



## Annual Report 2017



**Alesco: from the Latin, to grow or mature**

*For young people eligible for Years 9 to 12, who are ready to take responsibility for themselves, their learning and their future, in a safe and supportive environment for change*

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Alesco Illawarra operates  
under the auspices of WEA Illawarra  
ABN 14 062 944 950  
NSW School Number: 78007  
Australian Government School Number: 29085

This report is prepared by Alesco Illawarra to meet educational and financial reporting requirements for the 2017 reporting year, in accordance with the Commonwealth Government's *Australian Education Regulations 2013* and the NSW Education Standards Authority requirements for Registered and Accredited individual non-government schools.

Alesco Illawarra would like to thank

- The Australian Government Department of Education and Training
- The NSW Department of Education
- The Association of Independent Schools NSW
- The Board of Directors and staff of WEA Illawarra
- The staff and students of Alesco Illawarra

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# Table of Contents

<b>From the WEA Illawarra Board of Directors .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Principal's Message.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Vision, Mission and Philosophy .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Characteristics of the Student Body .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Student Performance .....</b>	<b>13</b>
NAPLAN.....	13
Year 10 .....	13
Preliminary HSC (Year 11).....	13
Higher School Certificate.....	14
<b>Workforce Composition.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Teacher Accreditation and Qualifications .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Professional Learning .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Student Attendance .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Post-School Destinations .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Student Retention Rates from Year 10 to Year 12.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Enrolment Policies .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Other School Policies .....</b>	<b>24</b>
Student Welfare.....	24
Anti-Bullying .....	25
Discipline.....	25
Complaints and Grievances .....	26
<b>School Improvement Targets.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Summary Financial Information.....</b>	<b>35</b>
Chart 1: Recurrent Income 2017.....	35
Chart 2: Recurrent Expenditure 2017.....	35
Capital Income and Expenditure 2017.....	35

## From the WEA Illawarra Board of Directors



On behalf of the WEA Illawarra Board, I would like to congratulate Alesco Illawarra on another fantastic year of achievement.

Our Alesco Illawarra School continues to thrive and the positive and life-changing impact on the students and their support network is indeed inspiring. In 2017 we had several students sit their HSC and these graduates were celebrated at an uplifting ceremony in November.

During 2017, the Alesco outreach program consolidated at three sites, Nowra, Bulli and Koonawarra. These centres are aimed at assisting young people who are disengaged from formal education and want to transition back into school, training or employment. 2017 was an extremely successful year with many students moving to the Wollongong Campus and others finding employment or registering for further study. The cohort in Nowra were an inspiration to us all with their excellent attendance, great attitudes and their desire to work through the annual holidays on a vocational readiness program. The Board has endorsed plans to explore an extension of the outreach program to further sites in 2018.

To support our growth strategies, refurbishment of our warehouse at 58 Auburn Street, Wollongong was undertaken in 2017. This funky 'industrial feel' facility will allow for expansion of Alesco Illawarra, and we are very much looking forward to seeing how the students grow in this new facility.

During the year, the school achieved its five year registration and accreditation with the NSW Education Standards Authority, a very critical achievement ensuring that we can continue to operate and support our students. Well done to all involved.

We all continue to be inspired by the students' success stories and personal learnings. The Board of WEA Illawarra thanks the dedicated team at Alesco Illawarra for their commitment, support and belief in the students. They do a stellar job in delivering our supportive, inclusive and flexible learning model and we look forward to further Alesco Illawarra innovative growth.

*Stephannie Jonovska*  
*Chairperson*  
*WEA Illawarra Board*

## Principal's Message

As Principal of Alesco Illawarra there were a number of highlights for me in 2017 that relate to what was achieved and to the work undertaken to help achieve even greater things for the school in the future.

The continued growth in maturity of our senior students who returned in record numbers to study with us again in 2017 was indeed impressive. These young people are important role models for the younger students at Alesco Illawarra and we are all very proud of them for the way they have conducted themselves and the concern they display for the younger students.



The 2017 Graduation Ceremony was a great celebration of individual and collective achievement and a very proud moment for the school community under the theme of 'Be courageous and dare to follow your dreams'. There were many highlights: like the Alesco Illawarra students graduating with their HSC or ROSA, many the first in their families to do so; we celebrated those students who took a different pathways like Pre-University courses, TAFE or employment or other artistic endeavours; we were honoured to have a parent share with us all the tremendous positive impact Alesco Illawarra has had on her family with three of her children having now attended; and finally we bid farewell to some teachers who left during the year and welcomed those who have arrived to replace them.

In 2017 our Outreach Centres Bulli, Koonawarra and Nowra have done very well. What a transformation, what a triumph for the students and staff. The Outreach at Nowra, who had their own graduation ceremony, finished Year 10 and then said we are not ready to leave so they then studied through the holidays for the Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways to launch them into the next phase of life. They are an inspiration to us all and we thank them for their efforts this year and wish them well for their futures. We all look forward to seeing the Outreach program grow and develop over the next few years.

The long awaited refurbishment of the warehouse at 58 Auburn Street, to create a contemporary senior student precinct was completed in 2017 with staff and students looking forward to engaging with this new space next year.

Respect remains the core value of Alesco Illawarra and the Positive Behaviour Support Program (featuring Respect and Participation) continues to underpin a growth in our students who are developing a more positive attitude about their own wellbeing and also looking out for the wellbeing of other students, their teachers and support staff and their own learning outcomes. Each year we are very proud to see the growth of this culture of care and respect within the school.

Our team of dedicated staff (teachers, support staff) are truly an inspiration. Their passion, commitment and professionalism is what allows Alesco Illawarra to make such a difference in the lives of our students, their families and carers.

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Due to the hard work of staff the school was granted accreditation for a further five years at the end of 2017 by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). I would like to thank all staff for their efforts towards this success which reflects the growth and maturity of Alesco Illawarra.

I would also like to acknowledge the extremely valuable contribution the Board of Directors has made towards creating the framework for a supportive and inclusive learning community here at Alesco Illawarra. We are all so very privileged to be involved in assisting young people at Alesco Illawarra to open their eyes to the opportunities of life, develop their potential and become valued members of their community.

*David Fuller*  
*Principal*

# Vision, Mission and Philosophy

## Context

Alesco Illawarra is a non-denominational independent school registered with the NSW Department of Education for Years 9 to 12, and accredited by the NSW Education Standards Authority to deliver courses leading to the award of the Record of School Achievement (RoSA) and the Higher School Certificate. Alesco Illawarra offers young people an alternative education option. Students who enrol at Alesco Illawarra typically face barriers to completing their education in mainstream school settings, including mental health issues, learning difficulties, social disadvantage and behavioural issues.



Alesco Illawarra operates under the auspices of WEA Illawarra. WEA Illawarra is a not-for-profit education and training organisation that is part of the Adult and Community Education sector and has a vision to build strong communities through individuals achieving their potential. WEA Illawarra is a community college with a broad social inclusion agenda and Alesco Illawarra is an integral service in the achievement of WEA's vision and mission.

## Alesco Illawarra Vision

Alesco Illawarra will provide a safe, respectful and inclusive environment in which young people can explore learning, develop their potential, and be well equipped to meet the challenges of education, work and life in the 21st Century.

## Mission Statement

Alesco Illawarra strives to provide young people who have not found success in traditional secondary education models an opportunity to learn, grow and achieve success in a smaller, more informal and supportive learning environment.

We do this:

- Through the dedication of well qualified staff who are committed to the vision of Alesco Illawarra.
- Through the development of strong links with student support networks in the community including parents and carers, health and wellbeing service providers.
- Through the provision of teaching and learning programs which encourage critical thinking skills, enabling students to hypothesise, pose questions, investigate issues and develop solutions.
- By creating a culture of respect that focuses on equity and social justice.

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## Philosophy

### *Inclusion*

The philosophy of Alesco Illawarra is inclusive education. Every child has a fundamental right to education, and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning.

Inclusive schools are those 'which include everybody, celebrate differences, support learning, and respond to individual needs'\*. This inclusive orientation is the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all.

Alesco Illawarra strives to achieve educational systems and programs designed and implemented to take into account the unique characteristics and needs of every young person. To further enhance this learning, staff work collaboratively with agencies within the wider community to provide opportunities to enhance student wellbeing.

The aim is to meet the challenge of 'Education For All'.\*

\* (UNESCO, 1994, *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Paris.

