

2023 Annual Report

Aurora College



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Introduction

The Annual Report for 2023 is provided to the community of Aurora College as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the Strategic Improvement Plan. It outlines the findings from self-assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.

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Message from the principal

Welcome to Aurora College's 2023 Annual School Report. Here, as in previous ASRs, we celebrate some of our many achievements for the year. To our students and staff, and to our Aurora families and friends, I thank you all for the part each of you has played in the ongoing success of our school.

In our ninth year of operation, we were very pleased to acknowledge and publicly welcome to Aurora College the Year 6 students of the first cohort of the Young and Deadly Mob (YDM). This important initiative, delivered in partnership with the Department's Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate, seeks to improve the engagement and retention of high potential and gifted Aboriginal students, whilst maintaining their connection to their culture. Throughout the year, the Aurora College staff dedicated themselves to comprehensive professional development, focusing on integrating Aboriginal pedagogies into our learning and teaching programs. This commitment ensures a holistic and culturally inclusive education for all students. In 2024, I look forward to working with students and staff to secure a long-term future for this important initiative.

In 2023, many Aurora College teams competed with great success in state and national competitions. Our state debating and chess teams, the NRMA Transport Challenge team, Kids' Lit Quiz team and Game Changer Challenge teams were all a source of great pride for our school community. Throughout the year, our students also competed with distinction as individuals in numerous competitions, including the Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge and Maths Olympiad.

As we prepare for the year ahead, I am pleased to report that our school will once again experience significant growth. The 2024 school year will commence with approximately 840 Aurora students, shared with 230 schools across rural and remote NSW. This represents an increase of 20% on the number of students enrolled at the start of 2023 and an increase of 415% on the number enrolled at the start of 2015, our first year of operation. On behalf of the entire Aurora community, I welcome our new students, their families and our new teachers to our school.

Chris Robertson | Principal

School vision

Aurora College aims to provide great teaching and inspired learning in a whole new context, by allowing students in rural and remote communities to connect locally and to learn globally.

Aurora is committed to building relationships which foster in its students, a strong sense of belonging to Aurora and to their home school. Remaining in their local community, Aurora students benefit from the enhanced opportunities that come from belonging to two education communities.

Aurora College is dedicated to creating opportunities that will build each student's capacity to become an autonomous, life-long learner. Aurora College embraces the philosophy of 'personal best', acknowledging that each student's drive towards self-improvement in a curriculum rich in higher-order thinking provides a strong foundation for success in life beyond the school years.

Aurora's vision is to develop students who are not only at ease in the digital world, but who are empowered through their knowledge, skills and creativity to become influential contributors to the knowledge economies of this century.

Finally, the college recognises the importance of developing each student as a 'whole' person. Aurora students have multiple and diverse passions and interests, and it is the desire of the college that students pursue these and also have a happy and balanced social life.

School context

The establishment of a virtual secondary school was a key deliverable of Rural and Remote Education - Blueprint for Action. Through a range of actions, the Blueprint aims to bridge the gap in educational achievement between rural and remote and metropolitan schools.

Aurora College, the state's first virtual school, commenced classes on Monday 2 February 2015. Our students meet specific criteria, including enrolment in a rural and remote government school as defined by the MCEETYA Geographical Location Classification. The college enables these students to remain in their local school and community while providing the opportunity to study with peers and specialist teachers from across the state. Our school offers:

- Year 5 and 6 students Opportunity Class lessons in Mathematics, Science and Technology
- Year 7 to 10 students Selective School classes in English, Mathematics and Science
- Year 11 and 12 students the opportunity to study one or more Preliminary and/or Higher School Certificate subjects that may not be available in their local school.

Students at Aurora College connect with their teachers and classmates in timetabled lessons through a cutting-edge virtual learning environment, which includes web conferencing software and a range of online information, communication and collaboration tools. Teachers and students also have the opportunity to work together at a residential school held twice per year.

Aurora College offers students expanded career options through innovative programs and strengthened partnerships with business, and with scientific, cultural and tertiary education institutions. Mentoring opportunities and masterclasses are key features of both the online and residential school programs.

Self-assessment and school achievement

This section of the annual report outlines the findings from self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework, school achievements and the next steps to be pursued.

This year, our school undertook self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework. The Framework is a statement of what is valued as excellence for NSW public schools, both now and into the future. The Framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading.

Each year, we assess our practice against the Framework to inform our Strategic Improvement Plan and annual report.

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

For more information about the School Excellence Framework: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/school-excellence-and-accountability>

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

Elements	2023 School Assessment
LEARNING: Learning Culture	Excelling
LEARNING: Wellbeing	Excelling
LEARNING: Curriculum	Excelling
LEARNING: Assessment	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Reporting	Excelling
LEARNING: Student growth and performance	Excelling
TEACHING: Effective classroom practice	Excelling
TEACHING: Data skills and use	Sustaining and Growing
TEACHING: Professional standards	Excelling
TEACHING: Learning and development	Excelling
LEADING: Educational leadership	Excelling
LEADING: School planning, implementation and reporting	Excelling
LEADING: School resources	Excelling
LEADING: Management practices and processes	Excelling

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Purpose

To ensure that all students grow in their learning through explicit and targeted initiatives, so they may access the widest possible curriculum and participate fully in society.

Initiatives

This year our school implemented the following initiatives to support the realisation of the four year Strategic Improvement Plan and the achievement of system-negotiated and school-determined targets.

