

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Asquith

Annual School Report to the Community

2014



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Principal

Bernard Cumming

ABOUT THIS REPORT

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School (the 'School') is registered by the NSW Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) and managed by the Catholic Schools Office (CSO), Diocese of Broken Bay. The CSO as the 'approved authority' for the diocesan registration system formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act (1990), is responsible for monitoring the compliance of member schools in the manner that has been approved by the Minister of Education.

The Annual School Report (the 'Report'), approved by the School's Consultant, demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies and the CSO. Additionally, the Report complements and is supplementary to other forms of regular communication to the School community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students.

The Report provides parents and the wider community with fair, reliable and objective information about educational and financial performance measures as well as School and system policies. This information includes summary contextual data, an overview of student performance in state and national assessments, a description of the achievement of priorities in the previous year and areas for improvement. Detailed information about the School's improvement journey is documented in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) which is developed, implemented and evaluated in consultation with key stakeholders.

Further information about the contents of this Report may be obtained by contacting the School directly or by visiting the School's website. Information can be also be obtained from the [My School website](#).

SECTION ONE: MESSAGE FROM KEY GROUPS IN OUR COMMUNITY

Principal's Message

In my first year at the School as principal, I recognise that I have inherited an impressive school and would like to thank and acknowledge the work of the previous principal. 2013 was a year of significant change with a new principal and many new staff. The high standard of learning was sustained with a number of new initiatives. I have been impressed with the responsible students, dedication of the staff, the level of parental support and involvement and the relationship with the clergy and parish. The School has a great sense of community where staff work alongside parents to provide a stimulating learning environment for the students.

Parent Body Message

2014 was a year of major change, not only a new principal but also a number of new teachers. The parent body would like to thank the principal for doing such a wonderful job in his first year and the staff for making the school year run seamlessly. The School musical and the 'Kindergarten Ball' became a lower key affair enabling the children and parents to enjoy and enter into the event. 'Men in the Morning' was introduced as a way of getting dads (or significant males) more involved in the school. This proved successful and will continue in 2015. Other events continue to be successful, with the 'Green and Gold Ball', welcome and Christmas BBQs, and Mother's and Father's Day mornings being well attended. Another very successful *St Patrick's fete* was held, raising a substantial amount which will go towards replacing the existing playground equipment in 2015. We are blessed to have a strong and engaged school community. As the demands of life ever increase, the challenge for the Parents and Friends (P&F) is to continue to evolve and encourage parents to participate with the community and in all aspects of their children's learning.

Student Body Message

2014 was a positive year for student learning and wellbeing with students continuing to do their best and achieve good levels of academic success. Students participated in class, whole school and weekend Masses. Every grade had a designated weekend to help out with a Mass and many families took the opportunity to participate more fully in parish life. The Mercy Action Group (MAG) participated in the 'The Dish', the local van providing meals for people who are homeless or financially struggling. Students took turns in food preparation with parents helping to serve. Each class participated in the Vinnies' winter and Christmas collections and our band also performed at the local nursing home. Our fete was a great event and fundraising success. Students participated in both our swimming and athletics carnivals and many other sports events. Several teachers took time out from their busy schedules to coach and support us. As part of the *KidsMatter* initiative, in terms two and four, one week was designated a 'well-being week'. This included spending more time doing fun things with our families, no homework and activities at school to be thankful for the positive things in our lives.

SECTION TWO: SCHOOL FEATURES

School Features

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School Asquith, is a Catholic systemic co-educational school.

The School was established by the Sisters of Mercy in 1958 and continues to have a close connection with the order and its charism.

The School caters for students from Kindergarten to Year 6 (K-6) across fourteen classes and is part of the Ku-ring-gai Chase Parish. Situated near Asquith railway station, enrolments are drawn predominately from the local areas of Asquith, Hornsby Heights, Hornsby and Mt Colah.

