The annual Gold Award picnic day was held by the SDEHS Learning and Support Team and the Ernst & Young Research and Development Team on 27 November 2015 to celebrate our students' hard work and accomplishments throughout the year. Friendships were forged between students, supervisors and staff from Learning and Support and Ernst & Young through challenges including the Towers of Terror (a newspaper construction contest that produced fabulous results), King Ball, Captain Ball, Christine Says, soccer skills and, for some R & R, colouring activities. A wonderful lunch was kindly provided by the Ernst & Young team before students received their prizes. The Learning and Support team would like to thank the Ernst & Young team for their generous support of our students.

To secure an invitation to the fun and games of the 2016 picnic, students will need to achieve a Gold Award. All students are encouraged to start working towards this goal by earning 30 school Achievement Awards.

*Post bundles of 10 awards back to school with your work. They will be returned to you with the new award.
Senior executive message

Welcome to all our new students, their families and friends. We are looking forward to a totally terrific year!

One change this year is an enhanced senior executive to support students, families and staff. David Tracy is our Deputy Principal 1, Daniel Rattigan has joined the team as DP 2, Lisa Keating is DP 3 and our previous DP 2, Julie Kennedy, has a new role as DP 4 for three days a week. They all have big roles and responsibilities that you can check out on our website.

One extra job they have is to contribute to this senior executive message so you will read a range of perspectives as you enjoy our newsletters this year!

I just said that we looked forward to a totally terrific year. Last year was also very special. Thank you to all those who came to join celebrations at our three Presentation Days, and thank you to everyone who contributed to our school magazine which really reflects our school’s unique diversity.

In this newsletter you will read about some of the results from last year’s Tell Them From Me Surveys. They are really impressive and reflect strong relationships across our school community. Last year, we could add a few of this school’s own questions to the main survey and I wanted to know how good students, parents and teachers thought this school was!

In this school, we gather so much data to identify what we do well and to help us develop the wisdom to do even better. Sometimes, however, just a simple question can really nail it … and get to the essence of what is most important.

We asked, How good is this school?

For students and teachers – for you.

For parents – for your child.

It’s a great question because it allows the space for each individual to bring their own understanding and their own wisdom to an answer.

The possible answers wereExcellent, Very good, Good, OK and No good.

The numbers speak for themselves.

Student Responses (72)
Excellent, Very good, Good – 84%
Add in OK – 98%

Parent Responses (193)
Excellent, Very good, Good – 93.6%
Add in OK – 98.9%

Teacher Responses (172)
Excellent, Very good, Good – 95.9%
Add in OK – 100%

Thank you.

[Signature]

Congratulations to the following Top Achievers and Distinguished Achievers – students who gained over 90 in a subject.

First Place in Course | Course
--- | ---
Wilson, Benjamin | Aboriginal Studies

Top Achievers | Place | Course
--- | --- | ---
Julian, Justin | 4 | Music Extension
McKenna, Sean | 6 | Business Services Examination
Poate, Olivia | 10 | Textiles and Design
Tye, Celine | 10 | Industrial Technology Multimedia
Wilson, Benjamin | 1 | Aboriginal Studies