- Systematic data analysis for school improvement
- Highly effective teaching practices
- Analysis of achievement data of Aboriginal students

Resources allocated to this strategic direction

Low level adjustment for disability

Summary of progress

Systematic data analysis for school improvement with highly effective teaching practices

Literacy and Numeracy

Literacy

In 2023, the literacy program at Aurora College continued to support Year 9 students through weekly reading coaching tutorials for targeted students, in preparation for the NAPLAN test in Term 1.

The literacy coaches' focus was then directed to the Year 8 cohort, as longer preparation for NAPLAN testing in Term 1 2024. Students were identified from the Term 1 PAT testing and timetabled for intensive coaching sessions to build literacy skills using the PAT reading program.

Ongoing modifications were made to the tutorial component of the strategy, as strengths and deficiencies were detected using the testing capabilities on the platform. This allowed literacy coaches to adapt the approach to tutorials and better meet the individual needs of each targeted student.

In 2023, Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) data indicated that 57% of the Year 9 cohort showed growth in reading. The whole school data indicated 58% of students achieved growth over the year.

In 2023, in NAPLAN (Reading):

- 81.8% of Year 9 students achieved a result in the Exceeding proficiency level
- 80.6% of Year 7 students achieved a result in the Exceeding proficiency level
- 87.8% of Year 5 students achieved a result in the Exceeding proficiency level

In 2024, the literacy team will continue to refine, consolidate, and expand current strategies to meet the school's improvement measures with more students achieving in the top proficiency level for NAPLAN and displaying growth in Reading.

Numeracy

In 2023, students in Years 5-9 were the focus for improved numeracy learning through a range of strategies, including individual and small group coaching. Coaching sessions were conducted with Year 9 students in Term 1, Year 7 students in Term 2, and Year 8 students in Terms 2 and 4. These sessions were completed during mathematics lessons and addressed identified areas for improvement.

As part of regular classroom activities, students in Years 7-9 participated twice each week in dedicated numeracy activities during mathematics lessons. These sessions involved learners independently completing a calculator question, which had an accompanying instructional video and a form to check their responses. In addition, a student-led whole class discussion around methods to solve a non-calculator question allowed students to develop and learn strategies

from one another. In Stage 3, numeracy strategies were incorporated into lessons, accompanied by a range of video resources. Numeracy questions were also embedded into science lesson content for high school learners.

In 2023, Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) data indicated that 78% of the Year 9 cohort showed growth in numeracy. The whole school data indicated 76% of students achieved growth over the year.

In 2023, in NAPLAN (Numeracy):

- 58.2% of Year 9 students achieved a result in the Exceeding proficiency level
- 67.4% of Year 7 students achieved a result in the Exceeding proficiency level
- 72.4% of Year 5 students achieved a result in the Exceeding proficiency level

In 2024, the numeracy team will continue to refine, consolidate, and expand current strategies to meet the school's improvement measures of having a greater proportion of students achieving in the top band for NAPLAN and displaying growth in numeracy.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

The annual progress measures indicate the expected annual level of achievement for each improvement measure, aligned to the initiatives, in the Strategic Improvement Plan. Schools evaluate their achievement against annual progress measures to determine progress and inform future planning.

Annual progress measure	Progress towards achievement
<p>HSC - Top 3 Bands</p> <p>Improvement in the percentage of students achieving in the top 3 bands for the HSC to be at or above the school identified target of 60%.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 63% of students attained results in the top three bands, demonstrating achievement beyond the target.
<p>READING GROWTH</p> <p>An improvement in the % of students achieving growth in Year 9 PAT assessment scores in reading.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2023 Year 9 PAT scores in reading indicate the percentage of students achieving growth has increased by 4% compared to 2022.
<p>NUMERACY GROWTH</p> <p>An improvement in the % of students achieving growth in Year 9 PAT assessment scores in numeracy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2023 Year 9 PAT scores in numeracy indicate the percentage of students achieving growth has increased by 31% compared to 2022.

Strategic Direction 2: Student wellbeing

Purpose

To develop a learning environment which informs, guides and nurtures high levels of social, institutional and intellectual engagement for students while strengthening post school pathways that clearly link learning to future employment and study options.

Initiatives

This year our school implemented the following initiatives to support the realisation of the four year Strategic Improvement Plan and the achievement of system-negotiated and school-determined targets.

- Whole student wellbeing
- Strengthened partnerships

Resources allocated to this strategic direction

Low level adjustment for disability Professional learning

Summary of progress

Whole student wellbeing

Student Wellbeing

In 2023, the Wellbeing Team continued to implement processes across the school community and strengthened communication through the following channels: MS Teams; email; social media; and the school newsletter. A regular school assembly was also used to increase the school's and the community's awareness of student wellbeing initiatives. Evidence showed an increase in student engagement across all areas and enhanced levels of teacher understanding of how best to meet the wellbeing needs of our students. Consistent and clear messaging targeted all key stakeholders. Analysis of 'Tell Them From Me' data confirmed that our initiatives were successful throughout 2023, with 84% of our primary school students and 71% of our high school students feeling a "positive sense of belonging", which exceeded NSW Government norms.

In 2024, with an increase in the number of student enrolments and students requiring personalised learning and support adjustments, the school will continue to explore and implement initiatives that better meet their needs. The Wellbeing Team will also focus on providing enhanced support to our growing Aboriginal student cohort.

