



Annual Report 2020



Alesco: from the Latin, to grow or mature

Our purpose is to provide opportunities which foster the development of capable, confident and self-assured young people, who are connected to their community and able to forge a path to a productive future.

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This report is prepared by Alesco Illawarra to meet educational and financial reporting requirements for the 2020 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, Skills and Employment
- 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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From the WEA Illawarra Board of Directors



On behalf of the WEA Illawarra Board, I would like to commend Alesco Illawarra on a challenging year in delivering on our mission.

In 2020, Alesco Illawarra continued to provide a safe, respectful and inclusive environment in which young people could explore learning, develop their potential and be well equipped to meet the challenges of education, work and life. This effort was extraordinary in 2020, in a time when delivering our services meant facing the threat of bushfires in our southern regions, which was quickly followed by floods and then Covid 19 response plan restrictions across the whole of the organisation.

Despite these hurdles, the WEA and Alesco Illawarra team has worked tremendously hard to deliver on our mission.

2020 has seen demand for places grow in Vincentia and Jervis Bay Baptist Church, from whom we lease our school space, has generously provided us with some additional space to accommodate our growing staff team there. We are also looking for opportunities to support growth at Nowra in the Southern Highlands at alternative premises, while in Wollongong we explored the possibility of creating more flexible learning spaces to meet future anticipated teaching requirements.

In 2020, Alesco graduates celebrated their successes in uplifting ceremonies held in Wollongong, Bowral, Nowra and Vincentia. It is always a pleasure to witness the pride of students and their caregivers in reaching the milestone of finishing school.

It is with great excitement that we have been able to extend our offerings in Nowra and Vincentia by introducing a Year 11 program from 2021 onwards, with Year 12 in 2022. This provides a long awaited pathway for our students there to be able to continue with us into senior high school and further education, training or employment beyond. This pathway has been made possible by a change in our approach in delivering the NSW curriculum, using the challenge-based approaches and accreditation of ASDAN, an international awarding organisation whose mission is to transform life chances through learning. ASDAN programs and qualifications help young people develop knowledge and skills for learning, work and life. Alesco Illawarra staff began to prepare for the ASDAN program in Term 4 of 2020. The Board looks forward to the ongoing investment in this new approach to teaching, learning, growth and achievement for our future students and seeing where this learning will take our students.

As a Board, we continued to invest in our organisation with new Board members and staff who have all strived to provide life changing opportunities for those in need, assisting young people with an alternative to the conventional secondary school system. The Board of WEA Illawarra thanks the continual dedicated team at Alesco Illawarra for their commitment, support and belief in our students.

Ross Crapis
Chairperson
WEA Illawarra Board

Principal's Message

2020 was such a challenging year and we were really stretched to respond to the closure of face to face classes on our four campuses in response to the pandemic and to keep learning and welfare programs functioning. Our exceptional team of professional staff demonstrated a passion for helping our students to learn, and together they achieved some really great outcomes using innovative ideas and flexible delivery solutions. Staff stayed in regular contact with students via a variety of methods and students were given computers, internet access for those who had none at home, workbooks and even some emergency supplies. Looking back as a school we should all be very proud of just how well we came through this difficult time.



Staff at Alesco Illawarra have a genuine concern for our students' wellbeing and their personal growth to ensure they have opportunities to improve their chances in life through better education and training and importantly learning how to work with and trust people. We often deal with students who suffer from significant disadvantage and from the impact of trauma in their lives and this work can take a heavy toll on our staff at times. In 2020 we introduced an enhanced Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to complement our in-house wellbeing staff and ensure all our staff can get access to appropriate professional services no matter where they live. Every year we are steadily getting better at watching out for and caring for each other as team members as we share in this challenging work.

In the face of very disturbing trends in the cyber-crime and inappropriate use of communications devices we also continued to upgrade our communications infrastructure and capabilities in 2020, strengthening our e-safety standards, business continuity plans and cyber security awareness and defence measures designed to combat identified vulnerabilities and practices with email, file storage, social media, privacy and personal data protection. We all need to take these threats seriously and heed the advice, directions and training that our IT Team are offering in this area.

Alesco Illawarra continued to transform in 2020 into a more student centred senior secondary college that specialises in assisting young people who do not fit well into mainstream secondary schools. The school team which is now 40 strong across four campuses work tirelessly and have the privilege of witnessing the transformation of the special young people in their care. We made some changes to the structure of the school organisation in 2020, we introduced a four person executive team (Louisa Raft - Leader of Operations, Andrea Garner - Leader of Teaching and Learning, Monique Piper - Leader of Health and Wellbeing; and, myself as Principal) and we meet regularly to oversee the culture of the school and to articulate strategic directions. Our middle leadership team consists of Campus Coordinators and Wellbeing Managers. Additional roles were also added in areas of wellbeing and learning support and a dedicated Aboriginal Student Wellbeing Officer for our Shoalhaven teams.

We have, for several years, been wrestling with the unsuitability of the HSC (Higher School Certificate) programs for our senior students and the RoSA (Record of School Achievement) for our Year 10 students. In response, in 2020, we took the bold decision to investigate and begin implementing a new approach to meeting the personal needs, skills and growth of our students. We have decided to adopt the internationally accredited ASDAN program which features a challenge-based, project learning approach to learning, the use of micro-credentials and awards and vocationally relevant electives requiring students to compile personal portfolios as evidence of their growth and learning. ASDAN challenges and Awards will be used across all our school campuses from 2021 onwards and it has been very professionally led by Dr Andrea Garner, our Leader of Teaching and Learning. Students and

their families have warmly accepted the flexible, student-led opportunities that the ASDAN program provides. Without the rigid and resource intense accreditation requirements and constraints of the HSC, we have been able to introduce Year 11 classes for the first time in Nowra and Vincentia in 2021 and in the Highlands campus in 2022.

Louisa Raft Leader of School Operations undertook a survey of staff and students in late 2020 to develop suggestions for a new name for our school and after much discussion and debate we settled on the name Novo Education Space. Novo is a Latin word meaning to *make new or renew*. It can also mean *from the beginning* or to *make as good as new*. This new name will be formally adopted from 2021 and captures well the new direction and fresh start we can offer our students through our new teaching and learning approaches.

I thank all the dedicated staff of Novo Education Space (formerly Alesco Illawarra) of whom I'm so very proud and thankful for their outstanding commitment to their students and their selfless efforts in 2020. You did an amazing job.

I want to acknowledge the efforts of the Chairman of our Board, Mr Ross Crapis, who has championed quality governance and the strong leadership of the Board of Directors and has been a great source of support for the school executive throughout 2020. I'd like to thank the members of the Board of Directors for their generosity with their time, their skills and unwavering support and encouragement of Novo Education Space staff and students.

David Fuller
Principal

Vision, Mission, Purpose, Values and Charter

Context

Alesco Illawarra is a non-denominational, independent secondary 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 operates under the auspices of WEA Illawarra. WEA Illawarra is a not-for-profit Community College and Registered Training Organisation with a broad social inclusion agenda and Alesco Illawarra is an integral service in the achievement of WEA's vision.



WEA Illawarra Vision

To improve the lives of people by offering them appropriate education and training in a nurturing and caring environment.

Alesco Mission

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.

We value

Respect – acknowledging the importance of each person's identity, needs, heritage, traditions, skills, knowledge, and aspirations, and having a commitment to honesty and open communication.

Collaboration - an interactive process that enables people with diverse expertise to generate creative solutions to mutually defined problems. The outcome is different and enhanced from the original solutions that any team member would produce independently.

Self-Reflection and Accountability – taking time to analyse and understand our own needs, thoughts and resulting behaviours, and taking responsibility for our actions.

Our Purpose

To provide opportunities which foster the development of capable, confident and self-assured young people, who are connected to their community and able to forge a path to a productive future.

Our Charter

Our school strives to lift up young people, developing in them renewed hope, self-worth, autonomy and optimism.

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 acknowledge that staff, students and caregivers are all on a learning journey together and we work hard to make sure nobody gets left behind.

We are committed to shaping the lives of young people so that they flourish and are positive contributors to their communities.

Our School Culture

is characterised by:

- Belonging
- Kindness
- Patience
- Courage
- Trust
- Responsibility
- Acceptance and forgiveness
- Respect for self and others
- Championing growth
- Unconditional positive regard for each member of the school community
- Recognition and celebration of everyone's giftedness
- High expectations and no excuses

Our Learning and Teaching Practice

is characterised by:

- The quality delivery of the NSW Curriculum
- Specialised strategies for healing, growth and achievement
- Belief that every student can learn, progress and succeed
- A shared commitment to growth mindset and life-long learning
- Student-centred and engaging learning experiences
- An active student voice
- Practice that is evidence-based and reflective of current research
- Being well prepared
- Innovation and continuous improvement
- Flexibility and agility

Campus Reports

Shoalhaven Campuses (Nowra and Vincentia)

2020 was an unprecedented year of trials and obstacles, as it was for all people worldwide. The issues that COVID raised for our students and staff were many and varied, including learning how to access school and how to teach students during remote learning, ensuring healthy mental states during lockdown, and implementing COVID safe measures and practices on return to face to face learning at school. However, the staff and many students displayed amazing resilience and teamwork to overcome these challenges creating a supportive environment in spite of the difficult circumstances.

