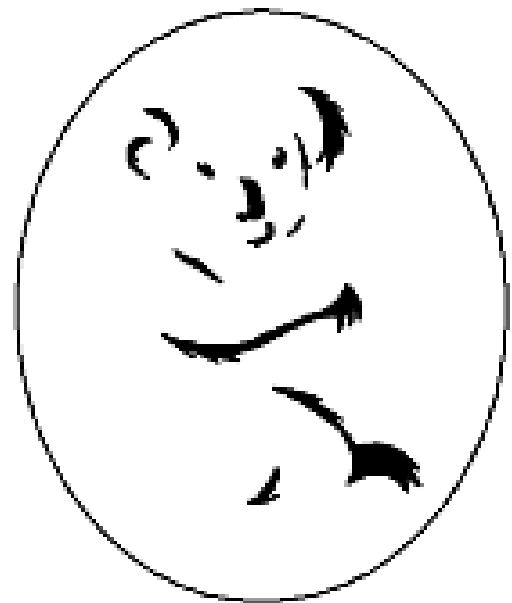


Wesburn Primary School
3466

**2008 Annual Report to the
School Community**



School Overview

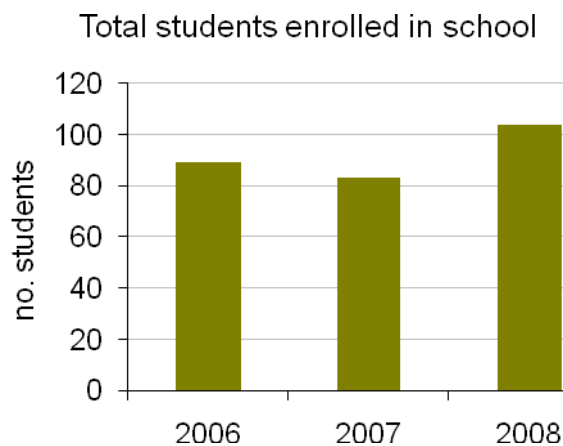
Wesburn Primary School is a small semi-rural school situated in the Upper Yarra Valley. It is committed to developing in students and the wider school community a sense of responsibility for the environment, focusing on teaching behaviours related to sustainability. Incorporated within this focus is the Kids Go For Your Life Kitchen Garden Program with Stephanie Alexander.

The school aims to develop the potential of all children by providing them with the foundations of achievement and social/emotional wellbeing in school, work and the world of tomorrow.

In support of our school philosophy a vast number of volunteers from the wider community participate in and support the kitchen garden program in particular, and a vast number of other programs that support student learning and wellbeing. We value and appreciate the support of our volunteers and continually encourage and welcome further participants.

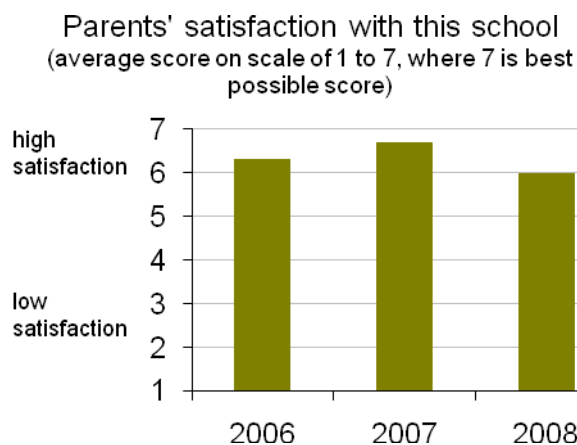
The Wesburn community has high expectations of its students. Parents and teachers work collaboratively to set individual goals for students and to assist them in achieving these.

Student Enrolments



Enrolments as at the 2008 census were 104. This was an increase of 21 students over the 2007 census data. Indications are that this number will be consistent or gradually increase over the next few years. The school continues to have students who reside both locally as well as some distance from the school (e.g. Reefton, Launching Place, Powelltown, etc.) enrolled.