Student Attendance

In 2023, attendance procedures continued to highlight to our community the importance of a partnership in monitoring and supporting student attendance. A whole community approach continued to be key to refining and streamlining attendance monitoring procedures. Aurora College's management platform, Constellation, was enhanced to complete a scan through Sentral attendance data and create spreadsheets for drilling down into student attendance patterns. This has freed up significant administration time so that key staff can focus on putting attendance improvement supports and measures in place for identified students. For students whom the Wellbeing Team identified as being an attendance concern and in need of individual support, attendance letters were sent to their families highlighting their role in encouraging regular school attendance. In cases where these approaches were not successful, Attendance Improvement meetings were held with the student, their family, the Wellbeing Team, the Aurora College Coordinator and Deputy Principal. At these meetings, expectations were communicated and supports were formulated, and an Attendance Improvement Plan/Academic Improvement Plan was developed and agreed upon.

In 2024, the Wellbeing Team will enhance how we deliver professional development around attendance monitoring and will be proactive in upskilling teaching staff and Head Teachers around procedures within the school. We will also look at changing the way information is provided to staff around attendance monitoring processes, with clear roles and responsibilities at each level of the attendance monitoring process, from the senior executive to the classroom teacher. In 2024, a greater focus will be placed on Aboriginal student attendance and Stage 6 student attendance.

Aboriginal students and education

In 2023, Aurora College reviewed the Personalised Learning Pathways (PLPs) process to assess how to approach the rapidly increasing number of PLPS that would need to be completed this year with the addition of the Young and Deadly Mob (YDM) program. With the start of the YDM initiative, Aboriginal student numbers doubled from 45 students to

approximately 90. In Term 1, the team evaluated the existing process and template. Professional Learning was undertaken and was complemented by further research into best practice in other schools. The result was a template that would work well in the virtual setting. Key goals were to authentically cater to the academic needs of diverse groups of students, while supporting these students to celebrate their culture and talents. A goal was set to complete all PLPs by the end of Term 1, but this was not achieved. A thorough audit of the process was enacted, necessitating changes to staffing, communication pathways and timelines, to ensure that teachers and students would have the updated PLPs promptly each term. This process was very successful and resulted in almost all PLPs being completed for the next year by the end of 2023. We also introduced a PLP 'goal achieved' award which displays a meaningful artwork from one of our Aboriginal students.

In 2024, we will continue to assess the effectiveness of our PLP process and take on feedback from the community, teachers, students, and parents. Close attention will be given to ensure that processes and staffing for the PLP team are sufficient to keep to the established timeline. A further goal is to enact and automate the "Goal Achieved" stage of the PLP. Specific feedback, through quantitative data analysis and qualitative discussion, will be sought from our Aboriginal families and communities about the changes to the process, and the perceived level of support/success of these PLPs. Our ultimate goal is to provide our families with the opportunity to celebrate growth and achievement, both in academic and cultural contexts.

In 2023, the idea of a Digital Acknowledgement of Country specific to Aurora College was raised and discussed at Aboriginal Education SIP Team meetings. Various models and examples were shared and viewed, with professional dialogue and reflective discussion following. A suggested timeline and consultation paths with stakeholders were established. The idea for the Digital Acknowledgement of Country specific to Aurora College was then shared with, and approved by, the Senior Executive. Student contributions were sought through a broad canvas of student interests in the Aurora College Student Team. Students collaborated with staff members to begin drafting and recording elements of the video. The project is currently in the early editing and filming stages.

In 2024, the Aboriginal Education SIP team will continue to work on the Digital Acknowledgement of Country specific to Aurora College. An early draft will be shared with the Aboriginal Education SIP team and the Senior Executive. If approved, editing will be completed and will also utilize the technical skills of the in-house Technology team. Further stakeholders, including the AOPD, SRG, and local AECG will be consulted before a version is finalised. A fully approved Digital Acknowledgement of Country specific to Aurora College will then be available to be used in online assemblies and key events, and to be played at the Aurora College headquarters in Lindfield.

**Strengthened partnerships
Wider Aurora Community**

In 2023, the college continued to build stronger partnerships with students, their parents, partner schools, and other key stakeholders in regional, rural, and remote education, to enhance student support and to better inform communities of the many opportunities offered by Aurora College. Different groups, people, and initiatives helped to continue to build a greater sense of belonging within the Aurora community. This was achieved through: the active involvement of all stakeholders in the development of the college's new vision and values statements; continued growth of the college's virtual P&C; visits by staff to partner schools; a significant increase in our social media presence; and an expansion of the role of Careers Advisor to better support and guide students with future career pathways. A close working relationship was also established between the college and the Regional, Rural, and Remote Policy Team, as a means to improving and strengthening educational engagement and achievement.

In 2024, the Community Team will continue to strengthen existing processes and initiatives to enhance support for students and the wider college community. This will be achieved by establishing further ways to better engage with the broader community and to communicate the many benefits that partnering with Aurora College provides for students, parents, and the public education system.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

The annual progress measures indicate the expected annual level of achievement for each improvement measure, aligned to the initiatives, in the Strategic Improvement Plan. Schools evaluate their achievement against annual progress measures to determine progress and inform future planning.

