Soldiers’ Settlement Public School
Annual School Report 2014
School context statement

Soldiers’ Settlement, Matraville played a vital role in shaping the lives and the learning of our students in 2014. The school began the year with an enrolment of 220 students K-6 and a 40 place sessional Preschool. Numbers continued to increase throughout the year. 25% of our students are from an Indigenous background and 36% are from backgrounds other than English. The staff are a mix of experienced teachers who have been in the role for more than seven years and teachers within their first five years of teaching. Soldiers’ Settlement Matraville prides itself on being a school with strong community links and has forged strong links with local businesses, clubs, AECG and community groups. Many of our families are multigenerational graduates and take pride in the ongoing relationship they have with our school through our current students.

Principal’s Message

This report gives information about the programs and performance of Soldiers’ Settlement Public School. It has been written for accountability purposes for both our community and the Department of Education and Communities (DEC). It is part of our process of self-evaluation reporting and planning. The 2014 school year has been a productive and successful journey for our students, staff and community. This annual school report highlights our school’s achievements, academic record and significant events for the school year.

The profile of our school has continued to be raised due to our exemplary and unique programs. The school’s enrolment continues to grow and is recognised in the wider community as being committed to continuous improvement in the areas of Aboriginal education, social/emotional learning and academically. Soldiers’ Settlement operates on the premise that students flourish if our teachers are cherished. Teacher wellbeing and appreciation is critical to student wellbeing.

The implementation of the new English curriculum has been a key focus in the school and our staff have completed many hours of professional learning to ensure they are delivering all aspects of the curriculum professionally and with confidence. The implementation of the new Mathematics curriculum in 2015 will continue through ongoing professional learning along with further curriculum areas, History and Science.

It has been a privilege to lead the school since Term 3, 2013 and over a short period of time I have witnessed excellent successes from all stakeholders across a range of areas within the school. I would like to acknowledge the hard work, dedication and professionalism of the staff who have been 100% committed to ensuring that all students are provided with the best learning environment. I would also like to commend the hard work of P&C President Rebekah Glacken and our P&C who work tirelessly to support our students and staff and community.

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

Polly Palaitis

P&C Message

Soldiers’ Settlement Public School has a hard working and dedicated P&C Association which works closely with the Principal and other members of the Executive Team to raise much needed funds to support the school.

The P&C Association and Parent Volunteers, run a very successful uniform shop. The P&C also hold discos, Election Day Barbeques, cake stalls, Mother’s and Father’s Day stalls, Movie nights, Welcome Barbeques, Easter and Christmas Raffles. We have also contributed to school excursions for the cost of buses to transport the children. Our annual aim is to raise at least $10,000 per year to support the school with various projects linked to the school plan and the needs of the students. In the past we have contributed to the One Laptop Per Student Scheme (OLPC) and the Year 6 Farewell Event.

As this is my First year as P&C President, I would like to thank the current P&C Members for their hard work and support of me in this role. I would also like to make a special mention to the longstanding P&C members who will be moving on next year. Your contribution and dedication to the children and the community will forever be remembered and valued. Lastly I would like to thank our Principal Polly Palaitis, and the Soldiers’ Settlement staff, families and community for their continuous support of our Brilliant School. This year has been a very rewarding experience and I look forward to a new year with new adventures and experiences with the P&C.

Rebekah Glacken - President
Student Representative’s Message

2014 has been an exciting year for us. It’s been full of unforgettable moments. Our experience as school captains started at the end of last year when Mrs Palaitis was announcing the 2014 leadership team. When our names were called out as the 2014 school captains we were ecstatic! No more campaigns, no more speeches; this was the real deal. We felt very grateful to be standing up on that stage holding the responsibility and the badge of Soldiers’ Settlement’s new school captains.

2014 was full of exciting events at Soldiers’ Settlement and we were very excited at the announcement of launch of the newly formed SRC. Miss Jackson and Miss Cummings assisted the SRC in understanding their roles and responsibilities and the SRC were able to run some very significant fundraising events.

We wish the 2015 school captains all the best with the New Year. Enjoy the role. Good luck to all those families and students who are leaving. Thank you all for the amazing seven-year adventure of primary school.

Josh Uy and Sammy-Lee Cessario
2014 School Captains

Student information

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

Student enrolment profile

Enrolments have steadily increased over the past two years. This year we had 220 enrol in our K-6 environment. The graph highlights growth.

Student attendance profile

Student attendance remains reasonably steady. However there was a slight increase in the number of families travelling overseas during term time.

Management of non-attendance

Class teachers, Executive and the Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO), monitor student attendance. Parents are asked to provide a note explaining a student’s absence. Contact is made with the family as soon as whole day or partial absences are causing concern. Students with above average non-attendance are placed on a tracking sheet and followed up with a face to face meeting and if necessary a meeting with the HSLO.
### Class sizes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll class</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total in class</th>
<th>Total per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KH</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KJ</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>17</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2W</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4R</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-SJ</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6A</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>29</td>
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<td>5-6R</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>29</td>
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### Workforce information

#### Workforce composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Teacher(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0.42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Education Officer</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Learning and Support Officer (P)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>4.622</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>18.804</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Australian Education Regulation, 2014 requires school to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce. In 2014 Soldiers’ Settlement Public School employed 5 Aboriginal staff members.