The School enjoys an excellent reputation as a community of high quality learning and teaching where students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning in an environment of support, nurture and partnership with parents. We strive to model Gospel values for our children and all in our community so that each may contribute to building a better world.

SECTION THREE: STUDENT PROFILE

Student Enrolment

Students attending the School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2014. Additional information can be found on [My School website](#).

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
190	168	101	358

* Language Background Other than English

The School maintains a steady enrolment profile.

Enrolment Policy

The School follows the [Enrolment Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools](#). The policy encourages the local Catholic community, under the leadership of the parish priest and principal, to look upon the time of enrolment as a potential occasion for ongoing evangelisation. The policy calls upon parents to examine their present faith commitments, to develop their role as prime educators of their children in faith and to immerse themselves in the communal, liturgical, ministerial and service dimensions of the parish. Copies of this policy and other policies in this Report may be obtained from the [CSO website](#) or by contacting the CSO.

Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for the School in 2014 was 96.17 %. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Kindergarten	96.20 %
Year 1	97.00 %
Year 2	97.20 %
Year 3	95.50 %
Year 4	95.50 %
Year 5	96.40 %
Year 6	95.40 %

Managing Student Non-Attendance

In order for students to reach their full potential it is of paramount importance that they attend school regularly. While it is the parents' legal responsibility under the NSW Education Act (1990) to ensure that their children attend school regularly, our staff as part of their duty of care, monitor all absences and work in partnership with parents to support and promote the regular attendance of students. In doing so, the School, under the leadership of the principal:

- provides a caring environment which fosters in students, a sense of wellbeing and belonging
- maintains accurate records of student attendance
- implements policies and procedures to monitor student attendance and to address non-attendance issues as and when they arise
- communicates to parents and students, the School's expectations with regard to student attendance and the consequences of not meeting these expectations
- recognises and rewards excellent and improved student attendance.

School attendance records also contain information regarding student absences including reasons for absence and documentation to substantiate reasons for absences. Teachers are required to monitor non-attendance diligently on a student by student basis and to bring to the attention of the Principal immediately any unexplained absences, non-attendance of a chronic nature, or reasons for non-attendance that cause concern. Matters of concern are referred to the Principal, the CSO and the relevant Department of Education officer where appropriate.

Where a student is not able to attend school for a prolonged period of time due to a medical condition or illness, the School in collaboration with parents, provides resources to contribute to the student's continuum of learning where possible. The CSO monitors each school's compliance with student attendance and management of non-attendance as part of the system's School Review and Development (SRD) processes. The School's attendance monitoring procedures are based on the [*Guidelines for the Management of Student Attendance in the Broken Bay Diocesan Schools System*](#) (password required).

SECTION FOUR: STAFFING PROFILE

Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2014:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
24	6	30

* This number includes 14 full-time teachers and 10 part-time teachers.

Teacher Standards

The NSW government requires that this Report detail the number of teachers in particular categories. The following table sets out this information. Further information about can be obtained from the [My School](#) website.

Teacher Qualifications		Number of Teachers
1	Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	24
2	Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	0

Professional Learning

The ongoing professional development of each staff member is highly valued. Professional learning (PL) can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific in-services, meetings and conferences and a range of professional learning programs provided by the CSO. The School takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating and tracking staff professional learning. Individual staff members take responsibility for their ongoing professional development. All teachers have been involved in professional learning opportunities during the year related to improving student outcomes. The following table provides specific information relating to the focus of three of these staff development days.

Day 1	Staff Spirituality
Day 2	Mathematical Assessment Interviews
Day 3	Science and Technology - The New Syllabus

The staff are committed to professional learning. They work collaboratively to develop the

annual School Improvement Plan (SIP) goals and align their professional learning to achieve these goals within their classrooms and also within the whole school. Staff present at regular staff meetings and attend diocesan and network professional learning sessions.

