2014 Annual Report to the School Community
School Number: 1721

Hurstbridge Learning Co-op
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Section 1: The School Context

The Hurstbridge Learning Co-Operative Primary School is an independent primary school set on 18 acres of natural bushland. Established in 1973, the Co-op operates as a consensus-based cooperative of families. The group is committed to working together to create a stimulating alternative to the mainstream classroom.

Facilities and Surrounds

The land and buildings are totally owned by the Co-operative. The facilities include a kitchen as an integral part of the learning program, a library, an Arts’ space, an instrumental music space, a fully equipped theatre space (built with assistance of the BER grant), a small group workspace, a kiln room and a multi-purpose room for indoor games and performing arts.

The surrounds include adventure play equipment, cubbies and plenty of space to play. There is an abundance of creative garden spaces, a chook shed, and an organic kitchen garden. The facilities accommodate enrolments of 25–30 students and include a shared open classroom space that encourages and supports multi-age learning, interaction and child-to-child mentoring. The intimate size of the Co-op creates a community much like an extended family.

Sustainability and Environmental Responsibility

The Learning Co-operative supports environmental sustainability through its use of solar energy, Tank water only supply, and is working towards becoming a carbon neutral environment. The children participate in the “Kids teaching Kids” conferences where environmental issues are explored as part of the learning program.

The Learning Environment, Philosophy & Curriculum Model: Overview

The Learning Co-operative Primary School offers play-based learning opportunities in an environment where children are given a true voice with regards their learning. Working within a dynamic educational framework, we provide a learning environment which is creative and constantly evolving; children work with their friends, in a peer based but cross aged learning environment, guided by parents and teachers to develop their unique passions. We do not use age-based grade levels, preferring broader groupings of
‘Biggies’, ‘Middlies’ and ‘Littlies’. We believe that every member of the community can contribute to the learning and raising of its children.

At present we have 29 children from K-6 with a fairly even spread across age groups, though there are higher numbers of children aged 5-6 and 10-12.

Choice, co-operation, open-mindedness, non-judgmental attitudes, wonder and curiosity are defining features of the learning environment.

Core units of numeracy, literacy and the other competencies of AusVELS are delivered via a range of experiences to cater for all learners. The teaching staff and parents offer two focus-time sessions per day, where the children work on core competencies based on their individual needs and interests. The remainder of the day is spent on child-initiated projects and tasks, as well as activities created by the parent-body and teaching staff. An Indigenous cultural program has been a feature of the learning program at the Learning Co-operative and we also incorporate learning units on social justice, in particular projects around refugee stories and experiences.

The school has a long history of excellence in the performing arts and LOTE (Italian). The learning is showcased through drama performances and games. In 2014, the children performed a play in Auslan, Italian, French and German inspired in part by weekly Auslan lessons and the diverse cultural backgrounds of the parents. The concert also featured a wide range of plays written and directed by students. Some graduating students were part of 14 performance items. Themes in the concert included instrumental performance, solo and group singing, dance items, Star Wars (fan-fiction), fantasy and puppetry the children as well as a series of child-created animations and movies.

For more detailed information please refer to Section 2: Student Learning

**Parent Involvement and Responsibility**

Since inception, parents have been responsible for the management of the Co-operative. Responsibilities include participation in the learning programs at Co-op, administration, maintenance and transport. Decisions regarding all aspects of the Co-op’s activities are made at fortnightly adult meetings. Typically, meetings include discussion about what occurs in the school, organizational matters
and planning. Importantly, they provide a forum for philosophical debate and a forum to discuss the challenges and milestones occurring for individual children, (and families).

Section 2: Student Learning

The school has implemented changes in Curriculum and Learning to ensure a comprehensive program. New methods of recording the learning program have been put in place, including a daily chronicle kept by the children. English and Mathematics are taught as stand-alone subjects but are also integrated into other areas of the curriculum.

The school uses ongoing fortnightly discussions as one means of measuring student performance and readiness for learning. All parents are involved and guided by the teacher/coordinator in these discussions. This forum supports planning and provision of learning opportunities for the next fortnight. The school uses term-based Individualised Learning Plans to facilitate parent/child development of specific goals and to create strategies to address learning needs for each child. This process is a collaborative exchange among the parents, child, and the teacher/coordinator and the goal is to create a balance between interests and learning needs.