### *Values*

At Alesco Illawarra we believe in the core value of RESPECT:

#### **Respect for Self    Respect for Others    Respect for Community**

This core value of respect is reflected in the management and operation of the school and in the participation of students in the learning program. The student welfare policy, code of conduct and discipline framework focuses on this value to ensure that our learning environment is positive and supportive.

Our Positive Behaviour Support program is built on Respect and Participation and is affectionately known as "RaP".

### ***Relationships and Personal Growth***

We aim to create positive relationships with our students so we can help them to move forward with their education. Breaking down barriers between students and teachers creates an environment in which young people feel comfortable learning.

Our job is to help young people believe in themselves and to realise that they can shape their future and choose what it will be, regardless of what has come before. We seek to provide opportunities for each young person to:

- 
- grow as a person,
  - learn how to form positive interpersonal relationships,
  - enhance their desire to learn for learning's sake,
  - progress in their knowledge and skills.

We attempt to accept young people as they are, and however they choose to express themselves, within a framework of mutual respect.

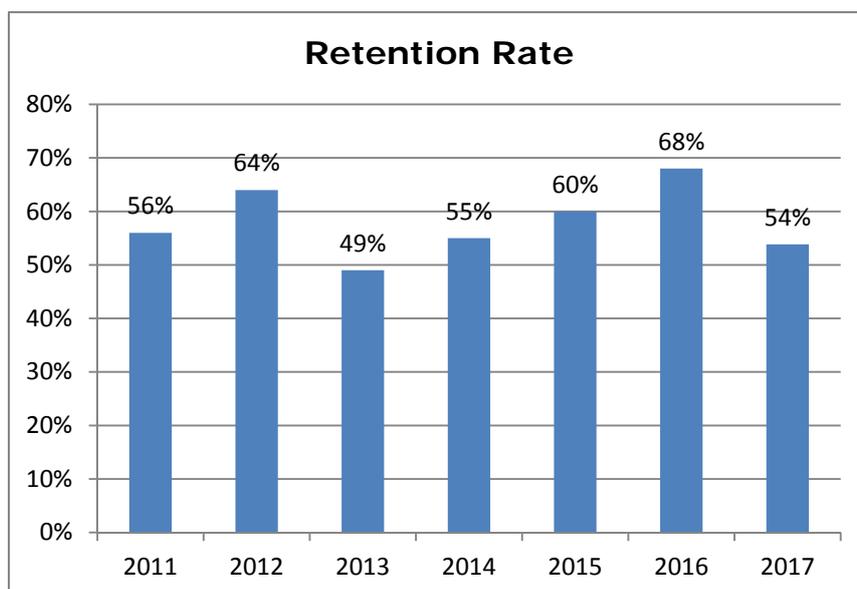
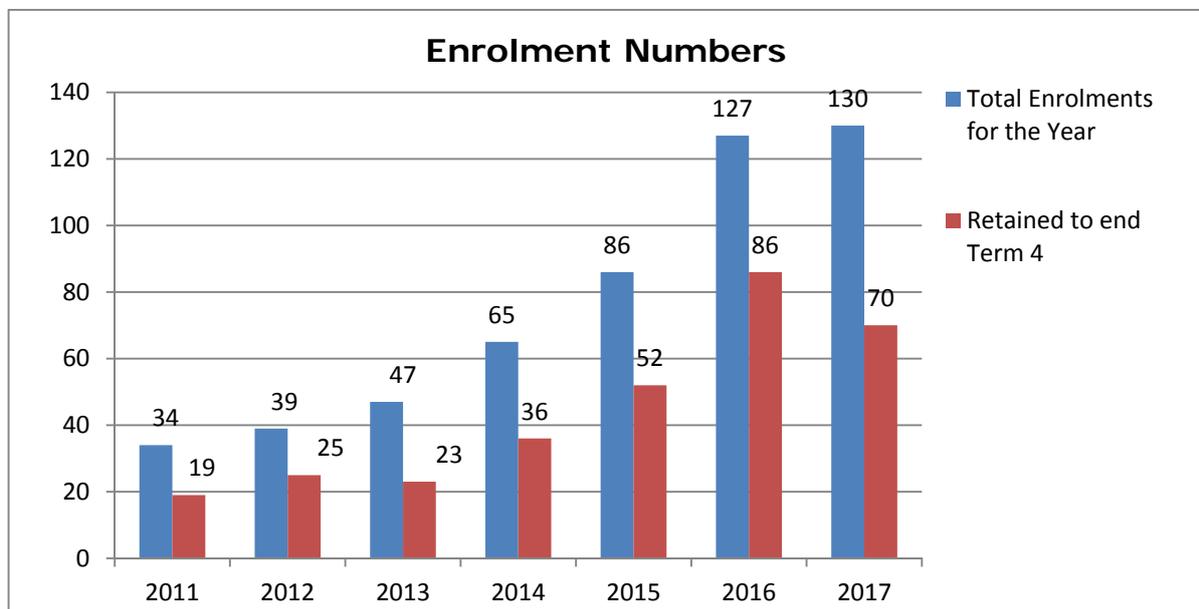
We seek to provide learning opportunities for young people which prove their capabilities and help them reach their potential, in an environment that is designed specifically for their inclusion.



# Characteristics of the Student Body

The NSW Minister for Education has granted Alesco Illawarra status as a Special Assistance School. This recognises that the school primarily enrolls students with social, emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Throughout 2017 Alesco Illawarra enrolled a total of 130 students across Years 9, 10, 11 and 12. Seventy (70) students maintained their enrolment until the end of Term 4, representing a 54% retention rate. Each year, Alesco Illawarra takes on a new cohort of students and the barriers each student faces in completing their education will impact differently on their desire and capacity to complete the school year. The introduction in 2014 of a HSC pathways program has provided an opportunity for students to complete their senior schooling with Alesco Illawarra and it is encouraging to note a consistent number working towards this milestone.

