

TALLOWOOD STEINER SCHOOL

ANNUAL REPORT

2010

Messages from Key Bodies:

Presidents Message

The second half of 2010 brought a new beginning to Tallwood School, marking the transition from a Parent run Community School to a Steiner School. Sue Moran was employed to implement this change. Sue has had 26 years experience in Steiner education and she was employed at Tallwood as Teaching Principal, to implement this new direction. The change to a Steiner School saw increased enrolments in the school and the necessity of employing another teacher in 2011 to take the Kinder/1 class, thus separating the age groups as much as possible at this time.

New students arriving at Tallwood also increased energy and commitment from the parent body. New board members were co-oped in December 2010.

The main classroom in 2010 was transformed into a Steiner classroom with a new colour scheme, furniture and student resources.



CLASS PROJECT WORK (HSIE)



LEARNING AREA AND PERIMETER

Numerous working bees towards the end of 2010 and in the Christmas break transformed the two remaining buildings. The school library was re-painted, and the library restructured, as well as student and Teaching resources relocated. The Kindergarten-Class One classroom was refurbished to welcome the new children and support the K-1 program in 2011.



KINDER CLASS ONE ROOM

Tallowood Steiner School Inc. Association Grants

NSP (National School Pride) Grant

The NSP Grant is part of the BER (Building the Education Revolution). During 2010 this grant was completed with the building of a sheltered outdoor learning space and the erection of new signage for school entrances.



P21 (PRIMARY SCHOOLS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY) GRANT

The P21 Grant is part of the BER.

During 2009 Tallowood School applied successfully for \$250000 under this grant for the purpose of building an art room. Commencement of the art room was greatly delayed during 2009 in part due to the number of floods experienced at the school, and in the mid north coast region generally.

At the time of writing this report the process of finalising the grant is being completed.



School Profile in 2010

Tallowood is a small school with one multi aged class. Tallowood is located in a picturesque and peaceful rural setting two kilometres outside of the small town of Bowraville in the Nambucca Valley, on 2 acres of land. Previously a Parent run community school with child led learning Tallowood had a change of educational direction in mid 2010 and is now a Steiner School.

Student Enrolment Profile

Students are drawn mainly from the surrounding farm community and the towns of Eungai creek, Bowraville, Macksville and Nambucca. The school is well serviced with buses coming from all of these areas, to Tallowood.

After completing Primary School most of our students attend various schools in the district, including Macksville High School, Bowraville Central School and Nambucca High School.

Student Population

Student population for 2010 by grade								
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Total	8	4	2	3	1	3	1	22

As per the August 2010 Census

Student Attendance Rate

Our student attendance rate at Tallowood School for 2010 was 95%. Roll books are kept daily to record student absences and attendance and unexplained absences of more than two days are followed up by telephone by the Principal. Parents are requested to notify absences of more than 2 days in writing, to the Principal.

Structure of Classes

After the change of direction in mid 2010 Tallowood remained a single, multi aged class, single teacher school until the beginning of 2011.

Teacher Qualifications

Qualifications	Number of staff
Category 1 Teacher. (Bachelor of Education, including Steiner training and experience).	1

Our staff in 2010:

In terms 3 and 4 there was one 5 year trained Teacher/Principal and a Literacy and Numeracy support teacher, funded by AIS.

Teacher Attendance for 2010:

Tallowood was a 1 teacher school in 2010 with a change-over of teaching staff in the second half of the year in accordance with the new school direction. A new Literacy and Numeracy Aid commenced casual employment in term 4. This Aid has a 4 year trained teacher qualification thus enabling her to act as relief teacher and maintain continuity during the teacher's absence.

Teaching and Learning

Teacher Learning

All staff are encouraged to undertake professional development throughout the year. In 2010, due to the change of direction and the school's single teacher status, Professional Development in the second half of the year consisted primarily of our mentor school providing support through numerous meetings, in order to developing a new curriculum to support the school's new direction. The adaptation of the Steiner Curriculum at Tallowood is a complex and unusual task, due to the multi-age classes. Governance and

Management support were also provided through AIS and our mentor/support school.

Student Learning

The transformation of Tallwood into a Steiner School was a major undertaking and heralded a different philosophical and pedagogical basis for the school and therefore a very different educational experience for the children. The implementation of a Steiner based curriculum and methodology saw the students learning take place in theme blocks called Main Lesson blocks, each of three or four weeks duration. Main Lesson theme blocks unify and integrate all curriculum areas, where a subject is studied in depth and music, art, drama, movement, speech and recitation are incorporated daily and connected to the subject under study. Student learning covers all of the Key Learning Areas, in accordance with the Board of Studies approved curriculum.