#### Teacher qualifications

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
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### Professional learning and teacher accreditation

The teachers were strongly committed to a professional learning program that focused on improving the learning outcomes of their students. Executive and staff identified targets for improvement and the professional learning program was developed to increase staff skills in managing and guiding student learning in the identified areas. School professional learning was targeted to improving student learning in English, particularly in understanding syllabus expectations and changes in curriculum required.

- Administrative staff attended Annual Financial Statement and Rollover training, First Aid training, Strategic Financial Management and Core Financial Literacy.
- Staff participated in a professional learning program throughout the year designed to increase their understanding of the new English syllabus, changes in teaching strategies and to enhance student understanding of the curriculum.
- A walk through the English syllabus on the school development day on Day 1 2014, continuing with school development day presentations and staff meetings throughout the year. Combined professional learning with our Sister School, Botany Public School and Consultants Adele Crowhurst and Susan Yabsley provided expert support with the implementation of the curriculum. Time was provided to staff for stage based collaboration with each other, stage executives and with Botany Public School to discuss, prepare, teach and evaluate appropriate teaching and learning strategies.
- Both Executive attended the Primary Executive Network Conference
- Two Staff attended the Live Life Well Professional Development Training
- Staff participated in numerous Adobe Connect sessions including:
  - Syllabus Plus: Maths (Fifteen staff)
  - Writing (Fifteen staff)
  - Syllabus Plus Science and Technology (four staff)
- All staff participated in Adobe Connect sessions by the Curriculum Directorate on aspects of implementing new curriculum including sessions on English, Mathematics, Science and History.
All staff undertook mandatory training in Keeping Them Safe (child protection), emergency care, CPR, and managing health care needs including anaphylaxis updates.

Topics covered on school development days and through professional learning staff meetings attended by all staff included planning and programming, familiarisation with new syllabuses and developing curriculum strategies for our students. Teachers have worked collaboratively using the new syllabuses to plan units of work for implementation in 2014.

Learning Support Team members completed the updated training on the National Disability Standards framework in preparation for the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data for School Students with a Disability 2014.

Throughout the year, topics for professional learning staff meetings included:

- Using the literacy and numeracy continuums, and PLAN for recording and planning teaching programs;
- Science and developing teaching units in line with the new syllabus;
- Building student resilience through the PBL program;
- Using Mathletics the on-line mathematics program;
- 21st Century learning and the use of iPads as a teaching tool;
- HSIE and developing teaching units in preparation for the new syllabus;
- Assessment and reporting in the new syllabuses;
- Implementing the new English syllabus – working with quality texts
- Professional conversations around programming and assessment in mathematics.

Learning Support Team members completed the updated training on the National Disability Standards framework in preparation for the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data for School Students with a Disability 2014.

All classroom teachers, relief from face to face teachers (RFF), learning and support (LaST) and ESL teachers attended these sessions. Many of our casual teachers elected to attend our school-based professional learning activities. All staff attended school development day professional learning activities.

The DEC allocation for professional learning for the school was $10,063.28. Funding to implement the Australian Curriculum of $1,657.13 was also received, and under the Resource Allocation Model (RAM) literacy / numeracy funding was $11,883.46. Professional learning funds were also utilised from other sources e.g. National Partnerships and Curriculum Implementation.

Additional school global funds were allocated for professional learning for school administration and support staff.

Beginning Teachers

In 2014, there were no beginning teacher appointments to Soldiers’ Settlement Public School
Financial summary

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
<th>30/11/2014</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>159,418.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>150,584.66</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>167,746.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>67,455.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>5,652.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>47,131.15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>597,989.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expenditure**            |            |
| Teaching & learning        |            |
| Key learning areas         | 44,523.56  |
| Excursions                 | 21,013.82  |
| Extracurricular dissections| 8,656.00   |
| Library                    | 5,767.20   |
| Training & development     | 2,839.84   |
| Tied funds                 | 120,364.85 |
| Casual relief teachers     | 33,341.72  |
| Administration & office    | 48,757.86  |
| School-operated canteen    | 0.00       |
| Utilities                  | 40,381.32  |
| Maintenance                | 23,224.20  |
| Trust accounts             | 38,207.64  |
| Capital programs           | 0.00       |
| **Total expenditure**      | 387,078.01 |
| Balance carried forward    | 210,911.32 |

The school would like to acknowledge the P & C Association and year 6 parents for their generous support of the school throughout the year.

A full copy of the school’s 2014 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2014

Academic achievements

NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10.