SECTION FIVE: MISSION

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Broken Bay exist to educate and form young people in a Catholic Community of Discipleship; offering them experiences of following Jesus as members of the Catholic community. Mission is therefore the philosophical core of all the priority areas and of our schools. The Broken Bay K-12 Religious Education Curriculum was launched in 2005 by Bishop David Walker. This curriculum provides teachers with the opportunity to develop engaging and challenging learning experiences for their students and is comprised of three sections: (i) foundations (ii) syllabus (iii) modules. A distinctive feature of the syllabus is a statement of the Catholic Worldview that is integral to all that we do. It provides insights on the purpose of life and how we live it. In the words of Bishop David Walker, it is 'experiencing life through the eyes of our Catholic faith'.

The School explicitly teaches Religious Education but just as important, are the community relationships based on the person of Jesus.

The Mercy Charism is embedded in many school learning and mission-related activities; it has helped students to feel a sense of belonging to a wider religious and faith community and to become involved in practices through which their faith is given practical expression. This is evident through every child attending parish Mass every week with parish masses being held on Tuesdays and Thursdays. This year a new administrator was appointed to the parish. A positive relationship continues to develop between school and parish, priest, principal and staff. Our deacon continues weekly class visits where he provides information to the students about the liturgical life of the Church.

Students are encouraged to live out the school vision and mission statement. This is evident in the Mercy Action Group (MAG) group and 'The Dish', where the families in the School provide meals to the local homeless community.

Each grade was responsible for their ministries at a Sunday Parish Mass throughout the year, with parents organising a community morning tea afterwards.

All classrooms had a sacred space with Catholic icons including use of liturgical colours, scripture and connections with the current Religious Education modules taught.

The bond with the neighbouring parish school, St Bernard's School at Berowra Heights, has continued in 2014. Many opportunities to unite and celebrate together were sought. To celebrate St Patrick's Day, all of the children from St Bernard's came to school and Mass and a day of celebrations was had. Similarly, all children from St Patrick's visited St Bernard's to celebrate the feast day of St Bernard. Our Year 6 children joined with the other Year 6 children

from the diocesan North Shore cluster of schools to celebrate Mass at Sacred Heart Church at Pymble. Our Year 5 children joined with St Bernard's for a leadership camp in Term 4, where liturgies were celebrated together concentrating on the leadership of Jesus.

The School continued its involvement in Project Compassion and the Mercy Candela Appeal where all children learned about the importance of hygiene and adequate sanitation in third world countries and the difference a simple toilet and shower can make to a community.

SECTION SIX: CURRICULUM, LEARNING AND TEACHING

Primary Curriculum

The School provides an educational program based on, and taught in accordance with the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) syllabuses for primary education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology (S&T), Human Society and its Environment (HSIE), Creative Arts (CA) and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE). In 2014 the School implemented the new NSW syllabus for the Australian Curriculum in English and Mathematics. In addition to this, the School implements the Diocesan Religious Education syllabus. Staff members are committed to continuous improvement of teaching and learning in all facets of the curriculum.

There are many sound teaching and learning practices at the School. Consistently strong NAPLAN results and quality student work samples are testament to thorough programming, assessment that informs instruction and high quality teaching.

The work established through the School's participation in Extending Mathematical Understanding (EMU) was continued and consolidated. Two new EMU specialists were trained and were able to target two groups of at-risk Year 1 students. Once again teachers used the Mathematics Assessment Interview (MAI) to establish student *Growth Points* at the beginning of the year.

Science and Technology was also a focus in 2014 with the 2015 implementation of the new NSW Science and Technology syllabus for the Australian Curriculum. Professional learning focussing on the content and scope of this new syllabus has been extensively undertaken. In addition to developing a new scope and sequence, teachers have been engaged in designing units of work that meet the outcomes and organisation of this syllabus. Consolidation of the implementation of Mathematics and English syllabuses has been ongoing.

The School has a strong focus on incorporating Information, Communication, Learning Technologies (ICLT) to support learning. Every classroom is well equipped with Interactive Whiteboards (IWB) and various digital devices.