In 2020 the Vincentia Campus was staffed by teachers Ben Sauvao and Brooke Butler and SLSOs Rob Matthews and Matt Lewis. Nowra campus was staffed by teachers Keeli Cambourne and Kathryn Antonio and SLSOs Joshua Sharp and Jessica Glennie. In September 2020, we filled our Aboriginal-identified Student Wellbeing Officer position. Coordinator Rebecca Kate and Wellbeing Manager Carolyn LoPinto continued to work across both campuses throughout 2020.

Professional Development

Although many professional development opportunities were unavailable or only offered virtually for the majority of 2020, staff were still able to engage in some professional learning activities. Matt Lewis completed his Certificate IV in Education Support in 2020 and Josh Sharp continued to work through the same course, with the aim to complete it early in 2021. Jess Glennie and our Student Wellbeing Officer completed various AIS webinars on Student Wellbeing and also attended the Bangamalahna Conference. Ben Sauvao, Rob Matthews, Matt Lewis and Josh Sharp maintained their APOLA surf training so that we could continue to support students in the outdoor environment safely. Kathryn Antonio and Keeli Cambourne completed an online webinar regarding students who have experienced trauma, which they then shared with the rest on the staff after they had completed their learning. All staff at Nowra and Vincentia completed an internal PD session reviewing our Berry Street Model training. All staff also completed training in groups and individually to roll out our new programming model with ASDAN in 2021. All staff also completed First Aid training to keep their qualifications up to date.

Nowra and Vincentia Campus Activities

There were many events over the course of 2020 which were beneficial for our students. The following is a summary of the stand out events and programs that were run across the two campuses.

The Wheelchair Basketball Association was contacted by teacher Kathryn Antonio to come and present to our students. This was such a fantastic event for both staff and students. We had a speaker talk to the students about his journey with his disability and how it affects his life and the impact that playing wheelchair basketball has on his life and mental state. The students then learnt how to use a wheelchair to play basketball and engaged in drills and finally in a game of wheelchair basketball. The group came again later in the year for another session which was also fantastic.

Both campuses were involved in several programs run by local services which were of great benefit to the students. Red Cross delivered the Save-a-Mate program across two sessions on each campus. This helped educate students on the importance of safety around the use of drugs and alcohol when partying with friends. Loves Bites is a program developed by NAPCAN which informs students about domestic violence, consent and safety in relationships. This course was run in Nowra over three

sessions, which greatly engaged the students and opened their eyes to appropriate boundaries and expectations within relationships. HARP came in again this year to run their workshops on sexual health and consent which, as usual, was informative and useful for students. This year the Nowra campus was chosen by HARP to design and create a condom couture art piece. This involved creating an outfit entirely out of condoms to promote sexual health. The students took to this activity with enthusiasm and the dress that they made was very impressive. This was then toured around the area during Youth Week by the HARP employees. Also from HARP this year was an award given to Coordinator Rebecca Kate called the 'Cool Bananas' award which is awarded to people in the local area who are promoting sexual health in their industries.

In 2020 the Shoalhaven Youth Week couch surfing event was organised jointly between the Alesco Illawarra Nowra Campus, and some Social Work TAFE students who were completing their work placement hours with Nowra Campus at the time. This event is held to raise awareness amongst young people and the community about youth homelessness. The TAFE students came into the Nowra Campus each Tuesday afternoon during Terms 2 and 3 (when not in the remote learning phase) to work with different groups of young people to delegate, plan, and organise the event. Due to ongoing COVID restrictions, the students and the TAFE team had to think creatively about how they could still run the event in a COVID-friendly way. The team decided that schools and services could still decorate their couches, but instead of bringing them to a physical event they could submit photos of their creations for an online exhibition. The whole team worked so well together and created a fantastic event despite the difficulties.

Vincentia campus was involved again in their Bush Regeneration program, getting outdoors in our local area and completing many tasks across the year to improve the beautiful bushland and allow the students to learn so much, both about the local area and the flora and fauna they were working with.

Our Wellbeing Manager Carolyn LoPinto organised for our students to be involved with the TAFE NSW Youth Engagement Strategy (YES) program. This program usually allows students to choose between a variety of different course options to trial one day per week for 4 weeks, however due to COVID, students only had the option of completing a course in Cafe Skills. Even though there were less options this year, the students still had an extremely enjoyable time completing the cafe skills and learnt many new skills which will greatly benefit them in the workplace.

Teacher at Nowra campus Kathryn Antonio organised for local optometry business Specsavers to send an optometrist into both campuses to assess the vision of all willing students. This resulted in several students discovering or confirming that they had an issue with their vision and with the assistance of staff and families were able to access low or no cost glasses.

NAIDOC week was celebrated at both campuses in 2020. The NAIDOC 2020 theme was 'Always Was, Always Will Be', which recognises and celebrates that First Nations people have occupied and cared for this continent for over 65,000 years. Our Student Wellbeing Officer spoke to both campuses about the background of NAIDOC week and shared some of her insights with staff and students at both campuses. Nowra campus had two guest speakers come in to present to the students and staff. Jake Trindorfer, local Torres Strait Islander man, spoke to the students about his upbringing as well as his own personal view of ownership of the land and how we must all work together. He challenged the students on many areas in their own lives and encouraged them to uncover their passions and always stand up for themselves. Teacher Keeli Cambourne organised local Aboriginal artist 'Pirate' to come and talk to the students about his life journey and the lessons he learned by growing up as an Aboriginal child in a primarily 'white' system. Pirate spoke of his tough road to

resilience and encouraged the students to access support services so that they can learn to be resilient too. Vincentia campus held a bush tucker BBQ at Booderee National Park and incorporated different lessons on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture throughout the week.

Many of our students at both Southern Campuses completed their White card course and their First Aid course in 2020 which benefits them greatly in terms of knowledge gained but also increasing their potential in the employment market.

Unfortunately due to COVID-19, Work Experience was challenging to arrange for most students as businesses were unable to have additional staff in their workplaces. However, two of our students took initiative to source their own Work Experience placements through personal connections and went on to have successful and meaningful experiences in mechanics and student learning support.

Our end of year camp was cancelled due to COVID-19 but in lieu of this we were able to provide students with several end of year activities to celebrate a successful and particularly trying year. Nowra campus enjoyed a trip to Jamberoo Recreation Park and also challenged themselves at the Shoalhaven Trees Adventure high ropes course. Vincentia campus also had a day at Jamberoo Recreation Park and then spent a day paddle boarding in Jervis Bay.

Celebration Ceremony events at the end of Term 4 were wonderful despite the COVID-19 restrictions we had in place at the time. We had to limit the amount of guests we invited to meet requirements, leading us to have two separate Nowra and Vincentia ceremonies, unlike our combined celebrations of years past. This allowed us to have extra people at each event and meant that students could invite all of the family and friends that they wanted to have at their celebrations. At both events, students gave speeches about their year at Alesco, what they had learnt and how they had grown over the year. The celebration was continued after the ceremony with a catered lunch, served by two of our previous students.

In conclusion, 2020 was a year of many successes despite COVID-19 and the difficulties it presented to our staff and students at Nowra and Vincentia Campuses. We are so pleased to have gotten through such a trying time and to have had the ability to rely on our fantastic staff members, working together to provide a safe, inclusive, and exciting learning environment for our students. We look forward to doing the same in 2021.

Bec Kate
Campus Coordinator, Nowra and Vincentia Campuses

Wollongong Campus

The Wollongong crew saw a lot of change in 2020 and they demonstrated their grit by making it through to the Celebration of Achievements to end of a very challenging year.

We had a period of remote teaching and learning and tried out a large number of online tools but in spite of our magnificent care packages with sensory toys, workbooks, and crafts, our students were itching to come back to school face-to-face.

As soon as it was safe we reopened and used our new learnings to try things a bit differently. In Stage 5, we hosted workshops in Maths, English, Science, PDHPE and HSIE and had periods of independent self-directed learning. Students found themselves completing more work on their checklists than ever in their schooling history! In Stage 6 the students had to work hard to get back into the swing of things and complete their assessments and exams for the HSC.

The Stage 6 had students completing master level art works, doing work experience and supporting each other over the finish line. Meanwhile our three Stage 5 classes had adventures going to Bulli to see a whale bone that had washed up and playing outdoor lazer skirmish when restrictions were lifted.

It was a wild year but it resulted in many students completing their RoSA certificate and some moving on to work or TAFE. We also had five very proud HSC graduates!

Of course, with all of the challenges there were big impacts on mental health and wellbeing. We had a big concentration on mental health and wellbeing with our Wellbeing Officers working directly with students as well as with outside groups, like Top Blokes and Women's Health, to provide some top quality programs throughout the year.

We are looking forward to 2021 and the fresh new directions we will travel together.