In 2014 we began to develop Individualised Learning Plans (ILP) in a format that includes all eight learning areas; there are detailed for Literacy and Numeracy. The plan is to further support child-initiated learning through these ILP. Each family is encouraged to develop goals and agreed measures of achievement in these eight areas. A folio is also kept of each child’s work to complement the ILP and to monitor student progress, along with teacher and parent observations.

In 2014 written reports were not provided. The main reason is all parents wrote letters expressly asking not to have such reports written, preferring to communicate directly with the educators and other parents in the community regarding their child’s progress. There was also a change of principal coordinator mid-year, and thus written records of student progress were not linear for the period.

The learning program uses Integrated Curriculum approaches, Stand-alone approaches in English and Mathematics; it also supports child-initiated learning through the Individualised Learning Plans.
Engaging Children
Co-op children are engaged in their learning and enjoy having access to programs that give them a targeted way to focus upon their passions. Previous focus areas include water conservation projects, kids teaching kids workshops, reconciliation week activities, and world music concerts. Learning activities link in with integrated theme studies or are multi-faceted and involve a high level of student decision-making and participation. The range of activities offered during 2014 is varied and vibrant, and demonstrates the Co-op’s commitment to providing a tailored, inspiring education for our students and families.

Activity highlights in 2014:
The following groupings are arbitrary, as many of the projects listed are aspects of larger integrated projects and therefore include invaluable social and interpersonal learning, as well as providing authentic avenues for students’ ideas and passions.

Language and Literacy
• Dream Journals
• Blogging project
• Cyber etiquette and literacy
• Learning Italian
• AUSLAN
• Script writing-Plays
• Fonts and lettering
• Reading-Monitor and reading with children
• Kids reading with kids
• Playing board games
• Storytelling and writing, with random dice topics
• ‘Exquisite corpse’ story-writing game
• Grammar games – full stops, commas
• Reading in nooks and crannies
• Letter writing
• Magazine articles
• Autograph hunt
• The Art of Asking: Writing persuasively
• Field journals about our archaeological dig (term-long project)
Technology

- Stop-motion animation
- Collaborating on a documentary about Co-op
- Movie night showing movies made by students
- Building Computers (strawberry Pi)
- Building and designing cubbies
- Building props for Concert

Maths & Logical Thinking

- Paths and Maps
- Problem solving
- Pie Graphs
- IXL online maths program: all basic concepts covered
- Geometric shape constructions
- Concept Drawing - Architectural Design - Scale
- Study ladder - Focus on Numeracy/Literacy activities
- Maths Games
- Writing in code and code breaking
- Timing and graphing races
- 3D drawings
- Probability
- Orienteering
- Projectiles
- Equations
- Lengths, volume & Mass
- 2D and 3D shapes
- Food miles
- Analysing patterns
- Drawing tables
- Multiplication and division
- Plan of HLC Building – Area
- Distances
- Chance
- Maths problem solving – logic puzzles, thinking backwards
- Making models of shapes
- Treasure hunts
- Making obstacle courses
- Ian Mapping

Science

- Native Seedling planting at Darrabi Bush Food Garden
- Archaeological digs in our purpose built pit.
- Incursion with the snake man
- Raising Chickens
Composting
• Kitchen Garden
• Making things explode
• Polymers
• Field trips: mycology, bird-identification, native wildlife and local plants
• Forces
• What shapes our world?
• Weather
• Cycles in nature
• pH testing experiment
• Chickens- hatching, caring, weighing, meetings
• Road Safety - Reaction Times - Science
• Petri Dish Science
• Incursion with an astrophysicist
• Planets and Space
• The archaeology of Space: using our arch pit
• Space and Planet Presentation day: Planetary obstacle course, performances and power point presentations around Space

Humanities
• Bush walking excursions in Kinglake, St Andrews, Panton Hill and Warrandyte (Includes learning about gold panning/ local history of goldfields, local legends
• Historical Archaeology
• Neanderthal
• Reconciliation week and Close the Gap
• Writing to the Prime Minister about aboriginal kids and health
• Refugee stories and story-writing project with Maytrei
• Café: Planning, cooking, serving (and eating!)
• DIY: Online Scouts
• Reading Maps
• Life-Skills How to: Write letters, address an Envelope, boil and egg, research on Google, budget
• Fire Drills and Emergency training
• Organising Fire clothes – with kids help
• Making our own family trees
• Time Travel Day: Presentations and child-created activities
Performing Arts