Parent Satisfaction



The staff endeavours to build and maintain a strong relationship between the home, school and community and encourages a high level of participation in programs and decision-making. The Parent Opinion Survey results indicate that parents have particularly improved their perceptions in the areas of homework, student safety, and classroom behaviour. They feel that their children are taught organisational skills to help them do their homework and that the homework they are given helps them with their learning. Overall, parents believe that there is little bullying (in the forms of physical, being mean or teasing) at the school. Parents also believe that there is far less student disruption and misbehaviour in classes that would make it hard for their children to learn. These are particularly pleasing results as they are areas that have been identified in previous years and that have been targeted in our 2008 Annual Implementation Plan.

Areas that parents were concerned about included extra-curricula activities, student motivation, social skills and school connectedness. These will be addressed in the 2009 Annual Implementation Plan. Nevertheless, it is disheartening to read this data given the amount of effort that the school goes to to provide the kitchen garden program, extra-curricula choir, lunchtime gardening and skipping programs, etc.

Overall, the school should feel proud of the results of the Parent Opinion Survey with nearly all aspects achieving results well above or equal to the state mean. The following parent comment is typical of the feedback received from the Survey:

"My children love their school. They have a lot of close friends. The teachers at my children's school are very professional and very enthusiastic. Our Principal is very passionate about her role in our school. My children wouldn't be as happy anywhere else."

The average score for Parent Satisfaction with Wesburn Primary School is 6.00. This figure across all Government schools was 5.91%. The highest possible score is 7.

Teacher Satisfaction

The average score for teacher satisfaction (morale) at Wesburn was 86.9 on a scale from 0 to 100 where 100 is the best possible score. This figure across all Government schools was 80.8%.

Teacher Absence

Date for 2008 teacher absences will not be available until April/May 2009.

Teacher Retention

Of the 8 teaching staff at Wesburn Primary School at June 2007 (including those on leave without pay), 7 (or 88%) were still at the school at June 2008. This figure across all Government schools was 84%.

Teacher Participation in Professional Learning

All teaching and support staff have participated in professional learning throughout the year, such as the Teacher Professional Leave Program, the Induction/Mentoring for Beginning program for teachers, the Literacy Improvement Cluster program, etc.

Teacher Qualifications

All teachers in Victorian Government schools are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching. The requirements for registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching can be found at: <http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/content.asp?DocumentID=241>.

Principal's Report

When looking back over the 2008 school year it is amazing to recall the many great events that have occurred.

Although taking a long time to reach completion, the Investing in our School projects were completed early in the year. This included shade sails over the playground equipment, new surface to the basketball court, sandpit and instructional area, and the wonderful outdoor learning area. Many visitors to the school comment very positively on these facilities and it is a great pleasure to see them all in constant use.

Our Community Water Grant funding enabled us to install three extra water tanks (bringing the total to four tanks) which provide water for flushing the toilets and also irrigating all the kitchen gardens via a drip system on a timer. This was completed by the end of 2008 and we are eagerly looking forward to seeing the difference it will make to our water bills. From the kitchen garden perspective, it has eased the load on parent and teacher volunteers who were previously coming up to the school during holiday periods to water the gardens.

Continued involvement in the Literacy Improvement Initiative has seen vast improvements in student literacy outcomes, particularly in the grades 3 – 6 students. Teachers have enjoyed and put into practice many skills that they have learnt through weekly one-on-one professional development and twice a term cluster literacy professional development. The results are something to be particularly proud of and will be discussed further into this report under Student Progress and Achievements.