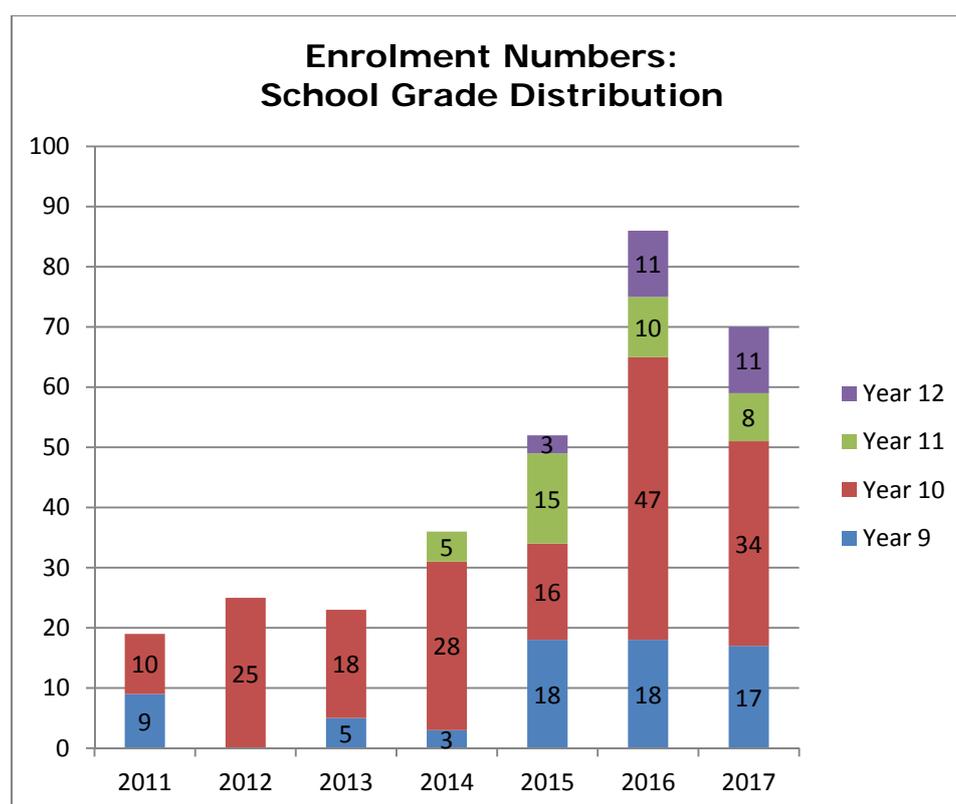


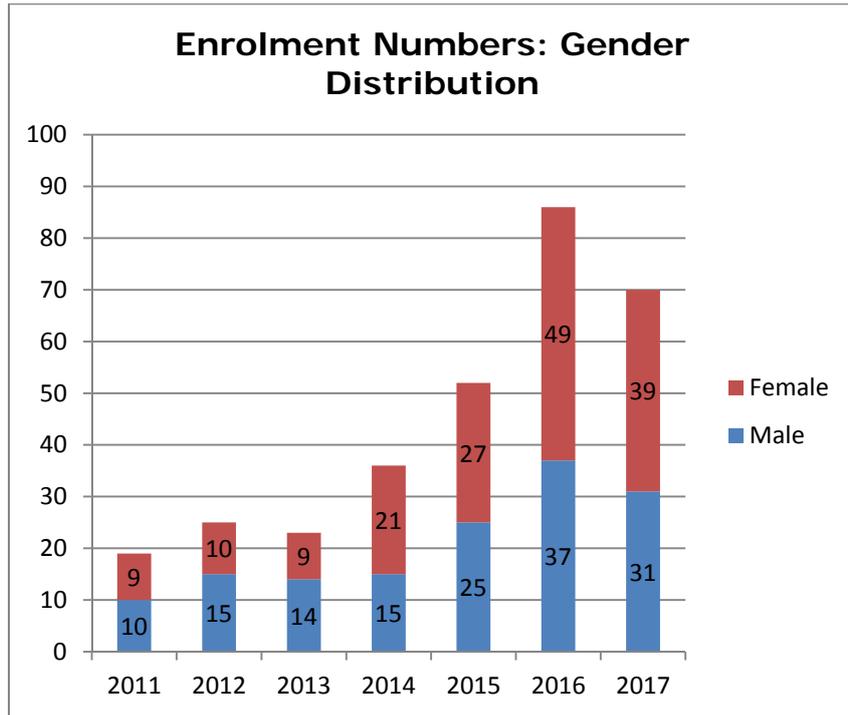
Of the 70 students enrolled at the end of Term 4 in 2017, seven students graduated having completed their HSC and 35 students re-enrolled to continue their schooling with Alesco in 2018 as follows:

	Number of Students
Year 9 students returning for Year 10	14
Year 10 students to continue with Year 10	5
Year 10 students returning for Year 11	9
Year 11 & 12 students returning to continue with their HSC	8
<b>Total number of students returning to Alesco in 2017</b>	<b>36 (51%)</b>

All of the Year 10 students who returned to continue with Year 10 were previously enrolled in one of the Outreach Programs in 2017. They successfully re-engaged with learning and in 2018 will be working to achieve their Stage 5 RoSA credential.

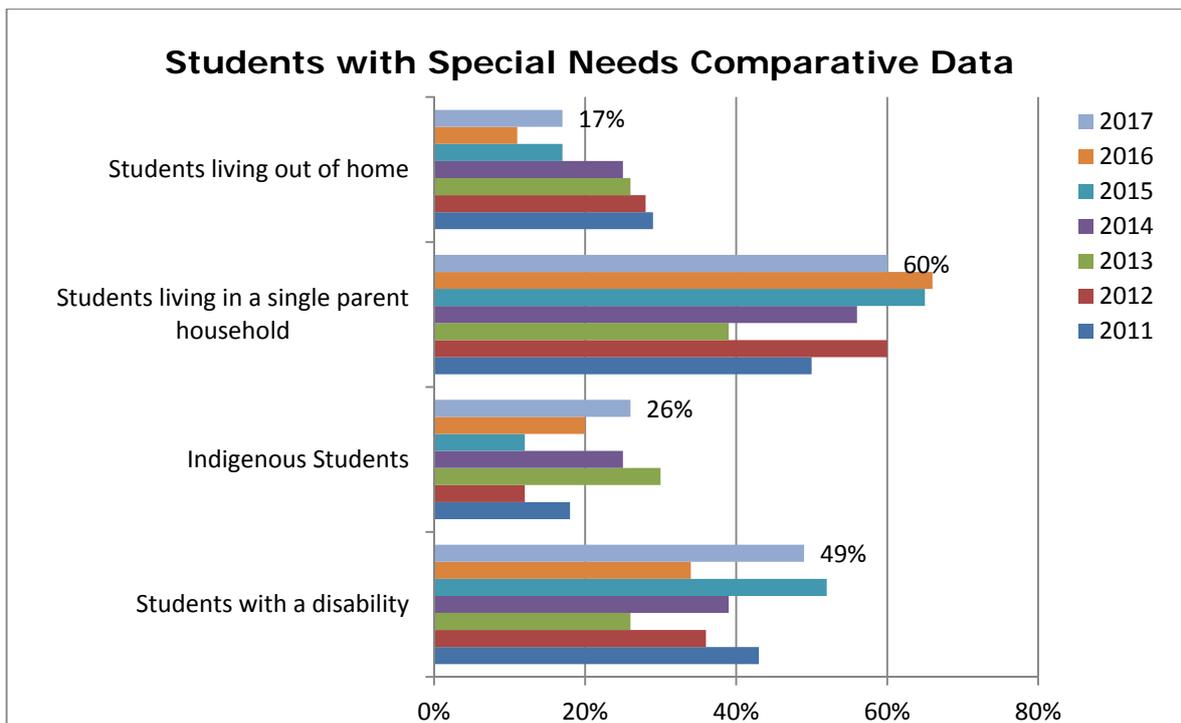
The following charts indicate the distribution of students who remained enrolled to the end of Term 4 in school grades and by gender, compared across all years of Alesco's operation.





Of the 70 students enrolled until the end of the 2017 school year:

- 17% of students either lived with a family member other than their parent, a family friend, independently, in out of home care arranged by the State, a youth refuge or other supported accommodation situation because they are no longer able to live at home.
- 60% lived in single parent households
- 26% identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- 49% had a disability which impacted on their learning



# Student Performance

## NAPLAN

Results for Alesco Illawarra Year 9 student outcomes in standardised national literacy and numeracy testing can be found on the My School website (<http://www.myschool.edu.au>).

## Year 10

Thirty-four (34) students were enrolled in Year 10 at the completion of the 2017 school year, with 23 completing Year 10 mandatory course requirements in English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography and PDHPE. Of these students, 10 moved into full time vocational training at the end of the year and were awarded their Stage 5 Record of School Achievement (RoSA) credential, issued by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). The remaining students continued with their school education and if they leave school before completing the HSC they will be eligible to receive their RoSA credential.

Many of the Year 10 students who did not complete all mandatory course requirements were participating in the non-accredited Outreach Program with the aim of re-engaging with education. Five of these students returned to Alesco Illawarra in 2018 to work towards their Stage 5 RoSA credential at one of our accredited campuses, while others were pursuing vocational training or employment opportunities.

## Preliminary HSC (Year 11)

In consultation with relevant stakeholders and authorities, Alesco Illawarra made the decision in 2014 to offer a pathways program to facilitate a pattern of study leading to the achievement of the HSC for senior students. The pathways program is offered in line with the guidelines provided in the NESA Assessment Certification Examination website. Stage 6 students are enrolled full-time and have a timetable which reflects the indicative hours of study for each subject. The pathways program acknowledges that Alesco students may require more time to meet the outcomes at a standard that reflects their knowledge and understanding of a subject. Typically, Stage 6 students will take three years to complete their HSC at Alesco Illawarra, undertaking final examinations in the second and third year.

Eight students commenced their Preliminary studies in 2017, completing the following courses:

English Standard (2 unit)

Fundamentals of English Part 1 (1 unit)

Mathematics General (2 unit)

Food Technology (2 unit)

These students will continue with their remaining Preliminary units of study in 2018 as well as commencing some HSC units of study.

Three students completed their Preliminary studies in 2017 and partially completed their HSC, with two of these students being awarded their Year 12

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RoSA credential when they decided to leave school at the end of the year. The third student returned to Alesco in 2018 to complete her HSC.

## Higher School Certificate

A total of 11 students studied HSC courses in 2017, our third cohort of senior students to have done so. Courses completed were:

<b>Board Developed Courses</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>
English Standard	2
Mathematics General 2	2
Studies of Religion (1 unit)	5
Visual Arts	11
Business Services (VET Course)	8

<b>Content Endorsed Courses</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>
English Studies	2
Mathematics General 1	7
Sport, Lifestyle and Recreation Studies (1 unit)	5

Seven (64%) students attained the Higher School Certificate, two of these receiving an ATAR. Two Year 12 students returned in 2018 to continue their HSC studies through the pathways program.