Distinguished Achievers | Students who have gained over 90 in a subject
--- | ---
Ashley-Turner, Phoebe | Food Technology & Senior Science
Atkins, Lashana | Community and Family Studies & Food Technology
Brades, Elijah | Industrial Technology Multimedia
Dreyer, Alexandra | Dance
Furniss, Alexander | Personal Development, Health and Physical Education
Green, Marni | Dance
Hillsmith, Ruby | History Extension
Julian, James | Music Extension
Julian, Justin | Music Extension
Lappin, Chloe | Dance
Macourt, Lucy Pamela | Business Studies, Mathematics General 2, Music 2 & Music Extension
McGregor, Eila | Community and Family Studies
McKenna, Sean | Business Services Examination
McMillan, Simon | Senior Science
Morjanoff, Caiden | Mathematics Extension 1 & Mathematics Extension 2
Nicolson, Juliet | Music 1 & Entertainment Industry Examination
Tye, Celine | Biology, Business Studies & Industrial Technology Multimedia
Congratulations to the following students on the completion of the HSC 2015 and their successful admission to university or other tertiary courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>ATAR</th>
<th>Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ruby Hillsmith</td>
<td>97.20</td>
<td>B. Psychology/B. Arts, University of Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justin Julian</td>
<td>97.00</td>
<td>B. Viola Performance, Sydney Conservatorium of Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Julian</td>
<td>94.60</td>
<td>B. Music, Sydney Conservatorium of Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucy Macourt</td>
<td>94.05</td>
<td>B. Music Performance, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, Sydney Scholars Award Scholarship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celine Tye</td>
<td>92.60</td>
<td>B. Computing/B. Science, University of New South Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Furniss</td>
<td>91.50</td>
<td>B. Business, University of Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Guda</td>
<td>85.00</td>
<td>B. Medicinal Chemistry, University of Technology Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elijah Brades</td>
<td>85.00</td>
<td>B. Engineering Software, University of Technology Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Alessi</td>
<td>84.80</td>
<td>B. Commerce, Macquarie University, continuing to play for Western Sydney Wanderers football club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angela Shi</td>
<td>84.60</td>
<td>B. Nutrition Science, University of Wollongong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Schramko</td>
<td>83.00</td>
<td>B. Arts Psychology, Macquarie University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eila McGregor</td>
<td>82.85</td>
<td>B. Science, University of Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Stein</td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td>B. Engineering Mechatronics, Macquarie University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon Saha</td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td>B. Arts/B. Law, Notre Dame University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Ward</td>
<td>77.10</td>
<td>SAE Institute Australia Software design-Game Development, Matthew has been offered a place at the Melbourne Vicentre Swimming Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aidan McRitchie</td>
<td>77.00</td>
<td>B. Science, University of Technology Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lashana Atkins</td>
<td>75.90</td>
<td>B. Social Work, Australian Catholic University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stamatia Skapetis</td>
<td></td>
<td>B. Arts, Macquarie University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cristian Gonzalez</td>
<td>73.60</td>
<td>B. Business Sport Management, Western Sydney University, continuing to play soccer for Sydney FC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sean McKenna</td>
<td>73.50</td>
<td>B. Business Property Management, Western Sydney University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexandra Piro</td>
<td>72.00</td>
<td>Rambert School of Ballet &amp; Contemporary Dance, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Kinsela</td>
<td></td>
<td>B. Social Science Psychology, Western Sydney University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jett Tay</td>
<td>70.00</td>
<td>Sound &amp; Production Cert 4, North Sydney TAFE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adele Blanks</td>
<td></td>
<td>B. Arts Psychology, Western Sydney University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olivia Thomson</td>
<td>62.20</td>
<td>Diploma Legal Services, University of Wollongong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vivekram Raja</td>
<td></td>
<td>Diploma in Management, Macquarie University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francesca Haworth</td>
<td></td>
<td>B. Nursing, Notre Dame University</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following students were nominated for the prestigious showcasing of student excellence by both the Department of Education and the Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW.

**Music: ENCORE**

Justin Julian performed *Capriccio* by composer Henri Vieuxtemps and Zac Olsen performed *Aria* by composer Bozza in the Concert Hall, Sydney Opera House on Monday 22 February.
Emily Arthur

Team flag-bearer Emily Arthur Year 11 has delivered Australia’s first medal at the Winter Youth Olympics in Lillehammer, Norway with silver in the halfpipe. Congratulations Emily!

Mitzi Gardner

Mitzi Year 11 performed a solo piece at the Schools Spectacular in November 2015.

Keanu and Denali Blunden

Keanu (right) Year 12 and Denali, his brother in Year 10 have both been selected to the Australian team for the World Junior Short Track Speed Skating Championships.

Thomas Dilley

Thomas Dilley Year 10 performed in front of the state’s finest dancers from the Ballet Ensemble accompanied by the symphony orchestra at the Schools Spectacular in November 2015. He has just been accepted into the prestigious Australian Ballet School in Melbourne. Congratulations Thomas!

Adobe Connect Lessons

During Terms 2 & 3 SDEHS will be holding regular synchronous lessons for students using the webconferencing tool Adobe Connect. Students enrolled in Mathematics General Year 11, Visual Arts Year 12, Science Year 9 and all senior PDHPE courses will be invited to participate in lessons from home (or centre) on their computer using verbal interaction or screen sharing. Recordings of the lessons will be available to students who are unable to attend the lessons.

Your teacher will provide more information during Term 1.
On Friday 30 November 2015 I attended the Science Spectacular Study Day. This was a day for students interested in finding out about the different sciences that could be done in Years 11 and 12. It was a great day and we learnt so much.

The first activity we got to do was related to Earth and Environmental Studies. We made a fossil using modelling clay and plaster. We covered so much information in such a short time.

Next Michael Marusic the Chemistry teacher helped us learn about alcohol and how it can be used to make plastic and did a demonstration of combustion. He also talked about acids and bases and how they can both burn us.