The staff had a major focus throughout 2008 - that was for the school to achieve Performance and Development Culture Accreditation. We worked collaboratively to ensure that the school had a detailed and thorough induction program for all new staff and that the Staff Handbook was established as a resource that teachers could use to understand all school processes. Teachers use multiple sources of feedback to enable them to provide learning programs that meet the needs of individual students. All staff have individual development plans that are aligned with the School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan. Quality Professional Development is made available to all staff and a considerable budget provided each year to enable participation. The process was particularly time consuming and provoked much thought around school philosophy and expectations, however results from the Performance & Development Culture Questionnaire Report indicate that the school has a strong belief in such a culture.

Department of Education & Early Childhood Development priorities include the implementation of the Ultranet by the end of 2010. The school purchased three Interactive Teamboards/Whiteboards as well as upgraded with new computers across all classes. We thank Parents & Friends for their financial contribution as the Whiteboards alone were approximately \$5,500 each! The school website has been described by the Yarra Valley Network Coach as the best of all schools in the Yarra Valley. It is updated weekly and provides a wealth of information about the school as well as promoting it in an extremely positive manner.

The Open Night held in fourth term was a resounding success, with approximately 250 people sharing food made by students in the kitchen garden program and cooked using produce they had grown at school. This event will become part of our annual calendar of events as it was so successful.

Other items worth noting include the well-attended Drug Education Forum run by students of grade 5 and 6, Swinburne TAFE erecting a hothouse, a new brick garden bed was built, four dining tables were purpose built for the dining room, shelving in the multi-purpose room ensures that PMP equipment and playgroup materials can be stored safely and at the same time there is increased space for activity, the whole school cheered on the Jayco Herald Sun Tour as it passed the school, Grade 3/4 won first prize at the Lilydale Show with the quilt representing the Olympics that they had made, and our fabulous whole school kite making and flying day.

Staff and many dedicated parents and volunteers work particularly hard at Wesburn to make this school such a special place to be.

Anne Stenhouse

Student Progress & Achievements

Student Learning

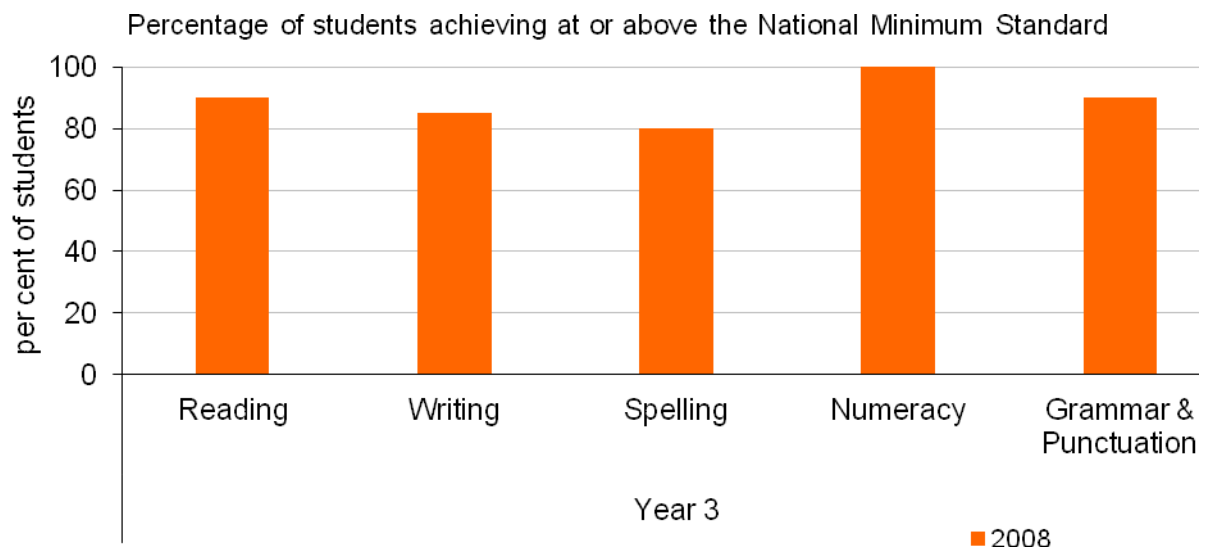
The goal for Student Learning as set out in the School Strategic Plan was:

- To improve student achievement in English and Mathematics with a specific focus on speaking and listening P-6 and measurement grades 4-6.