In 2017 Alesco Illawarra offered its first Vocational Education and Training course for HSC students and 8 students (73% of the HSC cohort) received a Statement of Attainment towards Certificate II in Business. No students undertook training in a trade at HSC level.

During 2017, one student who had commenced their HSC left school to complete a pathways program to university, a joint partnership between WEA Illawarra and the University of Wollongong (UoW). This student was offered a place at UoW at the start of the 2018 academic year.

At the end of 2017, another student who had not yet completed all HSC subjects enrolled in the WEA-UoW pathways program and on completion will be eligible to enrol at university in second semester 2018.

We congratulate all the students who were awarded their HSC or have made progress towards their HSC and school completion. It should be noted that many of the Alesco Illawarra students sitting for HSC examinations are the first in their immediate family to have done so. In the context of Alesco Illawarra as a Special Assistance School, regardless of HSC Bands achieved, it is a significant achievement for our students to have participated in the HSC examinations and be on their way to completing their secondary schooling.

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**Table: Higher School Certificate Results – Board Endorsed Courses**

Subject	Year	No. of Students	Performance band achieved School and State %			
			Bands 4-6		Bands 1-3	
			School	State	School	State
English (Standard)	2017	2	0	55.12	100	44.85
	2016	4	0	49.51	100	50.49
	2015	2	0	42.41	100	57.59
Mathematics General 2	2017	2	0	50.7	100	49.28
	2016	1	0	52.09	100	47.91
Studies of Religion	2017	5	0	82.19	100	17.78
Visual Arts	2017	11	9.09	90.27	90.9	9.71

Previous years' comparative results are only available for English (Standard) and Mathematics General 2 as these were the only courses studied in both 2016 and 2017.

## Workforce Composition

Alesco Illawarra employed the following staff in 2017

Category	Number of Staff	Full-Time Equivalent
Teaching	15	10.4
Non-Teaching	6	4.4

There were no members of staff who identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent at the time of the annual school census.

## Teacher Accreditation and Qualifications

All teaching staff met the professional requirements for teaching in NSW according to the following categories:

Level of Accreditation	Number of Teachers
Pre-2004 teachers (accreditation not required in 2017)	7
Conditional	1
Provisional	3
Proficient Teacher	4
Highly Accomplished (voluntary accreditation)	0
Lead Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	0
<b>Total number of teachers</b>	<b>15</b>

Qualifications of Alesco Illawarra teaching staff

Category	Number of Teachers
i. Teachers having teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines	14
ii. Teachers having a bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications.	1

## Professional Learning

Alesco Illawarra staff and Board members participated in the following externally facilitated professional development sessions in 2017:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Support Staff</b>	<b>Board Members</b>
AISNSW Governance Symposium	1		3
Introduction to School Governance			1
School Governance			1
Legal Compliance			1
Financial Compliance			1
Executive Supervision			1
Managing Risk			1
Child Protection Legislation			1
Conference on Assessment	1		
Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on Students with a Disability Training	1		
Child Protection: Obligations in Identifying and Responding to Children and Young People at Risk	11	5	
Child Protection Conference		1	
Staff Development Retreat – school improvement, planning, trauma informed practice	7	3	
Creating Safer Independent Schools		1	
NDIS Information Workshop	1		
English Teaching Conference	2		
Supporting School Improvement	3	1	1
Stronger HSC Standards Briefing	1		
Suicide Postvention Workshop	3	2	
First Aid and CPR Training	4	3	

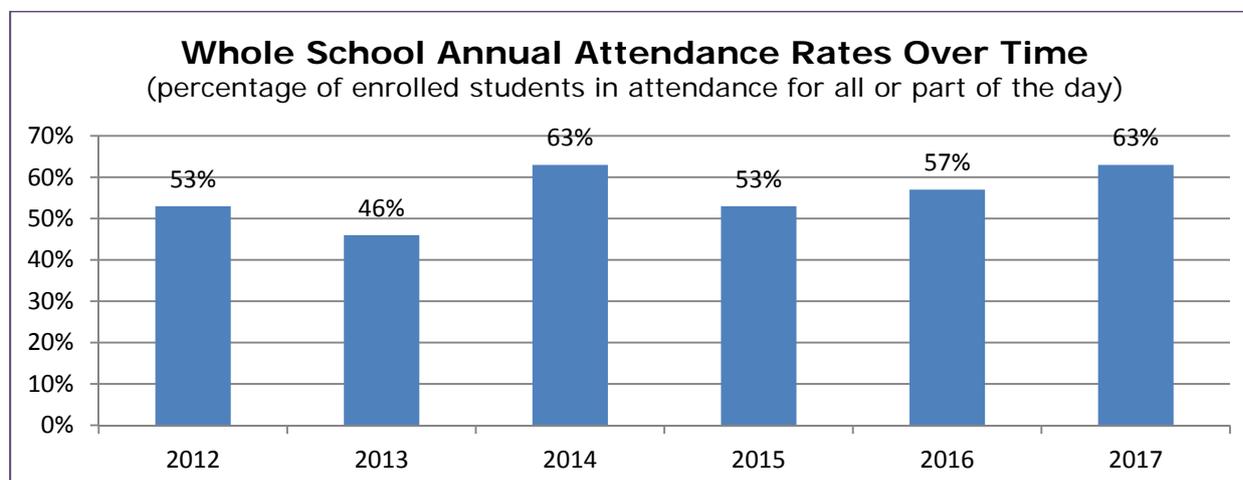
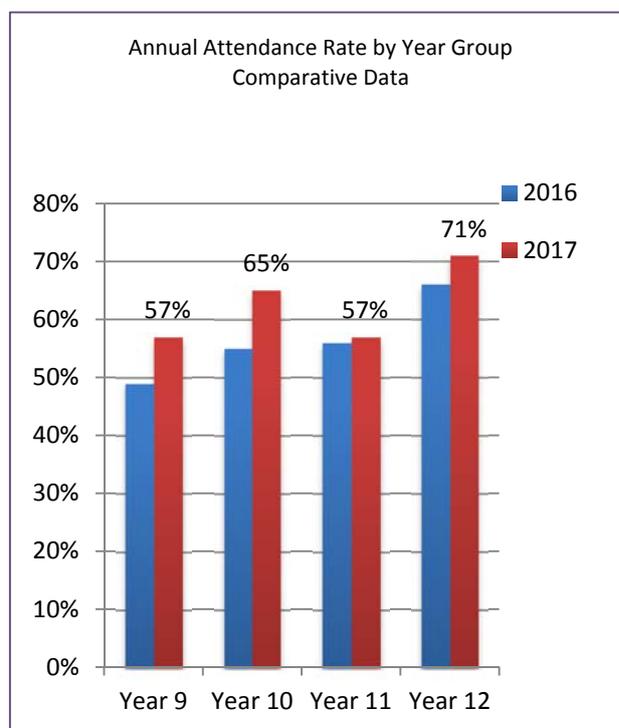
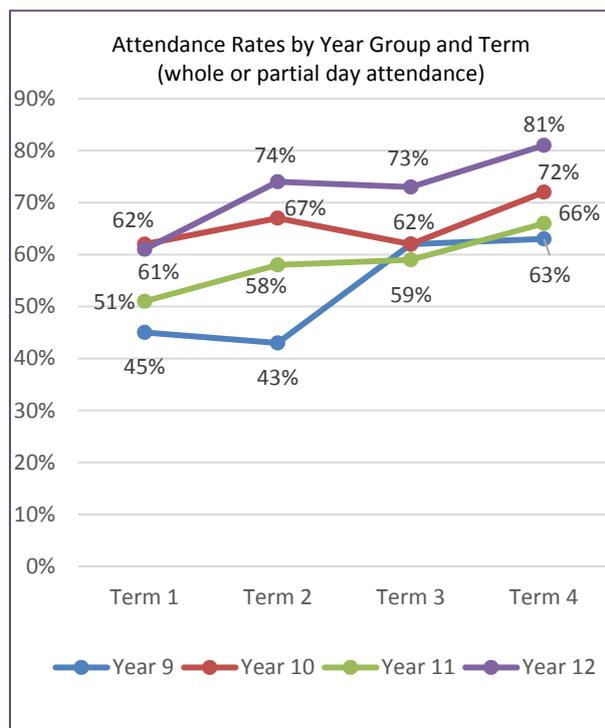
In addition, regular professional learning sessions were held through such activities as staff meetings, pupil free days for curriculum review, and other internally facilitated sessions relevant to key issues for the Alesco team.

