

Rumbalara Environmental Education Centre 2019 Annual Report





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Introduction

The Annual Report for 2019 is provided to the community of Rumbalara Environmental Education Centre as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the school plan. It outlines the findings from self–assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.

School contact details

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School background

School vision statement

Rumbalara EEC Vision

Providing authentic learning experiences in, about and for the environment that enable students to make decisions and take actions for a sustainable future.

NSW Department of Education Environmental and Zoo Education Centres' Vision

Leading environmental education to empower learners for a sustainable future.

School context

Rumbalara EEC Context

Rumbalara EEC is located at Gosford on the Central Coast near Rumbalara Reserve. The school pays respect and acknowledges that it is on Darkinjung land. The Centre has no permanent student enrolments and instead services over 8000 students from predominently Central Coast Schools.

Rumbalara offers a variety of high quality field work and sustainability education programs for students K–12. There is a strong emphasis on student led/inquiry learning with programs offered across the curriculum. The Centre's programs are also delivered off site with locations including Bouddi, Brisbane Water and Wyrrabalong National Parks, Katandra Reserve, Copacabana and within schools' grounds. Aboriginal Education is a major focus of the Centre with all programs including Aboriginal perspectives and there is an Aboriginal Heritage program formally approved by Central Coast Regional AECG.

Rumbalara EEC also supports teachers on the Central Coast to deliver Sustainability Education through the provision of high quality professional learning.

Rumbalara EEC works closely with Central Coast schools and is a member of the Erina Learning Community and the Central Coast Environmental Education Network (CCEEN). The Centre has a partnership with Central Coast Council to deliver a 'Wiping Out Waste Program' and 'Future Council' (a civics and citizenship program).

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Self-assessment and school achievement

This section of the annual report outlines the findings from self–assessment using the School Excellence Framework, school achievements and the next steps to be pursued.

This year, our school undertook self–assessment using the School Excellence Framework and participated in an external validation. The Framework is a statement of what is valued as excellence for NSW public schools, both now and into the future. The Framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading.

Each year, we assess our practice against the Framework to inform our school plan and annual report. Every five years, our school undergoes an external validation process.

During the external validation process, an independent panel consisting of a Principal School Leadership and a peer principal considered our evidence and assessment of our school's progress against the School Excellence Framework.

Our self–assessment and the external validation process will assist the school to refine our school plan, leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

For more information about the School Excellence Framework: https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/school-excellence-and-accountability/school-excellence

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

Elements	2019 School Assessment
LEARNING: Learning Culture	Excelling
LEARNING: Wellbeing	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Curriculum	Excelling
LEARNING: Assessment	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Reporting	Working towards Delivering
LEARNING: Student performance measures	Working towards Delivering
TEACHING: Effective classroom practice	Excelling
TEACHING: Data skills and use	Working towards Delivering
TEACHING: Professional standards	Sustaining and Growing
TEACHING: Learning and development	Excelling
LEADING: Educational leadership	Excelling
LEADING: School planning, implementation and reporting	Excelling
LEADING: School resources	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: Management practices and processes	Sustaining and Growing

In the **Domain of Learning** our evidence has led us to a judgement that we are Excelling in the areas of Learning Culture and Curriculum and Sustaining and Growing in Wellbeing and Assessment. All other areas for this domain were not applicable to our school's situation. Our evidence to support our judgements includes visitation statistics, teacher evaluations, student work samples, student surveys and community surveys.

The evidence suggests that Rumbalara EEC provides a range of quality lessons K–12 that are well planned and differentiated for many different types of learners. We also engage with visiting teachers, the Erina Learning community and community partners when developing programs. We regularly reflect on best practice using evaluation results, teaching observations and staff debriefs.

Through the SEF process we have also identified ways to move forward. Our aim is to increase student wellbeing by providing more pre visit resources specifically for students with special needs. We will also be aiming to collect more student assessments from a variety of schools so we can accurately compare student learning and make adjustments to programs as required.