Andrea Garner
Leader of Teaching and Learning

Bowral Campus

The Alesco Illawarra – Bowral Campus offers a non-accredited education re-engagement program for students in Years 9 and 10. 2020 was a very challenging year for our community. We were devastated by bushfires across our summer, which was then closely followed by the impact of a worldwide pandemic in COVID19. The compounding stress on our community and the limited ability for us to socialise with one another presented unique challenges. The most difficult aspect was for our students and staff not being able to be present in classrooms for education and support purposes during lockdown. Our team rallied together to support students with online learning options and home delivered paper and pen packages to allow for students to have some attempts at remaining engaged in their education. It was a difficult time for all, and the return to classroom learning saw a rapid increase in attendance at school as our students reflected on the importance of the opportunities that they have in face to face education.

Throughout the past year, our students have had some wonderful opportunities to work together with our extended learning community to engage in exciting learning opportunities. Students attended a cooking program with the amazing team at Koori Kulcha. A much looked forward to time of coming together to learn skills in meal preparation and planning, cooking and cleaning, and caring for each other. Students had visits from our local TAFE where they were able to hear about options for post school study, and then head over to the TAFE to have a tour around to build comfortability with the environment and the people involved with supporting students.

Students were able to engage in a social and emotional learning program to build their skills in resilience, interpersonal communication and healthy relationships through the On Track program and the RAGE program. Students also participated in important research with the Black Dog Institute to support the development of youth mental health assessment and interventions. A strong connection was also built with our local youth mental health support organisation at Reframe where we have had regular visits from staff, and students have had site visits to break down barriers to help-seeking and engagement. And of course we have had the very fortunate ongoing support of the Highlands Youth Hub staff who give generously of their time and expertise to support staff, students and our families on a day to day basis.

With the COVID impact on everyone's social and emotional health we took the opportunity to spend time in our homerooms learning new skills in mindfulness, relaxation and meditation. We also focused on healthy relationships and problem solving to support our personal growth and development. Homeroom was also a space where we introduced time and space to set visions for our future, learnt how to set goals and work towards them, and how to manage our setbacks and the importance of building a growth mindset to help us overcome our self-limiting beliefs.

A highlight of our program this year has been our commitment to and engagement in diversity programs. The students are very passionate about building a safe classroom space and ensuring all students and staff feel a sense of belonging at Bowral. Students were engaged in activities to celebrate and bring about healthy discussion for Pride Month, Sorry Day, Reconciliation and Harmony Day.

Due to the restrictions with COVID, our access to and engagement in work experience opportunities were significantly limited. However, one student had the amazing opportunity to complete some work experience with a local Blacksmith, a not too common trade in this day and age. The student was amazed at the knowledge, expertise and skills that were on display, not to mention the really cool tools he was able to see and hold up close.

We finished the year with some excursion opportunities that the students had really missed due to COVID restrictions, attending the Mangroves in Huskisson (with the added bonus of some Laser Tag for fun), engaging in some local bushwalks, and a visit to the Canberra Zoo (a crowd favourite).

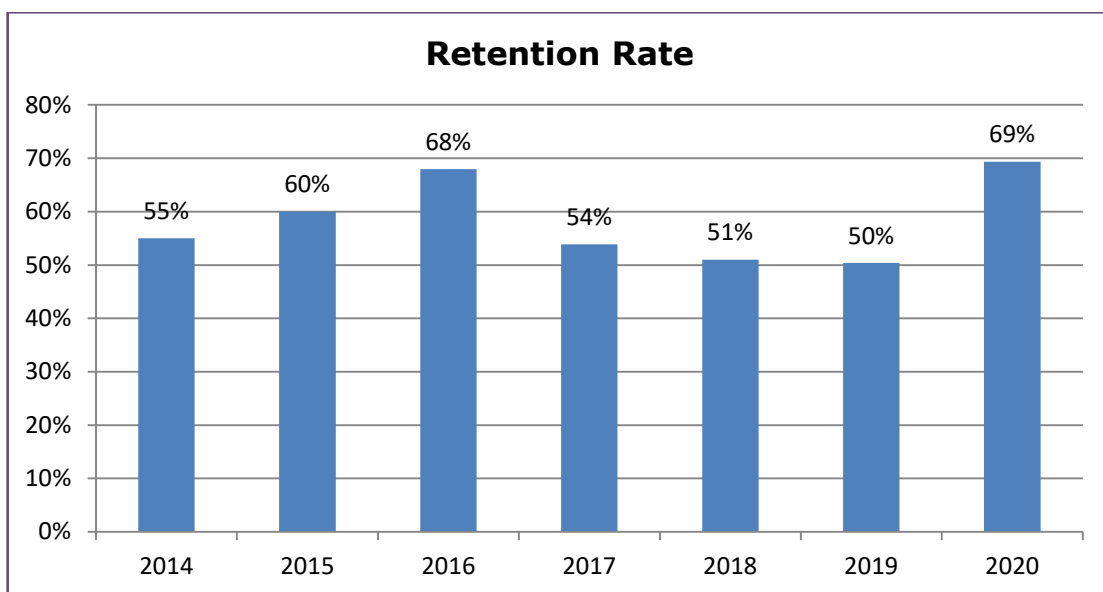
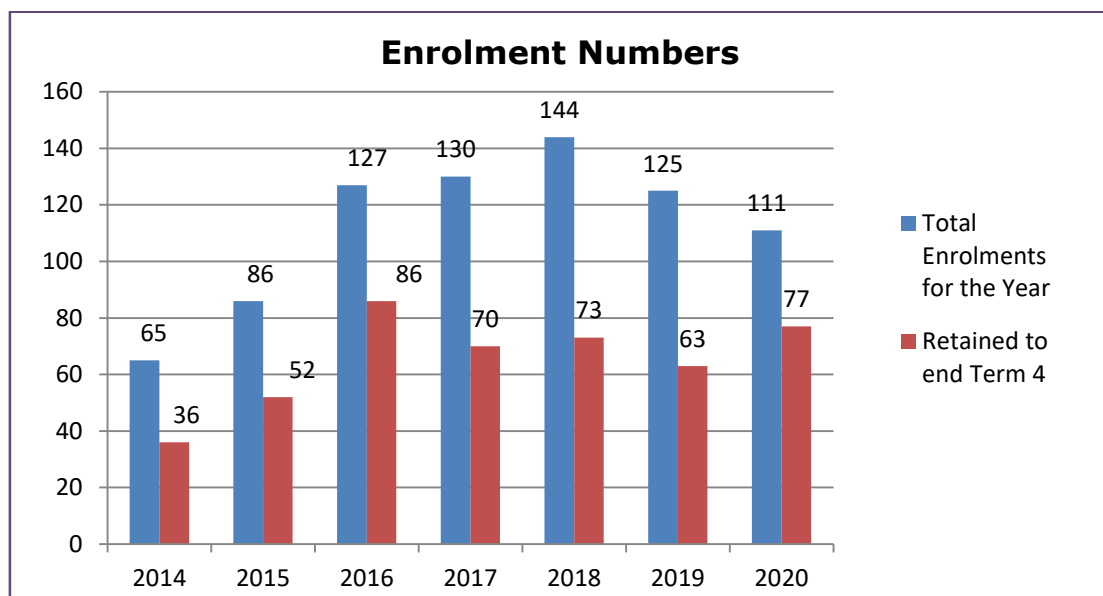
A final highlight for the year was the rescue and care for a baby possum by the students. The kind and caring nature of Bowral students saw a different learning experience that day. Students researched what to do to care for the animal while other students contacted WIRES to collect and care for the baby possum until it could be released safely back into its natural habitat. The whole experience was wonderful to watch and provides a small example of what our young people have been able to achieve during their time with Alesco. Our small supported learning space has helped our students see what brilliant young learners they are which leaves us super excited for what the future will hold for each and every one of them.

Kylie Fleming, Teacher
Ellen Stefanello, Student Wellbeing Officer
Monique Piper, Leader of Health and Wellbeing

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 2020 Alesco Illawarra enrolled a total of 111 students across Years 9, 10, 11 and 12. Seventy-seven (77) students maintained their enrolment until the end of Term 4, representing a 69% retention rate. Each year, Alesco Illawarra takes on a new cohort of students and the challenges each student faces in completing their education will impact differently on their desire and capacity to complete the school year. In the senior school (Years 11 and 12) there is always a proportion of students who will leave school prior to completing their HSC as opportunities arise for further training and/or employment in their chosen field.

