is also received for specific Operational Responses and Targeted Initiatives. Locally raised funds include student contributions and Charges, Fees from Facility Hire, Fundraising, Donations, Sponsorships, Reserve Transfer, Other Grants and Revenue.

Expenditure Summary

A large proportion of the school's budget is expended through salaries. The original Salaries and Wages budget for 2023 was significantly higher,

however vacant positions, and the ability to replace staff on leave resulted in a salary carry forward of unspent funds of \$924, 136.

At Merredin College a large proportion of Goods and Services is spent on utilities (water, gas and electricity) and school maintenance. Curriculum and Student Services still account for a large proportion of the cash budget. At the end of the year, \$296, 578 was carried forward to 2024 for projects that were ongoing or unspent in 2023, also predominately driven by staffing shortages.

Reserves

The College has a cash backed Asset and Reserve replacement schedule, itemised into Plant and Equipment, ICT, Vehicles, Communications, Furniture, Office Equipment, Photocopiers, Infrastructure and other resources considered portable and attractive. The balance at the end 2023 being \$678, 683.73. Funds for replacement of these assets and resources are accumulated in the General Reserve. Funds are transferred in 2023 for the purpose of future replacement totalled \$151, 174.00, while transfers out for replacement purchases and upgrades equalled \$123, 040.00.

Investments

Funds not needed to meet cashflow obligations are invested in term deposits to attract higher interest rates. There are two term deposits with \$300 000.00 each, maturing at different intervals. \$112 100.00 is invested funds from benefactor Les Last for the Les Last Scholarship. \$1500.00 accrued from the investment interest is awarded to a graduating student in the following year who is studying STEM based degree at university. The balance of the Operating Account in December 2023 was \$720, 030.30.

Merredin College Detailed One Line Budget 2023

INCOME 2023		
	Current Budget (\$)	Actual YTD (\$)
Carry Forward (Cash)	631,348	631,348
Carry Forward (Salary)	641,132	641,132
STUDENT-CENTRED FUNDING		
Per Student	5,079,365	5,079,365
School and Student Characteristics	2,274,476	2,274,476
Disability Adjustments	92,522	92,522
Targeted Initiatives	810,521	810,521
Operational Response Allocation	242,849	242,849
Total Funds:	8,499,733	8,499,733
TRANSFERS AND ADJUSTMENTS		
Regional Allocation	47,036	47,036
Transition Adjustment	0	0
School Transfers – Salary	(796,142)	(796,142)
School Transfers - Cash	870,358	870,358
Department Adjustments	(39,829)	(39,829)
Total Funds:	81,423	81,423
LOCALLY RAISED FUNDS (REVENUE)		
Voluntary Contributions	28,326	28,327
Charges and Fees	143,019	140,799
Fees from Facilities Hire	773	773
Fundraising/Donations/Sponsorships	46,380	43,281
Commonwealth Govt Revenues	0	0
Other State Govt/Local Govt Revenues	0	0
Revenue from CO, Regional Office and Other scho	12,343	9,903
Other Revenues	65,309	65,259
Transfer from Reserve or DGR	123,040	123,040
Residential Accommodation	0	0
Farm Revenue (Ag and Farm Schools only)	0	0
Camp School Fees (Camp Schools only)	0	0
Total Funds:	419,190	411,382
TOTAL	10,272,826	10,265,018

EXPENDITURE 2023		
	Current Budget (\$)	Actual YTD (\$)
SALARIES		
Appointed Staff	6,470,041	6,470,041
New Appointments	0	0
Casual Payments	514,774	514,774
Other Salary Expenditure	80,441	80,441
Total Funds:	7,065,256	7,065,256
GOODS AND SERVICES (CASH EXPENDITURE)		
Administration	63,310	54,603
Lease Payments	40,232	40,232
Utilities, Facilities and Maintenance	522,399	439,352
Buildings, Property and Equipment	286,140	259,780
Curriculum and Student Services	742,010	577,722
Professional Development	55,730	48,707
Transfer to Reserve	151,174	151,174
Other Expenditure	44,226	37,074
Payment to CO, Regional Office and Other schools	18,823	18,823
Residential Operations	0	0
Residential Boarding Fees to CO (Ag Colleges only)	0	0
Farm Operations (Ag and Farm Schools only)	0	0
Farm Revenue to CO (Ag and Farm Schools only)	0	0
Camp School Fees to CO (Camp Schools only)	0	0
Total Funds:	1,924,044	1,627,467
TOTAL	8,989,300	8,692,723