The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.
**NAPLAN Year 3 - Literacy** (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)

### Year 3 Reading

#### Percentage in bands:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bands</th>
<th>Percentage of students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **Percentage in Bands**
- **School Average 2010-2014**
- **SSG % in Bands 2014**

### Year 3 Writing

#### Percentage in bands:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bands</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **Percentage in Bands**
- **School Average 2011-2014**
- **SSG % in Bands 2014**

### Year 3 Spelling

#### Percentage in bands:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bands</th>
<th>Percentage of students</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **Percentage in Bands**
- **School Average 2010-2014**
- **SSG % in Bands 2014**

### Year 3 Grammar & Punctuation

#### Percentage in bands:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bands</th>
<th>Percentage of students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **Percentage in Bands**
- **School Average 2010-2014**
- **SSG % in Bands 2014**
NAPLAN Year 3 - Numeracy

NAPLAN Year 5 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)
ICAS Competitions
International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS), commonly referred to as the University of New South Wales competitions, is conducted annually in Australia and over 20 countries globally. Students from Years 3 to 6 were offered the opportunity to participate in these international, skills based assessments with a competition element. A total of 28 students entered both competitions in 2014 and participated in both the English and Mathematics Competitions.

Our Achievements were:-

Maths:
- Five students achieved a Credit Certificate.
- One student achieved a Merit Certificate.

English:
- Four students achieved a Distinction.
- Four students achieved a Credit Certificate.
- Two students achieved Merit Certificates.

Technology
In 2014, MSSPS continued the implementation of the One Laptop per Child Program, providing equitable access to technology for students in our school. Students from Kindergarten to Year 4 have had 1:1 access to the XO computers. Teachers implemented the use of the XO’s in their classrooms across a variety of KLA’s by utilising phonics programs, speaking and listening programs, illustrating and publishing written work and researching topics for class projects. Since the implementation of this program, there has been positive feedback from teachers in relation to student engagement. We installed extra wireless access points to provide further access to wireless internet school wide.

Year 5 and 6 students have continued to use Lenovo Notebooks within the classroom, and we purchased an additional 8 Notebooks to cater for our rising enrolments.

Twelve Ipad minis were purchased for the school as part of a pilot program to introduce a wider variety of technology and the use of apps to cater for 21st century learning. We also purchased a site licence for the use of ‘Airserver’ software which was installed onto all Smartboard computers. This program gives students and teachers the ability to work in ‘real time’ by displaying student work on the Smartboard directly from an iPad or iPhone. Teachers implemented their iPads in the classroom across a variety of KLAs and are constantly sharing ideas and collaborating during professional learning sessions.

In 2014 Soldiers’ Settlement also introduced School eNews as a more immediate way to deliver our newsletter, alerts and information to our school community. This is done via a Smart Phone app. This app has been proven to be very popular with over 200 downloads recorded. This has reduced our paper usage across the school, and has proven to be an effective source of communication as parents and community members are kept informed in a timely manner.
Student Representative Council

The SRC is an important leadership program in any school. It is aimed at providing students with the opportunity to positively contribute to life at their school.

2014 at Soldiers’ Settlement Public School, saw the start of the implementation of an active SRC consisting of student-elected members from Years K to 6. In 2014, the SRC representatives consisted of two students per class from Kindergarten through to Year Six along with the School Executive.

Although the SRC program is still in its initial stages, all students elected in 2014 had a deep and abiding interest in their roles and were proud and active members, taking on the role as communicators and problem-solvers to the very best of their ability. All members brought their opinions and presented them clearly to their representative body.

During 2014, the SRC meetings were scheduled for every second Tuesday, commencing from mid-term 2, in an open forum where the representative members from each year presented ideas and suggestions raised by their peers, or from their own observations of the school environment. These suggestions ranged from creating a healthy, active and inclusive playground to suggestions of fund raising days for various charities. As our SRC is still in its beginning stages, these suggestions have resulted in excellent ideas for future directions for our SRC going into 2015 where we have high expectations for the next incoming committee.

Future Directions (as per the suggestions of the 2014 SRC):
- Continued consolidation and maintenance of the SRC program;
- SRC organised activities for raising funds for various charities i.e. ‘Jeans for Genes’ Day; The Sydney Children’s Hospital; Stewart House Clothing Drive;
- SRC organised and run activities on the playground for Infants students to create a safe and inclusive playground for all students.

Soldiers’ Settlement Public School is very excited about the on-going development and commitment towards a fully functioning SRC and leadership program within our school. We believe that a productive SRC is an important addition to our school as it ensures a valued student input into the school decision making process where appropriate.

Science and Technology

In 2014, the school’s Science and Technology program was again taught by a dedicated science and technology teacher, to provide consistency of approach and delivery for all years from K-6. In addition this year, the science and technology program was extended to include pre-school students, who responded with deep thinking open-ended questions and insightful observations about the world in which they live.

Science teaching at Soldiers’ Settlement integrates a constructivist approach, where hands-on activities and direct observation are incorporated throughout, to more deeply engage and excite student interest and understanding in science. This year, students across the grades explored scientific concepts and the scientific method, through a variety of topics, including: leaf-litter; states of matter; electricity; weather; forces; products; lifecycles; light & sound; natural disasters and the built environment.