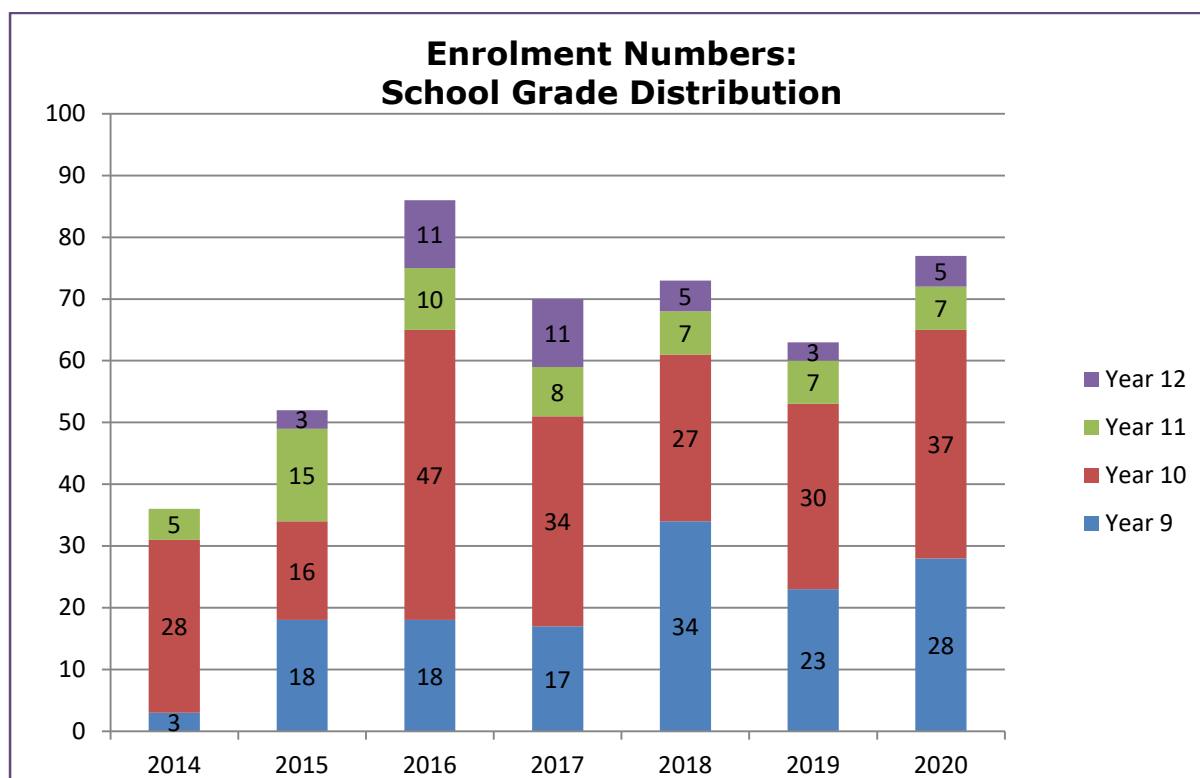


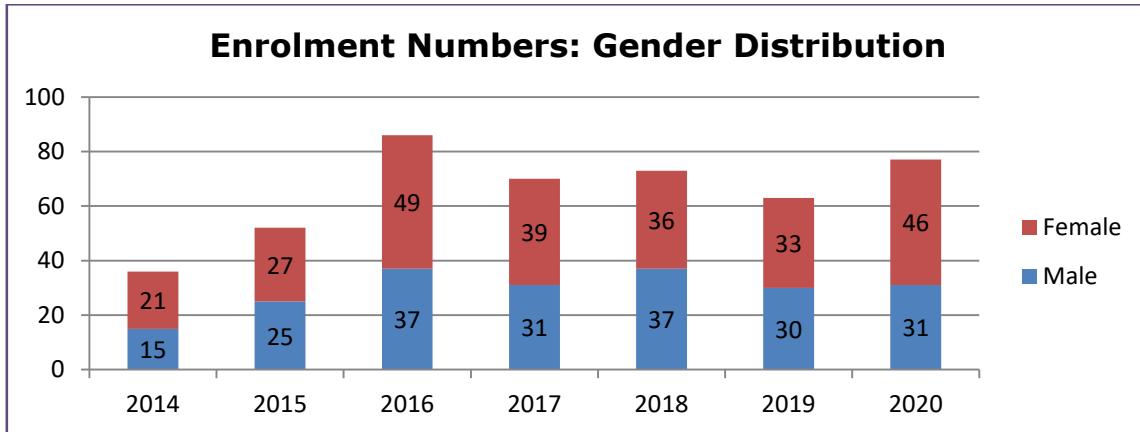
Of the 77 students enrolled at the end of Term 4 in 2020, five students graduated having completed their HSC and 48 students re-enrolled to continue their schooling with Alesco Illawarra in 2020 as follows:

| | Number of Students |
|---|--------------------|
| Year 9 students returning for Year 10 | 20 |
| Year 10 students to continue with Year 10 | 2 |
| Year 10 students returning for Year 11 | 22 |
| Year 11 students returning for Year 12 | 4 |
| Total number of students returning to Alesco in 2020 | 38 (60%) |

Alesco Illawarra applied to the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for registration for Year 11 and 12 at our Nowra and Vincentia campuses. This has enabled a significant number of students to return to Alesco Illawarra in 2021 to continue their school education with us.

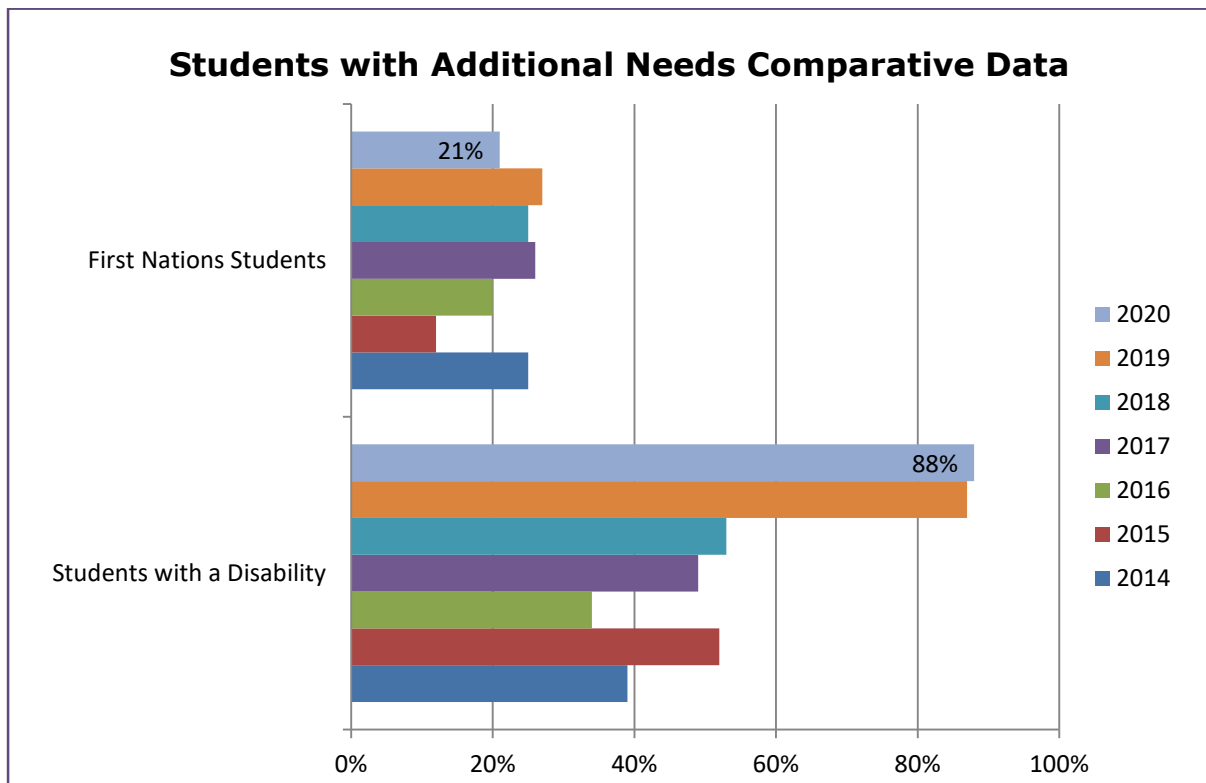
The following charts indicate the distribution of students who remained enrolled to the end of Term 4 in school grades and by gender, over the last seven years of Alesco Illawarra's operation.





Of the 77 students enrolled until the end of the 2020 school year:

- 21% identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
- 88% had a disability which impacted on their learning and for which supplementary, substantial or extensive adjustments were required to enable them to participate in their education along with their peers.



Student Performance

NAPLAN

NAPLAN assessments were cancelled in 2020 due to COVID-19. Results for previous 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-seven (37) students were enrolled in Year 10 at the completion of the 2020 school year, with 23 completing Year 10 NESA accredited course requirements in the mandatory key learning areas of English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography and PDHPE. These students will be eligible to receive a Record of School Achievement (RoSA) credential if they leave school education before completing the HSC.

Many of the Year 10 students who did not complete all mandatory course requirements were participating in our non-accredited engagement programs with the aim of re-engaging with education and preparing for transition to work or vocational training.

Preliminary HSC (Year 11)

In 2020, 13 students were initially enrolled in our Preliminary HSC program at the Wollongong Campus. Of these students, 7 finished the school year and completed all course requirements and are eligible to receive their Year 11 RoSA if they leave school prior to completion of the HSC. The courses studied throughout 2020 were:

English Studies (2 unit)

Mathematics Standard (2 unit)

Food Technology (2 unit)

Visual Design (2 unit)

Sport, Lifestyle and Recreation Studies (2 unit)

Computing Applications (2 unit)

VET – Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways (3 unit).

EVET – Certificate III in Screen and Media (4 unit)

(Not all students studied all courses).

61.54% of Year 11 students undertook Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses in 2020.

