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.

**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.

**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.

**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

Wordflyers literacy program https://wordflyers.com.au

WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE?

Developed by Department of Premier and Cabinet in conjunction with Department of Education, with thanks to Fairfield Principal Network. Sources: My School website and information provided directly by schools. Note: the proportion of students in NAPLAN bands does not sum to 100% due to students who were absent or withdrawn from NAPLAN tests.