Throughout 2014, the new NSW Science and Technology K-6 curriculum has been introduced into the school’s science program, in preparation for its scheduled state-wide implementation in 2015. The school has developed a new scope and sequence for all grades that integrates the new NSW Science and Technology curriculum outcomes into the school’s future science and technology programming.
**Breakfast Club**
The YWCA funds a daily breakfast program at the school staffed by MSSPS teachers and YWCA volunteers. Daily supervision starts at 8:30 with the serving of breakfast. This program helps students to settle into the morning routine and also provides opportunities for students to talk with their peers and other adults in a relaxed setting. Teachers identified students in each class who would benefit from a healthy start. It also helps students who were previously arriving at school and eating their recess and lunch for breakfast as they had not had breakfast at home. Our school is pleased to be a part of the YWCA programs and the PDHPE curriculum is further enhanced by the adoption of these carefully planned and managed programs.

**Books In Homes**
Students at Soldiers’ Settlement Public School have been fortunate to take part in a program that promotes the love of books and reading. Books In Homes is delivered in Term 1, 2 and 4. Students are asked to choose three books per term and are presented with their books in a waterproof bag by a special visitor (often a Journalist, illustrator or children’s author). Students also participate in a workshop with the special guests. In 2014 all students were provided with nine books of their choice and waterproof bags to keep the books safe. We are proud to be a part of this Mainfreight Australia reading initiative, who sponsor all 260 students at our school. This year our Preschool was also invited to join the program. This sponsorship program is valued at $78.27 per student per year, which equates to $18,940 in 2014.

The vision of Books in Homes Australia is to reawaken a sense of wonder in children and excitement in parents, by creating an Australia where every child and family has access to quality books of choice at home. As well as the take-home books for each student, the Books in Homes program also includes a preview pack of 48 books each term that is donated to the school library. ‘Caught Being Good’ books are also offered to students throughout the year as a reward for positive behaviour on the playground. Students and teachers have responded very positively to the program and are always very excited to participate in Books in Homes; it is a highlight of the term for many children.

**ABCN SPARK Reading Program**
The SPARK reading and literacy program returned to Soldiers’ Settlement again this year, with volunteers from Ernst & Young meeting weekly with selected students from years 2 to 5. SPARK is coordinated through the Australian Business and Community Network and is designed to provide an opportunity for selected students to develop their reading and comprehension skills through weekly, one-on-one reading sessions with a volunteer from the business sector. During terms two and three this year, fifteen students had the opportunity to benefit from this wonderful program. Throughout the program students not only improved their reading and comprehension skills, their confidence grew too and it was heartening each week to witness the productive conversations between student and business mentor, as their learning relationship developed.
Premier’s Spelling Bee

During Term three the students in stage two and three participated in The Premier’s Spelling Bee. This program provided the students with a fun and engaging way to promote and encourage all students to practise spelling. The children competed at class level first, then two representatives from each class were chosen to represent their class in a stage two and three spell off in the hall. The two winners from each stage were entered into the Premiers’ Spelling Bee, which was held at Darlinghurst Public School. All of the students had a positive and enjoyable experience.

Yarn Up

Six students attended Yarn Up, a public speaking program for Stage 3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The program consisted of three training sessions. Two days at the Powerhouse Museum and one day at Parliament House. The three training sessions were aimed at developing the student’s skills in the areas of impromptu speaking, public speaking, debating and positive feedback. A Showcase was held at Parliament House, where the students were able to present their speeches and to the fellow students and family members. The students enjoyed the experience and developed confidence in their public speaking skills.

Visual Arts

Each week students complete visual art activities with their classroom teacher. These activities are often linked with other Key Learning Areas and topics being studied in each stage or class. Visual arts activities reflect a variety of both subject matter and form including drawing, print making, digital media, sculpture, painting and collage. Lessons are also often linked to an artist study and include time for reflection and art appreciation along with the practical component. In 2014 the students also spent some time studying animals and creating artworks around their new Aboriginal Animal Class Names to coincide with the launch of these names in Term 2.
Other Achievements

Sport
Sport has always played a vital role in the Soldiers Settlement school community. The various programs and the children’s participation are well promoted by the supporting staff and wider school community. Students participate in fitness sessions three mornings a week. The core focus is on cardiovascular fitness, coordination, gross motor skill development, modified games and participation. All students in K-6 participated in a term of the Got Game Skills Development program.

ESPSSA
The students in 3-6 participate in PSSA sports every Friday throughout the year. In summer the sports that are offered for the children are AFL, softball, cricket and school sport. During the winter months the students can choose between rugby league, netball, soccer and school sport. The school sports program mixes between modified games and skill based lessons each week. During term four the school sport program was facilitated by Got Game who run specific curriculum based sessions to help the students develop certain aspects of their fitness.

Junior and Senior Netball
This year Soldiers’ Settlement Public School entered a Junior and a Senior team into the Eastern Suburbs PSSA winter competition. All of our teams performed well throughout the season. The students worked on their throwing, catching and positioning. Students formed new friendships with students at other schools and developed their skills and good sportsmanship.

K-2 Sport
The K-2 sport program is based on a fundamental movement skills program which is explored and developed. These skills can then be used later in their schooling life and in various other sporting endeavours.