Annual progress measure	Progress towards achievement
<p>Attendance</p> <p>Increase the percentage of students attending school more than 90% of the time to be at or above the school determined target of 65%.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2023, the proportion of students attending greater than 90% of school days was 87%. The proportion of students attending greater than 90% of the available lesson time was 41%, indicating progress towards achieving the school determined target.
<p>Positive Growth Mindset</p> <p>TTFM data shows an increased number</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of the 2023 Tell Them From Me survey data indicated 63% of secondary school students and 81% of primary school students set

<p>of students with a positive growth mindset and who feel supported in achieving their goals and aspirations to be moving towards the school identified target of 53%.</p> <p>TTFM data shows an increased number of students who feel supported accepted and valued by their peers and by others at their school to be moving towards the school identified target of 76%.</p>	<p>challenging goals for themselves in their schoolwork and aim to do their best, indicating achievement beyond the school's identified target.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of the 2023 Tell Them From Me survey data indicated 71% of secondary school students and 84% of primary school students felt accepted and valued by their peers and by others at their school, indicating progress toward the school's identified target.
<p>Resilience, confidence, independence and academic buoyancy</p> <p>TTFM data indicates increased levels of resilience, confidence, independence and academic buoyancy in students to be moving towards the school identified target of 5.6..</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of the 2023 Tell Them From Me survey data indicated 52% of students can overcome setbacks and challenges that are typical of the ordinary course of school life, indicating progress toward the school's identified target.
<p>Aboriginal Students - Positive Growth Mindset</p> <p>TTFM data indicates an increase in the percentage of Aboriginal students with a positive growth mindset and who feel supported in achieving their goals and aspirations whilst maintaining their culture to be moving towards the school identified target of 34%.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of the 2023 Tell Them From Me survey data indicated 78% of secondary school Aboriginal students and 82% of primary school Aboriginal students felt good about their culture when they are at school, indicating achievement beyond the school's identified target.

Purpose

To ensure a challenging, engaging and responsive learning environment underpinned by high quality, collaborative planning, programming, assessing and reporting practices, which maximise the potential of every learner.

Initiatives

This year our school implemented the following initiatives to support the realisation of the four year Strategic Improvement Plan and the achievement of system-negotiated and school-determined targets.

- Whole school approach to effective evidence-based teaching and learning
- Excellence in professional standards

Resources allocated to this strategic direction

Professional learning Beginning teacher support

Summary of progress

Whole school approach to effective evidence-based teaching and learning

HPGE Implementation

In 2023, the High Potential and Gifted Education (HPGE) SIP team promoted differentiation strategies to Aurora College teachers through 'strategies of the moment', collaborative 'differentiation rounds', and further development of the differentiation professional learning course. Posting strategies in Term 2 achieved limited engagement, so the team pivoted to a more interactive approach throughout Term 3 and followed this up with data informed posts in Term 4. These initiatives increased teachers' confidence to incorporate differentiation strategies in their teaching.

In 2024, the HPGE SIP team will promote the differentiation professional learning course across the school, support enrichment across all domains of giftedness, continue to support teachers to meet the learning needs of HPGE learners, and celebrate the varied successes of our unique students.

Aboriginal pedagogies professional learning

In 2023, the college undertook extensive professional learning around Aboriginal pedagogies. This had the effect of increasing our knowledge of how to create lessons catered to the learning and cultural needs of Aboriginal students. The professional learning also supported staff in authentically embedding in teaching and learning, Aboriginal cultures, histories and experiences. Each key learning area completed an audit of learning and teaching programs and resources, ensuring Aboriginal pedagogies were embedded appropriately. Throughout the year, some of our Aboriginal students organised school wide events that acknowledged, remembered, and/or celebrated Aboriginal days of significance for the entire Aurora community. Both staff and students also undertook the development of a digital Welcome to, or Acknowledgment of Country, showing awareness of and respect for the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we learn.

In 2024, the Aboriginal Education Team will work to provide enhanced levels of support for our current Aboriginal students, including supporting Aboriginal students to be part of the SRC, as well as those joining the secondary school as part of the Aboriginal high potential and gifted students cohort (The Young and Deadly Mob). This NSW Department of Education funded initiative is a partnership between Aurora College and the Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate. It aims to enhance engagement and retention of Aboriginal students in regional, rural, and remote areas of NSW. Staff will continue to undertake extensive professional learning around the Aboriginal pedagogies which will provide a framework for teaching practice that supports the meaningful inclusion of Aboriginal perspectives. Faculties will continue to reflect on the implementation of Aboriginal pedagogies professional learning for ongoing adaption and improvement.

Excellence in professional standards

Teacher Accreditation at all levels

In 2023, Aurora College supported teachers at all stages of Accreditation. We had three teachers in the Early Career Teacher (ECT) stage, including one who is part time. With dedicated funding for this year, we were able to support these teachers with additional observation sessions and days to specifically learn the craft and skills of teaching. One of these teachers also submitted her accreditation at Proficient level this year. Four additional teachers submitted a maintenance round with their Proficient accreditation. Six teachers were active in their pursuit of and learning about Highly Accomplished and Lead Accreditation, attending internal and external network meetings to explore the new policy and prepare potential documentary evidence.

In 2024, Aurora College will continue and extend this support. We will have an additional ECT on staff, and another ECT staff member who plans to submit their Proficient Accreditation. Four teachers are due to submit their maintenance round of Proficient Accreditation, with six teachers continuing to work towards Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher level. In 2023, teachers were supported internally through rolling personalised meetings with an accredited HALT coordinator. Further depth to this support will be gained as the coordinator takes on an assessor role with NESA in HALT in mid 2024.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

The annual progress measures indicate the expected annual level of achievement for each improvement measure, aligned to the initiatives, in the Strategic Improvement Plan. Schools evaluate their achievement against annual progress measures to determine progress and inform future planning.