# Student Attendance

Overall, attendance rates for students at Alesco Illawarra improved from the previous year, however there is variation in attendance rates between the Year groups and from term to term.

Attendance rates in 2017 are detailed as follows:

	<b>Present for part or all of the day</b>			
<b>Year Group</b>	<b>Term 1</b>	<b>Term 2</b>	<b>Term 3</b>	<b>Term 4</b>
Year 9	45%	43%	62%	63%
Year 10	62%	67%	62%	72%
Year 11	51%	58%	59%	66%
Year 12	61%	74%	73%	81%



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A significant number of students face personal, socioeconomic, and other barriers to completing their education. It should be noted that prior to attending Alesco Illawarra many students were not attending school at all and it is an achievement for many that they are establishing a regular pattern of attendance, even if this is, at times, only partial attendance on any given school day.

Alesco Illawarra remains committed to working with students, parents/carers and other support people to improve student attendance. Individual consideration is given to each student and their particular circumstances. Strategies include home visits, attendance agreements with students, negotiated flexibility in attendance where a student can demonstrate a satisfactory work completion rate, support meetings with parents/carers and other service providers involved in the care of the young person and exemptions from attendance for specified periods where medical or mental health problems are present.

Information on the school's attendance rates can also be found at the My School website: <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/50379/attendance/2017>

## Post-School Destinations

Intended destination of students enrolled in Year 10 as at Term 4 in 2017  
(n = 34)

Destination	Number of Students
Re-enrolled at Alesco in 2018 to undertake Year 11	9
Enrolled in other schools to undertake Year 11	4
Re-enrolled at Alesco in 2018 to under Year 10 RoSA	5
Undertaking vocational training, apprenticeship or traineeship	14
Employed full-time, part-time or seeking employment	0
Unknown destination	2

Intended destination of students enrolled in Year 11 and 12 as at Term 4 in 2017  
(n = 19)

Destination	Number of Students
Returning to Alesco Illawarra to continue with HSC Pathways Program	8
Undertaking vocational training, apprenticeship or traineeship	2
Undertaking WEA-UoW Pathway to University Course	2
Employed full-time or part-time	4
Unknown destination	3

## Student Retention Rates from Year 10 to Year 12

Alesco Illawarra is tracking student retention from completion of Year 10 through to completion of Year 12. Our HSC Pathways Program was first introduced in 2014 when our first cohort of students commenced in Year 11 with Preliminary HSC courses. In 2017, seven students completed their Pathways Program and graduated with their Higher School Certificate. Four of these students were enrolled at Alesco Illawarra for their Year 10 courses (in 2014), with the remaining 3 having transferred to Alesco from another school in Year 11.

The total number of Year 10 students enrolled at any time in 2014 was 42 students. The 2017 graduating Year 12 students represents a 9.5% retention rate for this cohort from Year 10 to Year 12. The nature of our school means that we have a high proportion of students transitioning into and out of Alesco Illawarra at various times in their academic pathway and for various reasons, including:

- transitioning back into mainstream schools which provide a wider range of academic options than is possible to offer at Alesco Illawarra;
- desire for non-academic pathways including transition to vocational training and employment;
- transient and itinerant family situations including homelessness.

# Enrolment Policies

<b>Policy No: 1.5</b>	<b>Enrolment Policy</b>
<b>Version</b>	<b>2.2</b>
<b>Created</b>	<b>30 November 2010</b>
<b>Reviewed</b>	<b>29 July 2013</b> <b>3 December 2013</b> <b>20 December 2016</b> <b>20 July 2017</b>
<b>Next Review Date</b>	<b>20 July 2019</b>

Alesco Illawarra is a school specifically designed to help young people with barriers to education, or who are at risk of not completing their education, to re-engage with learning.

The school aims to provide learning opportunities for young people eligible to complete Stages 5 and 6 and are unable to complete their education within the traditional school environment.

The selection process for Alesco Illawarra explores the following key areas to determine suitability for our program:

- Learning difficulties/disabilities
- Behavioural and/or social and emotional difficulties/disabilities
- Financial disadvantage and /or social isolation
- Previous academic performance and disconnection with learning
- Indigenous, cultural and linguistic background
- Desire to overcome past difficulties and move on to future education, employment or training.

Alesco Illawarra caters for students whose behaviour or health support needs can be managed within the school's facilities and staff to student ratio. The school is best suited to students who can operate within the adult learning environment and can take responsibility for themselves, their learning and their actions. Of primary importance is our ability to provide a safe learning environment for all students and staff. We all have a right to be safe at school and therefore a responsibility to not do anything which may threaten, or harm or cause danger to self or others.

Students applying to attend Alesco Illawarra must complete the appropriate application form and submit all required documentation prior to meeting with school staff for an interview. A student's acceptance into the program is dependent on their presentation at interview, information provided from previous schools, and the student's and parents/carers attitudes towards and demonstrated ability to work within the policies and philosophy of Alesco Illawarra.

All students who are enrolled at Alesco Illawarra will be required to undergo a literacy and numeracy assessment if the teaching staff deems it necessary. This may be conducted prior to enrolment if required.

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Continued enrolment at Alesco Illawarra is dependent upon the student making satisfactory academic progress, attending consistently, making a consistent effort to participate in learning and other school activities when in attendance, and the student and their parents/carers observing all behavioural codes of conduct and other requirements of the school which are applicable from time to time.

Alesco Illawarra may suspend or terminate the enrolment of a student, either temporarily or permanently at any time for reasons which may include, but are not limited to:

- a) a serious breach of the School's rules, Code of Conduct or Discipline Policy;
- b) conduct which may damage the reputation of the School or adversely affect the safety, health or wellbeing of its students or staff; and
- c) where the Principal or the Board of Directors believes that a mutually beneficial relationship of cooperation and trust between the School and the parent/carer(s) has broken down and adversely impacts on that relationship.

Alesco Illawarra may terminate the enrolment of a student without notice if, either before or after the commencement of enrolment, the School finds the relevant particulars of the special needs of the student have not been provided to the School or the particulars provided are materially incorrect or misleading.

The School has an absolute discretion in determining the weight of each of the factors it takes into account in determining whether a student will be offered a place in the school or in the continuation of a student's enrolment.

<b>Policy No: 1.6</b>	<b>Information required upon application to Alesco Learning Centre Illawarra</b>
<b>Version</b>	<b>1.2</b>
<b>Created</b>	<b>30 November 2010</b>
<b>Reviewed</b>	<b>July 2013</b>
<b>Reviewed</b>	<b>February 2017</b>
<b>Next Review Date</b>	<b>February 2019</b>
<b>Related Documents</b>	<b>Alesco Illawarra Application for Enrolment 1.12 POL Register of Alesco student enrolments 1.13 PROC Register of Enrolments, Attendance Record Keeping and Exemptions</b>

Due to the nature of the target group attending Alesco Illawarra and the school's intended focus, Alesco Illawarra requires specific information regarding the student's history when applying to enrol.

This information includes but is not limited to:

- Personal details: name, age, address, DOB etc; (including proof of identity either through birth certificate or photo ID which includes a birth date)
- Parent/guardian contact details, if aged under 18 at time of application
- Current living arrangements
- Emergency contact details
- Details of the referring service provider (if applicable)
- Assessment and service provider support details (including any reports or letters of support from psychologists, psychiatrists, counsellors)
- Demographic information: ATSI identification, cultural/linguistic background, disability)
- For students born overseas, information regarding arrival date, citizenship or residency status and visa number and class
- Medical conditions and medication (if applicable)
- Previous education details (including most recent school reports)
- Other training or employment information.

This information will be gathered through the *Application for Enrolment* form. No student will be accepted without a completed application form. No application will be processed without all of the essential supporting documentation being provided with the application.

# Other School Policies

## Student Welfare

Alesco Illawarra seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment which:

- supports the social and emotional wellbeing of students
- encourages academic achievement
- minimises risk of harm.