In the **Domain of Teaching** our evidence has led us to a judgement that we are Excelling in the areas of Effective Classroom Practice and Learning and Development and Sustaining and Growing in Professional Standards. Data Skills was judged as not applicable to our school's situation. Our evidence to support our judgements includes teacher evaluations from professional learning workshops, staff PDP's, Rumbalara staff professional learning surveys, MyPL enrolment data and staff meeting minutes.

Rumbalara staff regularly attend professional learning and collaborate with other experts to ensure they are preparing high quality lessons that meet curriculum requirements and use researched based strategies. The evidence outlined indicates that staff actively engage in the PDP process and are supported to meet their PDP goals. Our staff are high performing with specialised skills and mentor and deliver professional learning to other teachers on the Central Coast and in our EZEC community. Our surveys demonstrate that the professional learning we present is of high quality and value adds to the schools of attendees.

Through the SEF process we have also identified that we would like to improve on the teacher observation and feedback process. We would also like to increase opportunities for implementing literacy and numeracy in our programs.

In the **Domain of Leading** our evidence has led us to a judgement that we are Excelling in Educational Leadership and School Planning, Implementation and Reporting and Sustaining and Growing and in all other areas. Our evidence to support our judgements includes Staff PDP's and staff meeting minutes, staff NESA reports, budget meeting notes, SPARO evaluation reporting, community use agreement preparation emails and Facebook posts.

Successful implementation of the School Plan was a central focus for all our work. Staff PDP's and professional learning are focussed on being able to meet our strategic directions and include opportunities for leadership development. Rumbalara EEC principal models instructional leadership to REEC teachers, the EZEC Community of Schools and local schools. We also encourage leadership for all Environmental Educators by co–organising professional learning for the Central Coast Environmental Education Network (CCEEN).

The school is recognised as excellent and responsive by its community as reflected in our community surveys and the many partnership programs we develop with other environmental educator providers. Our leadership success and community engagement is made possible by our effective administrative processes that are regularly reviewed and updated to improve communication with schools and staff.

As a future improvement we would like to improve our reporting to the community by organise a mid–strategic plan workshop to discuss future partnership projects and the Community User Agreements.

Strategic Direction 1

Empower Learners

Purpose

To develop students' environmental knowledge, skills, values and attitudes in creating environmentally literate citizens. This is accomplished through providing engaging and stimulating learning environments that empower learners to think and communicate creatively, collaboratively and critically to achieve positive environmental impact.

Major SEFV2 links

- · Learning Curriculum, Assessment
- Teaching Effective Classroom Practice, Professional Standards, Learning and Development
- · Leading- Educational Leadership, School Resources

Improvement Measures

- Increased number of schools supported to engage students in sustainbility education beyond the "field work day". (Base line data 2017 is three schools)
- Student work samples demonstrate to a greater extent the creative/ critical thinking processes based on ACARA Creative & Critical Thinking Continuum. (Base line 2018)

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Provide engaging new programs and review existing programs with a focus on critical and creative thinking.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Analysis: Eight Lesson plans were updated with links to ACARA Creative & Critical Thinking Continuum. Excellent evidence of creative and critical thinking from the Energy Project with Tuggerah P.S. Students made energy action plans for their school and built models of sustainable houses. Rumbalara teachers are starting to use terminology during field work and started use some of the Creative & Critical Thinking Crunches. Critical thinking was used the most in our Environmental Management & Change Geography program where students consider the management options for Wamberal Beach and put themselves in the role of decision makers. Teacher survey responses show that they considered that students did use critical and creative thinking skills during field work or pre and post visit resources provided by REEC— all ratings were a 4 or 5 out of 5 for this question in the survey.	
Future Implications : All REEC teachers to ensure they mention when we are using creative and critical thinking skills so visiting teachers are aware of how we implement. i.e more focus on terminology. Also an opportunity to improve Future Council Evaluations with Central Coast Council and include a question on critical thinking.	

