

# HARRISTOWN STATE HIGH SCHOOL

## School Annual Report 2007



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### Descriptive Information

*Harristown State High School is a public co-educational Year 8 to 12 secondary school situated in the city of Toowoomba approximately 120 km west of Brisbane. The school draws students from a range of partner primary schools through out Toowoomba and neighbouring rural communities. Our school opened the 2007 school year with an enrolment of 1711 students.*

Harristown State High School has successfully undertaken a rigorous accreditation process with the Council of International Schools. This highly regarded and demanding standard of school effectiveness was awarded in 2003. A full review of the school's status was undertaken in March 2008.

At Harristown, all students are encouraged to achieve their potential, to develop a strong work ethic and to extend their talents in as many ways as possible.

The School Annual Report provides an overview of key aspects of the 2007 school year. The Annual Report is one significant way in which the school meets accountability and outlines the school's achievements and areas of development for this report period.

*Further information is available on our website [www.harristoshs.eq.edu.au](http://www.harristoshs.eq.edu.au) or upon request from the school.*

### Distinctive Curriculum Offerings

*Harristown State High School continues to be innovative in its implementation of study programs in both the Middle Phase of Learning and Senior Phase of Learning. The curriculum allows for students to progress through an exciting and motivating curricula and the opportunity for project based learning.*

*The senior phase curriculum provides an extensive range of choices. Harristown State High School has a partnership with USQ to provide direct entry to tertiary studies with Principal endorsement. An effective Special Education Unit operates on site to provide appropriate individualized programs for students identified for support due to a learning disability delivered within an inclusive environment.*

*A distinctive aspect of the curriculum delivery in both the Middle Phase of Learning and Senior Phase of Learning has been the development of a range of 'Specialisation Programs' across the curriculum. There are four (4) main areas where distinctive specialization occurs. This includes academia, industrial skills, sport and the arts.*

The school actively supports and encourages students' participation in a wide range of co curricular activities. In previous years, the school's performances in the arts resulted in significant outcomes in two of Queensland's premier competitions – that being the Rock Eisteddfod and Fanfare. Continuing successes in the field of dance and music performance have not only value added to the offerings to our students, but resulted in a range of invitations to perform at regional and state functions. Our extensive sports program supported by specialist staff and facilities resulted in many sporting successes in such sports as soccer, softball, and hockey.

*In addition to the school's formal curriculum, students have access to a vast array of extra curricular activities such as:*

- \* *Debating / Public Speaking*
- \* *Arts Program to include visual, performing, dance and concert / stage bands, vocal groups.*
- \* *Extensive sports with special program in the following offerings such as volleyball, soccer (QAS endorsed), basketball, gymnastics, rugby league, softball, baseball and many others.*
- \* *Academic competitions*
- \* *Community Service clubs / activities*
- \* *Leadership programs*
- \* *Student Representative Council*
- \* *Tours, camps and excursions*

*These programs have significant support from both the school and broader community and our students represent Harristown State High School with distinction, pride and consistently achieve in external competitions and events.*

The school's technology facilities have developed to an outstanding level with networks operating across all buildings on campus. Seven fully equipped computer laboratories housing some 375 computers, with others located in pods within various facilities are linked to the internet and utilize up to date software. (Two ICT group computer labs have been established.) This approach to technology education is not to be regarded as an add-on, but as a tool to integrate new and exciting approaches to learning and teaching across the curriculum. Such an innovative approach to technology has led to Harristown State High School being invited as one of six schools to develop partnerships with key ICT industry organisations such as Microsoft to further enhance industry standard skills of the classroom. This initiative known as the ICT Gateway Program will significantly enhance the skill and knowledge of both students and staff in the coming years.

In 2007, the school began a general classroom refurbishment program. This program is expected to be a priority for the next 2 years.

### **Social Climate**

Parent and student responses in recent School Opinion Surveys confirm Harristown State High School has a positive school and learning climate. Our school values the achievement, happiness and success of all students and a range of programs and support personnel are provided to cater for the needs of the broader cohort such as:

- \* Lunchtime activities and competitions
- \* Extra-curricular activities
- \* Camps / Tours
- \* Rock Eisteddfod
- \* Stage / Concert Bands
- \* Vocal Groups
- \* Student Representative Council
- \* Sporting programs

*Our school's extensive 'Pastoral Care' program called "Healthy Hawks" is constantly under review to ensure relevance, given changing student needs. This program is supported through the services provided by a Chaplain, School Based Nurse, School Based Police Officer, Community Education Counsellor, Defence Transition Officer, Guidance Officer and Behaviour Management Staff.*

### **Parents and Community**

A range of forums and strategies are utilized to encourage active parent participation in the education of their children such as:

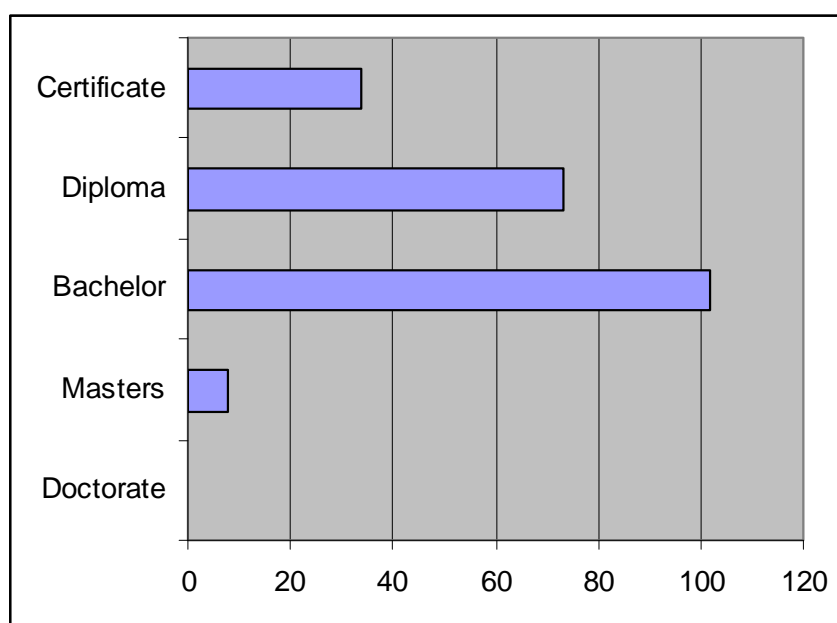
- \* Parents' and Citizens' meetings
- \* Specific Parent forums aligned to student, curriculum and reporting outcomes
- \* Individualised meetings
- \* Parent forums to outline school operational functions
- \* Staff involvement in school cluster visits
- \* Weekly newsletter, local media publications and website publications
- \* Personalized correspondence
- \* Involvement in a volunteer capacity such as Tuckshop, transporting / supporting students in extra-curricular activities

- \* Attendance at school functions and activities such as awards ceremonies and sporting occasions
- \* Annual external survey of parents to determine satisfactory levels aligned to student outcomes, curriculum, resources
- \* School community relations
- \* Participation in Strategic Committees

*Partnerships with our parent body and broader community continue to be open and timely, resulting in a positive impact on the individual student, along with building overall school capacity and reputation.*

### **Staffing Information**

Harristown State High School has an experienced and stable staff whose practices are based around a genuine care for our students. Many of them are committed, dynamic and energetic innovators in their respective fields. Harristown staff are active members of professional associations and contribute to the broad educational agenda as leaders in their areas of expertise. This translates into the consistent employment of a wide range of strategies both in and out of the classroom to cater for the wide range of abilities for our students. This philosophy of supporting students, along with providing opportunities to succeed, assists enormously in our students' development for life after school.



Harristown State High School employs 'Learning and Development' strategies to support key school and systemic directions. Staff learning and development is designed to have a particular emphasis on the continued development of a whole school learning environment. In 2007, \$81,119 was spent on Professional Development activities with 80% involvement of the teaching staff. Average staff attendance for the school, based on unplanned sick and emergent leave for periods of up to five days was 97%. Proportion of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 88%.

### **Key Student Outcomes**

<i>Average student attendance rate</i>	<b>95%</b>
<i>Total Number of Senior Certificates awarded in 2007</i>	<b>219</b>
<i>Percentage of OP-eligible students with OP 1-15</i>	<b>56%</b>
<i>Percentage of students awarded Senior Certificates and awarded a VET qualification</i>	<b>63%</b>
<i>Year 12 student enrolment as a percentage of their Year 8 enrolment cohort.</i>	<b>78%</b>
<i>Percentage of students awarded Senior Certificates with OP-eligibility or awarded a VET qualification</i>	<b>95%</b>
<i>Percentage of QTAC Applicants receiving an offer</i>	<b>93%</b>

*At the time of publishing this Annual Report, the results of the 2006 Year 12 post-schools destinations survey, Next Step – Student Destination Report for the school were not available. Information about these post-school destinations of our students will be on our website as soon as it is received.*

## School Improvement Programs – 2007

There were a number of activities the school undertook during 2007 to improve its learning program:

- \* The school went through a major review of its core and specialisation programs. The strategic programs that emerged through the process aimed to build on the established programs such as literacy, the arts and sport as well as ways to improve student learning such as ICT, thinking skills, learning support and library services.
- \* Introductory subjects in the senior phase of learning began in semester 2, Year 10. This will transition to semester 1, Year 10 from 2009.
- \* The school redeveloped its pastoral care program to have a stronger emphasis on personal development, study skills and citizenship. This was done to support the house structure in the school
- \* A higher number of students achieved qualifications in VET as a part of their coursework.
- \* A stronger emphasis on drafting of assignments across the whole school improved student assessment submission rates.