In line with Steiner School's throughout the world, Tallwood celebrates the seasonal Festivals and our Spring Festival was held at Swimming Creek in Nambucca Heads. The lead up to this Festival was a Science block on 'Spring', and to complement the aspects of air and wind which we studied, our Manual Arts component was the construction of Kites. These were flown during our Festival. Parents and families attended our picnic and activities included beach cricket, boating and swimming.

Our Summer Festival was celebrated at the school and the theme was a multi-cultural feast of delicious and nutritious foods from all around the world. This Festival was the culmination of our 'Festivals Around the World' Main Lesson Block.



Several excursions occurred during the second half of the year. The class visited a local small farm and had a wonderful day with the owners, engaging in such activities as exploring animal husbandry, the Kitchen garden plot and delighting in the fabulous lunch put on for the students, using many of ingredients from the Kitchen Garden. A HSIE unit focusing on caring neighborhoods saw us visit another neighbor who runs a small business and who was the recipient of some delicious muffins, baked by the children.

Our technology block saw us visit the beach at Winonah Headland, Urunga, to test our construction and team work skills by building a beach hut out of drift wood. A swim and a picnic complemented a great day at the beach.



Teacher Satisfaction

Tallowood offers a great environment for staff to work in with our bush surrounding offering peace and tranquility as well as the opportunity for activities such as creek visits during summer. The heavy workload of the Teaching Principal in the second half of 2010 was buoyed by the enthusiasm of pioneering the change to Steiner Education and a small and dedicated group of parents and helpers.

Parent Satisfaction

The growing number of enrolments at Tallowood and enquires about the school, are a testimony to the level of satisfaction parents are experiencing through having their children attend Tallowood Steiner School. The children are given the chance to develop academically, emotionally, socially and ethically in a learning environment which is clearly structure and organized. The school gauges the level of satisfaction parent's experience, through regular communication channels such as Newsletter Feedback requests,

regular parent interviews, student progress reports and Parent/Teacher meetings. Parents have reported being delighted, and enthusiastic, about having a unique, affordable to all, Steiner School in the Nambucca Valley. Parents report being very satisfied with the quality of Tallowood's learning environment, the range of subjects taught and the methodology employed to teach these subjects. Parents have reported that they recognize the benefits their children receive in terms of their social/emotional development and the level of Pastoral care which our school context is able to provide.

Student Satisfaction

The students work and behavior are also a testimony to the benefit of Tallowood's educational approach, methodology and environment. Our small school ethos is founded upon care, respect and consideration towards each other and our school environment. The mixed aged classes allows for the full benefit of peer tutoring and peer interaction to be developed and the children's happy faces as they come to school each day is a pleasure for both the parents and teachers to see. Our literacy/ numeracy support program allows for each child to receive some individual help where needed and this contributes to the progress in academic skill for each child. In the primary class, the teacher holds regular class meetings where each child is able to address any issues which are happening in the playground, on the bus or in the social relationships between each other. These meetings have proven to be a very successful venue for monitoring the social and emotional development of the individuals and the group.

The school uses a variety of assessment strategies at key points in the learning framework. These include teacher observation, annotated Checklists, projects, presentations and more formal assessment tests. Teacher observation is highly effective due to the small class sizes. The school also offers the state-wide literacy and numeracy testing program for parents who agree to their child participating in this testing. Information on student progress is communicated on a regular basis and written progress reports were provided in June and December.

School performance in National Literacy and Numeracy testing.

In 2010 the parents of the year 3 and 5 students requested that their children be exempt from participating in the NAPLAN testing.

School determined achievement priorities for 2010	Comment
TEACHING AND LEARNING	
Pursue the educational links between Tallowood School philosophy and Steiner educational philosophy	This target was achieved through the employment of our new Teaching Principal with Steiner training and experience, who has lead and implemented this educational change.
Pursue equipment resources and classroom style set up which enhances the capacity to facilitate the Steiner educational philosophy	Achieved
Continue to include swimming lessons as part of the educational week in at least Term 1	Swimming classes were continued through term one, once a week.
Pursue additions to the teaching staff with a specialty of music education	This target was not possible due to budgetary constraints but the new Classroom teacher was able to teach recorder lessons as part of her daily program.
Encourage the active learning through child lead projects and topics as part of the weekly learning schedule	The school has changed from a child led learning system to the implementation of a Steiner based curriculum inclusive of all Board of Studies Key Learning Areas and Outcomes.
STUDENT WELFARE	
Continue to include "Circle Time" as a regular part of the student's schooling life	Circle time continues to be a core aspect of the Main Lesson time and includes speech, recitation, active literacy and numeracy activities and recorder playing.
Continue Values Education	Values Education is an integral part of the curriculum and methodology of the school.
Strive to increase student enrolment numbers to increase social opportunities for learning, development and friendship	This has been achieved through a positive response to Tallowood now being a Steiner School.