Additional Financial Information Revenue

Fundraising, Donations and Sponsorship

The P&C continue to support the school with donations totalling \$14, 652 for awards, Merrydin backdrops, camp subsidisation and Leaver's shirts/jackets for Year 6 and 12. Collgar Renewables continued their partnership with the school to Fund \$1, 500 for Vet Scholarships. \$14, 671 was received in parent Voluntary Approved Requests for the chaplain, library, technology and sustainability. The community continues to strongly support the end of year awards with donations totalling \$4, 460.

Facility Hire

Revenue for the Hire of School Facilities was limited to \$682 received for hosting the Federal Referendum in the Wahlsten Library.

Operational Responses and Regional Allocations

For the second year. Merredin College has received a subsidy from the Department to run the Girls Aboriginal Engagement Program, Shooting Stars. Cost of the program for the provision of the third-party provider was \$218, 494 of which \$213,638 was subsidised. The school also receives funds to host the regional school Psychologist. Regional Network funds for EWEN are administered by the school. Funds allocated for 2023 totalled \$37, 000.

Targeted Initiatives

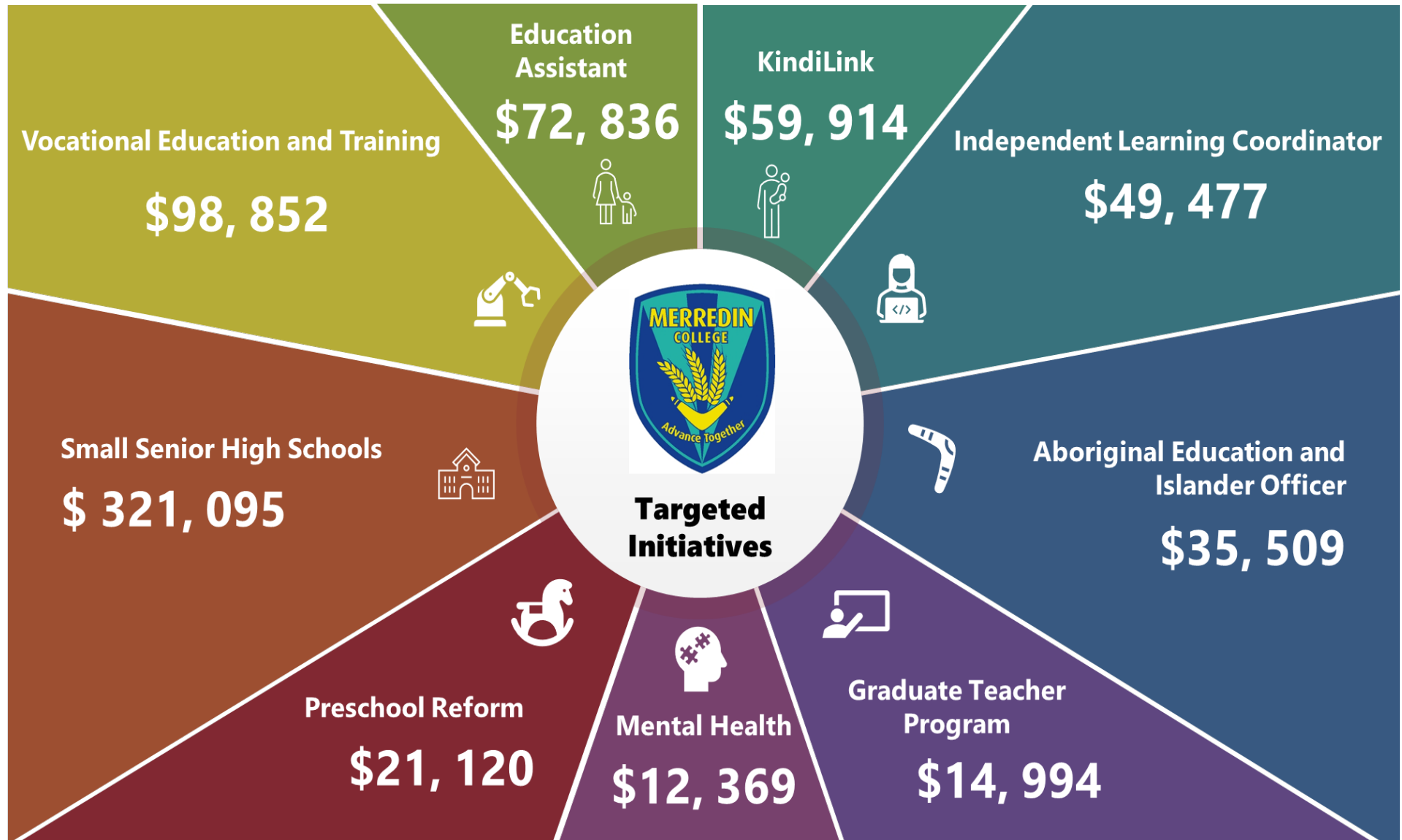
Merredin College receives additional funding for specific programs each with specific requirements which are outlined in the Funding Agreement for Schools, which is noted by the School Board each year.