The following policies are in place to support student welfare and are available on the Alesco Illawarra intranet or on request to the Business Manager. Policies marked with an asterisk (\*) were reviewed in 2017.

### ***Child Protection***

Child Protection policies were reviewed in 2017. Policy regarding Working with Children Checks is incorporated into the WEA Illawarra Fit and Proper Persons Policy, as WEA Illawarra is the governing body and employer.

Type	Number	Name
Policy	2.1	Child Protection Policy *
Procedure	2.1	Reporting Risk of Significant Harm *
Form	2.1a	Child Protection Report to Community Services *
Form	2.1b	Proof of Identity
Policy	2.2	Role of Staff in Care and Protection
Policy	2.3	Harm Relating to Actions of a Student, Trainee or Apprentice
Glossary		Child Protection Terms
WEA Policy	1P01	Fit and Proper Persons
Resource		Office of the Children's Guardian Working With Children Check Phase-In Schedule
Resource		Office of the Children's Guardian Working With Children Check Information for Employers Guide
Resource		NSW Government Online Mandatory Reporter Guide
Resource		Protocols for Internal Investigative and Disciplinary Proceedings (AISNSW/IEU)
Resource		An Introduction to Creating Safer Independent Schools (AISNSW)

### ***General Welfare, Security and Safety***

Type	Number	Name
Policy	1.7	Individual Plans for Students
Policy	1.11	Corporal punishment
Policy	1.12	Register of Alesco Student Enrolments *
Policy	1.13	Student Attendance and Exemptions *
Procedure	1.13	Register of Enrolments, Attendance Record Keeping and Exemptions *
Policy	1.14	Visitors to the Centre
Policy	1.15	Request for police assistance
Policy	1.16	Withdrawal of a student from Alesco Illawarra
Form	1.16	Student destination unknown notification
Policy	1.18	Student excursions
Policy	1.21	Duty of care

Policy	1.22	Lock down
Policy	3.8	Student supervision
Policy	3.9	Students travelling in staff vehicles
Policy	5.5	Student Code of Conduct
Policy	5.5	Student Rights and Responsibilities
Policy	5.9	Student Medical Disclosure and Medications
Policy	5.10	Students and Alcohols and Other Drugs
Policy	6.1	Welfare policy *
Policy	6.2	Notification of concern for student welfare
Policy	6.3	Referral to support services
Policy	6.4	Accepting referral to support services
Policy	6.5	Students leaving premises
Policy	6.6	Anti-Bullying policy
WEA Policy	1P10	Work Health and Safety
WEA Proc	4WI24	Critical Incident Management

## Anti-Bullying

Alesco Illawarra is committed to providing all students with a caring, supportive and safe learning environment, helping to promote personal growth and excellence by developing confidence and self-esteem.

Bullying is an anti-social behaviour that is unacceptable and is not tolerated at Alesco Illawarra. Every student has the right to expect that he or she will be free from bullying and harassment, both inside and outside the classroom.

Alesco Illawarra has a Welfare and Anti-Bullying Plan which gives clear information regarding bullying and whole school strategies to prevent bullying and intervene effectively if bullying occurs. It addresses all forms of bullying and harassment, including cyber bullying. The plan has a strong focus on responsibility, respect and resilience and incorporates all members of the school community.

The Anti-Bullying Policy and Welfare and Anti-Bullying Plan are available on the school intranet and on request from the Business Manager.

## Discipline

Students are required to abide by the Alesco Illawarra Student Code of Conduct and follow the directions of teachers and other people with authority delegated by Alesco Illawarra. Where disciplinary action is required, consequences vary according to the nature of the breach of discipline, as outlined in the Discipline Framework.

All disciplinary action is undertaken in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness as outlined in the Procedural Fairness policy and in keeping with the Alesco Illawarra Welfare Program. Decisions regarding time out from school or withdrawal from the school involve students and their carers and opportunities for appeal are provided.

Alesco Illawarra does not permit corporal punishment of students attending the school under any circumstances. The school and its staff are also not permitted to use corporal punishment regardless of whether the parent or caregiver has requested or given permission to do so. The school does not condone the use of corporal punishment by a parent or caregiver to reinforce any discipline actions implemented by the school or any disciplinary decision by a parent or caregiver.

The following policies are in place to support student discipline and are available on the Alesco Illawarra intranet or on request from the school.

Type	Number	Name
Policy	1.11	Corporal punishment
Policy	1.17	Procedural fairness
Policy	5.2	Student discipline *
Policy	5.4	Student dress standard
Policy	5.5	Student code of conduct
Policy	5.6	Student rights and responsibilities

## Complaints and Grievances

Alesco Illawarra views complaints, as well as compliments and other constructive feedback as a way of creating opportunities for the school to improve its services and prevent future problems.

A suggestion or complaint can be lodged by any person who is a user or potential user of Alesco Illawarra services including a student, a parent/guardian or carer or other community member. The suggestion or complaint can be about any aspect of the service provided or not provided, the behaviour or decisions of other staff, or about workplace practices, policies or procedures. Complaints may be made verbally or in writing by contacting the Principal.

All complaints and grievances will be handled fairly by the appropriate people within the organisation in a timely and confidential manner

The following policies and procedures are in place in relation to complaints and grievances and are available on the Alesco Illawarra intranet or on request from the Business Manager.

Type	Number	Name
Policy	1.10	Complaints and grievances received by the school
Form	1.10	Complaints form
Policy	1.17	Procedural fairness

# School Improvement Targets

School Improvement Targets 2017		
Domain	Priorities	Achievement
Change Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distributed leadership</li> <li>• Team work</li> <li>• Establishment of a culture of self-reflection, learning and improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commenced the establishment of a school Leadership Team where joint collaboration occurs across teaching and learning, wellbeing and administration to help improve school vision, culture and direction.</li> <li>• Commenced discussions of the roles of various teams in the school and how to work effectively together to improve student outcomes.</li> <li>• Commenced change management in communication mechanisms and introduction of staff culture of reflection, learning and improvement</li> </ul>
Curriculum Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve 5 year re-registration and re-accreditation across whole school operations (all campuses)</li> <li>• Change to Stage 6 programs – move from multiple year pathway for achieving HSC to standard two-year pathway, keeping pathway as an option for those students who need it (rather than all students).</li> <li>• implementation of Principles of Universal Design for Learning across all programs and in the classroom</li> <li>• development of cross curricula programs with a focus on literacy and numeracy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and preparation of curriculum documentation for Stage 5 and Stage 6 courses with submission to NESAs in March 2017</li> <li>• Cross curricular programs introduced in Outreach Centres for Stage 5 re-engagement.</li> <li>• Five year registration and accreditation achieved (from 2018 – 2022) with monitoring visit</li> <li>• Successful planning undertaken for a standard two-year HSC pathway ready for implementation from 2018.</li> </ul>

Capital Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alesco Illawarra CGP Building Project – refurbished purpose-built teaching and learning facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refurbishment and construction commenced February 2017 of 4 new general learning areas, food technology kitchen, recreational space, lift for disabled access and all associated amenities.</li> <li>• Practical completion achieved in December 2017.</li> </ul>
Student-focused teaching and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining positive teaching and learning environments and experiences that stimulate student engagement and help students to progress in their learning</li> <li>• Improved communication with parents/carers about student progress and outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidation of two Outreach Centres for long-term disengaged students, working flexibly to encourage re-engagement with learning and transition back to mainstream school or Alesco Wollongong campus</li> <li>• Expansion and consolidation of Nowra Outreach centre offering full Stage 5 RoSA program</li> <li>• Continued to work on ICT improvements for administrative and teaching and learning purposes.</li> <li>• Continued work experience program then suspended for a thorough review of purpose and systems to support student readiness.</li> <li>• Regular communication with parents/carers through individual appointments and group communications, parent engagement in school recognition ceremonies and other activities</li> </ul>

### School Improvement Priorities for 2018

- Training of staff to undertake systematic diagnostic assessment for literacy and numeracy at a student's commencement in the school.
- 100% of students have an Individual Education Plan which clearly outlines academic adjustments to be made in teaching programs, differentiation requirements, and adjustments to assessment. Individual Education Plans to also include comprehensive wellbeing plan and transition plan for each

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student, with regular discussion and review between Alesco Illawarra team members involved in supporting the student.