Inform and monitor with all teaching staff any specific behavioral management plans which may be in place and contain requirements which must be fulfilled	This was achieved through the new staff continuing to implement and monitor the Existing behavior management plan for specific students.
Encourage staff to be aware of and administer the discipline policy and student code of conduct at all times	Consistently achieved.
Encourage teacher / parent communication by appointment to facilitate open communication regarding any out of school circumstances which may affect a student/s during school hours	Consistently achieved by the new teaching staff.
STAFFING	
Source a music specialized teacher	Not achieved due to budgetary constraints. However, a specialist is employed for some of the schools Festivals and special events, to enrich the musical component of these Festivals.
Add additional staff in order to increase supervision when children separate for different activities Focus any opportunity for new staff is to be viewed as an opportunity to increase Steiner Education within the school and therefore any replacement staff will be required to possess Steiner Education qualifications and experience	Support Staff have been employed to assist with Literacy and Numeracy.
FACILITIES AND RESOURCES	
Complete all outstanding grant works during 2010 (NSP, P21 & IOSP)	Not achieved by the end of 2010 but almost completed at this writing.
Purchase additional student resources in line with Steiner educational needs	Achieved
Ensure grounds maintenance via the hiring of an external maintenance contractor (not employee - paid an hourly rate as affordability allows)	Achieved. The grounds are maintained to a high standard to ensure safety and aesthetic considerations.

Relocate the library fit out to the "middle" building where the computers currently are, creating a Library/Computer Room	Not achieved in 2010.
Relocate the main classroom to the "First" building, currently used as Art/storage room	Achieved, with the room completely repainted and refurbished.

Policies

A. School Attendance

1. The school monitors the daily attendance and absence of students by maintaining a daily register for each class of students.
2. Student absences from classes or from the school are identified and recorded in a consistent manner by the staff members responsible.
3. Unexplained absences from school or classes will be followed up in an appropriate and timely manner with the student's parent or guardian.
4. The School will contact parents and/or guardians in an appropriate manner where a student has a poor record of school attendance.
5. Where unsatisfactory school attendance is identified, the attendance issue and any action taken will be recorded, as appropriate on the student file.

Enrolment Policy

Tallowood Steiner School is a co-educational, mixed age class, K-6 school providing a Steiner Education in compliance with the educational policies of the NSW Board of Studies. An interview with the parents is conducted before the child is enrolled and each family is provided with an Enrolment Package which includes the following:

- Student Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Student Dress Code and Food Guidelines
- Schools Fees Policy and Procedure Agreement Forms
- Association Membership Application Form

Once enrolled, students and their families are expected to support the school's ethos and comply with the school rules and policies in order to maintain their enrolment.

Procedures

1. All applications should be processed within the school's enrolment policy
2. Consider each applicant's interview responses regarding their ability and willingness to support the school's ethos.
3. Consider each applicant's educational needs. To do this, the school will need to gather information and consult with the parents/family and other relevant persons if deemed necessary.
4. Identify any strategies that need to be put into place to accommodate the applicant before a decision regarding the enrolment is made.
5. Inform the applicant of the outcome.

B. Policies for Student Welfare

At Tallowood we expect that our children will show respect to all members of the Tallowood community, including the staff and parents that are helping to guide them as well as their peers. We expect our students to develop a high standard of politeness and appropriate behavior at school and while representing the school in outside activities and traveling on school buses. At Tallowood we believe that this is achieved not just through the application of a Behavior Management Policy but also through the positive reinforcement of our daily student welfare and Pastoral Care practices.

Any teachers, parents or volunteers working with and around the students are asked to read summarized versions of pertinent policies before commencing work at school. This allows for a clear, safe and active learning environment for the students, teachers, parents and volunteers. Copies are also available in our office. The Principal and Teaching staff monitors the well-being of students at regular staff meetings and address any concerns to the parents in a timely manner.

C. Policies for Student Behavior

The students are required to abide by the school's rules and to follow the directions of teachers and other people with authority delegated by the school. This is achieved in a very wholesome manner through staff vigilance and attention, paid to each individual and the class as a whole. This is very manageable in a small school. Corporal punishment is not permitted under any circumstances.