- Shakespeare: Excerpts from the Tempest
- Play-reading ‘Rosencrantz and Gildernstern are Dead’
- Music through marimba, violin, cello, guitar, ukulele
- Boite Schools’ Chorus
- Juggling with Brian our resident juggling mathematician
- African Dance & Drum Playing
- Clay Modelling/firing/glazing
- Drama – character work, realism, absurdism, etc
- Film making workshops
- Playwriting
- Script analysis
- Theatre improvisation
- Physical theatre
- Glee club
- Making your own band with singing and instruments
- Stagecraft and management
- Costume Box Play
- Fire-twirling (Biggies)

Cooking

- Cooking/Cafe
- Kitchen Garden Markers
- Weekly Baking
- Gingerbread house construction and decoration
- Chocolate moulding
- Gluten-free baking
- Shared lunchtime cooking sessions
- Independent lunch-making

Art Design

- Clay projects (tree ornaments, vessels, signs)
- Foil art
- Portrait project
- Pastel drawing
- Animation & Film Making
- Art/Craft activities – Drawing
- Knitting and knitting nancies
- Dream catchers
- Painting workshops
- Woodwork: Swords, Shields, boxes
- Sewing & Clothes Design
- Biggies Cubby Building
**Sport**

- Archery
- Swimming - Term 1
- Gymnastics
- Basketball
- Ball games
- Crocodile, crocodile (In Italian!)
- Poison Ball
- Excursion to Treetops climbing space

**Excursions/incursions**

- Snake man Incursion
- Martu Mill Exhibition at McClelland Gallery “We don’t need a map”
- Burrinja Cultural Center Exhibition and Talk
- William Rickett’s Sanctuary
- Biggies camp
- Funfields Excursion
- Touring camp to Western Victoria
- Excursion to ACMI (Film Exhibit)
- Street Art Excursion
- Indigenous elder visit
- Cooking and doing a stall for the Wattle Festival
- Boite Schools’ Chorus
- Treetops High Ropes Course
- Performing at Eltham Market
- Performing at Opening Hurstbridge Community Center
- Performing at Opening Ceremony of Hurstbridge Wetlands
- Incursion with Astro-physicist

**Section 3: Student Engagement and Wellbeing**

The school requires parents to participate and contribute to the learning programs for a minimum of half a day per week for each family. This involvement allows an intimate understanding of any issues regarding student engagement and wellbeing; this enables appropriate support to be given and individual learning plans tailored for each child. The fortnightly meeting of all families is the forum for discussions and the development of strategies to support individual needs.
The principal coordinator is also available to privately consult with parents regarding student engagement and wellbeing. Student engagement and wellbeing is also addressed through whole-school meetings held twice daily. The children lead meetings and are part of a democratic process that promotes inclusion and respect for their views. The children have a voice in any issue that may affect their engagement or wellbeing.

The school uses inclusive approaches to empower children to manage social interactions. The groupings for learning vary; most often they are interest-based, but when appropriate, age-based groupings are organised. The children negotiate the context for learning and this greatly enhances social maturity and engagement.

The emphasis on play in learning also supports the development of social skills and results in a high level of proficiency amongst all the children within the social-emotional context. Areas of interest and passion are identified, as are gaps in knowledge, skills or proficiency, and activities are tailored to address these areas and maintain a high level of student engagement and inclusion.

The school provides a camping program for the older children; it involves a five-day under canvas experience. The children are directly involved in the planning and costing of the camp. The children plan things including the menu, cooking roster, activities, and are responsible for and budget-management. The school also includes sleep-overs for all children at the school as part of the transition to this extended camping program.

The school is a very close community where children often spend time with other families after school or on sleep-overs. The parents are supportive of each other and contribute to the wellbeing of families with their natural generosity and support.
Section 4: Student Pathways and Transitions

The Learning Co-operative has specific strategies to support Student Pathways and Transitions:

- **Term 4** - Inclusion of next years’ Preps in the Co-op learning environment.
- **Year 6** – Transition Program to secondary school

In term 4 we invite children enrolled for prep in the following year to engage in our programs. The parents attend with their child; this provides a gradual introduction to our school’s approaches and operation. By the start of the Prep year they are ready for a full day at school.

The transition to secondary schools is managed through orientation days and reports to high-school coordinators. Some high schools send a representative to visit prospective students at the Co-op. This program is largely coordinated by the various high schools.