- Professional development for teaching staff in evidence-based feedback and assessment as learning and for learning, to improve student academic progress and outcomes.
- Continued improvements in school systems for monitoring student attendance and pro-actively working with students and carers to improve student attendance.
- Continued improvements in school systems for monitoring and implementing student discipline within a trauma-informed framework.
- Employment of a Manager of Health and Wellbeing with leadership and mental health clinical skills to lead whole of school wellbeing initiatives, including staff wellbeing.
- Commence formal whole of school Trauma Informed Practice training in conjunction with Berry Street Education Institute, with initial model development in late 2018, and follow up training, review and evaluation in 2019.
- Review of academic reporting system, including whole school moderation processes and change of reporting method using Student Management System (Sentral) for Stage 5 and Stage 6
- Participate in AISNSW School Improvement Service to identify further priority areas and action plans for quality improvement.
- Consolidate Leadership Team, clarifying roles, building on strengths and developing staff to continue with collaborative change management and improvement in school culture.
- Roll-out of G-Suite for education including providing online learning for students through Google Classroom, investment in Chromebooks for student school use and improvements in wi-fi systems.
- Move Koonawarra campus to Lake Illawarra to improve student access and response to community need.
- Additional Outreach Campuses established and registered in Vincentia and Southern Highlands to meet community need.
- Employment of a Transition Support Worker to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate student work experience program and support other transition pathways for students to and from Alesco.
- Work on improved communication with parents/caregivers on student academic progress, wellbeing and transition planning.

## Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Wellbeing continued to be the focus of Alesco Illawarra for 2017. The Respect and Participation (RaP) program continued with a strong emphasis on Positive Behaviour Support principles.

The school continued to employ a Youth Support Worker with the assistance of the National School Chaplaincy Program. Staff, students and parents support this initiative and speak highly of the support offered.

The school continues to reward students through praise, positive communication with parents, Student of the Week and RaP awards. These awards were reviewed during the year to provide more desirable goals for students.

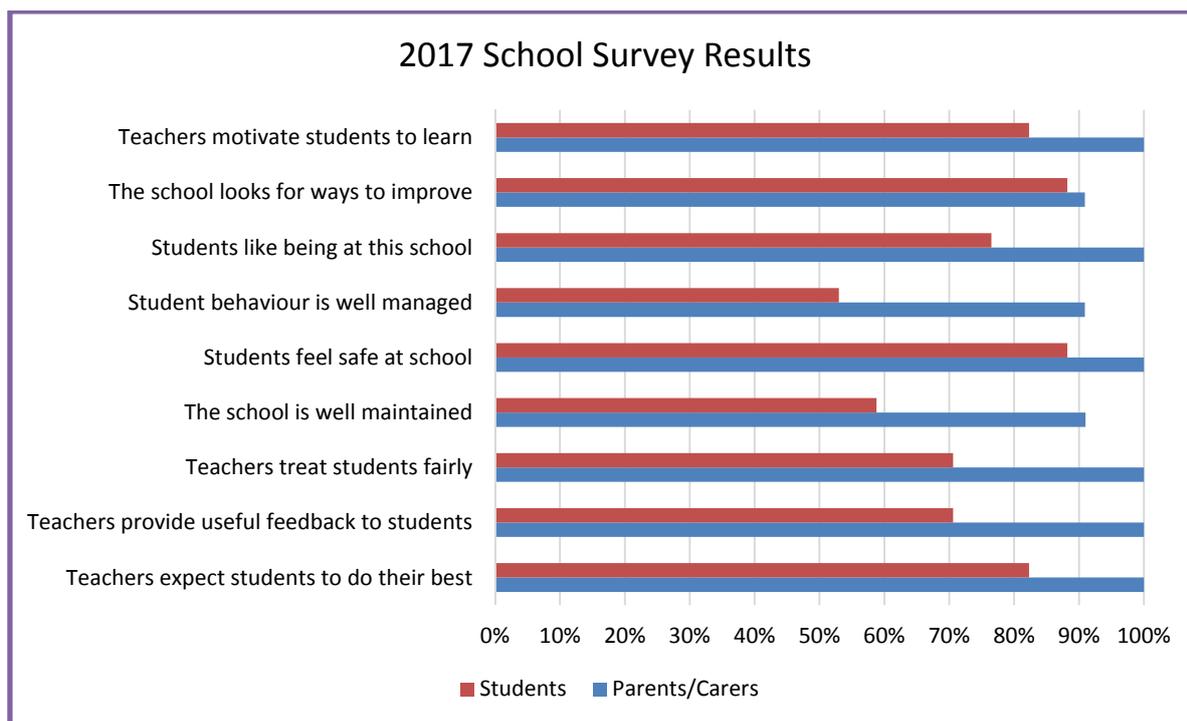
Work experience placements were organised for several students in 2017, particularly those involved with the Outreach Centres. The work experience program is only offered to students who have consistently demonstrated respect and participation in the teaching and learning programs and who are able to take responsibility for their actions in a workplace setting.

Wellbeing of staff is important in the school environment as well. In 2017 morning briefings and afternoon debriefings allow staff the opportunity to deal with issues as they arise and communicating effectively with the whole team about particular student welfare needs and strategies to be implemented for behaviour management and to promote continued respect and participation.

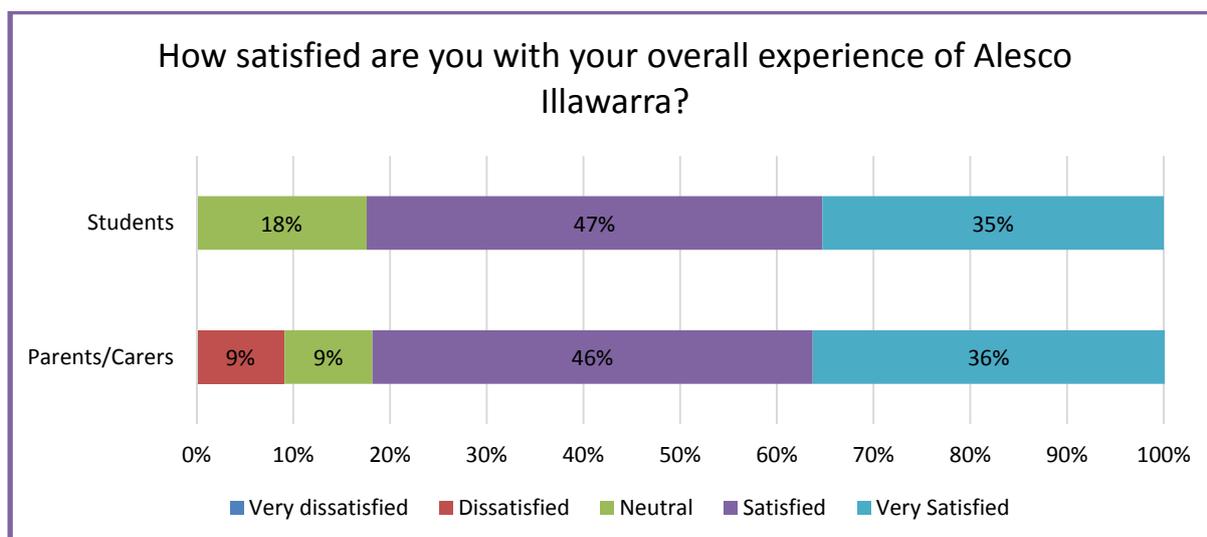
# Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

In 2017 Alesco Illawarra students and parents/caregivers participated in satisfaction surveys. Surveys were returned by 18 students and 11 parents/caregivers.

This chart shows the percentage of respondents who either agreed or strongly agreed with the following survey statements.



The following chart indicates student, parent/carer and staff overall satisfaction with their experience of Alesco Illawarra.



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## Student Feedback

"When I first came to Alesco I was a mess; I lacked confidence, I didn't have many friends, I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life, I hated school and my mental health was at its absolute worst. I'm a new person now. I enjoy being at school, I have a job, I can handle my mental health, I have a lovely group of friends, I've finally got my life back on track again."

"I don't get bullied like I did at my old school and my teachers actually help me here."

"Since being at Alesco it's given me confidence and improved my mental health."

"I believe that myself and others have enjoyed and have benefited from coming here."

"All through my troubles the staff have really been there for me and urged me to keep going."

"Alesco helped me through a difficult time in my life. Not sure where I would be if I hadn't come here. I would for sure not be graduating Year 12."

"I didn't think I would finish school but I ended up doing it."

"Wouldn't have made it this far without Alesco."