The plan was to annually increase the proportion of students working at or above the relevant VELS standard in measurement from grades 4-6 and achieve a higher proportion of students working at or above the relevant VELS standard in years P-6 in speaking and listening.

Targets were set in the 2008 Annual Implementation Plan that:

- Students would improve 0.5 VELS levels as measured on teacher judgements and the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).
- Students would improve 0.5 VELS levels in all areas of literacy (including speaking and listening) as shown in data collection with a particular focus on grade 5 and 6 children.



The above chart demonstrates that, overall, 100% of our Grade 3 students are achieving at or above the national minimum standard for numeracy. This is in contrast to the general trend in Victorian schools where data is indicating less students are achieving at this level. Whilst Measurement is not a report area in this graph, other School Performance Reports indicate that there is an overall improvement in measurement of 0.25 VELS (i.e. half of the targeted improvement).

There has been an overall improvement in Speaking and Listening and Reading by 0.15 VELs. This is significantly below the targeted level of improvement. However, Writing has improved by 0.77 VELs, well above the targeted level of improvement!

For privacy reasons, data points representing less than 10 students have not been reported for Grade 5 students, there being only 9 students enrolled in that grade level in 2008.

Involvement in the Literacy Improvement Initiative has significantly improved the writing process and outcomes across the school. Teachers have continued to develop confidence in using best practice literacy strategies in classrooms, especially new teachers to the school. They are using assessment data to inform further planning of student learning outcomes. Regular opportunities to participate in Literacy Walks have also allowed teachers to learn new skills and recognise their colleagues' professional abilities. More opportunities have also been given for students to participate in public speaking, e.g. interschool public speaking competition, Community Bank Opening, local radio program, etc.

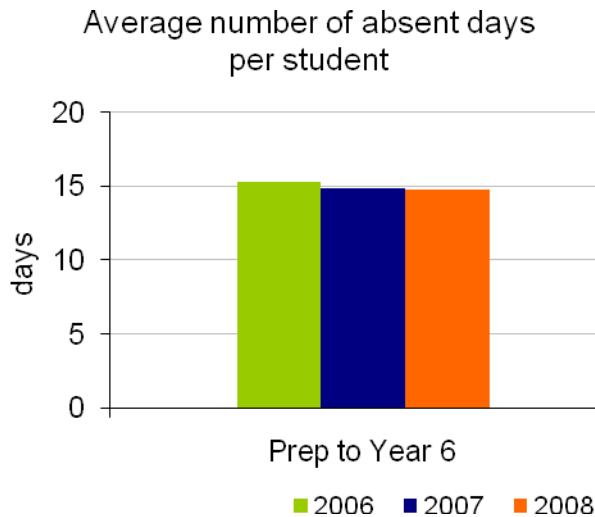
In spite of the extra strategies implemented across the school there are key elements that make it extremely difficult for teachers to ensure that all students are achieving at the correct VELs level at any given time. Prep entry assessments indicate a yearly decline in abilities of students starting at school. Examples of this include: 70% of children having no knowledge of letter names, sounds and their relationship, 70% have no knowledge of print/words, only 9% of prep students could recognise any number up to 10 at the start of the year. Further, many students have not learnt how to sit or focus for any length of time and must be trained in these and other behaviours before they can begin to learn. There is also clear evidence to suggest that many parents have poor literacy and numeracy skills and therefore find it difficult to help/support their children with their learning at home.

It is very obvious to teachers that the children whose parents are able to find the time to read and interact with them arrive at school with abilities far exceeding those that do not. With this in mind we particularly look at 'Value Adding', that is, continually improving the knowledge and skills of individual students. As one would expect, children who arrive with prior knowledge achieve at a much higher level than those who do not, but all students continue to learn and we continue to monitor that growth.