Annual progress measure	Progress towards achievement
<p>High Potential and Gifted Education Increase in the percentage of teaching programs and classroom observations that demonstrate embedded HPGE strategies, approaching the school identified target of 100%.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An audit of 2023 teaching programs and classroom observations found 95% with embedded HPGE strategies, demonstrating progress toward the school's identified target.
<p>Assessment and Reporting Increase in the percentage of school assessments and reporting practices that include clear evidence of student voice and feedback, approaching the school identified target of 100%.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An analysis of the school's practices in this area indicated 83% of school assessments in 2023 included clear evidence of student voice and feedback, demonstrating progress toward the school's identified target.
<p>School Excellence Self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework shows the school moving towards excelling in the themes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative Practice and Feedback Professional Learning Expertise and Innovation. </p>	<p>Self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework in 2023 indicated the school is currently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excelling in the theme of Collaborative Practice and Feedback. Excelling in the theme of Professional Learning. Excelling in the theme of Expertise and Innovation.

Funding sources	Impact achieved this year
<p>Low level adjustment for disability</p> <p>\$55,016.26</p>	<p>Low level adjustment for disability equity loading provides support for students at Aurora College in mainstream classes who have a disability or additional learning and support needs requiring an adjustment to their learning.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic data analysis for school improvement • Whole student wellbeing <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engaging a learning and support teacher to work with individual students and in a case management role within the classroom/whole school setting • employment of additional staff to support teachers to differentiate the curriculum and develop resources and classroom activities, resulting in improved outcomes for students with additional learning needs • employment of interventionist teacher • development of a needs-based learning and support program in which specialist staff collaborated with classroom teachers to build capacity in meeting the literacy needs of identified students <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact: the school achieved a more consistent approach to student learning support and interventions, with an increased number of learning support referrals and subsequent collaborative learning support activities.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be: to further expand the impact of the learning support team, the school will provide additional support for identified students through the employment of intervention teachers.</p>
<p>Professional learning</p> <p>\$7,661.88</p>	<p>Professional learning funding is provided to enable all staff to engage in a cycle of continuous professional learning aligned with the requirement of the Professional Learning for Teachers and School Staff Policy at Aurora College.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole student wellbeing • Excellence in professional standards <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teacher relief for staff engaging in professional learning • engaging a specialist teacher to unpack evidence-based approaches to implement Aboriginal pedagogies. • presentations by suitable and qualified facilitators. <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact: increased capacity of all teachers to embed effective practices in the explicit teaching of Aboriginal pedagogies, resulting in improved internal and external student results.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be: to continue to differentiate the curriculum to cater for the needs of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.</p>
<p>Beginning teacher support</p> <p>\$30,434.00</p>	<p>Beginning teacher support funding is provided to enhance the professional growth of beginning teachers at Aurora College during their induction period.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan</p>

Beginning teacher support

\$30,434.00

including:

- Excellence in professional standards

Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:

- reduced responsibilities or teaching loads sufficient to support the development of their skills
- ongoing feedback and support that is embedded in the collaborative practices of the school
- mentoring structures and collaborative practices within the school or across a cluster of schools
- teacher mentors access specific training and flexibility in their teaching responsibilities to support classroom observation and provide structured feedback

The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:

- Increased teacher collective efficacy in responsive pedagogy for more effective and engaging teaching and learning
- Establishment of structured mentoring across the school
- Teacher relief for staff to engage in professional learning and structured observation cycles
- Designated time and support for Early Career Teachers to learn about and engage with assessment moderation, programming, behaviour management and required teacher administration

After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:

- Continued mentoring partnerships and support for Early Career Teachers within and across faculties
- Increase and broaden our bank of best practice videos that target specific pedagogical practice
- Deepen opportunities to deconstruct practice as part of classroom observation processes

Student information

Aurora commenced the 2022 school year with a cohort which comprised 745 students from Years 5 to 12.

- Year 5: 100 students
- Year 6: 138 students*
- Year 7: 91 students
- Year 8: 91 students
- Year 9: 76 students
- Year 10: 62 students
- Year 11: 116 students
- Year 12: 71 students

*includes first cohort of the Young and Deadly Mob initiative

In 2023, the proportion of students attending greater than 90% of school days was 87%. The proportion of students attending greater than 90% of the available lesson time was 41%, indicating progress towards achieving the school determined target.

Attendance

NSW student attendance data in 2020 is not comparable to other years due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The NSW Government encouraged students to learn from home, where possible, for a seven week period from 24 March to 22 May 2020. During this period, schools monitored engagement with learning to determine whether students were marked present. This changed the attendance measure. There was also some evidence of varied marking practices as schools adjusted to the learning from home period, with some schools recording higher attendance rates while others recording markedly lower rates.

Attendance figures from 2021 were calculated differently to align with the third edition of ACARA's National Standards for Student Attendance Data and Reporting. Changes include treating partial absences over 120 minutes as a half day absence (instead of their actual value, calculated as a proportion of a nominal 6-hour day) and covers all weeks during Semester 1. Prior to 2021, the final week of Term 2 was excluded.

Furthermore, the department implemented an automated attendance feed (AAF) system in Semester 1 2021. AAF transfers data automatically from third-party attendance management systems to the department's centralised data warehouse every night. The AAF significantly improved data quality in 2021, which has affected data comparability with previous years.