All disciplinary action that may result in any sanction against the student including suspension, expulsion or exclusion, will incorporate procedural fairness and natural justice.

The full text of the school's Behaviour Management policy and associated procedures is provided to all members of the school community upon enrolment and through the staff handbook, the parent information booklet and the casual teachers, parents and volunteer information packs. A copy is also available in the policy folder in the office.

D. Communication Pathways and Steps for Resolution of Issues for Parents at Tallowood Steiner School.

The school's policy for dealing with complaints and grievances includes processes for raising and responding to matters of concern identified by parents. These processes incorporate the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice.

The full text of the school's policy and processes for complaints and grievances resolution is provided in the Enrolment Package, staff handbook, in the policies folder in the office and in the information packages for casual teachers, parents and volunteers.

E. Occupational Health & Safety Policy

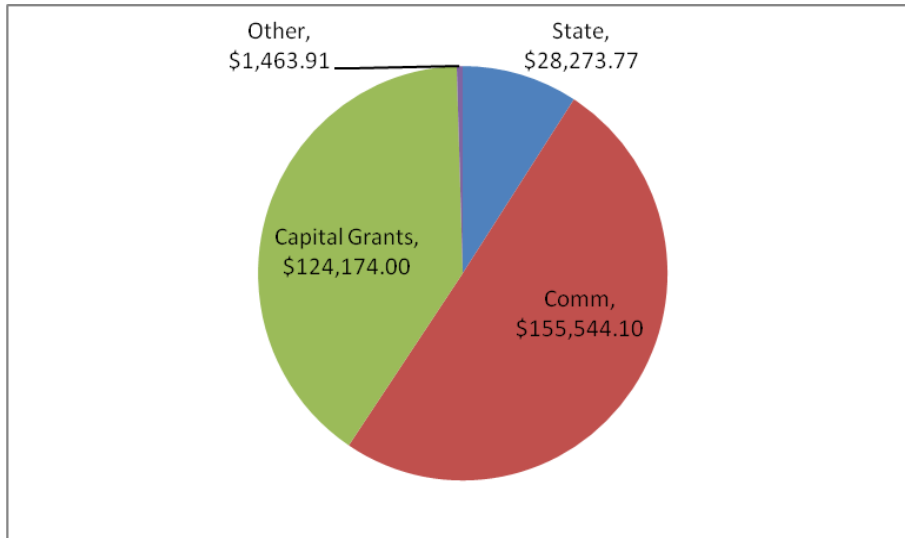
In an ongoing commitment to high Occupational Health and Safety standards, Tallowood Steiner School is committed to the highest standards of OH&S compliance, to ensure a safe environment for all students, staff, parents and community members. Staff and Management foster and promote a safe, secure and hygienic environment at Tallowood and Management and Board engage in ongoing review of all our OH&S procedures and policies. We engage outside professional consultation for compliance advice, as needed to ensure that we are up to date with changing compliance issues. The full text of the Occupational Health & Safety Policy and all the relevant documents and forms are available for all staff, parents and workers to view in the office.

Summary Financial Information

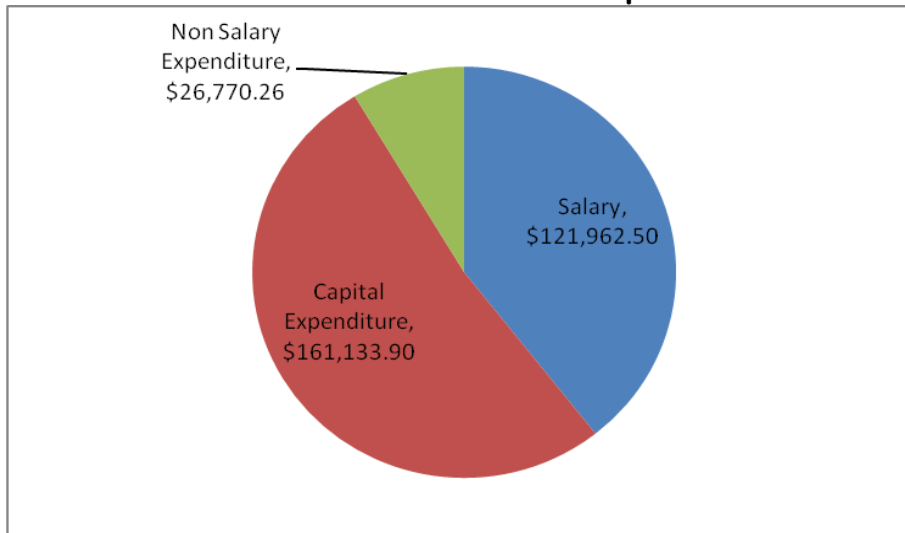
At the end of 2010 it was decided (by vote at a Tallowood Steiner School Inc. Association meeting) to reintroduce school fees at a very modest amount of \$100 per term per student beginning in 2011. Keeping in mind the