We must continue to strive for improvement in all areas of Literacy and Mathematics. Our accreditation of having a Performance and Development Culture enables us to have high expectations of all staff, students and the community and to continually aim for improvement.

Student Engagement and Wellbeing

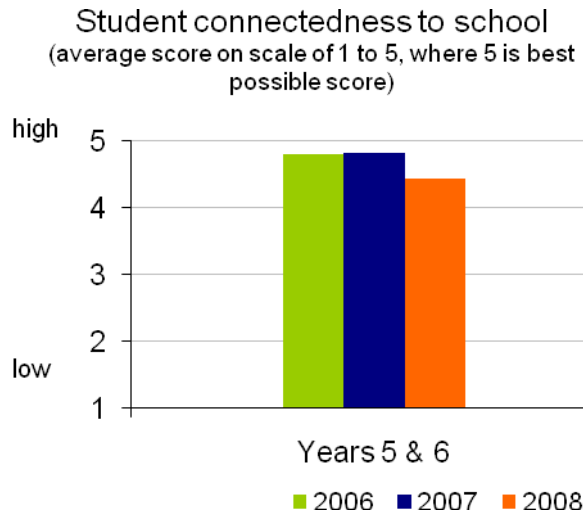
Based on the School Strategic Plan, the 2008 Annual Implementation Plan sought to improve the levels of engagement and wellbeing of all students. Improvement in attendance and punctuality data with a particular focus on parents/guardians providing notes for all absences or late arrivals was the main target. Of course, we also expected improved school attendance and punctuality to continue.



The above graph indicates that there was very little difference in attendance from 2007 to 2008.

The 'It's Cool to be at School' attendance program continued as a result of a designated coordinator who promoted, throughout the year, the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. With timetabled coordination time she was able to seek support from the wider community to provide incentives to both students and their families who strived for good attendance, punctuality, notices, etc. The vast majority of families at the very least attempt this, however it is consistently the same families who arrive late and have poor attendance. Support has been offered in the way of arranging for other families to transport students to and from school, establishing a shared transport system between families, and where necessary, staff picking up and taking home students (despite being against Department recommendations!).

Each month a student is highlighted for their attendance and details shared by both the child and parents on how they achieve this. Every term many prizes are awarded at assembly to children (and their parents) whose attendance has improved, and at the end of the year students who have achieved outstanding attendance are awarded a trophy.



Data was collected for the Student Connectedness to School graph, above from the Attitudes to School Survey completed by grade 5 and 6 students only. The results of this survey vary according to the particular cohort of students each year. Whilst the 2008 data is disappointing it can also be explained by the individual students and their particular circumstances (not necessarily at school!).

Wesburn P.S. continually strives to make the school a great place to be by providing a variety of programs and opportunities that meet the needs of our community. The Go For Your Life Kitchen Garden Programme with Stephanie Alexander, which develops and maintains a strong base of volunteers from the wider community, encourages students to grow, cook and eat a wider variety of fresh food and to carry this through to their families. Providing breakfast twice per week to approximately 41% of students (and often their siblings), healthy lunches twice per week at a reasonable price, the chaplaincy and primary welfare programs all contribute to the welfare of the students. Awards are also presented to students for academic and social achievements at weekly assemblies and within each classroom.

A variety of whole school activities such as the Whole School Excursion which includes parents, the Twilight Sports, Open Night where approximately 250 people attended, and Christmas Twilight Picnic and Celebrations gave ample opportunity for connection to the school. Other activities included assisting with maintaining the grounds, Trivia Night, Drug Education Forum, Me & My Mum Programme, playgroup, School Council, Parents & Friends, and opportunities to participate in classroom programmes, incursions and excursions throughout the year were available.