Process 2: Strengthen support for schools beyond the field work day through project based learning and authentic assessment procedures.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Analysis Energy Trailer Program Further to our Term 2 review of the program one school did continue the energy program with some highly successful outcomes. Tuggerah Public School completed their energy use survey for the whole school and students were involved in critical thinking activity to decide how they could reduce	Funding Sources: • (\$3000.00)

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

energy. They worked in groups to present an energy action plan, built models of sustainable houses and made an energy saving game. The teacher successfully followed the 'Design Thinking Process' and the units of work delivered by Rumbalara staff in the professional learning day.

Future Implications

Professional learning for programs needs to occur at the beginning of the year when staff allocations had been made. We lost key personal for the program due to end of year staff changes. The program was proved to be efficient from the one school who attended the PL and followed the program.

Analysis Assessment Data Collection

There has been an improvement in the collection of data. New surveys were created in Survey Monkey and a process was put in place for the SAM to send survey monkey links to teachers..

Future Implications

REEC teachers still need to follow up with teachers after the data pause period. A new process needs to be put in place to ensure this happens.

Strategic Direction 2

Develop Teacher Capacity

Purpose

To develop the capacity of Centre staff in addition to those within our networks as learners, teachers and leaders in environmental and sustainability education. This will be achieved through participation in, and the provision of, explicit professional learning that improves teaching practice, resulting in the development of environmental citizens.

Major SEFV2 links

- · Learning Wellbeing, Curriculum, Assessment
- Teaching Effective Classroom Practice, Professional Standards, Learning and Development
- · Leading- Educational Leadership, School Resources, Management Practices and Processes

Improvement Measures

- Increase in the number and type of professional learning opportunities offered to Central Coast teachers tracked through MyPL. (Baseline Data 2017 MyPL is 3 courses).
- 50% of main K–6 programs include adjustments to teaching and learning for students with specific learning needs.(Based on ten main primary programs)

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Embed practices that focus on supporting students with specific learning needs.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Processors are now in place and staff are well aware and implementing changes. Admin staff have been successful in chasing visiting teaching staff for medical needs before the excursion date.	
Data collected showed an average of 4.6/5 for REEC teachers supporting students with special needs. Our new evaluation question in the teacher surveys allowed better data to be collected.	
Future Implications	
For future we will consider site specific excursion packs. that include, site maps, social stories and risk assessments ready to take out in the field (possibly on Ipads).	

Process 2: Further strengthen opportunities to collaborate and participate in professional learning with other EZEC staff.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
REEC staff attended the annual EZEC Conference and the principal attended EZEC Principal conference.	Funding Sources: • (\$6500.00)
The conference increased staff knowledge on mangroves and staff learnt new ways to monitor mangrove health with a scientist from Macquarie University. Staff also gained the latest Climate Change information from scientists and understood the importance of providing information to Central Coast teachers. As a result REEC teachers invited a Climate Change guest speaker to our REEC sustainability forum. The conferences resulted in the 'Poop a Scoop' program being added to our Bioblitz day at Bateau Bay and our Features of Places program when conducted at Kincumba Mountain.	

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Sharing at the EZEC conference also allowed us to refine our Social Stories for the year, consolidate our relationship with Return and Earn for our Wiping Out Waste Program and reminded staff of literacy opportunities through the Tears In The Jungle student author presentation.

THE EZEC Principal Conference allowed some insight into improved ways to implement Lesson Observations. These have been communicated to staff and resulted in a clearer understanding for teachers.

Some of the EZEC Quality Teaching demonstrations planned through the year was not able to happen each term as originally hoped. Time commitments among all EZEC resulted in the idea being postponed till the 2020 EZEC conference. Planning for this is underway in 2019 and REEC staff have volunteered to present a lesson to be peer review for QT elements.