socio-economic status of many families in the Tallowood school locality, it was concluded that a sudden introduction of fees higher than \$100 per term may not be in the best interests of school community. It was agreed that the fee structure would be reviewed in 2011.

Tallowood Steiner School Income



Tallowood Steiner School Expenditure



Achievement priorities for 2011

CURRICULUM:

Ongoing staff development will continue as we navigate the development of a unique Steiner curriculum which is responsive to our unique and changing Tallowood context. Several professional bodies will be engaged in this dynamic process, including Steiner Education Australia, Chrysalis Steiner School as a mentor, a privately contracted specialist, the Board of Studies and the Australian Independent Schools.

2011 has seen Tallowood's change of direction in mid 2010 bear fruit as enrolments have increased and the school's profile in the community rise. A second full time teacher commenced at the beginning of 2011 and Management is committed to continue to endeavor to increase enrolments further so that a third teacher can be employed. This will help to stream the classes into age groups which will further enable the Steiner Curriculum to be delivered in age appropriate ways.

Maintaining our quality Manual Arts Program and our Italian classes are high priorities.

Connecting with other small, multi-age schools in our district, for such things as sports days will be investigated.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Allowing opportunities for Staff Development is a high priority with funds being allocated to this area. Staff Development will occur in Management, Curriculum development, Business Administration, and Governance for the Board of Directors.

FACILITIES AND RESOURCES:

Bring the new buildings to completion. To accommodate the projected enrolment increases in 2012 a kitchen will be installed into one of the larger classrooms. New desks for the primary school will be budgeted for.

TEACHING AND LEARNING:

We will continue to develop a Steiner Curriculum, which is adapted and responsive to the context of a small country school with mixed aged classes, and is taught in line with the Board of Studies requirements. This will be a dynamic, ongoing process as we are unsure about the future composition of age/class groupings, as we build our numbers. To ensure that children are active, engaged and enthusiastic about their learning, is a high priority. Regular staff meetings to monitor our approach and our development will also remain a high priority.

INITIATIVES PROMOTING RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY:

Respect and responsibility for one's own actions and their impact on the school, home and society are an integral part of the methodology and pedagogy of Steiner Education. Weekly meetings in the Primary School will continue to play a significant role in monitoring the social health of the group and the well-being of each individual in the group. The student's maturing awareness of themselves as decision makers and their ability to increasingly take responsibility for their actions is actively cultivated and developed, ensuring that Tallwood maintains a high standard of behavior amongst its students and a respectful profile within the larger community.

Summary of School determined achievement priorities for 2011
TEACHING AND LEARNING
Further development of a Steiner Based Curriculum, specific to a multi-age classroom, small school context.
The addition of LOTE to the curriculum.
The inclusion of a weekly Manual Arts program in the Primary school.
Engaging a mentor to assist current teaching staff new to NSW to achieve compliance with the Board of Studies requirements.
Continue weekly swimming lessons in term 1.
STUDENT WELFARE
To ensure that the existing weekly class meetings continue, thus ensuring that the social/emotional welfare and development of the students is constantly monitored

and evaluated.

To continue to build the school numbers through advertising, open days, regular school news contributions to local newspapers and increasing the visibility of the school through a school Website. This ensures our schools viability and increases the student's opportunities for peer learning and collaboration, relationship building and team games.

To hold parent education study group evenings to further increase understanding of Steiner Education and the healthy development of the children. This includes regular articles and parent education about healthy lunches for healthy learners.

STAFFING

To employ an additional full time teacher to enable us to separate the classes into closer age groupings, thus enabling us to implement the Steiner Curriculum more effectively

To employ a LOTE teacher.

To implement a regular Manual Arts lesson each week, into the Primary curriculum.

To hire a music specialist for Festivals and special events.

FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

To complete all grant works which are outstanding from 2010.

To complete the new rooms by adding floor coverings and furnishings.

To move the existing Library into one of the new rooms and move the k-1 room in to the large middle room, allowing more space for a composite k-1.

School Contact Information

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