Student Contributions and Charges

Collection Rates for Contributions and Charges for 2024 are as follows with Secondary Assistance Scheme providing much needed payment support.

2023 Collection Rates	
Voluntary Contributions	
Kindergarten	40.68%
Pre-Primary	28.14%
Primary (Years 1-6)	36.75%
K-6 Combined	36.02%
Secondary (Years 7-10)	48.07%
Secondary (Years 7-10) with EPA	53.49%
Subject Charges	
Year 11 and 12	64.47%
Year 11 and 12 with EPA	77.04%
Extra Cost Option Charges	
K-6 Combined	97.47%
Secondary (Years 1-10)	98.18%
Secondary (Years 11-12)	99.12%

Additional Financial Information Targeted Initiatives 2023



Additional Financial Information Goods and Services Expenditure

Curriculum and Student Services

Goods and Services for provision of educational programs are allocated through Learning Areas (Maths, Science, English, HASS, HPE, Arts and Technology), Student Services (Attendance, Behaviour, Welfare) specific program delivery and primary classroom budgets. It also includes expenditure relating to curriculum related student funded activities such as camps and excursions.

Professional Development

Instructional Delivery Program Visible Learning continued as the predominant professional learning program for 2023 along with Wellbeing and CMS training. Additional funds for upskilling preschool support staff were utilised as part of a Preschool Targeted Initiative.

Utilities, Facilities and Maintenance

Utility costs are significant at \$191, 000 for water/sewage, \$126, 000 for electricity and \$19, 208 for gas. The Department funded solar panels installed this year should reduce power account by about \$15, 000 per annum. Water and gas usage are impacted by weather patterns. Machinery and vehicle maintenance costs have increased with repairs to the bus, forklift, school trailers, mowers, truck and D&T equipment.

Buildings, Property and Equipment

Ongoing staffing shortages impeded many of the larger ground improvement projects originally budgeted for 2023. Photocopiers, ICT equipment and projector expenditure was \$65,902 while software costs totalled \$51,056. Furniture purchases which included new fit outs for

primary and the Year 7 hub totalled \$41 078. Building improvements paid by the school cost \$100, 266 and included extensive ICT upgrades to switches and cables. A new ride on lawn mower was also purchased.

2023 Student Funded Camps/Excursions	
Countryweek	\$ 23,370.00
Year 6 Camp	\$ 11,094.00
CORE Camps	\$ 9,848.00
Year 9 Camp	\$ 23,741.00
Choir Camp	\$ 6,201.00
Volleyball Program	\$ 5,707.00
Specific Curriculum Programs	
Regional Networks EWEN	\$ 56,723.00
Kindilink Classroom	\$ 1,017.00
Shooting Stars Program	\$ 218,494.00
Sporting Schools	\$ 4,530.00
Mental Health and Wellbeing	\$ 9,594.00
Follow the Dream/Aboriginal Education	\$ 2,431.00
Education Support	\$ 1,740.00
Taransition to Work	\$ 1,844.00
Vocational Eduction	\$ 14,742.00
Chapliancy	\$ 35,937.00

learning close to home