The EZEC team were able to engage with the Catalyst Lab DoE Innovations team and organise three design thinking work shops for all of EZEC. This resulted in EZEC teachers being able to identify ways to improve teaching and design solutions with a team of experts. Work workshops will be held in 2020.

Future Implications

Quality Teacher will be better pursued by individual Centres through the DOE program. REEC to consider for next Strategic Plan.

Process 3: Deliver a range of professional learning opportunities with a focus on integrating sustainability education to teachers K–12 across all KLA's.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Five professional learning events were delivered by Rumbalara EEC (three delivered with our partners). This included Take Me Outside with AAEE, an AUSMAP microplastics training day, a session on Primary Geography at the Geography Teachers Association conference a Learning Across the Curriculum PL specifically for 42 teachers at Woy Woy P.S and our Sustainability Leaders Forum. All of these were positively evaluated with results reported in our term analysis for each event.	Funding Sources: • (\$5000.00)
After attending the AUSMAP workshop REEC teacher Michelle Biddulph was able to deliver the microplastics program to Terrigal H.S.	
Woy Woy PS has continued to be a leader in Environmental Education as evidenced in their whole school programming. In 2020 they decided to join the Wiping Out Waste program after focussing on waste education at the Pd day.	
The venue for the Sustainability Leaders Forum provided teachers with a resource for science and agriculture lessons. Two of the primary schools that attended the day arranged to visit the Ag farm with their students at a later date. One teacher emailed back that the forum enabled them to create new waste management policies and they created three large compost bins for the school.	

Strategic Direction 3

Strengthen Partnerships

Purpose

To extend and strengthen partnerships with our networks and communities through effective communication and a culture of collaboration. The impact of these relationships drives the provision of authentic, relevant and unique experiences which enable students to be confident and creative environmental citizens.

Major SEFV2 links

- · Learning Curriculum
- Teaching Effective Classroom Practice
- · Leading- Educational Leadership

Improvement Measures

- Increase in the number and quality of programs developed in collaboration with the EZEC Community of Schools and implemented by REEC. (Base line data 2017 is one collaborative program. Quality will be measured through Centre based survey to schools with an aim of 10% increase in high to very high responses for curriculum, values and engagement questions).
- Increase in the number of schools engaged in community learning projects. (Base line data 2017 is thirteen schools)

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Work collaboratively with EZEC and other relevant community organisations to develop engaging community learning projects with a Citizen Science Focus.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
As part of our EZEC Collaborative project all REEC staff attended the AUSMAP training day. Most Central Coast schools participated in field work through Take 3 who had funding from Central Coast Council. We collaborated with Take 3 and implemented with one school who also wanted to integrate a water quality lesson. Northlakes High have booked 4 microplastic surveys for 2020. REEC will remain as a regional hub for the program and host the equipment for loans by community groups. We will remain supporters of the program and will deliver upon demand by schools. Citizen Science data was successfully loaded to our Bioblitz Bateau Bay Page. Our water quality data was also successfully loaded to the waterwatch data base for Terrigal Lagoon. Survey Monkey feedback showed that students were actively engaged in our Bioblitz data collection day and there was high teacher satisfaction with the program. One school used water quality data from Terrigal Lagoon in their student assessment task.	Funding Sources: • (\$5000.00)

Process 2: Implement a whole school approach to build stronger links with the community and engage the community with Rumbalara EEC programs and sustainability initiatives.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Rumbalara EEC has increased community engagement through out 2019. A survey was conducted with our partners in Term 1 and a meeting was held with our community partners in Term 3 to convey to share our successful External Validation report and seek further input and guidance for the Centre. It was decided to send our partners our milestones report that are updated each term. The group decided to be renamed as 'Rumbalara EEC School Planning Advisory Group' The process for the Community User Agreements were shared and a price agreed upon for hiring the Centre. Two	Funding Sources: • (\$35000.00)

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

organisations have used the Centre since the process has been place. Our Community open day was successfully attended our partnerships with the University of Newcastle and Central Coast Environmental Educators Network remain strong.