The school continues to be a place where many students feel a strong sense of connection and ownership. The extensive range of curricula and co-curricula programs promotes this. This is clearly reflected through the school opinion survey data, outlined elsewhere in this document.

## School Opinion Survey

Student, parent and staff opinion surveys are used to gauge satisfaction with key aspects of schools. Data is collected annually from specially designed representative samples of parents and students at each Education Queensland school in the state. Information within this survey assists us in future decision making regarding this great school. Individual schools receive a report on the data each year. *Details relating to Harristown State High School's results for 2007 are listed below for your information.*

*This guide will assist you in interpreting the figures:*

Average (Mean)	Satisfaction Range
0.00 – 0.80	Very Dissatisfied
0.81 – 1.60	Dissatisfied
1.61 – 2.40	Neutral
2.41 – 3.20	Satisfied
3.21 – 4.00	Very Satisfied

*Please note: **Like Schools** are identified as schools across the state that share a number of similar characteristics to Harristown State High School.*

	Comparative Results (Average)		
	Harristown	State	Like School
<b>Student Outcomes</b> ( <i>Focus on student progress, skills and learning</i> )			
Student Opinion	<b>2.90</b>	2.59	2.67
Parent Opinion	<b>2.71</b>	2.92	2.85
<b>Curriculum</b> ( <i>What's being taught</i> )			
Student Opinion	<b>2.96</b>	2.66	2.76
Parent Opinion	<b>2.93</b>	2.97	2.93
<b>Pedagogy</b> ( <i>How we teach and learn</i> )			
Student Opinion	<b>2.81</b>	2.60	2.66
Parent Opinion	<b>2.53</b>	2.82	2.66
<b>Learning Climate</b> ( <i>Interest and encouragement given</i> )			
Student Opinion	<b>2.60</b>	2.35	2.42
Parent Opinion	<b>2.71</b>	2.96	2.81
<b>School Climate</b> ( <i>Student behaviour, relationships, safety and fairness</i> )			
Student Opinion	<b>2.76</b>	2.49	2.61
Parent Opinion	<b>2.51</b>	2.84	2.75
<b>School Community Relations</b> ( <i>Approachable staff, ability to participate in school life</i> )			
Parent Opinion	<b>2.66</b>	2.94	2.79

<b>Resources</b> ( <i>School facilities and access to technology</i> )			
Student Opinion	<b>2.82</b>	2.48	2.56
Parent Opinion	<b>2.73</b>	2.90	2.80
<b>Overall Rating for all Questions</b>			
Student Opinion	<b>2.81</b>	2.53	2.61
Parent Opinion	<b>2.68</b>	2.90	2.80
	<b>Comparative Results (Average)</b>		
	<b>Harristown</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Like School</b>
<b>Physical Work Environment</b>			
Staff Opinion	<b>2.46</b>	2.75	2.51
<b>Relationships</b>			
Staff Opinion	<b>2.82</b>	3.02	2.89
<b>School Operations</b>			
Staff Opinion	<b>2.68</b>	2.80	2.68
<b>Staff Morale</b>			
Staff Opinion	<b>2.86</b>	2.98	2.82
<b>Support, Resources and Training</b>			
Staff Opinion	<b>2.46</b>	2.66	2.52
<b>Work Roles</b>			
Staff Opinion	<b>2.75</b>	2.94	2.86
<b>Work Value and Recognition</b>			
Staff Opinion	<b>2.68</b>	2.90	2.79
<b>Overall Rating for all Questions</b>			
Staff Opinion	<b>2.68</b>	2.86	2.72

### **Future Outlook**

Harristown State High School offers an extensive educational experience that is success orientated. Our students are exposed to a middle school program designed by staff, aligned to Education Queensland's Key learning area syllabuses, with strong links to 'project based learning'. The focus for reporting to parents is around what the student can do as apposed to what can't be achieved. Reporting strategies for 2006/07 will be alignment to the recently announced (5) point national report card.

Harristown State High School clearly understands that not every student will want to progress to tertiary studies. Given this, a broad range of study options are available for students wishing to make a direct transition from school to the workforce. These options include Queensland Studies Authority registered study area specification which includes industry level training and certification. Part-time traineeship and apprenticeships are also available within this study option. Further development of links / partnerships with industry to support opportunities for students to attain higher certification levels whilst at school will be the focus for 2007 and beyond.