Swimming Scheme
Every year student in years two and three participate in the Intensive Swimming Scheme which is a Department of Education initiative. During term 4, students attend specialised swimming lessons every day for two weeks at Des Renford Aquatic centre. The students achieve great gains during this two week period.

Athletics and Swimming carnivals
Our students participate in school events such as the swimming, cross country and athletics carnivals every year. These events involve the support and participation of our school community.

Swimming Carnival
Students in Years 2-6 participated in our School Swimming Carnival at Des Renford Aquatic Centre to an enthusiastic and supportive crowd. Many of our students represented Soldiers’ Settlement Public School at zone, regional and state levels swimming.

Athletics and Cross Country Carnivals
All Students K-6 participated in our annual cross country and Athletics Carnivals. Thirty five students from Years 2-6 represented Soldiers’ Settlement at the Zone Athletics Carnival and two students represented Soldiers’ Settlement at the Regional Carnival for Athletics.
**Boys and Girls Education:**

In 2014, we were approached by the Junction Neighbourhood Centre to be involved in a Girls Education Program focusing on self-esteem and resilience. The “This is me” program was held here at school and presented by facilitators from the Junction Neighbourhood Centre in Maroubra. The program ran every Wednesday for one hour. “This is me” focused on aspects of building confidence and self-esteem in for our female students. The facilitators of the program formed strong bonds with the girls and were able to help them answer everyday problems that students these days often have difficulty finding answers to. The girls participated in group activities and this allowed them to work strongly on their cooperative learning skills and their problem solving strategies. This was an extremely worthwhile program and it will be presented again in 2015.

Mr Ansell also ran a boys education program named ‘Rock and Water’. This program was modified for our students due to their age and our context. The program originates from The Netherlands where people started to express their concern about the decrease of academic performance of boys at school and the increase of alcohol abuse, drug abuse and violence. Although originally designed for boys only, the trainers of the program have found that girls also respond very well. The program focuses on the qualities and developmental tasks that young people face when growing up. Especially nowadays, living in a multi-cultural, fast changing society, there is a desperate need for guidance of youth in finding their way to happiness, real strength and meaningfulness. Mr Ansell worked closely with the boys involved in the program by talking to them about inner strength as well as outer strength, resilience and respect. This modified program will be run in 2015.

**Sustainability and Environmental Education**

This year the vegetable garden continued to grow under the guidance of Paul our dedicated volunteer. Various students have been involved with the program and have continued to improve their gardening skills.

In consultation with the community we began to upgrade the school grounds. Our first project was the front garden along Menin road, which has now been transformed into an Aboriginal Bush Tucker Trail in which students can run bush tucker lessons. There will also be opportunities for outdoor learning in the garden. A huge thank you to Mr Dean Kelly and his team of dedicated workers from the Botanical Gardens and National Parks, Calita Murray, Tyrone Kelly, Lew Palaitis, Ernst&Young volunteers and Chris Hill for their continued support and hard work in the upgrades of the school playground.
ACMF Music Program

2014 has been another big year for the music program at Soldiers’ Settlement. The partnerships with The Australian Children’s Music Foundation (ACMF) and the Australian Chamber Orchestra (ACO) have continued to grow.

Class lessons have continued for all students encompassing note-reading, singing, drumming and playing on both tuned and un-tuned percussion instruments. This year, due to funding issues, the very able kindergarten teachers at the school taught their classes the music lessons written for them by ACMF teacher Rachel Scott.

Both the Junior and Senior choir have performed at functions both within the school (ANZAC Day, Education week, the assembly celebrating the renaming of the classrooms) and in the community and Souths Juniors Grand Final. The string program has grown to 16 students and the children were invited to perform at the ACO’s major fundraising event – playing in the Great Hall of Sydney University with the entire Australian Chamber Orchestra! The ACO Education Manager wrote to the school afterwards – “I knew that the students would play well, but I didn’t know that they would be such beautiful ambassadors for their school and their community. Their performance, stage presence and behaviour was astoundingly good.”

The Rock Band has continued to grow. Members of the Senior Choir were asked to provide backing vocals for them in the school concert. Children from the band were also featured on a report shown on the ABC about the new AMCF Instrument Recycling Scheme. Children from 3/4R were invited to perform at the Four Seasons Hotel to a crowd of four hundred for the ACMF’s major fundraising event for 2014.

The Twilight Concert was another big success featuring all the musical groups of the schools, and each year group performing. Year six also opened the Presentation Day Assembly with a rousing drum performance.

Premier’s Reading Challenge

K-2 classroom teachers and the teacher-librarian read books listed on the Premier’s Reading Challenge to these students in 2014. Students were also encouraged to borrow these books from the library. Nearly every K-2 student completed the challenge this year.

Years 3-6 students were responsible for selecting and reading their own books. A greater number of students participated than in previous years, thanks in part to all teachers encouraging and promoting the challenge in class, as well as the enthusiasm of the students.
Significant programs and initiatives – Policy and equity funding

Aboriginal education

In 2014 our school implemented further aspects of the Aboriginal Education and Training policy. As a result, we have strengthened our partnership with our Aboriginal families and Aboriginal community organisations and sustained a positive and inclusive school culture.