Further, opportunities for students and parents to have frequent participation in decision-making are given throughout the year in the form of Policy Development, discussion through Student and Parent Captains' Tables, Junior School Council, Student Leadership opportunities and incidental recommendations.

Student Pathways and Transitions

The 2008 Annual Implementation Plan, based on the School Strategic Plan, determined a need to continue to improve the transition between Years 2 and 3. This is a well-recognised area where transition is seen to be difficult due to the large increase in expectations of student learning and outcomes. Teachers regularly met to discuss and plan programmes around VELS levels, assessment and making consistent judgements, development of responsibility for learning, etc.

Throughout the fourth term a weekly one hour programme where students would progress to their next grade level for 2009 occurred. This enabled them to experience change in classroom and environment, become familiar with a different teacher, and participate in some activities geared to their new class. It was a highly successful programme and certainly eased the sense of stress of students, especially those with special needs, about their future class and teacher.

A whole school framework of expectations for students and their responsibilities was also established for each grade level. This then allowed for development over time of students becoming responsible not only for their own learning, but also for their actions and behaviours.

The Prep teacher has a well-planned transition programme for pre-school to school and implements this throughout the year. This includes pre-school visits with designated grade 5 students who will be future buddies, visits to the school from pre-schools, a weekly Stepping Stones programme in term 3 for all pre-school children, and weekly programme in term 4 for all pre-school children who will be attending Wesburn the following year.

The grade 6 teacher writes reports for all students and passes these onto the secondary college they will be attending. There is also a meeting between the teacher and the year 7 coordinator of each school to identify any special programmes required. Parents and teachers meet at a Parent Support Meeting to also determine Individual Learning Plans for students with special needs. Overwhelmingly the majority of students from Wesburn progress to their local secondary college, Upper Yarra. In 2008, 2 out of the 13 students went to Lilydale Heights.

Future Directions

Wesburn, like every school, is now looking at future directions.

We must continue to focus on improving student achievement in English and Mathematics. Although targets are set and we strive to achieve them, the most important aspect of teaching and learning is that all students achieve at their best. Once again we will aim to improve grade 4-6 Measurement results 0.5 VELS levels as measured on teacher judgements and the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). We will continue to strive for 0.5 VELS level improvement in areas of literacy. This will be shown in a variety of data collected through standardised testing.

Assessment data will be used by all teachers to inform planning of student learning outcomes. In 2009 we will further cement the Literacy Improvement Initiative with all teachers participating as the program has been extended from Prep. Regular and timetabled literacy walks will continue to occur to enable recognition of good teaching and learning practice and to develop better skills and self-esteem. Participation in a broader range of speaking and listening activities should further enhance students' abilities.

School reports give detailed and very accurate information to parents of student abilities and goals. They also explain what actions should be taken at home to help embed knowledge, skills and behaviours that will enable students to achieve at their best.

To improve the levels of engagement and wellbeing of all students we must continue to be student focused in all that we do. Enthusiasm for prizes for excellent attendance and punctuality (or improvement in these) as well as parents providing a note for all absences and late arrivals will continue. We must continue to stress the impact that poor attendance has on learning outcomes and future directions for students and highlight the difference that can be made in academic achievement, developing good habits and opportunities in later life.

As reported in the 2007 Annual Report, much work still needs to be done to change family attitudes around student independent work habits, the ability for them to think for themselves and to be responsible for their own learning. The importance of the partnership between the school and parents will continue to be stressed regularly within the school newsletter while other opportunities for this include the twice per year formal parent/teacher interviews and less formal as needed interviews.

Regular meetings will continue between grade 2 and 3 teachers to ensure direct links are made about academic expectations and assessment, including moderation of work samples. Anecdotal feedback from teachers, parents and students will be sought to determine the success of the grade 6 – year 7 transition process.