Although there were no state-wide or regional lockdowns in NSW during Semester 1 2021, COVID-19 continued to affect student attendance. Analysis of attendance codes showed a change in the structure of absence reasons in 2021.

Although there were no state-wide or regional lockdowns in NSW during Semester 1 2022, student attendance was impacted by a range of factors:

- * Families evacuating and relocating due to NSW floods
- * Sick students staying at home until a negative COVID-19 test was returned
- * Household members testing positive to COVID-19
- * The easing of COVID-19 border controls at the beginning of 2022 which allowed families to travel inter-state and overseas.

While there were no lockdowns or learning from home periods in Semester 1 2023, there was still a high prevalence of sick attendance codes as students were encouraged to stay home if they were even slightly unwell. Advice for families were still in place, recommending students and staff to stay home when sick and only returning to school when they were symptom free. (See <https://education.nsw.gov.au/schooling/covid-19/advice-for-families> for advice).

Management of non-attendance

Attendance at school has a big impact on longer term outcomes for children and young people. When a child is not at

school they miss important opportunities to learn, build friendships and develop their skills through play. Regular attendance at school is a shared responsibility between schools and parents. By working together we can have a positive effect on supporting our children and young people to regularly attend school.

Our teachers promote and monitor regular attendance at school and all our schools have effective measures in place to record attendance and follow up student absences promptly. They are guided by the School Attendance policy which details the management of non-attendance.

Post school destinations

Proportion of students moving into post-school education, training or employment	Year 10 %	Year 11 %	Year 12 %
Seeking Employment	N/A	N/A	0
Employment	N/A	N/A	34
TAFE entry	N/A	N/A	2
University Entry	N/A	N/A	58
Other	N/A	N/A	2
Unknown	N/A	N/A	4

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

0% of Year 12 students at Aurora College undertook vocational education and training in 2023.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational education qualification

100% of all Year 12 students at Aurora College expected to complete Year 12 in 2023 received a Higher School Certificate or equivalent vocational education and training qualification.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Deputy Principal(s)	1
Head Teacher(s)	1
Classroom Teacher(s)	0
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	0.4
Teacher Librarian	1
School Administration and Support Staff	1
Other Positions	1

*Full Time Equivalent

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce composition

The department actively supports the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees through the use of identified positions, and scholarship opportunities to become a teacher and by providing a culturally safe workplace. As of 2023, 2.5% of the department's overall workforce identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school workforce composition

Staff type	Benchmark ¹	2023 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation ²
School Support	3.00%	3.60%
Teachers	3.00%	3.40%

Note 1: The NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2019-2025 takes a career pathway approach in that it sets an ambitious target of 3% Aboriginal employment at each non-executive grade of the public sector by 2025.

Note 2: Representation of diversity groups are calculated as the estimated number of staff in each group divided by the total number of staff. These statistics have been weighted to estimate the representation of diversity groups in the workforce, where diversity survey response rates were less than 100 per cent. The total number of staff is based on a headcount of permanent and temporary employees.

Teacher qualifications

All casual, temporary and permanent teachers in NSW public schools must hold a NSW Department of Education approval to teach. Teachers with approval to teach must be accredited with the NSW Education Standards Authority, and hold a recognised teaching degree. All NSW teachers must hold a valid NSW Working With Children Check clearance.

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Professional learning is core to enabling staff to improve their practice. Professional learning includes five student-free School Development Days and induction programs for staff new to our school and/or system. These days are used to improve the capacity of teaching and non-teaching staff in line with school and departmental priorities.

Financial information

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023. The Principal is responsible for the financial management of the school and ensuring all school funds are managed in line with department policy requirements.

	2023 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	1,407,353.03
Revenue	12,626,059.62
Appropriation	12,256,466.04
Sale of Goods and Services	11,071.42
Grants and contributions	309,522.81
Investment income	48,999.35
Expenses	-11,459,480.22
Employee related	-9,238,005.43
Operating expenses	-2,221,474.79
Surplus / deficit for the year	1,166,579.40
Closing Balance	2,573,932.43

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

Financial summary - Equity loadings

The equity loading data is the main component of the 'Appropriation' line item of the financial summary above.

	2023 SBAR Adjustments (\$)
Targeted Total	0
Equity Total	55,016
Equity - Aboriginal	0
Equity - Socio-economic	0
Equity - Language	0
Equity - Disability	55,016
Base Total	939,073
Base - Per Capita	0
Base - Location	0
Base - Other	939,073
Other Total	9,283,403
Grand Total	10,277,492

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

School performance - NAPLAN

The National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

From 2023, student achievement in NAPLAN is reported against 4 levels of proficiency (<https://www.nap.edu.au/naplan/results-and-reports/proficiency-level-descriptions>). These measure student progress against challenging yet reasonable expectations based on the Australian curriculum. They replace the previous numerical NAPLAN bands and national minimum standards.