We then went on to study some Physics. Each of us was given a lemon, a strip of copper and a paper clip and asked to make a battery. We were told to insert the strip of copper and the paper clip inside the lemon. We then connected it to a voltage meter and found we had a charge. It worked, we had made a battery. All of us were surprised that you can get power from a lemon!

Biology was next and we got a chance to discover enzymes and the microscopic world. This was really fun because we were able to use the microscope to look at a variety of plants and bugs in detail. We also got to have a look at a sample of Sydney Harbour water and some of the different microscopic creatures that live in it.

Senior Science was the last of the subjects we got a chance to find out about. That was good too. We learnt about UV light and the Great Barrier Reef. We did some population calculations and got to eat some lollies as well.

We all had a fun day. I enjoyed the experiments and hope to have more study days like this. We even got pizza for lunch.

Aaron Mearns Year 10

On 8 December 2015 the TAS Faculty held a fun day at the Central Coast Learning Hub, baking and decorating gingerbread men and creating Christmas cards. It was well attended and everyone had a great time, leaving with lots of gingerbread treats.

Wanted – Parents for Panels
Teachers and executive staff often get jobs at this school through selection procedures, including interviews. Every selection panel has a parent representative who has attended a 2 hour training course.

Are you interested?
I am seeking nominations from parents who may be interested in taking part in this important process.
If you are interested, please ring me at school or send me an email at the school email address:
sydneyh-d.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Thank you. Mark Piddington Principal

Come along for a fun day of cooking and making special treats.
RSVP by Tuesday 8 March
Julie Barel 9383 0251
julie.barel@det.nsw.edu.au
Please book online on the SDEHS website
Central Coast Learning Hub Learning Hub Form
Orientation Day
For all new Home Students in Stage 4/5/6

Sydney Distance Education High School invites all new Year 7 to 12 Home students to attend an Orientation Day at the school.

An introduction and welcome will be run by the Year Advisers and Transition teachers. You can meet and greet your teachers during Morning Tea.

The library staff will take you on a ‘Walkabout’ tour and the elearning Team will show you how to access our online learning.

Please look out for the invitation in the mail.

Orientation Day
Tuesday 1 March 2016
Please RSVP by 24 February 2016

Disability Provisions - 2016 Higher School Certificate

The Board of Studies Teaching & Educational Standards offers a number of Disability Provisions to students who may have certain requirements to enable them to successfully complete their Higher School Certificate examinations.

If you will require HSC Disability Provisions to complete your HSC you need to contact Christine Cato.

If you were granted HSC Disability Provisions in 2015 you will need to apply again for this year.

For more information, or to request an application form, please phone: Christine Cato 9383 0296

RoSA Online Literacy and Numeracy Tests

Optional tests in literacy and numeracy are available for students who intend to leave high school before completing their HSC.

The test reports give an overview of a student’s level of achievement in literacy and numeracy, focusing on the skills required by school-leavers for employment and further education.

During Term 1, these tests will be offered to students in Years 11 and 12 at SDEHS each Thursday morning. If you would like to know more about the test, you can visit the NSW Board of Studies website: http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/rosa/literacy-and-numeracy-tests.html or contact Angela Zarocostas (Relieving Head Teacher Secondary Studies – Thursday) on angel.zarocostas@det.nsw.edu.au for further information.

Maths Study Days

Study Days are a great opportunity to meet your teachers and brush up on topics that might be giving you difficulty. They are also a good way to meet other students who are facing the challenges of Distance Education.

The first Year 11 Maths Study Day for 2016 will be held on Wednesday 9th March.

The next Year 12 Study Day will be held Tuesday, 10th May.

Please put this date in your diary and RSVP when you receive your invitation to attend. We look forward to seeing you here at SDEHS soon.

Volunteering

Year 11 student Asher Taylor did some volunteer bandicoot monitoring with a Sydney University scientist at North Head, Manly.

They had to trap and tag bandicoots and take skin samples for DNA plus weigh and measure them. They also checked for babies in pouches.

They assessed health and population numbers as part of a protecting vulnerable species program.
The Mentoring program

Overwhelmed by your studies?  
Want some guidance?  
Try the new Mentoring program at SDEHS

Mentoring at SDEHS is an opportunity for students to develop a connection with a volunteer teacher who will offer support and encouragement on a one-to-one basis.

Mentoring provides a structured and trusting relationship that brings young people together with caring individuals who offer guidance, support and encouragement.

The mentor is not a replacement for a parent nor are they a counsellor or teacher. They are a sounding board and confidant to the young person.