Higher School Certificate

Six students studied HSC courses in 2020. Courses and achievements are listed in the following tables.

| Board Developed Courses | Number of Students |
|--|--------------------|
| English Studies or English Life Skills | 6 |
| Mathematics General 1 or Mathematics Life Skills | 6 |
| Visual Arts or Visual Arts Life Skills | 6 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Food Technology or Food Technology Life Skills | 6 |
| Content Endorsed Courses | |
| Sports, Lifestyle and Recreational Studies | 6 |
| Achievements | |
| Students awarded HSC | 5 |
| Students awarded Year 12 RoSA (having left in year 12 before completing HSC) | 1 |

No Year 12 students undertook Vocational Education and Training qualifications.

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.

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 |
| Food Technology | 2016 | 9 | 0 | 52.49 | 100 | 40.51 |
| | 2018 | 4 | 0 | 62.76 | 100 | 37.25 |
| | 2019 | 2 | 0 | 66.63 | 100 | 33.35 |
| | 2020 | 4 | 25 | 59.81 | 75 | 40.2 |
| Visual Arts | 2017 | 11 | 9.09 | 90.27 | 90.9 | 9.71 |
| | 2019 | 3 | 33.33 | 89.66 | 66.66 | 10.31 |
| | 2020 | 4 | 75 | 90.11 | 25 | 9.88 |

HSC Visual Arts was not studied in 2016 or 2018.

No Year 12 students undertook Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses in 2020.

Workforce Composition

Alesco Illawarra employed the following full-time and part-time temporary or ongoing staff in 2020:

| Category | Number of Staff | Full-Time Equivalent |
|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Teaching | 16 | 13.6 |
| Non-Teaching | 17 | 13.1 |

One member of staff identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.

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 |
|---|--------------------|
| Conditional | 1 |
| Provisional | 2 |
| Proficient Teacher | 13 |
| Highly Accomplished (voluntary accreditation) | 0 |
| Lead Teacher (voluntary accreditation) | 0 |
| Total number of teachers | 16 |

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. | 2 |

Professional Learning

Staff members have engaged in a number of different internally and externally provided professional development activities in key areas.

The key areas are:

Aboriginal knowledges and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
 Trauma-sensitive practices/positive behaviour support
 Promoting student engagement and student voice
 Self-determination theory and practice
 Innovative educational delivery methods and tools

In addition to providing in house training in these areas a number of staff members engaged in the wealth of free or low cost professional learning being hosted online by external providers due to Covid restrictions and remote learning.

| Training | Leadership | Teacher | Support Staff |
|---|-------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Alesco Illawarra Staff Retreat: First Nations cross cultural awareness and safety training; review and implementation of Individual Learning Profiles; Building a foundation of trust and good communication; Berry Street Education Model review | 8 | 10 | 12 |
| Obligations in Identifying and Responding to Children and Young People at Risk | | | |
| Condensed Accidental Counsellor Foundations Workshop | | | 1 |
| Auslan online made easy | | 2 | 2 |
| Provide CPR | 6 | 10 | 9 |
| Effective Teacher Aide Practices for Schools (eTAPS) Module 1 & 2 How to prepare for student learning | | | 10 |
| Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorder and Whole School Support | | 2 | 1 |
| Personalised Learning Processes for Aboriginal Students | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| QPR Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training – QPR, Institute | 1 | | 3 |
| Frontline skills in Domestic and Family Violence – SOA TAFE | | | 1 |
| Seesaw- connecting school and community | 3 | 5 | |
| Behaviour Management Blueprint (online) | | 2 | |
| Bringing Artificial Intelligence into the Classroom (online) | | 2 | |
| Build Resilience to Manage Stressful Situations (online) | | 2 | |
| Building Rapport Quickly (online) | | 2 | |

| Training | Leadership | Teacher | Support Staff |
|--|-------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| The Wonders of OneNote: digital notebook tips and tricks for relief teachers (online) | | 2 | |
| Teaching strategies 101 for literacy and maths (online) | 1 | 1 | |
| Teacher Wellbeing – 5 Ways to Recharge and Renew your Energy (online) | | 2 | |
| Supporting Students with Diverse Learning Needs (online) | | 2 | |
| Making Aboriginal perspectives more accessible (online) | | 2 | |
| The impact of parental trauma on the health and developmental wellbeing of children and young people | 2 | 2 | |
| Understanding Higher Level Accreditation | 2 | 2 | |
| Future focused learning (online) | 1 | 1 | |
| Critical and creative thinking | | 1 | |
| Emerging Technologies in Education, what are they? How do they apply to teachers? (online) | 1 | 1 | |
| Engaging students in learning through EdTech tools (online) | | 1 | |
| Understanding self-determination and how to support it | 6 | 11 | 10 |
| Homeroom and social emotional development | 6 | 10 | 10 |
| ConnectED international conference- online | 1 | | |
| Supporting self-determination of Autistic and Neurodivergent Individuals for Lifelong Success | 1 | | |
| Cultural Awareness and Safety | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| ASDAN implementation and practice | 7 | 11 | 10 |
| Bangalahma conference online | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Awarding Year 11 RoSA Grades | | 2 | |
| Determining Marks for HSC Course Components | | 1 | |
| First Nations Science in the Classroom | | 1 | |
| Practical Skills for Outdoor Learning | | 1 | |
| Difference Differently: Whole School Approaches to Diversity Education | 1 | 1 | |
| AOD Youth Solutions workshop | 6 | 10 | 8 |
| Boxer Live Liquid Captions | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| Google Suite in the Classroom | 2 | | |
| Mathletics and Distance Teaching | 1 | 1 | |
| Australian Professional Ocean Lifeguard Association (APOLA) accreditation | | 1 | 3 |
| Family Law guide for schools | 1 | | |
| Statement of Attainment: Apply infection prevention and control procedures | | | 1 |
| Not for Profit People Conference | 1 | | |
| Safe of Social Media | | 1 | |

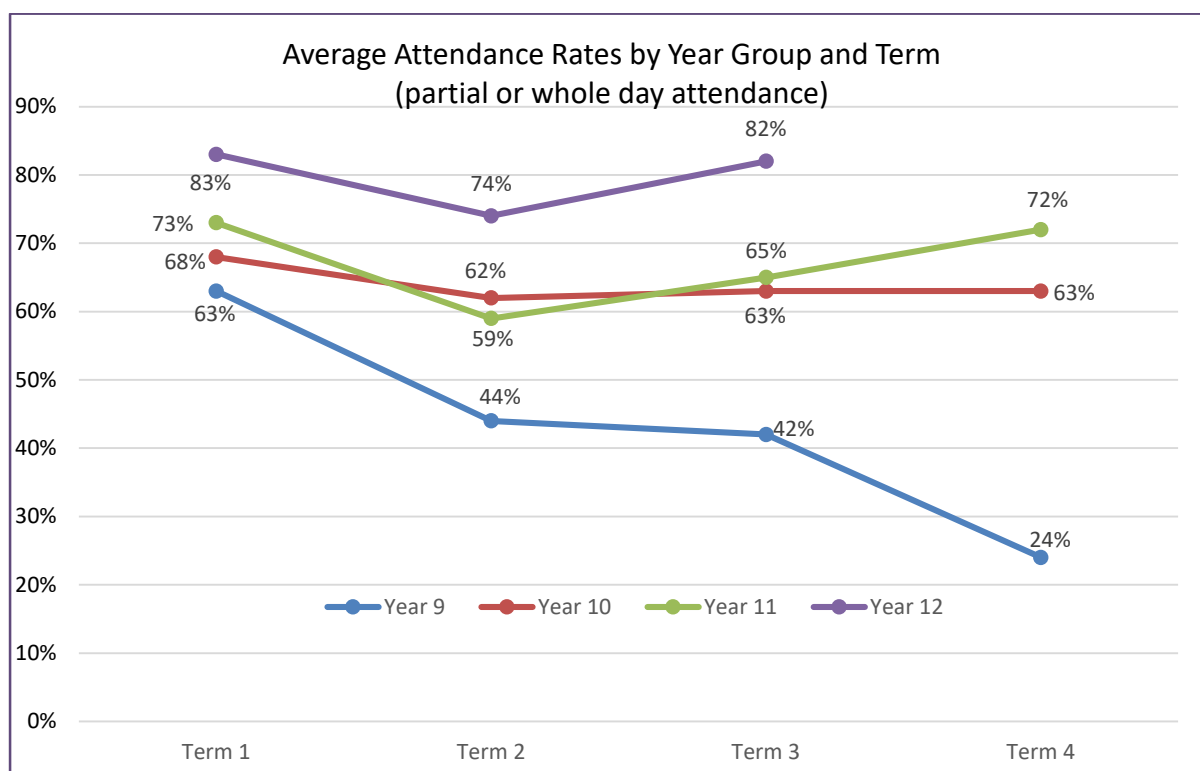
| Training | Leadership | Teacher | Support Staff |
|---|-------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Stile Science Teacher Training | | 1 | |
| Risk Management | 1 | | |
| Investigations Masterclass – Workplace Investigations | 1 | | |
| Developing authentic student voice in student wellbeing | 1 | | 3 |
| School based apprenticeships and traineeships | 1 | | |
| AISNSW VET RTO updates x 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Crossing Professional Boundaries | 2 | | |