The Hurstbridge Learning Cooperative does not use an age-grade approach and we find that the children move through the Aus-VELS recommended Stages of Learning at their own pace. We have children of a young age capable of literacy skills of the older children and those children participate at this higher level quite naturally. The differentiated learning available at the Learning Cooperative allows for children to find their own ability level and receive scaffolding into their next level of learning without experiencing undue pressure; children largely choose their learning.
Section 5: Staff Profile

**Greg Richards Role:** Principal / Learning Coordinator (1.0 EFT)

**Qualifications:**

**Previous Roles & Responsibilities:**
- Assistant Principal
- Early Years Literacy Coordinator
- Curriculum Development, Implementation and Assessment & Reporting
- Student Welfare
- Staff welfare
- LAP, AIM & NAPLAN Coordinator

**Elizabeth Bennet:**
**Role:**
Teacher/ Acting Coordinator
Appointed in 2010.
VIT registration No: 321908

**Qualifications:**
Education: BA Majoring in French (also studied Italian, music, psychology and linguistics) at Melbourne and Latrobe University.1986
Dip Ed 1987 Latrobe Uni. Methods: Modern Languages and ESL
Lived and worked in Italy 1984 - 1985 and France Jan- April 1985
Cert IV in Education and Training 2011
Previous and current positions
Teacher/Coordinator LOTE/Music Strathewen Primary School 2007-2013
Teacher/Coordinator LOTE Plenty Valley International Montessori School 2012-2013
Teacher/Coordinator ESL and ESL/Literacy Kangan Institute TAFE Broadmeadows 1988 - 2011
Teacher Italian evening classes, Diamond Valley Learning Centre and Swinburne Uni 2000-2006
Tutor for Music Workshops, including Roses Gap Folk Festival & VOSA marimba camp

Qualifications:
Education: BA Majoring in French but also Italian, music, psychology and linguistics at Melbourne and Latrobe University. 1986 Dip Ed 1987 Latrobe Uni. Methods: Modern Languages and ESL Lived and worked in Italy 1984 - 1985 and France Jan- April 1985
Cert IV in Education and Training 2011

Previous and current positions
Teacher LOTE Performing Arts Literacy (0.2 EFT) Hurstbridge Learning Co-operative 2010 - 2013
Teacher/Coordinator LOTE/Music Strathewen Primary School 2007 .2 ongoing Teacher/Coordinator LOTE Plenty Valley International Montessori School 2012 .3 Teacher/Coordinator LOTE Doreen Primary School 2011 .2 Term 4 replacement position
Teacher/Coordinator ESL and ESL/Literacy Kangan Institute TAFE Broadmeadows 1988 - 2011 Teacher Italian evening classes, Diamond Valley Learning Centre and Swinburne Uni 2000-2006
Tutor for Music Workshops, including Roses Gap Folk Festival & VOSA marimba camp

Ruth O’Dowd Role: CRT (.8 EFT)
Appointed: May 2014

VIT: 392109
Qualifications:  Education: BA Archaeology LaTrobe University 2012.

Graduate Diploma of Primary Education, LaTrobe University 2013

Previous and current positions

CRT .8 Hurstbridge Learning Co-operative Primary School

Kristin Polglaze

Role: Art teacher (.2 Eft) Appointed: February 2014

VIT: 367520

Qualifications: Dip. Ed

Zana Fraillon

Role: CRT (.3 EFT) Appointed: February 2014, ended April 2014

VIT: 323589

Qualifications:  Education: Previous and current positions:

Office Manager/Book-keeping

Sue Monigatti (Appointed: 2013)
Parents with Education Qualifications in 2014.

Duncan Sadler (VIT: 195520)

Sherry Sadler (VIT: 206437)

Ryan Griffith (VIT: 334847)

Ruth O’Dowd (VIT: 392109)

Zana Fraillon (VIT: 323589)
Section 7: Student Enrolment Data

The Learning Cooperative is a small school of around 25 students on average, which fluctuated throughout the course of the 2014 school year, dropping from 31 to 26 by the end of the year.

The Learning Cooperative highlights personal growth and strives to create individual learning streams for each student across their primary years rather than relying entirely on the more concentrated and specific standards expected through AUSVELS curriculum. This approach allows the teachers and community to take each child’s specific circumstances into account on a daily, and even momentary basis.