The mentoring partnership is a structured one-to-one relationship that focuses on the needs of the mentored participant. As such, mentoring may be described as the process of ‘walking along beside’ someone with the aim of helping that person achieve their potential.

The mentoring partnership is:
- undertaken willingly
- informed
- interactive
- confidential.

Effective mentoring seeks to establish a trusting relationship between student and mentor that:
- focuses on the needs of the student
- models and fosters caring and supportive relationships to increase self-confidence, awareness and management of behavior
- positive attitudes towards assisting others

Students who are enrolled as home students and who are in Year 7 to Year 12 are invited to participate in this program.

Expression of Interest notification will be sent out to home students so that they can sign up.

For further information please contact:
Supervisor of Girls Therese Metzl, therese.metzl@det.nsw.edu.au or
Supervisor of Boys Mick Brooker, mick.brooker@det.nsw.edu.au.
SDEHS students completing work within the elearning site now have the opportunity of earning badges in a number of their courses. Badges are the online equivalent of the achievement awards that teachers issue to students. Students may earn badges in two ways:

- by completing a certain number of activities in a course, e.g. all of the activities in an online topic, or by showing particular skills across a course. These badges are issued automatically.
- badges also can be manually awarded by teachers when you submit especially impressive work.

When a badge is issued to you, you will receive a message on the elearning site.

To view your badges, click on ‘My Profile’ in the Navigation block. Next click on ‘My Badges’. This will show you a list of the badges you have earned.

To view a list of badges you might earn in a course, go to the course page, and in the Navigation block click on ‘Badges’ then on ‘Course Badges’.

Once you have earned 10 badges, take a screenshot of the ‘My Badges’ page and email the screenshot to your Year Adviser. Each badge is the equivalent of one achievement award and will count towards school rewards. Repeat this for every 10 badges you earn.

If you have any questions about badges don’t hesitate to contact your course teacher.
Study Area Health Check

Welcome to all students and supervisors for 2016. We encourage you to visit, borrow and ask about our resources and services.

Information about the library can be found in your Guide for Students and Supervisors 2016 and on the Library elearning site called Using your School Library. Contact the library to be enrolled in this site which includes research and referencing guides as well as suggestions for HSC English Area of Study related texts. Students can also explore the library catalogue through the school website, follow the link under SDEHS Online.

How do I contact the library?

Our library hours are from 8:30 to 3:15 Monday to Friday. You can call outside these hours and leave a message for library staff. They will return your call the following day. You can also email our librarian direct.

Your library contact options are:

Telephone: 9383 0270
Email: sydneyh-d.school@det.nsw.edu.au and type ‘Library’ in the subject line

You do not need to fill in separate forms to be a library borrower. As soon as you are enrolled you can begin borrowing. Students can borrow up to six resources for four weeks. We can also post resources out to students.

Library News

We would like to encourage all students in Years 7–9 to participate in the NSW Premier’s Reading Challenge 2016. Call the library to find out more and to see whether the books you’ve been reading over the holidays can count towards fulfilling the challenge. Talking books are also available. Earn a school Achievement Award every time you finish five books!

Check the PRC website for further information including booklists for Years 7–9 at https://products.schools.nsw.edu.au/prc/home.html

If you have been watching the new TV series The Family Law on SBS, you will already be aware that Benjamin Law has created a hilarious and warm account of his family and some of his experiences as an Asian Australian teen on the Sunshine Coast. The TV series is based on his memoir of the same name. This book is currently available for loan.

Whether you are new to studying by distance education or have been doing it for a while you will already know that studying independently takes quite a bit of organisation.

The start of a new school year is a good time to run a quick health check on the area where you are doing your work. Use the checklist below to evaluate your study area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Sort of</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. You have a quiet and private space where you can work at home.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. When you do school work, you remove as many distractions as you can from the space where you work at home.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. You turn off music (except classical music) when you are doing work that requires lots of effort or concentration or memory.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. You understand what is meant by ‘ergonomics’ and you have made sure your space at home is set up as ergonomically as possible.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. You take regular breaks when you are working at home and you know of different things you can do in those breaks to reduce eye strain.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. You have a study space in a well lit room and a desk lamp.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. You ensure that when you are studying the room is not too hot or too cold and that the space is well ventilated (with lots of fresh air).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. You keep your workspace clear and uncluttered and pack things away when you are not using them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. You have a space set up for storage at home for past tests, assignments and work you have finished with.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. You have a noticeboard at home where you can keep due dates visible or key documents.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you answered “Sort of” or ‘No’ for some of the questions above it might be a good idea to look at some tips for improving your study area. You should have received an email with instructions on how to access an online study skills handbook at www.studyskillshandbook.com.au If you can’t find your email with the login details for the website, or if you just want some advice on how to get organised please contact your roll call teacher.
Tech Trivia

Be the first SDEHS student to correctly answer the following FIVE questions and email your responses to: eamon.gormley@det.nsw.edu.au. The first correct entry received wins your very own Sydney Distance Education High School COFFEE MUG!

