

# LITERACY & NUMERACY CABRAMATTA HIGH SCHOOL

## High value-add secondary schools operational case studies

These case studies provide practical examples of how secondary schools have established themselves as high value-add schools in literacy and numeracy. Each of these schools achieved significantly above average value-add for student progress from Year 7 to Year 9, and from Year 9 to Year 12. They are operational examples for schools to draw lessons from to apply to their own unique context.



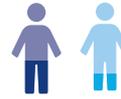
1,487 students  
117 staff

FOEI  
159

97%  
LBOTE students

### HSC outcomes

At Cabramatta **41%** of HSC students achieve 2 or more Band 5-6 results



Only **24%** of students at statistically similar schools achieve these results

## HOW DOES THE SCHOOL APPROACH LITERACY?

In 2016 Cabramatta turned its daily reading time into dedicated instructional literacy and reading classes, because daily reading was not demonstrating an evidenced impact on student results. This change is believed to have partly contributed to the school's above average value-add results.

### Tailored teaching

- Each student is assigned a **teacher mentor**, who coaches them through their NAPLAN results and helps to set goals and strategies for improvement to share with parents.
- The school is trialling a **dyslexia specialist** two days a week after identifying the benefits their existing **speech pathologist** produced over time.
- The school's literacy program **focuses on teaching for improvement** including tense and inferential reading.
- School is piloting the **Wordflyer online literacy program** to support its efforts.

### Data-driven

- The school hired an ex-primary Principal to do a **deep-dive SMART review of 2016 NAPLAN data** to identify weaknesses and develop strategies to overcome them.
- **Cabramatta continuously evaluates** its approach by using Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT) before and after interventions, using NAPLAN as a diagnostic tool, and by seeking student feedback.
  - The literacy team identifies effective **literacy teaching approaches** and they have designed an **evidence-based program** based on John Hattie's work.

**Cabramatta** produces good literacy results by giving individual students close attention and mentoring, underpinned by capable, supported teachers and empirical evidence that guide programs

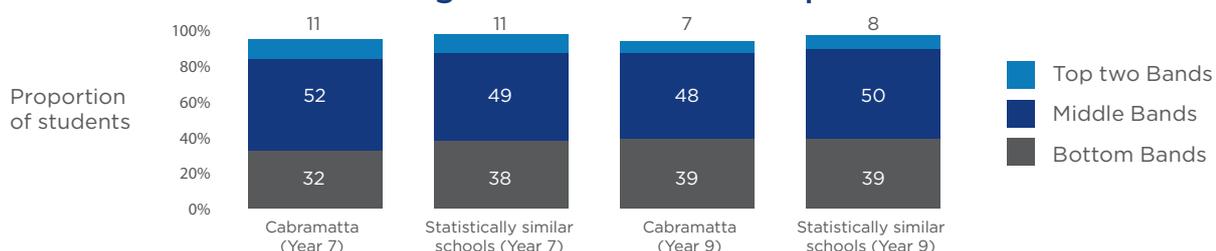
### Leadership intensity

- All leadership staff have a second-in-charge, selected through merit, which **increases leadership capacity** and effective implementation of faculty programs.
- A **literacy steering committee** has been established (4 Head Teachers and a Deputy Principal) who direct a selection of literacy representatives (other teachers).
- Strong support for the leadership team plus good governance contributes to **low teacher turnover** (~3% per annum) and **strong community engagement** (up to 60 parents at monthly school council meetings).

### Professional learning

- There is substantial investment in professional learning – **staff attend weekly professional learning sessions** to troubleshoot and build capacity.
  - **The school recognises the power of feedback programs** – teachers observe each other and provide positive and constructive feedback.
- Professional learning content aligns with individual, faculty, and whole school. For example, **all staff receive dedicated relevant professional learning sessions** if NAPLAN results identify specific gaps in literacy skills.

## Cabramatta's NAPLAN Reading results are set to improve



## WHERE TO NEXT?

Comprehensive evaluation of literacy programs and subsequent development of the 2018-2020 school plan.

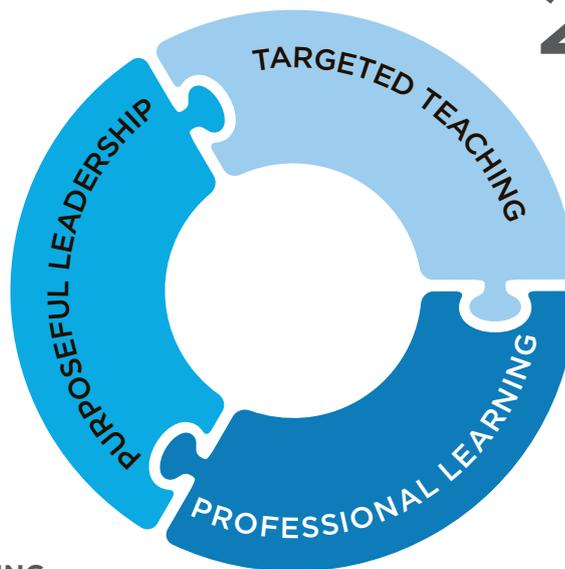
Evaluate the effectiveness of the Wordflyer pilot.

## HOW DOES THE SCHOOL APPROACH NUMERACY?

Cabramatta has a strong mathematics faculty with experienced teachers who understand their students' contexts. The faculty drives many of the school's numeracy initiatives.

### 1 PURPOSEFUL LEADERSHIP

- Annual management plans allow flexible **approaches to leadership**.
- **Numeracy representative in each Key Learning Area** has responsibility to ensure numeracy implementation across the whole curriculum.
- **Strong engagement with feeder primary schools** occurs through sharing numeracy strategies and having accelerated students run maths days for high achieving local primary school students.



### 2 TARGETED TEACHING

- The mathematics faculty has **different strategies to address different achievement levels**: an accelerated program, a standard program, and targeted classes for students below minimum standard.
- **Peer to peer coaching** aims to pair high and low achieving students to improve student outcomes.

### 3 PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

- Annual numeracy workshops **ensure numeracy representatives have appropriately analysed and adjusted programs**. The workshops focus on NAPLAN strengths and identified weaknesses.
- Teachers watch and learn from other teachers, which helps create **a culture of collaborative teaching**.

## WHERE TO NEXT?

Evaluate current strategies and build on successes.

Assess proposal to implement 'numeracy ninja' program to Year 8 and 9 students in 2017.

## CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

### Principal and school leadership view

- Utilising Resource Allocation Model funding to hire experts as needed.
- Serious and consistent investment in professional learning, embedded in the school culture.
- Commitment to evaluating approaches, and adapting what is done if needed.

“We cancelled staff meetings: they weren't useful with 115 teaching staff. Regular smaller group meetings are effective.”

Principal

“The weekly professional learning sessions are particularly helpful. They are a chance to ask 'what is working well?', 'what is challenging?' and 'how can we help teachers?'.”

Literacy Co-ordinator

“Faculty meetings include a 'show and tell' component, where teachers share their approaches.”

Maths Head Teacher

## RESOURCES AND LINKS

### WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE?

**Wordflyers literacy program** <https://wordflyers.com.au>

**SMART data** <https://education.nsw.gov.au/assessment-and-reporting/smart-data>

**School Plan, 2015-17** [http://www.cabramatta-h.schools.nsw.edu.au/documents/42770755/42773449/school\\_plan\\_2017.pdf](http://www.cabramatta-h.schools.nsw.edu.au/documents/42770755/42773449/school_plan_2017.pdf)