As part of the National Reconciliation Week activities, the school hosted a smoking ceremony conducted by a Dean Kelly. This is one of the most significant ancient ceremonies performed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The ceremony involves smouldering native plants to produce smoke that is believed to have cleansing properties and the ability to ward off bad spirits. As part of this ceremony, we also launched the introduction of the Aboriginal class names into the Soldiers’ Settlement school community. Community and family members were invited to join the school with the launch where Aboriginal community members shared their life experience with the students. The day was very successful and it was great to see the collaboration between the school and the local Aboriginal community.

The smoking ceremony broadened the understanding of all students about Aboriginal history, culture and the issues facing current Aboriginal Australia. In addition, throughout the year Aboriginal perspectives and content were implemented in all stages of learning as an integral part of our HSIE units of work.

The Soldiers’ Settlement Koori/Contemporary Dance Group are very well respected in the community and in 2014 were invited to perform at several events throughout the year. One particular event was the Randwick City Council Sorry Day celebration at Bare Island. This was a special community event and the students were commended by Governor General, Dame Marie Bashir, on their performance and behaviour on the day.

In September the Soldiers’ Settlement community celebrated the achievements of Aboriginal men and women who served for our country through NAIDOC Day. On the day the children were immersed in the Aboriginal culture through art, craft, dance, traditional face paint and indigenous games. The senior Aboriginal students, with the help of the Neighbourhood Junction centre helped organise and facilitate the day.

We are very proud of our Aboriginal students and we congratulate Isaac Kirovsky on receiving the Deadly Award and Bebeloa Brennan and Wirrin Ward-Lowe for their participation in the Yarn Up Public Speaking competition.

Preschool

Soldiers’ Settlement Public School promotes learning through play in the preschool and supporting children in Being, (Being who they are now); Belonging (Belonging to a family, culture and community) and Becoming (Becoming the special person they are).

In 2014, Preschool staff continued to implement the National Quality Framework and the Early Years Learning Framework outcomes and all staff K-6 participated in a staff meeting to support its ongoing implementation and provide an in depth learning experience presented by our Preschool teacher, Julie Butterfield.
We had a total of 32 children from a range of cultural backgrounds including Australian, Aboriginal, Samoan, New Zealand, French and Fijian.

We were fortunate to again participate in the ‘Books in Homes’ program with the rest of the school and the children loved the books they received.

Preschool participated in many whole school events such as Book Week, NAIDOC week, Reconciliation week and the Book Week parade to name a few.

**ILNNP – National Partnerships**

During 2013 and 2014 Soldiers’ Settlement Public School participated in the Improving Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership. This initiative supported the school in identifying areas where support for students was needed and where improvement has occurred in numeracy.

Teachers participated in professional learning and implemented the Targeting Early Numeracy (TEN) and Taking Off With Numeracy (TOWN) programs. The use of these programs developed a whole school approach to teaching, assessing and monitoring student growth on the Numeracy Continuum. The success of the TEN and TOWN programs have been reflected in the comparison of the 2013 to 2014 NAPLAN results.

**Numeracy NAPLAN results 2013:**
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI): 33% of Year 3 and 0% of Year 5 students in the bottom two bands in NAPLAN numeracy
- Non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander: 18% of Year 3 and 25% of Year 5 students in the bottom two bands in NAPLAN numeracy
- Male students: 29% of Year 3 and 14% of Year 5 students in the bottom two bands in NAPLAN numeracy
- Female students: 0% of Year 3 and 18% of Year 5 students in the bottom two bands in NAPLAN numeracy

**Numeracy NAPLAN results 2014:**
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI): 19% of Year 3 and 0% of Year 5 students in the bottom two bands in NAPLAN numeracy
- Non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander: 5% of Year 3 and 0% of Year 5 students in the bottom two bands in NAPLAN numeracy
- Male students: 10% of Year 3 and 0% of Year 5 students in the bottom two bands in NAPLAN numeracy
- Female students: 14% of Year 3 and 0% of Year 5 students in the bottom two bands in NAPLAN numeracy

**Multicultural education and anti-racism**

Multicultural perspectives are integrated across the curriculum in order to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes required for our culturally diverse society, which we celebrate daily. At Soldiers’ Settlement we promote multiculturalism and tolerance on a daily basis and it is embedded into our teaching programs.

All teaching programs contain multicultural perspectives and our music program is built around the teaching of all students through a variety of world instruments and songs that reflect the cultural diversity of our families.
Throughout 2014 students were supported by the English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher. Lessons focused on improving student’s understanding of English across the Key Learning Areas (KLA’s). Students received support in their own classroom environment, small group work and individual instruction.

In conjunction with individualised support during EAL/D sessions, support is given to students from a language background other than English in the classroom. This may consist of targeting students for specific instruction or working in a small group. Students are given support with differentiated activities to build their confidence and to extend their language. Instructions are broken down to meet student needs.

Aboriginal background

In keeping with the Aboriginal Education Action Plan, personal learning plans for our Aboriginal students were reviewed from 2013, developed for 2014 and implemented through parent meetings and Koori Parent afternoon teas.