1. Which English mathematician is considered by many to be the founder of computer science and the person who launched the field of artificial intelligence?

2. Did the Apple iPhone first become available in 2005, 2006 or 2007?

3. In terms of computing, what do the letters CPU mean?

4. True or false? Nintendo was founded after the year 1900.

5. Firefox, Opera, Chrome, Safari and Explorer are types of what?

Tell Them From Me (TTFM) Surveys

Thanks to all our students, parents and teachers who took part in the TTFM surveys in 2015. We had 193 parents, 157 students (across 2 surveys) and 172 of our teachers participate in the parent, student and teacher surveys. Nearly 600 schools across the state participated in the surveys. The information gathered from these surveys was invaluable in helping us set improvement measures in targeted areas for our School Plan 2015–2017 which can be accessed on our school website.

Of great significance were the following facts:

From our students’ perspective, our school scored above the state norm in all areas of school factors associated with student engagement which included Quality Instruction, Teacher–Student Relations, Learning Climate and Expectations for Success.

From our parents’ perspective, we scored above the state norm in nearly 75%, including the areas of Inclusive School, Parents Feel Welcome, Parents Are Informed, Parents Support Learning at Home and School Supports Learning.

From our teachers’ perspective, we scored above the state norm or equal to state norm in almost 90% of areas driving student learning including Leadership, Collaboration, Learning Culture, Data Informs Practice, Teaching Strategies, Technology and Parent Involvement.

Home students should have already received a consent form for this year’s Tell Them From Me student survey for Term 1. The survey is confidential and school staff will not be able to identify individual students from their responses. The survey is conducted online and will typically take less than 30 minutes to complete. If you do not want your child or children to participate, please return the consent form to school by Wednesday 9th March. Students will receive a unique username and password before the launch date of 14th March.

Julie Kennedy, DP and Daniel Rattigan, DP

The Central Coast Learning Hub

- Located in the Coast Community Connections complex at 93 McMasters Road, Woy Woy
- Operates between 9.00 am and 3.00 pm each Tuesday of school term
- Book online via the SDEHS home page
- For further information contact Hub Coordinator
  - Duncan Gerdes phone 9383 0235
  - email: duncan.gerdes@det.nsw.edu.au

The South Western Sydney Learning Hub

- Located in the Ingleburn Community Hall, Corner of Oxford and Cumberland Roads, Ingleburn
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Kids helpline

1800 55 1800
http://www.kidshelp.com.au

Parent Line

Free Professional Help 24/7
For Parents & Carers of Children 1-18 in NSW
1300 1300 52

Contact

Address: Forbes Street, WOOLLOOMOOLOO NSW 2011
Postal address: Locked Bag 5000, POTTS POINT NSW 1335
Phone: 02 9383 0200
Fax: 02 9383 0222
Email: sydneyh-d.school@det.nsw.edu.au
International Women's Day at SDEHS

You are invited to help celebrate this special day with afternoon tea and a presentation by students.

Tuesday 8th March 1pm to 2.30pm

Sydney Distance Education High School 38-68 Forbes St , Sydney.

Please RSVP therese.metzl@det.nsw.edu.au or 9383 0413 by Friday 4th March.
The learning hubs have been set up to further support communication, student engagement and learning for SDEHS home students closer to their homes. They are safe learning environments in community settings, where students can attend to receive help with their school work.

Students can also organise to meet with their teachers or welfare, transition or careers team members for individual support.

Both hubs operate between 9.00am and 3.30pm each TUESDAY of the school term. Please see below for information on where our learning hubs are located.

If you would like any further information please follow the links provided below or call our Learning Hub Coordinator:

Duncan Gerdes: (phone) 9383 0235         duncan.gerdes@det.nsw.edu.au

Central Coast Learning Hub
http://tinyurl.com/ofuffmt
Located at: 93 McMasters Road, Woy Woy (In the Peninsula Community Centre opposite Rogers Park)

South Western Sydney Learning Hub
http://tinyurl.com/prhdmj
Located at: Corner of Oxford Road and Cumberland Road, Ingleburn (Entrance on the right hand side, in the School of Arts building next to the library)