All staff have worked diligently on learning new ways with ICT in which they can enhance student learning. They will participate in ongoing professional development in this area. The school recently purchased three interactive teamboards which are in use daily within the grades 2/3, 4 and 5/6 classrooms. Further funds are to be allocated over the next two years to provide the other two classrooms with these pieces of equipment and to provide ongoing training in the use of them. Our school e-Potential survey results indicate a vast improvement in teacher capabilities and confidence in ICT over the 2008 year and we expect that this will develop further. ICT is embedded in all teacher performance plans.

Financial Performance and Position

Financial Performance – Operating Statement Summary for the year ending 31st December, 2008	
Revenue	2008 Actual
DE&T Grants	\$132,778
Commonwealth Government Grants	\$47,065
State Government Grants	\$25,455
Other	\$11,109
Locally Raised Funds	\$49,360
Total Operating Revenue	\$265,766
Expenditure	
Salaries and Allowances	\$38,793
Bank Charges	\$430
Consumables	\$14,918
Books and Publications	\$1,133
Communication Costs	\$3,390
Furniture and Equipment	\$23,191
Utilities	\$10,816
Property Services	\$127,383
Travel and Subsistence	0
Motor Vehicle Expenses	0
Administration	\$1,444
Health and Personal Development	\$83
Professional Development	\$6,397
Trading and Fundraising	\$22,168
Support/Service	0
Miscellaneous	\$13,462
Total Operating Expenditure	\$263,608
Net Operating Surplus/- Deficit	\$2,158
Capital Expenditure	\$6,511
Please note that the above amounts do not include any credit revenue or expenditure allocated or spent by the school through its Student Resource Package	

Financial Position as at 31st December, 2008	
Funds Available	2008 Actual
High Yield Investment Account	\$93,543.55
Official Account	\$15,715.17
Other Bank Accounts(listed individually)	
(insert)	-
(insert)	-
Total Funds Available	\$108,551.65
Financial Commitments	2008 Actual
School Operating Reserve	\$15,000.00
Co-operative Bank Account	-
Assets or Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$29,729.65
Revenue Received in Advance	\$5,403.00
Building/Grounds including SMS < 12 months	\$30,000.00
Region /Clusters Funds/School Based Programs < 12 months	\$11,026.00
Provision Accounts < 12 months	-
Repayable to DEECD	-
Other Recurrent Expenditure (Accounts Payable)	\$16,893.00
Assets or Equipment Replacement > 12 months	-
Building/Grounds including SMS > 12 months	-
Region /Clusters Funds/School Based Programs > 12 months	\$500.00
Provision Accounts > 12 months	-
Co-operative loan >12 months	-
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	-
Total Financial Commitments	\$108,551.65

At the commencement of the 2008 year the school was in receipt of a significant number of grants from D.E.&T. as well as the Commonwealth and State Governments. These were directly related to the Investing in our Schools programme, Community Water Grant and Kitchen Garden Programme. They were all completed over the course of the year except for a final payment of \$3,300 for the Community Water Grant that was paid upon

completion of the financial audit at the beginning of 2009. Funds held on behalf of the Region include the Literacy Coach, Yarra Valley Principal Cluster funds, etc.

It is worth noting that the Kitchen Garden programme is no longer funded and that the school is required to meet that expense over the year - an amount of approximately \$28,000 annually.

In 2009 we have been asked by the Regional Network Leader to manage the Yarra Valley Network funds of over \$50,000 as well. Of course, this will also provide the school with extra interest (which we will be able to use to meet the cost of extra administration time as well as other prioritised areas). We also intend to apply for grants totalling approximately \$1 million for upgrade to school facilities. (At the time of writing this report an application has already been submitted for funding up to \$75,000 for facilities work - stage 1). Further funds have been set aside to combine with these grants as it is an expectation that the school contribute certain percentages to these projects.

School Contact Information

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This report contains summary data extracted from the School Level Report. If you would like to access the School Level Report, please contact Anne Stenhouse at Wesburn Primary School on 5967 1302