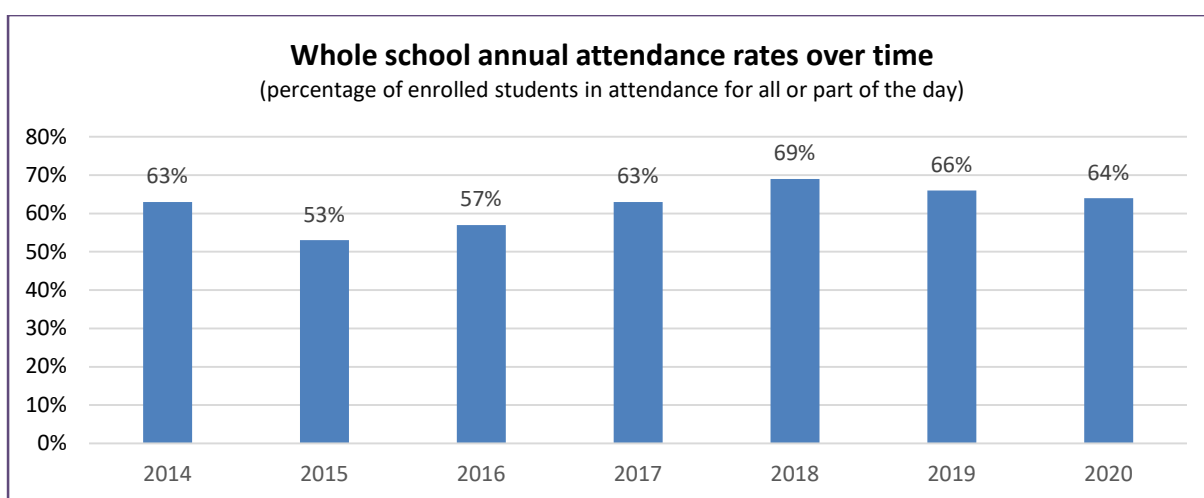
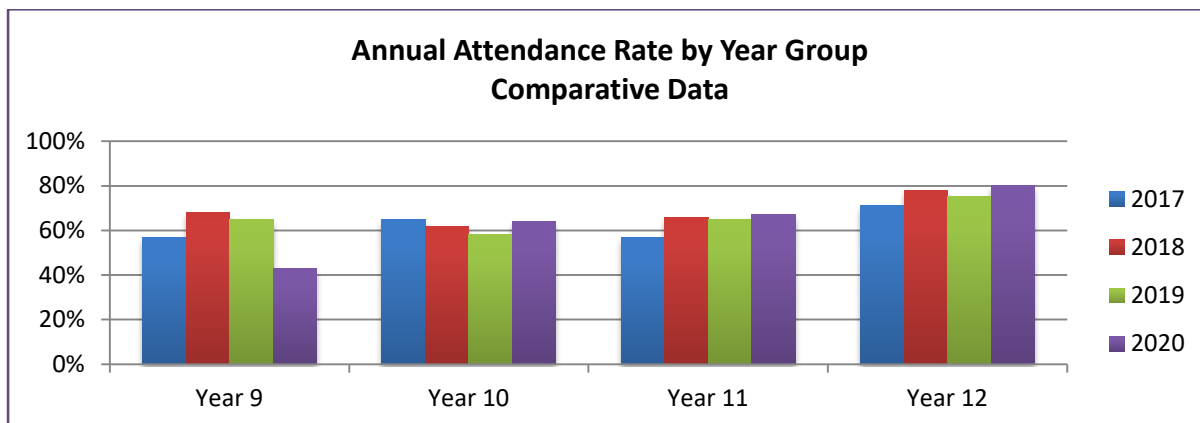
Student Attendance

COVID-19 presented significant challenges for our students and their attendance and engagement in school during the learning from home periods in Terms 1 and 2. Many of our students experience anxiety and school refusal in usual times, and the events of 2020 presented additional challenges for many of these students and their ongoing mental health. Overall, attendance rates for students at Alesco Illawarra fell dramatically for students in Year 9 compared to the previous year, but improved for Years 10 to 12. Average attendance overall has remained similar over the last three years. There is variation in attendance rates between the Year groups and from term to term.

Attendance rates in 2020 are detailed as follows:

| Year Group | Present for part or all of the day | | | |
|------------|------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| | Term 1 | Term 2 | Term 3 | Term 4 |
| Year 9 | 63% | 44% | 42% | 24% |
| Year 10 | 68% | 62% | 63% | 63% |
| Year 11 | 73% | 59% | 65% | 72% |
| Year 12 | 83% | 74% | 82% | N/A |





A significant number of students face personal, health and wellbeing, 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 with individual goal setting around attendance, 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/>

Post-School Destinations

Intended destination of students enrolled in Year 10 as at Term 4 in 2020
(n = 37)

| Destination | Number of Students |
|--|--------------------|
| Re-enrolled at Alesco in 2020 to undertake Year 11 | 22 |
| Enrolled in other schools or TAFE to undertake Year 11 | 1 |
| Re-enrolled at Alesco in 2020 to continue with Year 10 | 2 |
| Undertaking vocational training, apprenticeship or traineeship | 5 |
| Employed full-time, part-time or seeking employment | 3 |
| Unknown destination | 5 |

Intended destination of students enrolled in Year 11 as at Term 4 in 2020 (n = 7)

| Destination | Number of Students |
|--|--------------------|
| Returning to Alesco Illawarra to continue with Year 12 | 4 |
| Undertaking vocational training, apprenticeship or traineeship | 0 |
| Continuing with Year 12 at another school | 1 |
| Employed full-time, part-time or seeking employment | 2 |
| Unknown destination | 0 |

Intended destination of students enrolled in Year 12 as at Term 4 in 2020 (n = 5)

| | |
|--|---|
| Undertaking vocational training, apprenticeship or traineeship | 1 |
| Pathways program to university | 1 |
| Employed full-time, part-time or seeking employment | 2 |
| Unknown destination | 1 |

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. In 2020, five students completed their schooling and graduated with their Higher School Certificate. Two of these students were enrolled at Alesco Illawarra for their Year 10 courses, with the remaining three students transferring to Alesco Illawarra from another school in Year 11.

Alesco Illawarra only offers Years 11 and 12 at our Wollongong Campus, therefore students can only complete their senior years of schooling with Alesco Illawarra if they transfer to the Wollongong Campus (which is not possible for many students). The total number of Year 10 students enrolled at any time in 2018 was 71 students across the campuses that operated at that time (Wollongong, Bulli, Lake South, Nowra, Vincentia and Bowral). Only two students from this cohort remained enrolled with Alesco Illawarra over the two-year period and graduated with their HSC.

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;
- for our campuses with no Year 11 and 12 registration, transitioning after Year 10 to other schools to undertake the HSC or to TAFE to undertake the Tertiary Preparation Certificate;
- desire for non-academic pathways including transition to vocational training and employment;
- complex mental health challenges which result in school refusal or the need to focus on recovery;
- transient and itinerant family situations including homelessness.

Enrolment Policies

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Policy No: 1.5 | Enrolment Policy |
| Version | 2.2 |
| Created | 30 November 2010 |
| Reviewed | 29 July 2013 3 December 2013 20 December 2016 20 July 2017 23 September 2020 |
| Next Review Date | 23 September 2022 |

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.

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.

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Policy No: 1.6 | Information required upon application to Alesco Learning Centre Illawarra |
| Version | 1.2 |
| Created | 30 November 2010 |
| Reviewed | July 2013 |
| Reviewed | February 2017 |
| Next Review Date | February 2021 |
| Related Documents | Alesco Illawarra Application for Enrolment 1.12 POL Register of Alesco student enrolments 1.13 PROC Register of Enrolments, Attendance Record Keeping and Exemptions |

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 Leader of Operations. Policies marked with an asterisk (*) were reviewed in 2020.

Child Protection

Child Protection policies were reviewed in 2020. 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 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* |
| Form | 1.18 | Excursion-Activity Planner |
| Policy | 1.21 | Duty of care |
| Procedure | 1.21 | COVID-19 Managed Return to School Guidelines* |
| 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 Alcohol 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 Leader of Operations.