The staffing profile of the school altered dramatically at the very beginning of the 2014 school year. The existing Principal-Coordinator commenced extended sick leave, which culminated in his early exit from the position for health reasons. This saw our part time music/language teacher assuming the acting Coordinator role and commencing a full-time role. The school also employed two part-time teachers, essentially raising staffing levels to two full-time positions; this was a first in the school’s history. At the same time we experienced a decline in student numbers during this period, with several high-needs students moving to other educational facilities.

These staffing changes in combined with fewer high-needs students allowed the community deepen the reach and focus of ‘focus-time’, the twice-daily session of core literacy and numeracy. This saw and improved student outcomes and participation, especially for those students transitioning to secondary school. These scheduled focus times not only improved literacy and numeracy, but also had a positive effect on the children’s interest in these subject areas.

The Learning Cooperative gathers performance data via student feedback, teacher observation and small-group intensive focus times. All parents are also involved in monitoring student progress, meeting with the coordinator on a fortnightly basis. This allows for a targeted response to each child’s individual learning needs.

School performance data is more difficult to track and report on with any accuracy given the small cohorts of students at any specific year level. Much of the data involves examination of the value added for each student as they move through the school year.

All relevant families are given information relating to the NAPLAN testing scheme. In 2014 there were 13 children in the relevant
NAPLAN cohorts. The families of these students all submitted a request to withdraw from the NAPLAN test.

Due to the level of fluctuation in 2014 around student numbers, and the shifting student cohort groups, the below figures provide an overall interpretation of the teacher judgments in relation to AUSVELS data.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Areas</th>
<th>TEACHER JUDGEMENTS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At or above</td>
<td>Below</td>
</tr>
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<td>expected</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>level</td>
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<td>English Language</td>
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<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Literature</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Literacy</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths: Number and Algebra</td>
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<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths: Measurement and Geometry</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths: Statistics and Probability</td>
<td>78.0%</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
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<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language: Italian and Auslan</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civics and Citizenship</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and PE</td>
<td>78.0%</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Learning</td>
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<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Learning</td>
<td>96.0%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
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<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design, Creativity and Technology</td>
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<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information and Communications Technology</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking processes</td>
<td>96.0%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 7: Student Enrolment Data

In 2014, the school had a total of 29 full time students enrolled (see Table below), with slightly more male than female students. Enrolment was uneven across the grades, with larger numbers in the Year 1, Year 3 and Year 6 levels. The school aims for enrolments between 25-35 students to ensure that we can maintain the special character of our community.

Table: 2014 Enrolment Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Prep</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male total</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female total</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male Indigenous only</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Indigenous only</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enrolment levels are currently within our target zone; we had three new enrolments at the Prep level and another in Year 1 for 2014. Strong Prep enrolments in 2014 have mitigated the risk from the large cohort moving to high school in 2015. We expect the numbers to build up over the next few years as we have solid enrolments across the younger levels of the school.

We anticipate that enrolments will remain steady into the future, due to strategies put in place to increase awareness of the school’s programs and approaches. In 2014 we had 29 students as at the February census, and we have already had strong interest for 2015 as at May 2014.
Socio-economic background

ICSEA value – 1096
Average ICSEA value - 1000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Distribution</th>
<th>Bottom quarter</th>
<th>Middle quarters</th>
<th>Top quarter</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>36%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Australian Distribution</th>
<th>Bottom quarter</th>
<th>Middle quarters</th>
<th>Top quarter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The schools ICSEA value has been set using the ABS data for the district. The school is deemed metropolitan despite its bush location north of Hurstbridge. Parents choose the Learning Co-operative School based upon philosophy not location.

“The variables that make up an ICSEA value use family background information provided to schools directly by families, including parental occupation, and the school education and non-school education levels they achieved. In some cases, where this information is not available, ICSEA uses Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census data on family background to determine a set of average family characteristics for the districts where students live.