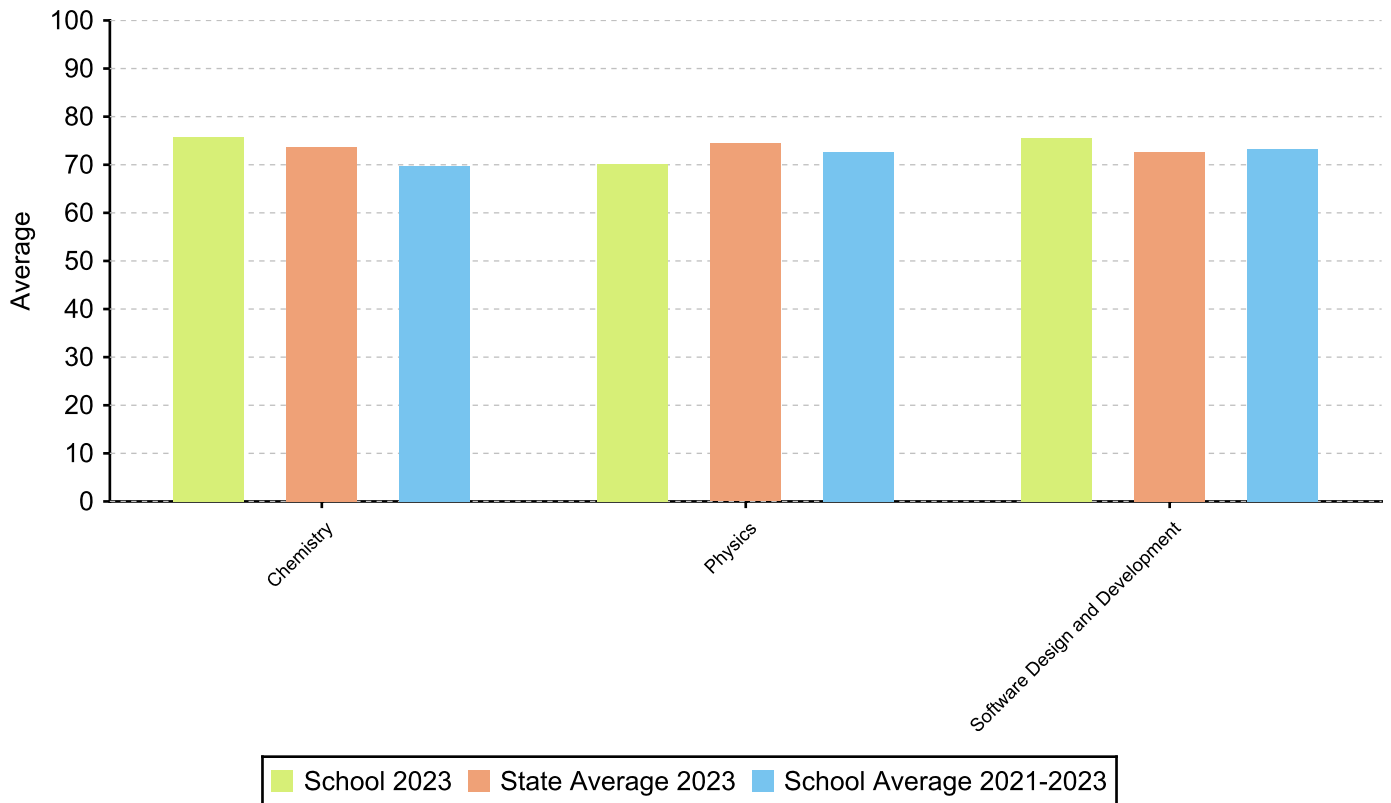
In addition to the shift to proficiency standards, the NAPLAN testing window moved up from May to March and the scale was reset. As such, NAPLAN scaled scores from 2023 and onwards cannot be compared to NAPLAN results prior to 2023.

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing. Go to myschool.edu.au to access the school data.

School performance - HSC

The performance of students in the HSC is reported in bands ranging from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest).

The information in this report must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies. Where there are fewer than 10 students in a course or subject, summary statistics or graphical representation of student performance is not available.



Subject	School 2023	State	School Average 2021-2023
Chemistry	75.8	73.7	69.7
Physics	70.2	74.4	72.6
Software Design and Development	75.6	72.7	73.2

In Stage 6, Aurora College is a **non-selective** school. In 2023, 18 HSC courses were offered at Aurora College with 62 students enrolled, and a total of 92 course completions.

- 63% of HSC results were in the top 3 bands.
- 33.7% of HSC results were in the top 2 bands.

The best results for the college's non-selective Year 12 cohort, included:

- One Band 5 result in Agriculture
- Three Band 6 results in Biology
- One Band 6 result and three Band 5 results in Chemistry
- Two Band 5 results in Economics
- One Band 5 result in English Advanced
- Three Band E3 results in English Extension 1
- One Band E4 result and two Band E3 results in English Extension 2
- One Band 5 result in Japanese Beginners
- One Band 5 result in Italian Beginners
- Three Band 5 results in Mathematics Advanced
- One Band E3 result in Mathematics Extension 1
- Two Band 5 results in Modern History

- Two Band 5 results in Physics
- Four Band 5 results in Software Design and Development.

In 2023, 11 students who were part of the Aurora selective stream in 2021 but did not study Stage 6 courses with Aurora achieved a further 17 Band 6/E4 results.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

The Tell Them From Me Survey includes ten measures of student engagement, categorised as social, institutional and intellectual engagement. For each aspect of engagement, students were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements, such as "I get along well with others at school."

The scores for the Likert-format questions (i.e., strongly agree to strongly disagree) were converted to a 10-point scale, then averaged and reported by question and by topic. A score of 0 indicates strong disagreement; 10 indicates strong agreement; 5 is a neutral position (neither agree nor disagree).

This report provided results based on data from 406 (secondary) and 192 (primary) students in this school who completed the the Tell Them From Me Survey between 23 May 2023 and 22 June 2023.