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 Leader of Operations.

| Type | Number | Name |
|---------------|--------|--|
| Policy | 1.10 | Complaints and grievances received by the school |
| Form | 1.10 | Complaints form |
| Policy | 1.17 | Procedural fairness |
| WEA Policy | 1P15 | Workplace Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying |
| WEA Procedure | 1W106 | Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Procedures |

School Improvement Targets

| Domain | 2020 Priorities | Achievement |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Student-Centred Learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and revise the implementation of ILP to ensure that all students have an active ILP goal by their sixth week with us. • Work on the development of self, including self-awareness and self-regulation and developing a sense of community through Home Rooms. • Pilot workshop based curriculum delivery style to promote self-determination • Employ Wellbeing Officers to lead the ILP process and work with specific students to connect them to services, manage transition plans and collaborate/co-advocate with students and teaching staff. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student wellbeing officers are leading the ILP process and teachers support with learning goals. Continue to review process and establish good practices to engage student voice and have collaborative meetings early in the term • Home room was introduced across the school with varied success. The classes that adhered to the social emotional learning model and created structured activities to build a concept of self, of school community and of charity and connection to the broader community demonstrated good gains • Workshop style delivery was trialled and adjusted according to feedback and student response. More successful with students with high autonomy needs • Wellbeing Officers were employed and engaged students using different tools (genograms, vision boards). Review of ILP document led to redesign |
| Staff development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in training and PD to support embedding of Aboriginal knowledges in classrooms and to support student engagement and culturally sensitive Personal Learning Plans. • Provide further professional development on self-determination and how to promote it in classrooms • Improve on-boarding practices of new staff to ensure they have received training and support in all of our foundation pedagogies and practices. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff engaged in training on cultural safety and Aboriginal ways • All wellbeing staff engaged in Personal Learning Plan training • All staff engaged in training on the pillars of self-determination and types of motivation with strategies to support the needs of each pillar • On-boarding timetables were created to ensure that new staff had scheduled time with key members of leadership to understand pedagogies, practices, policies and procedures. |

| Domain | 2020 Priorities | Achievement |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Whole of School Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate options for discipline policy and procedure to include the possibility of restorative practice • Review the effectiveness of the Coordinator Role and determine whether to maintain it or change it. • Utilize multi-media to increase connection to community e.g. Seesaw, Newsletters, Community afternoons. • Review and revise the Stage 6 options to reduce attrition and provide the most functional and engaging programs possible. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of some elements of restorative practice • A number of staff to attend training on restorative practice at a school level in 2021 • Review of coordinator role led to redefining into an operational non-teaching position once >24 students • Coordinator now campus coordinator and reporting to Leader of Operations • Attempts to increase connection to community through apps relatively unsuccessful. Parents/carers prefer text message or direct messaging • Have introduced a Newsletter and that is well received by the families and broader community • Stop offering accredited programs (RoSA and HSC) but maintain registration • Offer international accreditation ASDAN |

School Improvement Priorities for 2020

1. Use Compass data to drive early intervention for students that are identified as high risk learners
 - deliver evidence-based programs to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes-100% at level 3 or above after one year with us
2. All staff will be inducted on the whole school PBS and restorative justice plans
 - include members of the student, parent and broader community; evaluate impact using survey and incident reports
 - apply for grants to fund whole school PD
3. All staff will implement strategies which focus on increasing student engagement including trauma-sensitive lesson structure; feedback processes that promote self-determination; project based and real-world linked learning activities and physical classroom environments.
4. All students will engage in advisory sessions and co-create Individual Learning Profiles that will guide the direction of their growth and development within and outside of school.
5. Partner with tertiary institutions and community agencies to research and shape the design and delivery of learning and wellbeing programs, targeted specifically to the development and empowerment of young people experiencing disadvantage.
6. Foster a school community that is culturally safe, inclusive and celebrates the diversity of the community members
 - collect and analyse satisfaction survey data, setting measures of performance and ensuring accountability
 - investing in leadership to support culturally and emotionally sound practices (PD, clarity of roles and responsibilities, coaching)
7. Develop a community of practice that supports wellbeing, growth and fosters creativity and curiosity in the development of meaningful and engaging learning opportunities for students
 - Provide release time for collaborative planning
 - Embark on a peer observation PD program for on the job learning
 - Utilise staff meetings, working groups and mentoring to model and review practice
8. Facilitate programs and opportunities for past students, parents, friends, and staff to remain connected and have leadership opportunities
9. Embed positive psychology in the many aspects of Alesco life for students, staff and the community

Reflection on Teaching and Learning

2020 was a challenging year that required our teaching team to maneuver rapidly to the online space. Fortunately, our teachers and students were already working with Google Suite and our students were becoming familiar with the SeeSaw app, Google Hangouts and Google meet when we had to deliver remotely.

We had some interesting learnings from our short time in remote teaching and learning. Firstly, most of our students rely heavily on our staff and their peers for connection and belonging and were very happy to return to face-to-face learning, with COVID safe adjustments. Secondly, some of our students really enjoyed being able to do maths at midnight in their ugg boots. Finally, gaps in foundation skills were highlighted by the need to complete some work more independently than the students may have ordinarily done with access to teachers and student learning support officers available.

All of these learnings led to a trial of a workshop style delivery of core subjects in Stage 5 Wollongong. These workshops addressed stage appropriate content in practical ways and were followed up with independent learning times with checklists of work and projects that needed to be completed and were managed by the students individually.

We continually reflect on our practices and the impact they have on the students in terms of supporting self-determination, wellbeing, and of course learning. In addition to trial of new delivery models in Stage 5 we took a look at our Stage 6 HSC program.

COVID had a major impact on the mental health and wellbeing of all of our staff and students and the continued engagement of our Year 12 group is to be commended. It was a very difficult time to be completing an HSC. A review of our Stage 6 indicated that over the years, irrespective of the delivery model, there is a very high attrition rate by the end of Term 1 in the Preliminary Year. In addition, and in line with our findings around gaps in foundation skills through remote teaching, many of our Year 10 students who would be going onto Year 11, and the Year 11 students that left us over the course of their Preliminary year, tested at Level 3 or below on the Compass Baseline. This indicates that these students have significant literacy and numeracy needs that will likely mean they will find the rigorous assessment schedule of the HSC overwhelming, even with the creative adjustments and differentiation our teachers apply. We also questioned the purpose having the HSC itself, as a goal. We are much more interested in bridging the gap between school and real-world learning to support our students in leaving us prepared, if not already traveling, the road to their next step.

Andrea Garner
Leader of Teaching and Learning

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Alesco Illawarra promotes respect and responsibility among its staff and students through regular discussion of our values and engagement in activities around social-emotional learning and sharing of lived experiences.

The beginning of the 2020 year saw our region devastated by bush fires and then floods prior to COVID. Our students engaged in projects in the community creating food sources for animals that had lost their habitats. Students have been involved in a number of community initiatives including learning Auslan to communicate with the deaf community and creating donation baskets for disadvantaged children.

During 2020, Alesco Illawarra continued to take part in a number of different projects, special events, and learning opportunities to promote respect and responsibility among both students and staff. We also continued regular discussions of our values and the importance of respect and responsibility in our school community through our in-depth intake interviews, induction processes, and regular meetings with our students, families, and supporters.

Despite COVID-19 posing some unforeseen challenges, the school community was able to participate in the following:

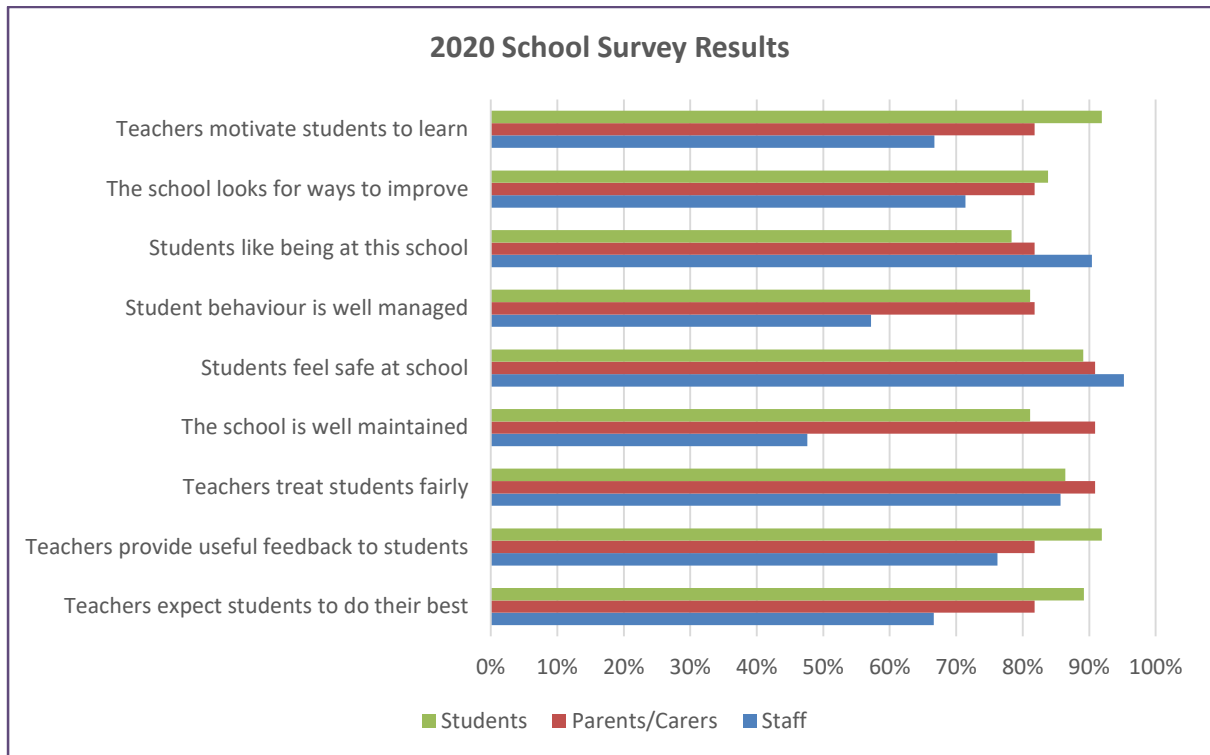
- **TAFE Youth Engagement Strategy (YES) Program:** All 4 campuses supported students to participate in the YES program, giving them the opportunity to experience training in a vocational context. Nowra and Vincentia students participated in a 4 day Cafe Skills course at TAFE, helping to prepare them for potential employment in related fields. The feedback from TAFE staff was that students demonstrated a high level of respect and professionalism. Wollongong students engaged in Animal Care and Horticulture, Carpentry, Child Care, Travel and Tourism.
- **Work Experience:** COVID-19 restrictions made arranging Work Experience challenging, but students took initiative in sourcing appropriate worksites for themselves, leading to a few meaningful placements in sectors including mechanics, student learning support, blacksmith, and physiotherapy.
- **Top Blokes Mentoring Program:** The young men at the Wollongong Campus again engaged in this program to support the growth of healthy identity and positive masculinity that ultimately promotes healthy respectful relationships with themselves and others.
- **Women's Centre Mentoring Program:** Students at Wollongong Campus engaged in group work to explore important themes linked to their adolescent journey. Topics covered include healthy respectful relationships, consent, mental health, drug and alcohol use and abuse, body image, racism and homophobia.
- **Love Bites:** This course helped our Vincentia students to examine, discuss, and explore respectful relationships. There was a key focus on taking responsibility to communicate and act respectfully in relationships with others.
- **Sexual Health workshops:** Through various local programs, students across all 4 campuses were able to participate in workshops around sexual health, with a key emphasis on consent.
- **Living Books:** Members of the local community came into the Wollongong Campus to talk about their personal lives and working experiences. This opportunity was well received by students and staff, creating an opportunity for students to interact with a diverse range of people from many different cultural groups and explore the themes and impacts of belonging, casual homophobia and racism, resilience, persistence, acceptance, and love.