The ICSEA variables also include two school characteristics: whether a school is in a metropolitan, regional or remote area; and the proportion of Indigenous student enrolments.” – My school quote

Section 8: Student Attendance Data

This report was generated from the school roll, and offers a data snapshot of the period February 4th through June 27th 2014. Note that prep attendance is not included in this snapshot, as in Victoria school is only compulsory from age 6; also, in 2014 we did not have any Year 2 students enrolled in the school.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Attendance Report</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
<th>Enrolment Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summary Enrolment Data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Male All Including Indigenous</td>
<td>528.00</td>
<td>352.00</td>
<td>176.00</td>
<td>88.00</td>
<td>264.00</td>
<td>1408.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female All Including Indigenous</td>
<td>264.00</td>
<td>176.00</td>
<td>176.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female Indigenous Students Only</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male All Including Indigenous</td>
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<td>86.50</td>
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<td>Female All Including Indigenous</td>
<td>244.50</td>
<td>161.00</td>
<td>141.50</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>387.00</td>
<td>934.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Indigenous Students Only</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Indigenous Students Only</td>
<td>86.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>86.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary Attendance Rate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall % Attendance</td>
<td>88.26</td>
<td>87.03</td>
<td>83.38</td>
<td>98.30</td>
<td>86.43</td>
<td>86.38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attendance is always very strong at our school. This reflects the extraordinary enthusiasm and engagement of our students—they are usually disappointed when it is holiday time! Absences are all communicated to the Principal-Coordinator directly. The school is able to address any long-term absence of a child through the community network, though this is a very rare occurrence due to the high levels of engagement of both parents and children. In 2014 all absences were approved absences due to illness, or parents exposing their children to other worthy educational experiences such as travel and outings.
Section 9: Financial Commentary

Grants

The total Government Grants received for 2014 was $266,691.21. These grants included financial assistance for students with disabilities and indigenous support. These grants were used specifically to employ a teachers’ aid, an Auslan teacher, and provide cultural studies opportunities for all students.

The school received the following Victorian Government Programs funding in 2013;

- Developing resiliency ($1010)
- Financial assistance model – students with disabilities ($4737.26)
- Arbor Week Grant ($400)

These grants have been used to target specific areas needing improvement.
**Savings and Term Deposits**

The school has increased the value of its term deposits in 2014. This means the school has a solid financial safety net.

Investment Term deposits at 31/12/14 totaled $132,976.63. The balance of the school’s current operating account at 31/12/14 was $232,130.36.

**Expenditures and Other Items**

The school’s 12-seater bus was fully paid off in 2013. The board will review any possible bus upgrade based on key factors including market value and condition of the bus.

During 2013 it was identified that with the State and Australian General Recurrent funding for enrolments of 26 – 30 students, the Learning Co-operative be in a position to be able to consider an increase in staffing levels. With enrolments at 32 for 2014 and with a predicted growth trend in future enrolments, the school was in the position to employ another staff member and a second teacher was employed for the year, which is a very positive outcome for the community.

With the current Coordinator’s slightly early exit from the 5 year contract due to ill health, the school went undertook advertising and interviewing for a new Coordinator. The community decided to adopt a Co-Coordinator model, and employed two teachers on a 5 year contract for the positions. The school was able to support this growth in staffing due to its positive financial position and positive financial growth forecasting; this move also strongly aligned with the wishes of the community. This new staffing structure begins in 2015.

The school has maintained a low-fee structure. To enable maximum access, the fees have remained unchanged for the last five years. There are social justice policies around fee payments to support families with multiple children enrolled. In 2014 the school provided free babysitting for all families to assist with the demands of evening meetings.
The school liaised with the local CFA and after conducting research purchased a 40,000 litre water tank specifically for fire use. The purchase included a diesel pump and two fire hoses as well as the plumbing of the tank and hoses. We paid for half late in 2014, and the balance will be paid early in 2015.

Future financial considerations:

Professional Development
Budget for ongoing Professional Development for staff and for parents responsible for:
- OHS
- HR
- Financial Management: Treasurer
- Governance
- Education

Solar Energy
Review Grants opportunities to extend current system.

Welfare Fund
Review methods we use to offer assistance to families facing short and long-term challenges.

Babysitting and parent access at meetings
Review our ability to pay for ongoing babysitting to enable all parents to attend meetings.

Facilities Upgrade:
Possible strategies/ideas include:
- A wetland area design, from water play area to beyond basketball court, including a tank for children to monitor their water consumption during play.
- Research grants or loan to procure funds for an external areas upgrade; specifically a more appealing entry landscape.
- Improve ceiling in main room. This could include replacing the ceiling in the main room including lighting, or just replacing the lighting. Awaiting quote from electrician.
Staffing:
Managing succession plans for changes in staffing. The school is monitoring and assessing the increase in staffing levels to cater for student learning.
Section 10: Goals, Targets and Key Improvement Areas

Please refer to our school improvement plan for information regarding forward planning, goals, and targets.