Achievements of our Aboriginal students in literacy and numeracy matched or were better than the non-Indigenous student cohort and attendance rates were improving. This was a reflection of the commitment of our Aboriginal parents to the school and active collaboration with families.

This year the school received RAM Equity Aboriginal funding of $37,640.37. The funds have been used to employee two Aboriginal Student Learning Support Officers to support the participation of Aboriginal students at the school in a variety of educational activities including reading programs, tutoring programs, social skills programs, excursions and sporting programs.

School based events such as the smoking ceremony, reconciliation assembly led by our Aboriginal students, and teaching programs have involved and benefitted all students.

Socio Economic Background

Under RAM equity funding, the school received $13,541.72 to support students from low socio-economic backgrounds. This has improved teaching and learning through enhancing student access to a wider range of curriculum learning experiences and sustained an inclusive school culture. The funding was used to support the following initiatives.

• Purchased 12 iPads, covers and a technology cart to enable students to access the latest technologies
• Provided support to families experiencing financial difficulties with school related expenses such as uniforms, excursions, sport school camps and school performances
• Students in K-2 were supported in the area of reading through the employment of School Learning Support Officers. Students identified as being ‘at risk’ in reading were provided with one-to-one assistance to develop word attack skills, sight word recognition and beginning reading strategies.

Learning and Support

The literacy and numeracy skills of our students have been developed through systematic and explicit teaching on a daily basis in classrooms. Even so, some students experienced difficulty with their learning and required additional support.

The learning support team (LST) met on a weekly basis and discussed referrals from teachers and parents, assessed students, identified the type of support required, monitored programs, referred students to the school counsellor and managed the allocation of DEC funds to support all student learning. The scope of the support provided for students with additional educational needs follows.

• Participated in the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on students with disability.
• Students who were identified with disabilities received state funding. The students received support from class teachers and a student learning support officer (SLSO) to meet learning and social needs.
• Our school counsellor provided support for students including IQ assessments, behaviour assessments, counselling and parent and student interviews.
• The learning and support teachers (LaST’s) provided assistance with literacy for early stage 1 students, support for Stage 1 students in literacy and numeracy, support for Stage 2 students in reading, and support for primary students in literacy and numeracy.
• The English Additional Language or Dialect Teacher (EAL/D) previously the ESL teacher, provided explicit teaching programs in English for EAL/D students.
• Students from the UNSW delivered the MULTILIT tutor program and supported 20 students from Year 2 to Year 4 who were experiencing difficulties with their reading.
• Personalised Accommodation and Adjustment plans (PAAP’s) were developed, implemented and adjusted by staff for identified students including students requiring follow-up to NAPLAN.

The LST outcomes include:
• Guidance and support for teachers to cater for the diverse range of needs within any one classroom
• Support and guidance for parents to cater for their child’s needs
• Quality teaching and learning programs for all students K-6
• Effective communication between concerned parties
• Coordination of resources

Additionally, staff participated in professional learning and dialogue about best practice in meeting the learning needs of students. In 2014, this included the revision of the teaching and learning cycle, universal strategies to meet the needs of the majority of learners, adjustments to meet the needs of learners experiencing difficulties or requiring extension, and annotating adjustments in class teaching and learning programs.

Outside Partnerships
This year we began our Breakfast Club partnership with the YWCA NSW. This was achieved through working with the YWCA on a mentoring program which enabled students identified by the Learning Support Team to establish a relationship with a mentor at our Breakfast Club Program. The Breakfast club Program is staffed by 100% volunteers who also provide time to mentor students and give them a healthy start to the day.

Our partnership with the Weave Kool Kids Club Program continues and 21 of our students are now part of the program. The program is an educational outreach and prevention program for children aged 7-13 years living in La Perouse and surrounding areas. The Kool Kids Club provides free after school and holiday activity programs to support the development of resilience and life skills for children and young people.

School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

School evaluation processes

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used include:
• Online parent satisfaction surveys
• Online student surveys
• Online staff surveys

School planning 2012-2014:

School priority 1

15% of students reaching the top two bands in aspects of literacy in NAPLAN by 2014

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Outcomes from 2012 – 2014 indicated improvements in student literacy particularly in spelling and reading.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014

• NAPLAN results indicated 34% of all students in years 3 and 5 achieved in the top two bands in aspects of literacy.
• 64% of our year 3 students were in the top two highest skill bands.
• The average progress for student growth was 95 points compared to 89.1 for the state

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

• Teacher Professional Learning on the effective utilisation of Best Start data, the Planned Literacy And Numeracy (PLAN) data and learning continuums to track student
progress, inform class teaching and programming and to differentiate the teaching of numeracy.

- Refined teaching strategies in literacy lessons to further differentiate student learning.
- Staff further developed an understanding of the Literacy Continuum as a means of plotting student achievement and to assist in the development of differentiated teaching/learning plans.
- Improved practices of learning support for individual and small group instruction in literacy targeting specific areas of weakness in literacy. In addition, the SPARK volunteer tutoring program and the teaching assistants from the UNSW program enabled us to implement an intensive reading program to encourage struggling readers in Stage One and Stage 2, resulting in students now more willing to read.
- Continuation of the Reading Recovery program which catered for our Year One students at risk of achieving outcomes in literacy.