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- **Homeroom:** In 2020, all 4 campuses adopted Homeroom into the morning schedule. Here, students engaged in social/emotional learning in small groups alongside their Homeroom teacher and shared a space with each other to build inclusivity, belonging, and relatedness between students and staff.
 - **Individual Learning Profiles:** We continued to develop and adjust our ILP process with students in 2020. Students, with support from their Student Wellbeing Officer, took responsibility for their learning and personal/wellbeing goals by discussing potential barriers, supports needed, and action steps to help them accomplish what they set out to.
 - **Harmony Day:** Students and staff celebrated Australia's cultural diversity and discussed the importance of inclusivity, respect, and sense of belonging for everyone. Harmony day is regarded as one of the highlights of the special events calendar at Alesco. The Wollongong Campus embraced the event through students and staff bringing in plates of food to share that often have significant familial and cultural value.
 - **NAIDOC Week:** The whole school community participated in celebrating the culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through activities such as visits from local elders, cooking bush tucker and native foods, and lessons/discussions on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history.

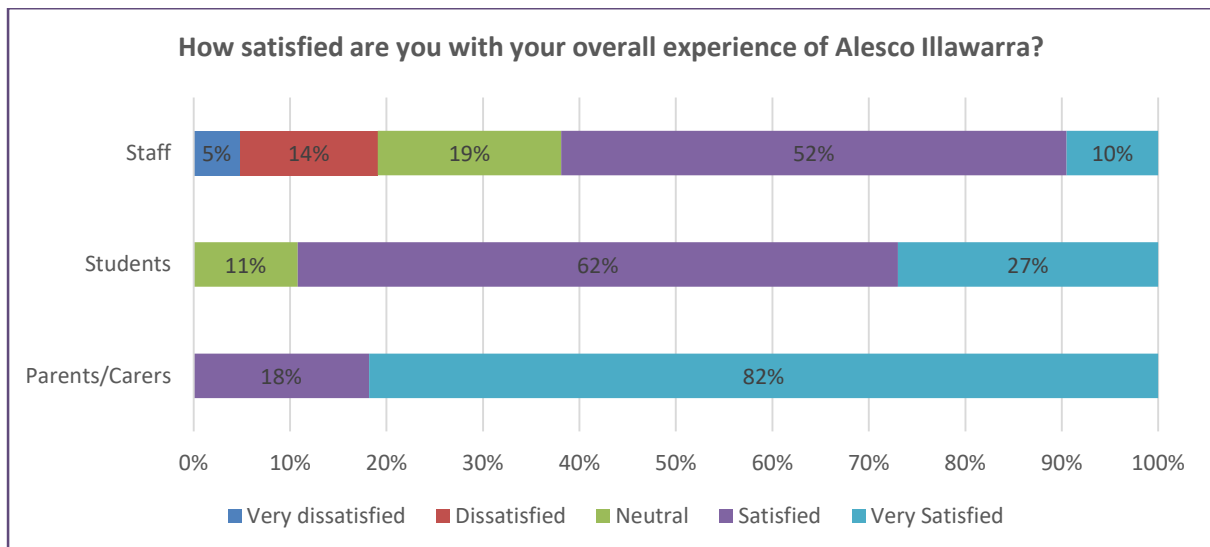
Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

In 2020 Alesco Illawarra students, parents/caregivers and staff participated in satisfaction surveys. Surveys were completed by 37 students, 11 parents/caregivers and 21 staff.

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.



Student Feedback

“The teachers and staff here are heaps supportive and nice and it’s a chiller less stressful environment.”

“I feel I have matured as a person because of the way the teachers treat me.”

“Both the staff and the students have made me feel at home when I didn’t think I’d fit in, since I started half way through the year.”

“The teachers are very helpful and understanding about school and/or home problems. It’s nice to know that I can talk to them about anything.”

“They have helped me with my learning skills and made me feel like I can reach my goals in life.”

“At other schools that I have been to, it felt like I was just annoying or too much to handle because the teachers were so busy with other students. At this school the teachers aren’t too busy with other students and actually make time for everyone.”

“My maths skills and literacy have improved.”

“I feel safe, and knowing I belong here comforts me.”

“It has helped me grow and has found ways to help me learning and support my needs. I love my time at Alesco and will happily finish my schooling here.”

Parent/Carer Feedback

“The staff at [our campus] are fantastic. The communication we have with them is awesome. My son loves coming to school. They are very caring and supportive towards my son and ourselves.”

“The support in my son’s education and wellbeing has been outstanding. The staff are very approachable in every aspect of his education.”

“Our child has only been at school for this term. She feels safe there and is happier to attend rather than her previous school, but I don’t feel we’ve been involved with the school long enough yet to comment fairly on other aspects. I think academically our child could be challenged further, but this is a fine balance because her mental health struggles mean she doesn’t cope well with new challenges!”

“Since my son started he has had nothing but praise for the staff and the students. My son is happy to go to school every day. He enjoys everything about the campus. The staff are caring and really care about the students’ welfare and his education. I have nothing but admiration for them. I also love the fact that as a parent, we are encouraged to have communication with them. I could not be happier with everything that the staff are doing for my son’s education.”

Summary Financial Information

Chart 1: Recurrent and Capital Income 2020

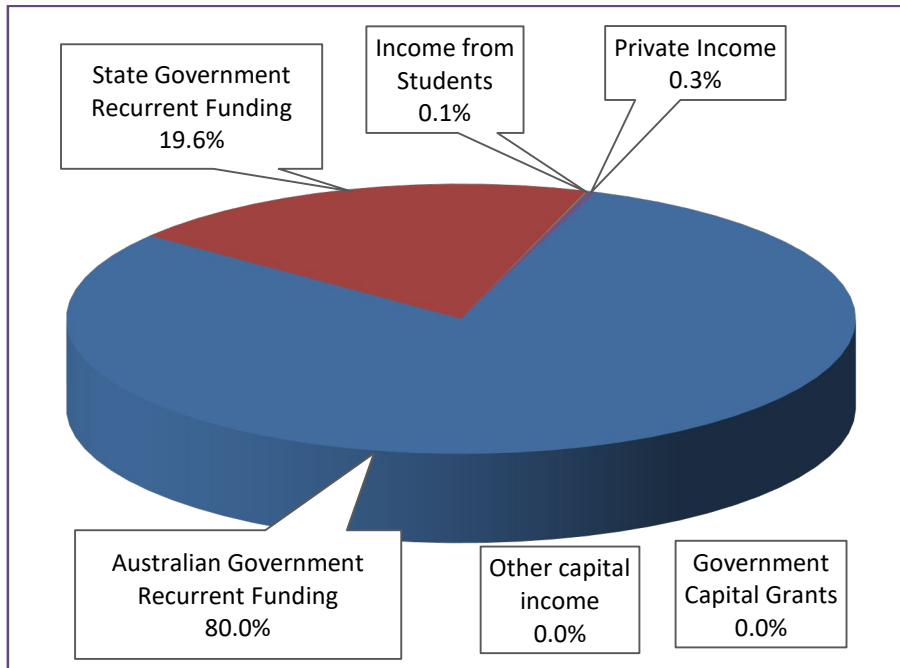


Chart 2: Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2020