The School has researched the use of iPads in primary schools and is in the final stages of implementing a one-to-one iPad program, 'Bring Your Own Designated Device' (BYODD), that will occur in 2015 for Years 4 to 6.

SECTION SEVEN: STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS

NAPLAN

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists the School's planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

The tables below show the percentages of students who achieved particular skill bands in the aspects of literacy and numeracy compared to students nationally. Literacy is reported in four content strands (aspects): Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy is reported as a single content strand. Students who were exempted from any test were deemed not to have met the national minimum standard in that test area and are not included in band distributions. Additional NAPLAN student performance information can also be accessed from the [My School website](#).

NAPLAN RESULTS 2014		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 3	Grammar and Punctuation	87.50 %	49.90 %	1.80 %	11.90 %
	Reading	80.40 %	46.20 %	1.80 %	13.10 %
	Writing	82.20 %	39.10 %	0.00 %	11.20 %
	Spelling	71.50 %	43.70 %	0.00 %	14.80 %
	Numeracy	62.50 %	36.20 %	3.60 %	13.40 %

NAPLAN RESULTS 2014		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	68.70 %	36.60 %	0.00 %	16.10 %
	Reading	49.00 %	34.50 %	2.00 %	16.30 %
	Writing	29.40 %	15.50 %	5.90 %	21.40 %
	Spelling	56.80 %	33.60 %	5.90 %	16.40 %
	Numeracy	45.10 %	25.90 %	2.00 %	18.10 %

NAPLAN Comments

Student achievement data indicates that more students generally achieve in the top 2 bands in both Years 3 and 5 compared to the State and Nationally.

At least 62% of Year 3 students scored in the top 2 bands in all testing areas. In grammar and punctuation, 87% of Year 3 students achieved scores compared to 49.9% nationally. In reading, 80% of Year 3 students achieved scores in the top 2 skill bands compared to 46% of students nationally. In writing, 82% of Year 3 students achieved scores in the top 2 bands compared to 39% of students nationally. In spelling, 71% of Year 3 students achieved in the top 2 bands compared to 43% of students nationally. In numeracy, 62% of Year 3 students achieved in the top 2 bands compared to 36% of students nationally.

With regard to Year 5, 68% of students scored in the top two bands in grammar and punctuation, compared to 36% of students nationally. In reading, 49% of students scored in the top two bands compared with 34 nationally. In writing, 29% scored in the top two bands compared with 15% nationally. In spelling, 56% of students scored in the top two bands compared to 33% of students nationally. In numeracy, 45% of students scored in the top two bands compared with 25% nationally.

No Year 3 student was placed in the bottom two bands of writing and spelling and in Year 5 no student was placed in the bottom 2 bands of grammar and punctuation.

The school will continue to refine the literacy and numeracy programs, with an emphasis on Extending Mathematical Understanding (EMU), with intervention in Year 1 to assist students in Mathematics.

Pastoral Care Policy

The School's pastoral care and student wellbeing policies and procedures are informed by the *Pastoral Care Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools*. This policy is underpinned by the guiding principles from the *National Safe Schools Framework (2011) (NSSF)* that represent fundamental beliefs about safe, supportive and respectful school communities. These guiding principles emphasise the importance of student safety and wellbeing as a pre-requisite for effective learning in all Catholic school settings. The *Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Framework for Learning for the Diocese of Broken Bay Schools System* (the 'Framework') utilises the NSSF ensuring that diocesan systemic schools meet the objectives of the NSSF at the same time as meeting the diocesan vision for pastoral care and wellbeing. The framework includes ten pathways that are intended to assist school communities to create safe schools that foster wellbeing for learning and positive, caring relationships. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the [CSO website](#) or by contacting the CSO.