Our Wiping Out Waste (WOW) program with Central Coast Council was successfully delivered to eight school on the Central Coast in 2019. Our biggest achievement was an increased understanding by staff on how to minimise waste in schools and the introduction of Return & Earn collections to reduce waste to landfill. The program will be funded again by Council in 2020.

In 2019, two Future Council events were successfully held – one at the Wyong Chambers of the Central Coast Council and the other at the Gosford Chambers. Eighty Stage 5 students from 12 schools (both government and non–government schools) participated.

The Sustainability Education field work course was successfully delivered to 14 pre service students over two days. One of the students involved in the course started as a volunteer at Rumbalara and assisted with four teaching days.

Student information

In 2019 Rumbalara EEC conducted field work programs for 7952 students. Of these 75% were primary and 25% were secondary. Our most popular primary programs in order of highest percentage were Stage 2 Our Aboriginal Heritage, Stage 1 Features of Places, ES1 Bush Picnic. Our most popular secondary programs in order of highest percentage were Stage 5 Environmental Change and Management (Geography), Stage 6 Local Ecosystems (Science) and Stage 4 Landscapes & Landforms (Geography).

An additional 3020 students were also involved in special programs delivered with Central Coast Council. Pre service students form Ourimbah University (48) were also trained in Sustainability Education with Rumbalara EEC.

Our field work numbers were slightly lower than 2018 due to the high number of rain days and total fire bans causing closures of National Parks and reserves.

Management of non-attendance

Attendance at school has a big impact on longer term outcomes for children and young people. When a child is not at school they miss important opportunities to learn, build friendships and develop their skills through play. Regular attendance at school is a shared responsibility between schools and parents. By working together we can have a positive effect on supporting our children and young people to regularly attend school.

Our teachers promote and monitor regular attendance at school and all our schools have effective measures in place to record attendance and follow up student absences promptly. They are guided by the School Attendance policy which details the management of non–attendance.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Classroom Teacher(s)	1
School Administration and Support Staff	1.19

^{*}Full Time Equivalent

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce composition

The Department actively supports the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees through the use of identified positions, scholarship opportunities to become a teacher and by providing a culturally safe workplace. As of 2019, 3.9% of the Department's workforce identify as Aboriginal people.

Workforce ATSI

Staff type	Benchmark ¹	2019 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation ²
School Support	3.30%	7.20%
Teachers	3.30%	2.90%

Note 1 – The NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2014–17 introduced an aspirational target of 1.8% by 2021 for each of the sector's salary bands. If the aspirational target of 1.8% is achieved in salary bands not currently at or above 1.8%, the cumulative representation of Aboriginal employees in the sector is expected to reach 3.3%.

Note 2 – Representation of diversity groups are calculated as the estimated number of staff in each group divided by the total number of staff. These statistics have been weighted to estimate the representation of diversity groups in the workforce, where diversity survey response rates were less than 100 per cent. The total number of staff is based on a headcount of permanent and temporary employees.

Teacher qualifications

All casual, temporary and permanent teachers in NSW public schools must hold a NSW Department of Education approval to teach. Teachers with approval to teach must be accredited with the NSW Education Standards Authority, and hold a recognised teaching degree. All NSW teachers must hold a valid NSW Working With Children Check clearance.

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Professional learning is core to enabling staff to improve their practice.

Professional learning includes five student–free School Development Days and induction programs for staff new to our school and/or system. These days are used to improve the capacity of teaching and non–teaching staff in line with school and departmental priorities.