The secondary survey results related to school-level factors associated with student engagement were:

- Quality instruction = 7.2 (NSW Government school norm = 5.9)
- Positive teacher-student relations = 7.8 (NSW Government school norm = 5.7)
- Positive learning climate = 7.6 (NSW Government school norm = 5.6)
- Expectations for success = 8.2 (NSW Government school norm = 7.0)

In addition, responses of the secondary school students indicated:

- 71% had a positive sense of belonging (NSW Government school norm = 66%)
- 73% value schooling outcomes (NSW Government school norm = 72%)
- 40% are interested and motivated (NSW Government school norm = 28%)

The primary survey results related to school-level factors associated with student engagement were:

- Quality instruction = 8.4 (NSW Government school norm = 7.7)
- Positive teacher-student relations = 8.9 (NSW Government school norm = 8.3)
- Positive learning climate = 8.1 (NSW Government school norm = 7.1)
- Expectations for success = 8.7 (NSW Government school norm = 8.6)

In addition, responses of the primary school students indicated:

- 84% had a positive sense of belonging (NSW Government school norm = 80%)
- 94% value schooling outcomes (NSW Government school norm = 95%)
- 80% are interested and motivated (NSW Government school norm = 77%)

The 'Partners in Learning' Parent Survey is based on a comprehensive questionnaire covering several aspects of parents' perceptions of their children's experiences at home and school. This report provides results based on data from 113 respondents in this school who completed the Parent Survey on 5 Sep 2023.

Among the findings of the survey were the following results:

- If there were concerns with my child's behaviour at school, the teachers would inform me immediately = 7.9
- I am informed about my child's behaviour at school, whether positive or negative = 7.5
- The teachers would inform me if my child were not making adequate progress in school subjects = 8.1
- I am well informed about my child's progress in school subjects = 7.6
- I am informed about my child's social and emotional development = 5.8
- Teachers show an interest in my child's learning = 8.4
- Teachers have high expectations for my child to succeed = 8.4
- My child is encouraged to do his or her best work = 8.5
- Teachers take account of my child's needs, abilities, and interests = 7.7
- Teachers expect my child to work hard = 8.5

In addition:

- 90% of parents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "I would recommend my child's school to other parents."
- 85% of parents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "I am satisfied with the general communication from the high school (e.g., newsletters, emails, school website, school app, social media, etc.)."

The Focus on Learning Survey is a self-evaluation tool for teachers and schools which is based on two complementary research paradigms. One is 'effective schools' research which has identified the most important correlates of student outcomes. The second paradigm, related to Dimensions of Classroom and School Practices, is based on the learning model followed by the Outward Bound program.

Among the findings of the survey were the following results:

- I work with other teachers in developing cross-curricular or common learning opportunities = 6.9
- Teachers have given me helpful feedback about my teaching = 7.2
- I talk with other teachers about strategies that increase student engagement = 7.9

- Other teachers have shared their learning goals for students with me = 7.2
- Teachers in our school share their lesson plans and other materials with me = 8.4
- I discuss my assessment strategies with other teachers = 8.3
- I discuss learning problems of particular students with other teachers = 8.4
- I discuss my learning goals with other teachers = 7.8

In addition:

- 90% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "My school is a welcoming place for all students.
- 90% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "School leaders clearly communicate their strategic vision and values for our school.
- 85% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "Teachers in my school are confident in their capacity to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal Education Policy

The responsibility for enacting the Aboriginal Education Policy rests with all departmental staff. The policy should underpin and inform planning, teaching practice and approaches to educational leadership in all educational settings.

Evidence of effective implementation of the policy included:

- Establishing, building and strengthening relationships with the Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Aboriginal people and communities.
- Providing, in partnership with Aboriginal people and communities, education which promotes quality teaching, is engaging, and is culturally appropriate and relevant.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will match or better the outcomes of the broader student population.
- Implementation of Personalised Learning Pathways for all Aboriginal students in a school culture of high expectations.

Aboriginal Education - School statement

In 2023, in acknowledgement of Aboriginal people and communities, Aurora College celebrated:

- National Close the Gap Day
- National Sorry Day
- National Reconciliation Day
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day
- NAIDOC Week
- NSW Aboriginal Languages Week

Anti-Racism Policy

All teachers are responsible for addressing incidents of racism and supporting students to develop an understanding of racism and discrimination and the impact these may have on individuals and the broader community. The Principal is responsible for examining school practices and procedures to ensure they are consistent with the policy. The school has an Anti-Racism Contact Officer who is trained to respond to concerns in relation to racism.

Anti-Racism - School statement

The staff at Aurora College is committed to the eradication of racism in our society by promoting acceptance of Australia's cultural, linguistic and religious diversity, challenging prejudiced attitudes and ensuring that sanctions are applied against racist and discriminatory behaviours. In support of a community free of racism, in 2023 Aurora College celebrated:

- Harmony Day
- International Human Rights Day

Multicultural Education Policy

Teachers are responsible for addressing the specific learning and wellbeing needs of students from culturally diverse backgrounds through their teaching and learning programs. The Principal is responsible for ensuring that school policies, programs and practices respond to the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of the school community, and provide opportunities that enable all students to achieve equitable education and social outcomes.

Multicultural and anti-racism education - School Statement

Aurora College is committed to providing opportunities that enable all students to achieve equitable education and social outcomes and participate successfully in our culturally diverse society.