The very strong sense of community is genuinely appreciated by students, parents and teachers. The recent School Review reported that teachers are approachable and available and confidently rely on each other for advice, support and professional collegiality. Students feel safe and welcome at the school and it was noted that "Even the rules are fun: they keep me safe."

Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy

The School's policies and procedures for the management of student behaviour are aligned to the *Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools*. Policies operate within a context of social justice, compassion, reconciliation and forgiveness. The dignity and responsibility of each person is promoted at all times along with positive student behaviours whilst ensuring the respect for the rights of all students and staff. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the [CSO website](#) or by contacting the CSO.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The School's Anti-Bullying Policy is based on and informed by the *Anti-Bullying Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools* and is aligned to the *Pastoral Care Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools* and other related wellbeing policies and guidelines. All students, their families and employees within Catholic education have a right to a learning and work environment free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. Anti-Bullying policies support school communities to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the [CSO website](#) or by contacting the CSO.

The School aligns its Mercy values of compassion, hospitality, respect, service, option for the poor and justice with its teaching and implementation of the Anti-Bullying policy. To support this, the School engaged STARRS productions (<http://www.starrs.com.au/about.php>) to present performances on *Cyber Bulling* for Years 3 to 6 and *The Bully is Back* for all students K-6. A core belief of the School is that every member of the community has the right to an environment that is free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. The whole community shares a responsibility to prevent, promote and restore right relationships.

Complaints and Grievances Policy

The School follows the *Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures for Diocesan Systemic Schools*. A distinctive feature of this policy is to ensure that complaints are addressed in a timely and confidential manner at the lowest appropriate management level in order to prevent minor problems or concerns from escalating. The expectation is that complaints will be brought forward and resolved in a respectful manner recognising the dignity of each person concerned in the process. The policy recognises that a number of more minor or simple matters can be resolved without recourse to the formal complaint handling process but rather, quickly and simply, by discussion between the appropriate people. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the [CSO website](#) or by contacting the CSO.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Through its Mercy values the School is continually promoting the respect and responsibility each member of the community should have for self and each other. This is lived out in many ways, including through the School's involvement in 'The Dish' where students and parents prepare meals at school, and then the parents distribute them to the homeless on their rostered evening. Through this, and other outreach programs, students and parents respect the dignity of the individual and our responsibility to share and support those in less fortunate circumstances. Students are continually reminded of and acknowledged for their good manners, thoughtfulness and willingness to offer their services in helping others.

SECTION NINE: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Strategic planning ensures a common purpose and agreed values are established. In Broken Bay systemic schools, this common purpose and agreed values along with goals, targets and key improvement strategies are documented in the School Improvement Plan (SIP). This SIP is a three year planning document and is used to record the School's progress in working towards priorities for improvement in three domains: Mission, Pastoral Care, Learning and Teaching. School improvement planning is supported systemically by the *Diocesan Leading Learning* initiative. This initiative is research based and has been developed in partnership with the University of Auckland.

Key Improvements Achieved

Much was achieved in 2014. A brief overview is provided:

- In the Mission domain, the focus was on prayer. This involved a degree of professional learning for staff that then filtered down into the children's prayer life.
- In the Learning and Teaching domain, time was spent on the new Science and Technology syllabus, to be implemented in 2015. A number of staff meetings and a staff development day was allocated to this new learning.
- In the Pastoral Care domain, the School continued with *Kidsmatter*, which provides a mental health and wellbeing framework for primary schools.

Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

The 2015 SIP, will focus on the following:

- Mission: Improving student engagement and achievement in Religious Education, with a focus on rich learning experiences.
- Learning and Teaching: Improving student engagement and achievement in Mathematics, with a focus on 'Number'.
- Pastoral Care: Improving student wellbeing, with a focus on social and emotional learning.

SECTION TEN: COMMUNITY SATISFACTION

The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students. This year, a variety of processes have been used to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the School from parents, students and teachers.