### What's the best thing about being a student at Alesco Illawarra?

- The school times, friendly staff, being able to learn at your own pace and being given opportunities that you wouldn't necessarily get.
- Opportunity to get my HSC, a relaxed learning environment, the support.
- My freedom. I'm not a student, I am an adult. Being treated equally with respect makes learning easier and more rewarding.

What else could we do to make Alesco Illawarra a great place to come every day?

- Provide more subjects that students would be interested in.
- Make things more fair.
- Make more food in the morning.
- Nothing. I think students take this school for granted.
- Don't become mainstream. Students come here to get out of the mainstream because it doesn't work for them. Don't turn it into something the students will hate.
- Take in students' opinions more.

### Parent/Carer Feedback

"My child has only attended one term. He attends most days, says the work is 'easy' when he gets into. I am grateful he's attending. His progress is steady and just this week I've asked to be more informed. Don't hear from staff hardly, except report and a couple of calls to advise of progress. I'm communicating more now."

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"My daughter's teacher is the best teacher she has ever had in her life in every way."

"The Lead Teacher has always enthusiastically consulted with us and involved other Alesco teaching staff in supporting my child in 2017 during difficult times in his life."

"Teachers helped a lot during my child's transition from Koonawarra to Wollongong campus."

"I as a parent think Alesco is a great organisation in helping kids that have dropped out of school and a great staff that the kids respect. It's wonderful. Good job!"

"Our survey results will make it obvious that we are delighted with the performance of Alesco Illawarra. We have witnessed gradual but dramatic improvements in our child's attitude to the importance of learning and taking responsibility for his various life choices. We know that he feels safe at his school and is willing to openly discuss private matters with school staff and accept advice that is offered to him with appropriate explanation."

"Not a lot of feedback (few calls to me). I've had to initiate to get the information I want."

### **Staff Feedback**

"I like working in an alternative school environment. I enjoy working with dedicated staff and students who appreciate attending Alesco. Communication is sometimes lacking, especially if you are new. Need to be kept in the loop. I am proud of connecting with the students and witnessing their progress in achieving their goals both academically and socially."

"I am passionate about teaching disadvantaged youth. I love being a teacher and helping students. Alesco is a very necessary part of the community. I believe that mainstream does not cater well for all students. Alesco provides a safe, supportive environment for those who need it."

"I fully believe that every child deserves an education no matter what background or issues they have. Education can change lives. I want to help kids break the cycle and help them move on to greater things. If I could change one thing about how we work at Alesco it would be more focus on wellbeing for kids and staff. I really love at Alesco that we don't give up on kids and we give everyone a chance."

"I want to make a difference in the lives of our students and feel that I wasn't able to do that as I wished in the mainstream system. I also feel the size of the school allows for the building of more meaningful relationships, both with staff and students. The thing that frustrates me the most about working here is getting the balance right, between the strictures of the NESA requirements and the needs of the students. I am most proud of seeing students persevere with

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their HSC. Seeing how many students begin to relax and develop trust when they realise that Alesco is different and seeing the change in some students over time."

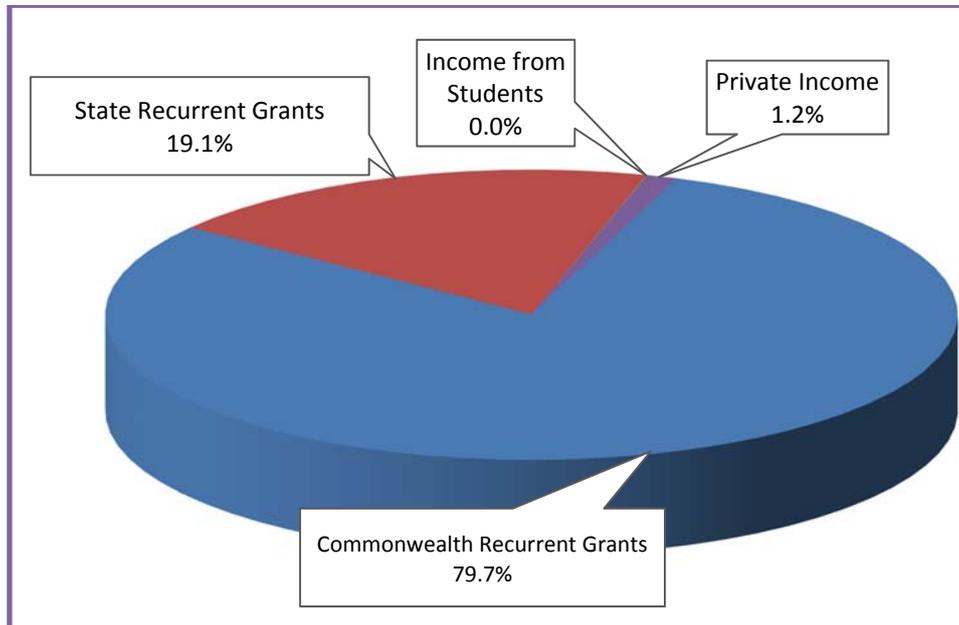
"It started as a steady job to make an income, but has become one of the best decisions I have made in my life. I really enjoy every aspect of my job and love who I work with and the kids we teach. If I could change one thing about how we work at Alesco it would be better facilities for the kids and easier access to needed resources instead of jumping through hoops."

"What I really love about Alesco is the results we can achieve doing things differently - focusing on the students and their ultimate goal of achieving an education. Miscommunication between campuses is frustrating and the time it takes to communicate in terms of admin etc. Being far away means we miss out on many things and there are difficulties in terms of accessing resources."

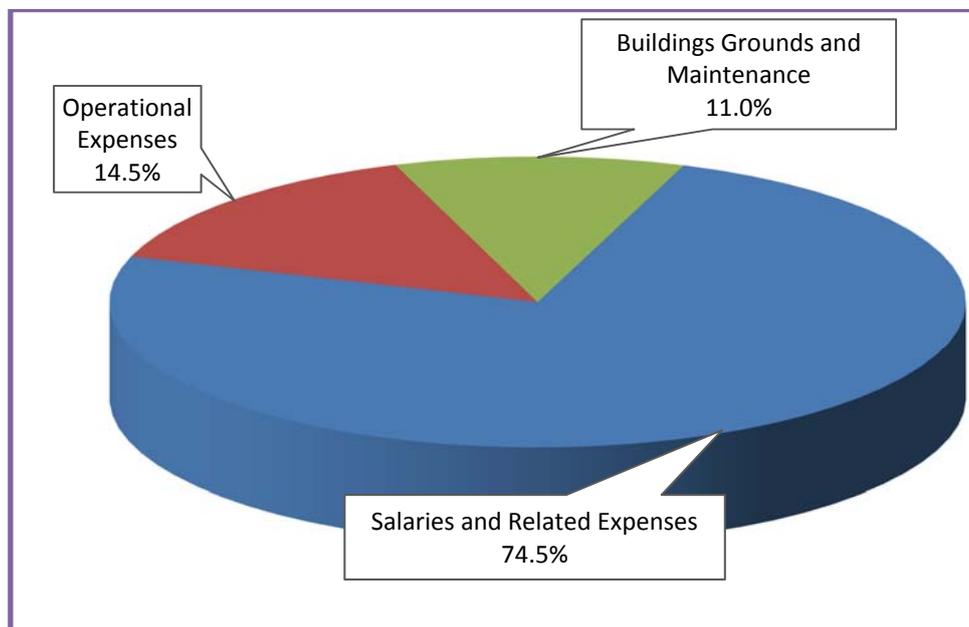
"I feel I can make a difference to the students' lives, their future, self-esteem and hopes. For me it is very important that the students come first. Their wellbeing and mental health is the main thing we need to ensure is taken care of. As a staff, we could improve by being open, trusting one another and sharing our concerns with each other. I love the relationships I have built over the years with staff members, students and their families. Work never feels like work. I enjoy my role and my ability to teach what I am passionate about."

# Summary Financial Information

**Chart 1: Recurrent Income 2017**



**Chart 2: Recurrent Expenditure 2017**



## Capital Income and Expenditure 2017

In 2017 Alesco Illawarra undertook a major building project to refurbish an existing building owned by WEA Illawarra to create purpose built teaching and learning facilities.

Capital Income through Government Capital Grants in 2017: \$866,700

Capital Expenditure total in 2017: \$1,082,474