Rumbalara Staff participated in a number of professional learning opportunities during 2019. Some of these are listed below

- Annual EZEC teachers Conference and Principal Conference
- · Geography Teachers Association Conference
- Creative and Critical Thinking with Erina Learning Community
- Catalyst Lab Design Thinking Workshops
- Staff wellbeing evening with Central Coast Health
- External Validation training
- · Local Aboriginal Sites visit and interpretation with DoE Aboriginal Education Officer
- · Australian Association for Environmental Education annual conference
- Using Virtual Reality Cameras and creating Google Sites workshop

Financial information

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019. The Principal is responsible for the financial management of the school and ensuring all school funds are managed in line with Department policy requirements.

	2019 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	48,900
Revenue	464,106
Appropriation	420,374
Sale of Goods and Services	1,600
Grants and contributions	41,426
Investment income	706
Expenses	-455,355
Employee related	-404,657
Operating expenses	-50,698
Surplus / deficit for the year	8,751

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

Financial summary - Equity loadings

The equity loading data is the main component of the 'Appropriation' line item of the financial summary above.

	2019 Approved SBA (\$)
Targeted Total	0
Equity Total	0
Equity - Aboriginal	0
Equity - Socio-economic	0
Equity - Language	0
Equity - Disability	0
Base Total	405,312
Base - Per Capita	14,078
Base - Location	324
Base - Other	390,909
Other Total	8,030
Grand Total	413,342

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Throughout 2019 we assessed visiting school teacher's perceptions of our field work programs. The responses are outlined below.

- Creating a Positive Learning Environment 73% scored 5/5, 23% scored 4/5
- Rumbalara Staff demonstrate high learning expectations 83% scored 5/5, 14% scored 4/5
- Relevance of field work programs to curriculum 72% scored 5/5, 24% scored 4/5
- Staff Knowledge of topics 78% scored 5/5, 16% scored 4/5

Below are some responses from our teacher surveys

- The i pads and devices to measure temperature etc kept the kids engaged. Very smart move!
- · All our children were engaged and enjoyed the hands on approach
- · The program linked perfectly with our Living World and Earth and Space unit we are currently studying.
- The Rumbalara teachers demonstrated their own passion for the environment and it was contagious.
- Consistently referred to our PBL expectations to remind students of their behaviour.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal Education Policy

The responsibility for enacting the Aboriginal Education Policy rests with all Departmental staff. The policy should underpin and inform planning, teaching practice and approaches to educational leadership in all educational settings.

Evidence of effective implementation of the policy included:

- Establishing, building and strengthening relationships with the Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Aboriginal people and communities.
- Providing, in partnership with Aboriginal people and communities, education which promotes quality teaching, is engaging, and is culturally appropriate and relevant.
- · Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will match or better the outcomes of the broader student population.
- Implementation of Personalised Learning Pathways for all Aboriginal students in a school culture of high expectations.

Most of the Centre's programs include an Aboriginal perspective and content that reflect local "on country" learning. Our most popular Stage 3 program was our Aboriginal Heritage program.

The Centre always engages in ongoing conversations with Tuggerah DoE District Office Aboriginal Learning and Well Being Team and Regional AECG.

Anti-Racism Policy

All teachers are responsible for supporting students to develop an understanding of racism and discrimination and the impact these may have on individuals and the broader community. Principals are responsible for examining school practices and procedures to ensure they are consistent with the policy. All schools have an Anti–Racism Contact Officer who is trained to respond to concerns in relation to racism.

The Centre has a trained ARCO and ensures there is equity and fairness to all students in the delivery of our programs.

Multicultural Education Policy

Teachers address the specific learning and wellbeing needs of students from culturally diverse backgrounds through their teaching and learning programs. Principals are responsible for ensuring that school policies, programs and practices respond to the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of the school community, and provide opportunities that enable all students to achieve equitable education and social outcomes.

The Centre's programs encourage students to consider sustainability as a global issue. They also demonstrate that environmental attitudes and values have a cultural basis. Our regular newsletter to schools and our website encourage participation in worldwide students events.