Parent Satisfaction

A survey of school satisfaction was conducted by Macquarie Marketing Group (MMG). Survey data indicated a very high overall satisfaction by the parents with the school; a sample of this analysis is provided:

- 95% of parents' expectations met with the quality of teaching
- 97% of parents' expectations met with the focus on student welfare, providing a safe and caring environment
- 99% of parents' expectations met with the school's values and
- 97% of parents' expectations met with the balanced education the school has to offer.

Student Satisfaction

The MMG survey data indicates a very high overall satisfaction by the students with the school. The students were especially satisfied with:

- the friendly and welcoming atmosphere
- the positive relationships between students and staff
- quality of education
- sports activities and extra curricula opportunities
- excursions.

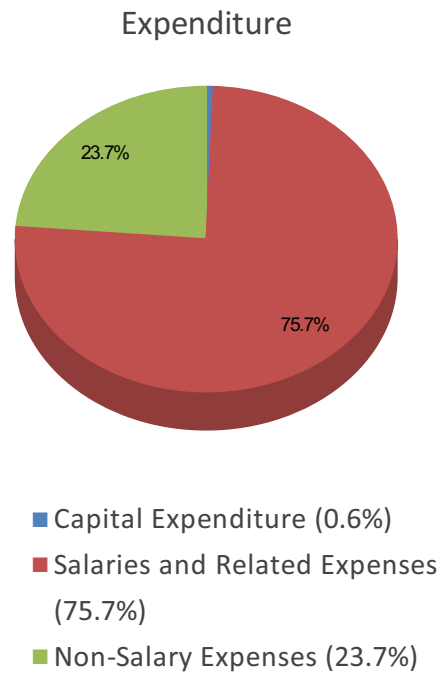
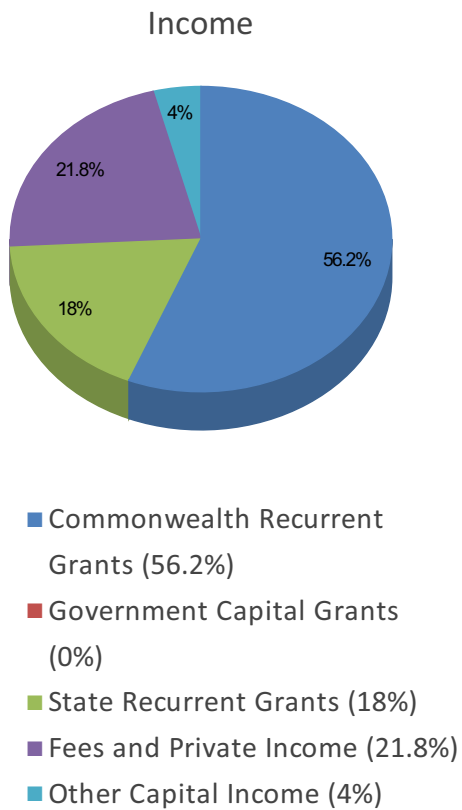
The satisfaction score for boys was marginally higher than that for girls (90% / 89%).

Teacher Satisfaction

The MMG survey data indicates a very high overall satisfaction by the staff with the School. The survey identified high overall satisfaction levels in areas pertaining to Catholic practices, Philosophy and Faith, Teaching and Learning, Pastoral Care and Community. There is a strong alignment between the parents, students and staff with their high satisfaction of the School.

SECTION ELEVEN: FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Consistent with the BOSTES requirements, financial income and expenditure for the School is shown below. More detailed financial data is available on the [My School website](#). Diocesan system financial reporting can be found in the [Broken Bay Diocese Annual Report](#).



RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants	\$2,246,220
Government Capital Grants	\$0
State Recurrent Grants	\$719,357
Fees and Private Income	\$872,507
Other Capital Income	\$161,561
Total Income	\$3,999,644

RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	
Capital Expenditure	\$22,047
Salaries and Related Expenses	\$2,750,679
Non-Salary Expenses	\$861,404
Total Expenditure	\$3,634,130