School priority 2

15% of students reaching the top two bands in aspects of numeracy in NAPLAN by 2014.

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Outcomes from 2012–2014 indicated significant improvements in student numeracy particularly in numeration and understanding place value.

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

- Over 50% of all students in years 3-5 achieved the top three bands in numeracy.
- The average progress for student growth in numeracy was 105 points compared to
- The average score in numeracy for year 5 was above state.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

- Continuation of the TEN and TOWN programs embedded into classroom practice and program K-6.
- Purchase and upgrade of numeracy resources K-6.
- Teacher Professional Learning on the most effective use of the Best Start data, the Planned Literacy And Numeracy (PLAN) data and learning continuums to track student progress, inform class teaching and programming and to differentiate the teaching of numeracy.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

Background

The Focus on Learning survey is a research based self-evaluation tool for teachers and schools. In 2014, some 15,229 respondents in 513 schools across the state completed the survey. The surveys are collated externally by the Tell Them For Me company.

The survey identifies the most important drivers of student learning and the critical aspects of quality classroom and school practice. Fifteen of our teachers completed the online survey. Based on the survey results, a report was provided to the school for analysis.

Findings

Results indicated that practices at the school were very supportive of student learning in all areas and that staff felt strongly about an inclusive school and teacher collaboration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drivers of learning</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>State</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Involvement</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive School</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>8.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Culture</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>7.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data Informs Practice</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Strategies</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The scores for the Likert format questions were converted to a 10-point scale. A score of zero indicates strong disagreement, while 10 indicates strong agreement.

The school also sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. As part of discussion around the new Strategic School Plan 2015 – 2017, the school community was surveyed and their responses are presented below.

- 97% of parents thought that being ‘confident and successful’ was the most important skill for students to possess.
- 86% of our parents thought that teacher quality was the most important factor for our students.
- 74% of parents thought the school community was becoming more cohesive.
- 98% of families felt that our school is welcoming.
100% of families felt that it is important that teachers are present and visible in the playground in the afternoon.

When asked what things we could do to make our school even better, parents said:
- ‘More creative studies like drama and dance.’
- ‘A quiet space for students to play.’
- ‘Ensuring we have quality teachers as they empower students in their learning.’

When asked how our school could improve, teachers said:
- ‘Effective differentiation for all students.’
- ‘Continual Professional learning for all staff.’
- ‘Timetabled Cooperative Planning.’

When asked how our school could improve, students said:
- ‘We would like dance and drama lessons.’
- ‘I would like more discos and movie nights.’
- ‘I like it that we have laptops for every student.’

**Students**

The results of student surveys indicated that students enjoy coming to school (97%), feel proud to be a student at the school (99%) and that the work is good preparation for the future (95%). Students also indicated that:
- I am a success as a student 96%
- I am good at school work 97%
- I learn to get along with people 97%
- My teacher is fair to me 100%

**Future Directions**

The survey results and the detailed analysis of each question have been considered in the process of developing the 2015 – 2017 strategic plan.

**Future Directions**

2015-2017 School Plan

NSW DEC is implementing a new school planning process for 2015-17. The new plan will be published on the school’s website from the beginning of Term 2 2015.

Our new school plan will focus on 3 key areas for improvement. These areas have been determined in consultation with our students, staff and parent community through surveys, focus groups and meetings and are based on the Melbourne Declaration On Educational Goals for Young Australians 2008.

Our draft strategic directions for 2015-17 are:

**Strategic Direction 1**

**Quality Learning and Wellbeing**

- To develop our students for the future as successful global citizens by equipping them with the skills to be confident, critical and creative 21st Century learners.
- To continue to foster wellbeing, resilience, confidence and understanding within our culturally diverse learning community.

**Strategic Direction 2**

**Professional Practice and Leadership**

- To build a dynamic culture of innovation and best practice through quality professional learning and collegiality.
- To engage teachers in the process of developing professional knowledge in order to improve teaching practice in partnership with colleagues leading to improved student outcomes.
- Leaders and teachers will have high expectations of themselves and their students in order to foster sustained school improvement.

**Strategic Direction 3**

**Community Partnerships and Connectedness**

- To build an educational community through further developing school partnerships throughout educational experiences from Preschool to High School.
- To inspire a culture of collaboration between key stakeholders to strengthen the partnership between school and community.
About this report

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school's practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school's future development.

Mrs Polly Palaitis, Principal
Mr Luke Ansell, Relieving Assistant Principal
Miss Samantha Cummings, Assistant Principal
Miss Nicole Hume, Teacher
Miss Angela Jokai, Teacher
Miss Rachel Jackson, Teacher
Miss Jodie Westcott, Teacher
Miss Karen Faulkner, Teacher
Mrs Melanie Rose, Teacher
Mrs Melanie Vandenberg, Teacher
Mrs Calita Murray, Aboriginal Education Officer

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Parents can find more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the report and have the opportunity to provide feedback about the report at: