



# Unity College

# **PERFORMANCE REPORT**

# 2019



## Mission Statement

Unity College: In the heart of the Murraylands striving for excellence in education and spiritual growth in a safe, caring, forgiving Christian environment.

## Philosophy

Students come first in an exceptionally caring Christian environment where opportunities and diversity result in inspired learning and development.

## How

**We Learn:** Unity helps each student reach their full potential and encourages them to be the best they can be.

**We Care:** Unity cares for students and provides a safe and nurturing environment because 'happy children learn best'.

**We Engage:** Unity provides modern, spacious and functional facilities that engage students who enjoy and have a desire to learn.

**We Involve:** Unity involves parents and the wider community in student learning because 'it takes a village to raise a child'.

**We Inspire:** Unity inspires students through innovative educators who encourage individuality and diversity because each student learns in a different way.

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## From the Principal

*Unity College, in the heart of the Murraylands, striving for excellence in education and spiritual growth in a safe, caring, forgiving Christian environment.*

The College Mission Statement demonstrates the value of our 'Students First' mantra and all that we do at Unity. The statement sits within our strategic plan and has helped to formulate a blueprint moving forward in 2020 and 2021.

At the commencement of the year we announced the student leadership team for 2019. Students and staff were involved in the selection, and voted for Student Leaders, House Captains, Ambassadors and the SRC. Together they form the excellent core group of student leadership for the year. During the first Term these new leaders gathered together for a training day to help them understand their roles as leaders as well as bond together as a cohesive group, ready to lead their teams and inspire other students to do great things in our community.

Unity is an incredible place and one where so much happens and the arranged events and activities seek to engage learners and provide unique ways of applying knowledge to real, hands on and practical experiences for life. For example, Junior and Middle School students were involved in structured 'Inquiry Based Lessons' that enhanced their skills by allowing them to be more independent. In this 21st Century world, knowledge is constantly changing, so it is vitally important to support students to know and understand the purpose behind their learning, how to find information they need and determine if the information is relevant and from a reliable source. Teachers provided structured the 'Inquiry Based Lessons' to encourage students to determine the

information they needed, how they might go about finding that information and how they would present their knowledge in a way that demonstrated their learning. Students were engaged in the process and this gave them insight into 'learning how to learn'.

We also saw students become active learners, engaged and empowered to be the best version of themselves to reach their full potential. We believe that 21st Century students need to be involved in the decisions around what they learn and what this means for their world in the future. We see classrooms as communities of learners, where students can feel comfortable to formulate questions about a topic and are guided by their teachers to discover, explore and learn alongside one another, in an environment that celebrates success.

One of the greatest learning opportunities comes from when we make a mistake. At Unity we acknowledge that we all make mistakes and instead of being concerned, we encourage students to embrace mistakes and consider them as opportunities to learn. We also learn from and with one another, and the sharing of ideas and insights through reflection and discussion is also a major focus of our 'Inquiry Based Lessons' and learning.

The Strategic Plan directs the exploration into the IB Primary Years (PYP) and Middle Years Program (MYP) which in the future will help in forming the framework around our learning programs. It is through this framework, combined with the Australian Curriculum, that we can be assured that our students have all they need to be successful learners both now and in the future. As a College it is our role to partner with parents and caregivers to prepare our students for an ever-changing world. We feel through the 'Inquiry Based Learning' practices, students will be better equipped for the uncertainty of the future and will eagerly embrace all that it has to offer.

Not only does Unity College strive to engage their students in meaningful learning opportunities, but our staff acknowledge they are also learners and were highly engaged in both spiritual and professional development. In 2019 they embraced the opportunity to learn about the connections in our community, discovering ways our Murraylands region provides a wealth of learning opportunities and career pathways that students can be a part of and showcase.

At all times we aim to provide educational experiences that capture community, home, school and the wider Murraylands. Parents, families and the wider community give of their time, talents and effort to add much value to this amazing place and for that I thank everyone involved. I also wish to acknowledge and thank our incredible staff team who go above and beyond for students and give of their own personal time to support them. Thanks to the College Council who provide governance and direction and Unity College parents, families and caregivers who are always very supportive of our endeavours.

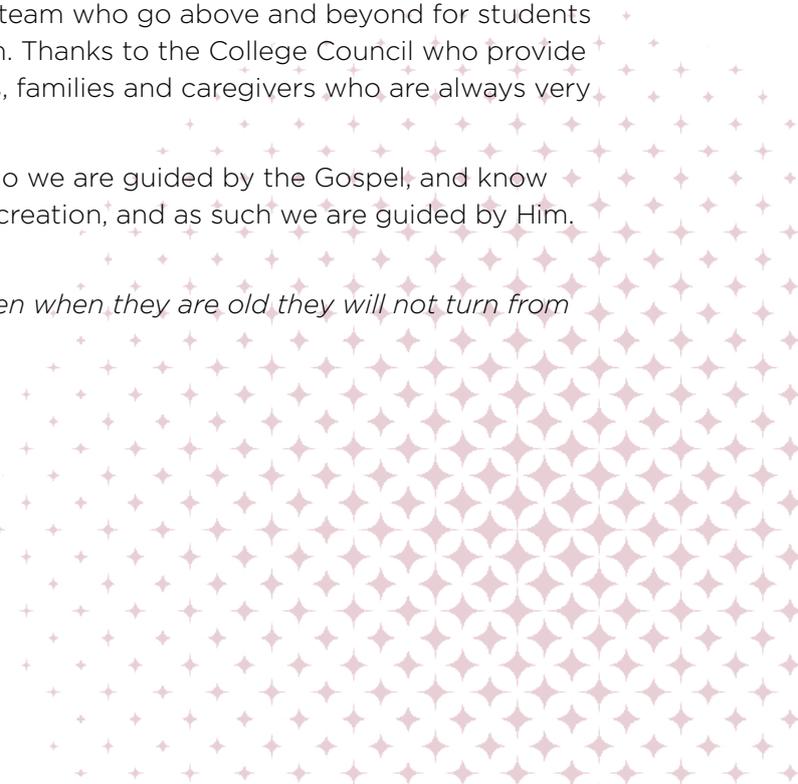
Above all we know that throughout everything we do we are guided by the Gospel, and know that this College was founded in God's Word, is His creation, and as such we are guided by Him. Together we make Unity an awesome CommUnity!

*Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it. - Proverbs 22:6*

Yours sincerely

**Kaye Mathwin-Cox**

Principal



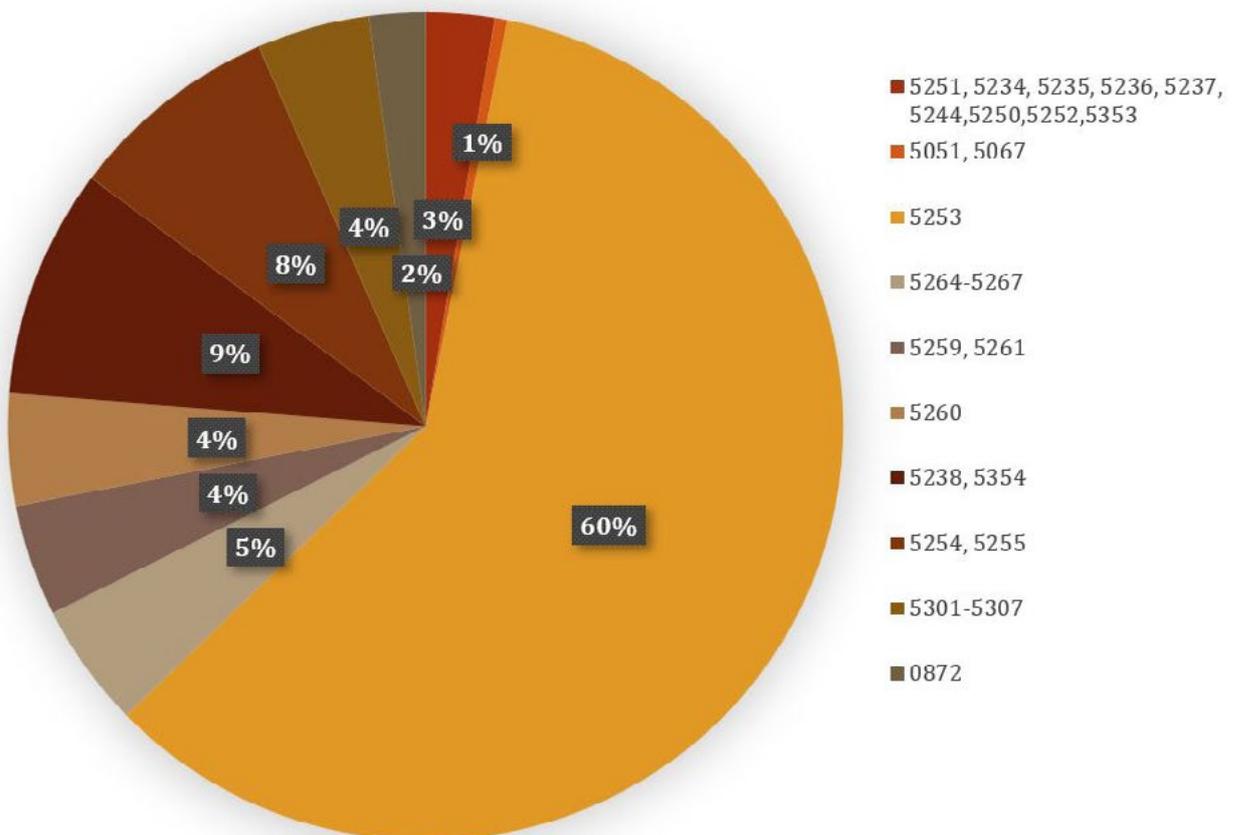
# Student Body

While students from the immediate Murray Bridge postcode area (5253) constitute the greater proportion of students at Unity, we continue to grow our student body from further afield than just our historic Murraylands boundaries.

Our relationship with the Areyonga community in the Northern Territory continued as we once more welcomed students to Unity College. This year was the first year mainstreaming Areyonga students for every lesson. We were very excited to see four Year 12 students graduate. It was an absolute delight to host their families for our Valedictory service and we were blessed to enjoy a song from the Areyonga Ladies that evening. These students form a large portion of our 'Homestay' students.

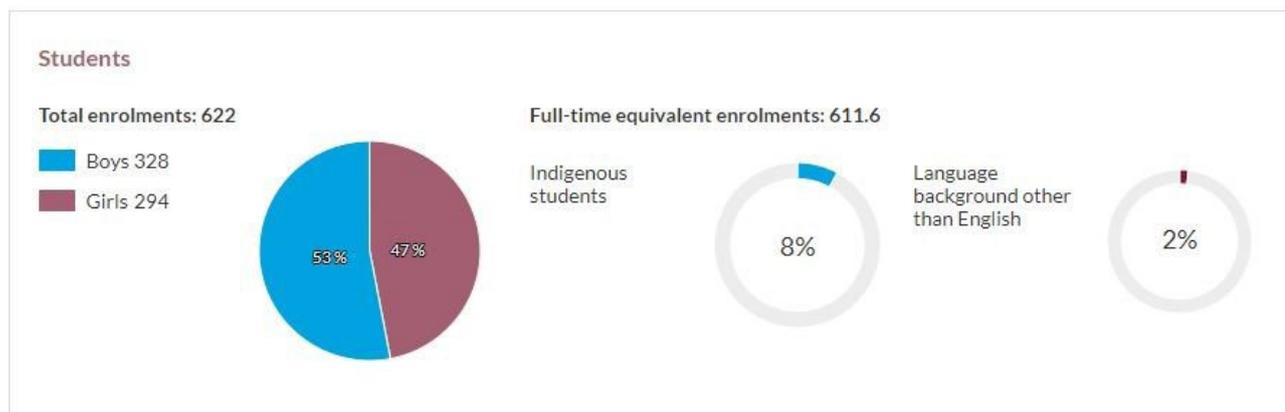
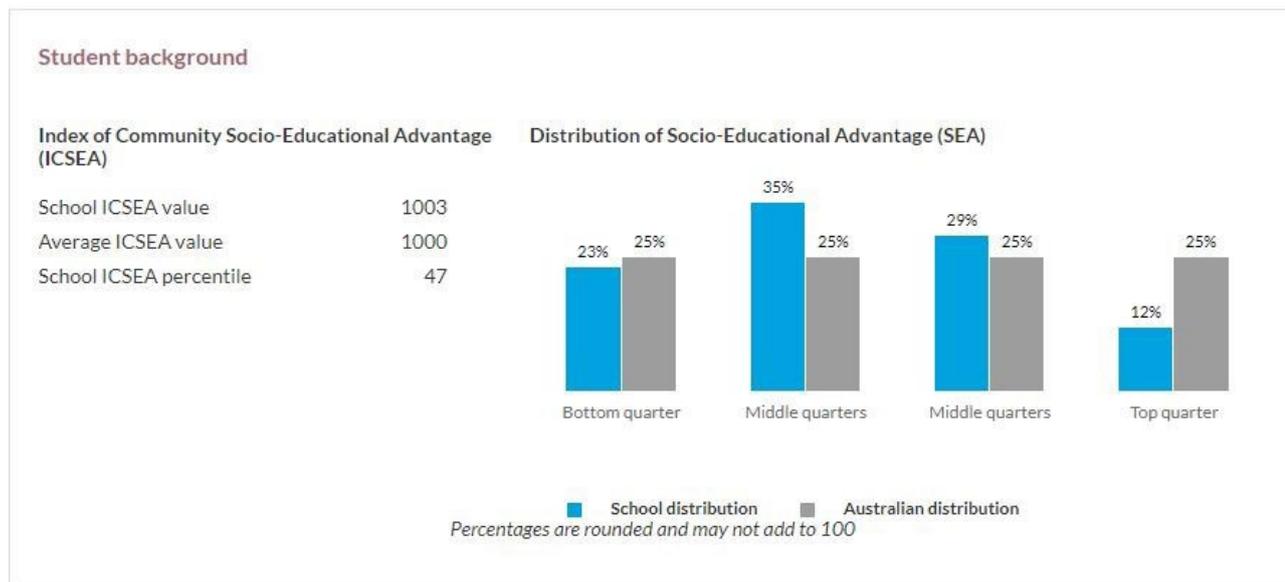
The Unity bus services from Mount Pleasant and Swan Reach areas continued to grow in 2019.

**Student Distribution by Home Postcode (local areas combined)**



# Enrolments

This report is based on our 2019 August Census Data as reported to the Commonwealth Government. It is from this data that we receive funding, with the Commonwealth Government being the primary source of funding.



Please note that these are August Census figures - some enrolments and/or exits may have occurred between August and end of November.

# Attendance Report

Since 2015 the Commonwealth Government has required schools to provide snapshots of attendance recorded at regular periods. These were taken at regular intervals throughout Semester 1 (roughly the first 2 terms) and again in Term 3. Results were reported online to DEEWR (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations) and are available through the *My School* website.

We are also required to advise and report on Indigenous attendance separate to our overall attendance figure and that data is included in the tables. Please note that these reports are only required to be based on students in Years 1-10.

Indigenous attendance data is not a particularly accurate analysis of attendance as the students in our CASLAU program attend for fewer weeks each term. This is in recognition of their distance from home and we ensure they have extended breaks when they return to their community in Areyonga. While living in Murray Bridge, the NT students have virtually 100% attendance with very few days missed.

Student attendances at Unity are recorded electronically during Home Group and for each lesson, providing a clearer picture of student attendance, taking into account part days where students may attend medical appointments etc.

Student attendance percentage rate	Semester 1	Term 3
All students	92%	91%
Indigenous students	88%	87%
Non-Indigenous students	93%	91%
Student attendance level (Proportion of students attending 90% or more of the time)	Percent	
All students	74%	65%
Indigenous students	56%	35%
Non-Indigenous students	76%	68%

## OVERALL STUDENT ATTENDANCE DATA BY YEAR LEVEL (AS PERCENTAGE)

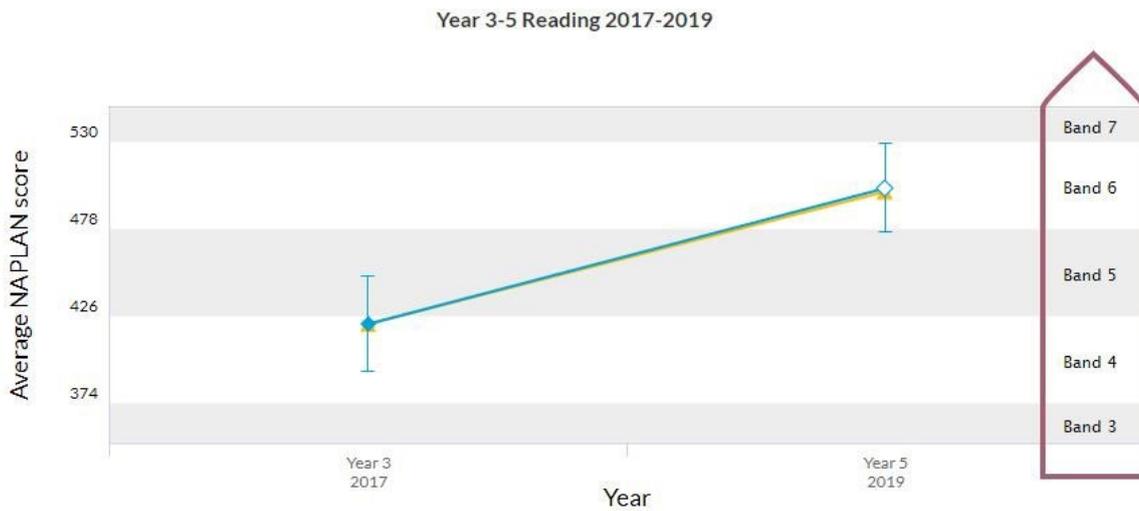
Year Level	Whole School	Indigenous
Year 1	91.05%	92.34%
Year 2	91.96%	91.18%
Year 3	91.28%	88.42%
Year 4	91.71%	84.45%
Year 5	94.53%	94.25%
Year 6	95.87%	78.88%
Year 7	91.35%	85.46%
Year 8	91.61%	83.72%
Year 9	91.26%	84.31%
Year 10	94.30%	96.33%
Overall % Attendance	92.49%	87.93%

When a student has an unexplained absence a text message is automatically sent to the Caregiver. Once they reply this data is entered into our attendance system.

# NAPLAN – Student Outcomes

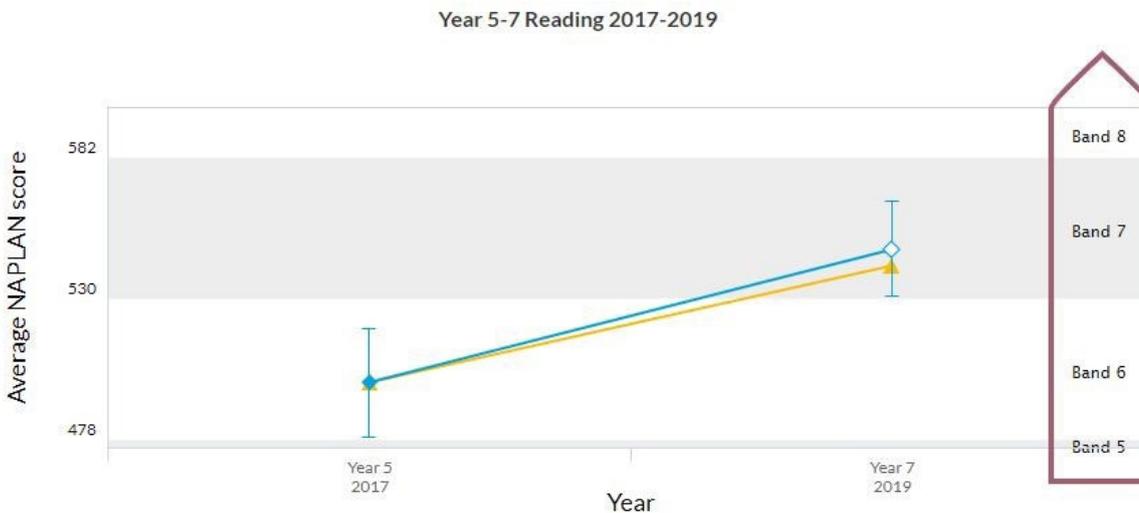
Unity’s NAPLAN results for 2019 are now available on the *My School* website. We strongly advocate to families that NAPLAN is just one indicator of a student’s progress and should not be used in isolation. Families are encouraged to continue to follow their student’s progress via the continual reporting models that are accessible on the college parent portal in *Daymap*.

For the purpose of the continuity of this report I have used the Reading charts as an indicator of growth, comparable to other like schools. Unity College is the blue line. Other areas (Numeracy etc) can be viewed on the *My School* website.



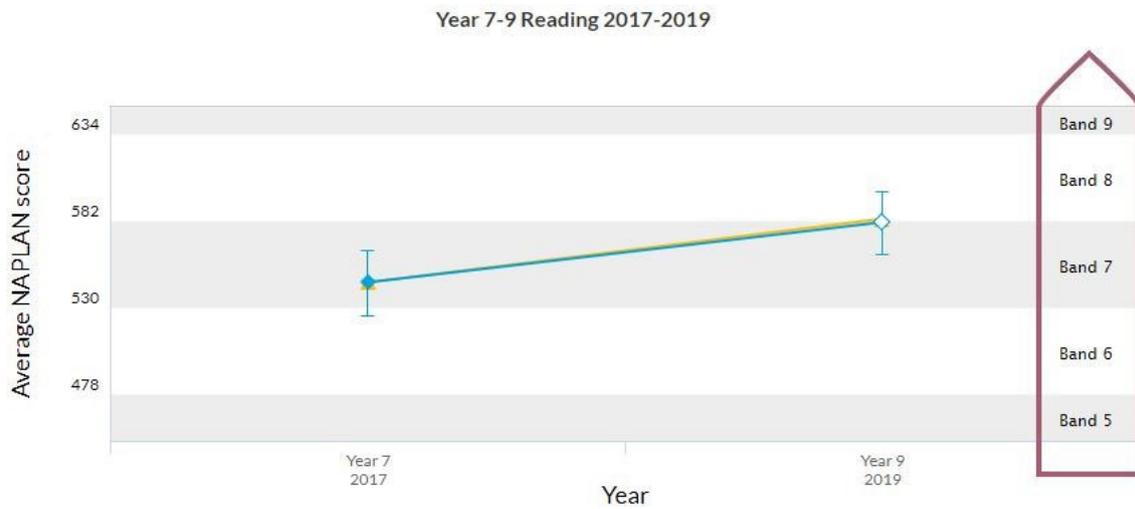
Select categories:

- Selected school
- Students with the same starting score and similar background (i)
- All Australian students



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- Selected school
- Students with the same starting score and similar background (i)
- All Australian students

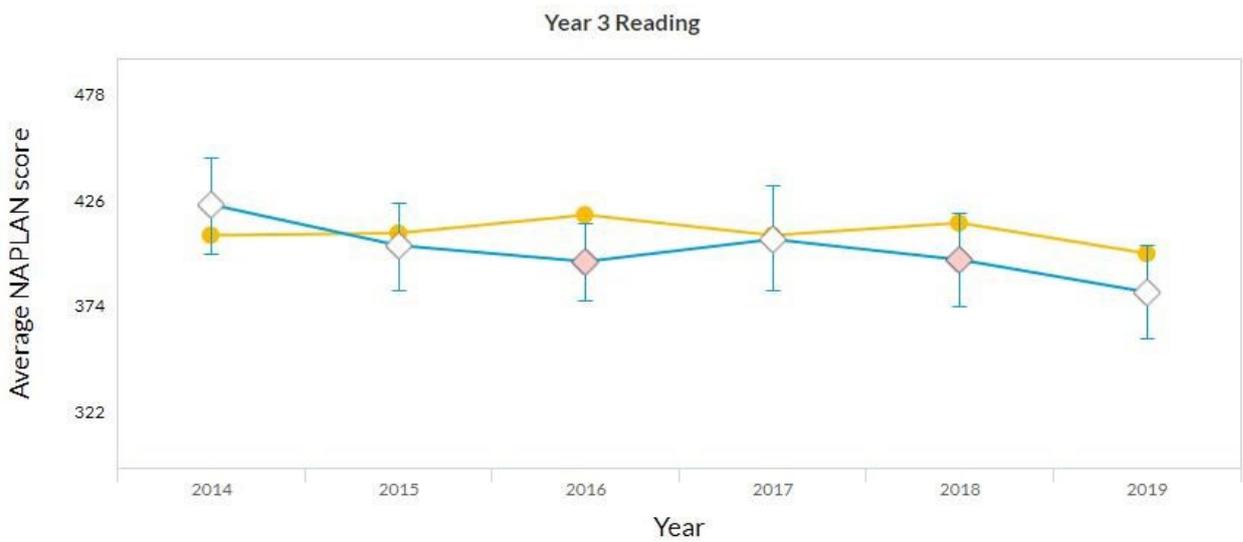


Select categories:

- Selected school
- Students with the same starting score and similar background (i)
- All Australian students

## STUDENT RESULTS OVER TIME

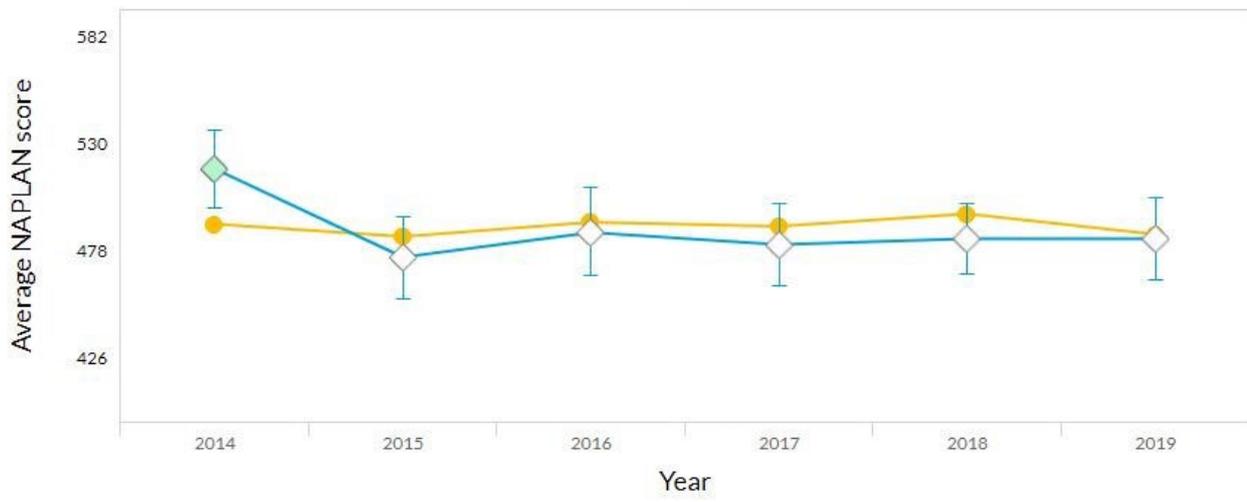
The graph below shows the average NAPLAN score for all students at the school in each domain over time, compared to the average score of students with a similar background.



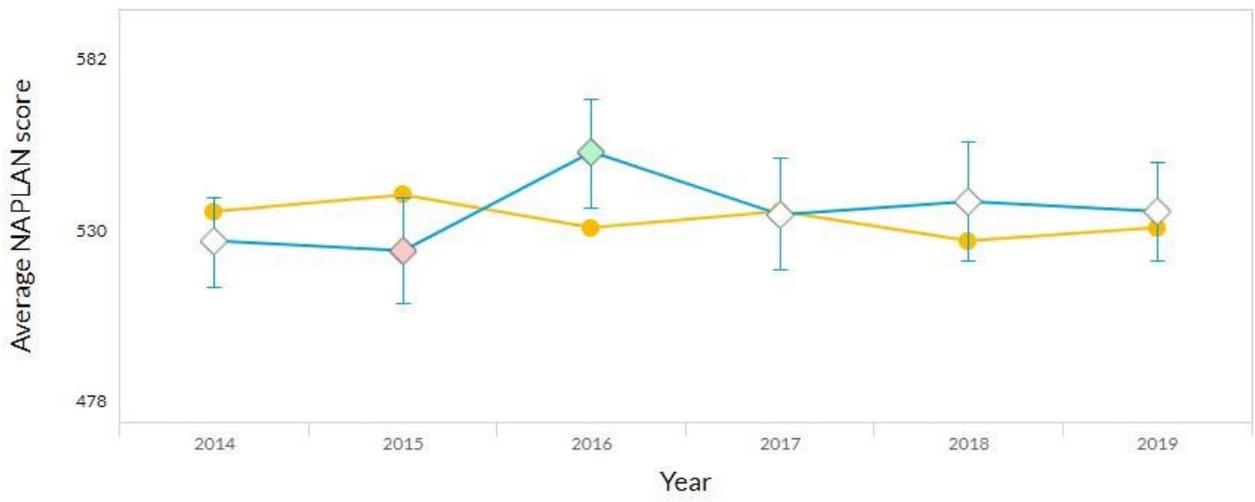
Select categories:

- Selected school
- Students with similar background
- All Australian students

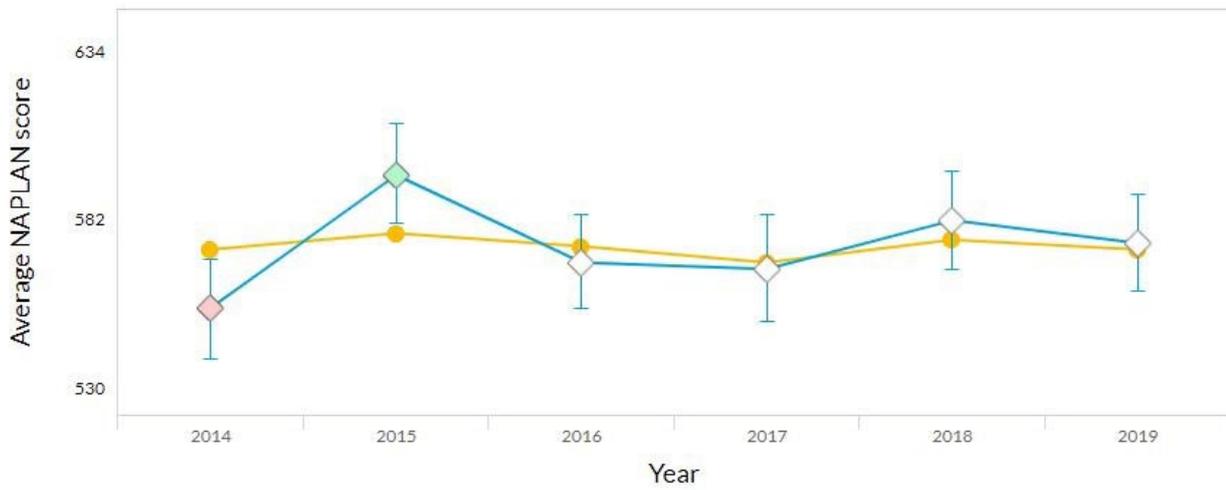
Year 5 Reading



Year 7 Reading



Year 9 Reading



## NAPLAN cont...

The Australian Government *My School* Website uses a number of varying criteria particularly with NAPLAN – one of which is comparing the school results for ‘like’ schools. This takes into consideration a number of factors and includes socio-economic background, school size, ethnic diversity, rural vs urban location etc. While virtually impossible to compare one school to another it does provide some indicators that may be of use when assessing our curriculum effectiveness.

Below is a table from the My School website that provides a snapshot across the areas that are tested in the NAPLAN – Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Numeracy. As you can see from the table, Unity College rates on a par with schools with similar students, although we fell slightly below in Year 3 Writing 2019. It is always the aim of teaching staff to improve the outcomes for our students, and tools such as this NAPLAN data is just one that can be utilized to analyse and improve our pedagogy.

*Compared to schools with similar students:*

	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
Year 3	386	374	408	385	388
Year 5	489	455	474	475	477
Year 7	539	499	530	520	547
Year 9	578	537	561	544	586

### Interpreting the table

Selected school's average when compared to students with a similar background

- Well above
- Above
- Close to
- Below
- Well below
- No comparison available

# Academic Outcomes

Of the 48 students completing Year 12 in 2019, it is pleasing to report that 100% of students received their South Australian Certificate of Education, an outstanding result above the State average. There were 33 students who were eligible for an ATAR, eight of these were Indigenous students. The additional students had chosen courses that allowed them to achieve their SACE but were not requiring them to attain an ATAR.

## TOP ATAR SCORES (above 90)

The Dux of Unity College for 2019 was Kara Lewis who received an ATAR of 92.15. We congratulate Kara on her achievement. Kara received her Dux Award at the 2020 Opening Service on Wednesday 29 January 2020. A total of two students achieved an ATAR above 90. It is worth noting that 60% of all grades achieved by the Class of 2019 were A and B grades. Also two thirds of students have achieved an ATAR score to guarantee one of their tertiary study preferences.

The following is a brief summary of the range of results of Unity College students who were eligible for an ATAR:

### ATAR % of STUDENTS

90 - 100 6.06% (6.06% = 90+)

80 - 89 18.18% (24.24% = 80+)

70 - 79 24.24% (48.48% = 70+)

A variety of awards are presented to students at Unity College to acknowledge and encourage their learning. 2019 was a year of much achievement and excellent learning and we recognise the way God has blessed our students. We are proud of all students and their achievements and acknowledge those who have served their school and have achieved in their academic and community pursuits. The following were major Senior School award winners for 2019:

## 2019 SENIOR AWARDS

- + UCOS Christian Leadership Award: **Daniel Altmann**
- + Friends Supporting Unity (FSU) Service Award: **Molly Maddaford**
- + Tracey Venning Memorial Award: **Kirra Carson**
- + Long Tan Youth Leadership & Teamwork Award:  
**Rebekah Naismith** (Year 12), **Jacob Bailey** (Year 10)
- + Order of Australia Merit Award: **Daniel Altmann, Aidyn Loveday**
- + Caltex Best All Rounder: **Kara Lewis**
- + Lutheran Women's Award: **Morgan Klemm**
- + Environmental Award: **Olivia Hand**
- + Journey Award: **Lachlan Daniels, Isaak Goodwin**

## VET in SACE

It is also important to reflect on statistics from another very successful year for the VET in SACE program at Unity College.

1. 65% of Year 12 students completed VET as part of their SACE
2. 48% of Year 12 students completed a Certificate III qualification
3. 4 students completed a School Based Apprenticeship or Traineeship (SBAT)

In the combination of both VET and SACE pathways, these results reflect how Unity places 'Students First' by catering for individual career paths and future aspirations.

Students in Year 10, 11 and 12 undertook Work Placement as part of their Personal Learning Plan or career development in 2019.

VET Off-site placements for 2019 were undertaken at various locations and businesses including Bowhill Engineering, Chapman Heavy Mechanical, John Holland Pty Ltd, Jacksons Australia, Inner Soul, Anytime Fitness, EFM Murray Bridge, Mannum Leisure Centre, Snap Fitness and Tangles Hair Studio.

Workplace Learning is a wonderful opportunity for our students to explore career choices and gain valuable insight into life at work. We thank the employers for the time and effort they dedicate to making these great learning experiences happens.

## POST SECONDARY STUDIES

While some students have successfully gained employment, traineeships or apprenticeships, there are a variety of tertiary courses that graduates will be undertaking including:

- + Bachelor of Medical Science (Vision Sc)/M Optometry
- + Bachelor of Health Sciences
- + Bachelor of Accounting
- + Bachelor of Nursing
- + Bachelor of Human Movement/Bachelor of Nutrition
- + Bachelor of International Relations Double Degree/ Political Science
- + Bachelor of Primary Education (Hons)
- + Bachelor of Human Movement/Psychological Science
- + Bachelor of Science (Space & Astrophysics)
- + Bachelor of Criminology
- + Bachelor of Behavioural Science (Psychology)
- + Bachelor of Media Double Degree
- + Bachelor of Applied Social Sciences (Youth Work)
- + Bachelor of Sport, Health and Phys
- + Bachelor of Nutrition and Food Services
- + Bachelor of Business (Tour & Event Management)
- + Diploma of Health
- + Bachelor of Law and Society
- + Bachelor of Creative Arts (Screen)

# Extra-Curricular

Unity College is delighted to offer a wide range of Extra and Co-curricular activities and programs to enrich the lives of students. In explanation, 'Extra Curricular' activities are usually optional 'add-ons' to education, whereas 'Co-Curricular' are events and activities directly linked to the study of subjects and courses. Co-Curricular activities include school camps and excursions.

One of the defining differences of Unity is Service Learning, where students across the school learn the value of serving their community whether locally, the wider Australian community and overseas.

In 2019 Unity continued the Service Trip to Areyonga for Year 9 and 10 students, as well as the Service Trip to Indonesia, working on our partnership with HKBP Elementary and Senior High School. This is targeted at Year 11 students, and as it is voluntary and it sits outside of the required student excursions.

In March we were fortunate to have 2 staff from HKBP School come to visit Unity College. Janri, the Principal and Ellyda the English Teacher came to observe teaching methods and curriculum styles to incorporate some of these practices in Indonesia. Our motto was 'Learn Together, Succeed Together'

Some of the Extra Curricular Activities to which students are invited to be involved include:

- + Year 9 Student Ambassadors
- + SRC – Junior, Middle and Senior Schools
- + Various competitions (eg Maths, Writing)
- + Instrumental lessons
- + Concert and Drama productions
- + Community Service programs
- + SAPSASSA sports
- + Homework Club
- + Pedal Prix
- + Music Ensembles
- + Peer Support
- + Hospitality Catering
- + Easter Devotions
- + Sporting activities
- + Service trips (Areyonga and Indonesia)
- + Japanese Exchange (Hosting here at Unity)

There are a wide range of additional programs to support student learning across the College. These include:

- + Languages – Japanese and German
- + In class Learning Support
- + Individualised Learning Programs
- + Drug Education
- + Literacy and Numeracy Testing (NAPLAN)
- + Senior School Tutoring

# Staffing Report

Teaching staff at Unity remained stable throughout 2019 and we welcomed the following staff to our community:

- ✦ Heidi Zirkel - 1 year contract JS German/PE
- ✦ Chad Picon - Year 6 teacher
- ✦ Sharon Gierus - JS Chaplain
- ✦ Wendy Harris - Japanese teacher
- ✦ Jessica Burpee - Agriculture teacher

Long term Teaching staff for whom 2019 was their last year at Unity College were:

- ✦ Rod Davis - Business/Maths
- ✦ Josh Hein - Year 12 Coordinator/PE
- ✦ Josh Noye - Year 7 Teacher
- ✦ Matt Bell - Year 5 Teacher
- ✦ Emily Willsmore - Year 1 Teacher (end of contract)

We offer Professional Development opportunities for staff with a large portion of the Professional Development program occurring during what is known as 'Retreat Week'. While this provides an additional week of holidays for some students in the middle of the year, it is a week with a high focus on professional and spiritual development for all staff.

Our staff continue to be highly trained professionals, with teaching staff possessing strong qualifications that meet the stringent professional standards required by the Teachers Registration Board (TRB) of South Australia. Below is a snapshot of teaching staff qualifications as at August Census:

Teaching Staff Summary 2019				
Degrees	No			
Certificates	14	<i>Note: Data is inclusive of staff currently on leave/ Parenting leave etc</i>	Teaching Staff with more than 1 degree	47
Graduate Certificates	6			
Diplomas	13			
Associate Diplomas	1		Total Teaching Staff	55
Graduate Diplomas	17			
Bachelor	65			
Masters	12		Teaching Staff on Parenting/Extended Leave	3
Doctorate	3			

Male Teaching Staff	20
Female Teaching Staff	35
Indigenous Teaching Staff	0

# Parent Satisfaction

We Involve – Unity involves parents and the wider community in student learning as it ‘takes a village to raise a child.’

Unity College continues to work in partnership with families to prepare the young people in our care for the future. Each year a number of opportunities are provided for community feedback including parent surveys which assist in forming plans and reviewing progress each year. Of the parents who completed the Year 12 Parent Exit Survey, 100% were either ‘very satisfied’ or ‘somewhat satisfied’ with the overall education experience their child had received at Unity College.

Comments included in the Year 12 Parent Exit survey included:

- + *Thank you for the most positive, amazing experience for our children - couldn't be happier!*
- + *More support for Year 12s in applying for university, choosing subjects etc.*
- + *So many special memories for all of my children!*
- + *Overall very happy we made the decision to send our child here for senior school.*
- + *A caring professional college that has put student's first*
- + *Caring and Supportive, Great school would highly recommend to family and friends.*
- + *Amazing, genuine, caring environment.*
- + *The students' needs and best interests are Unity College's priority.*
- + *The staff are caring.*
- + *Subject selection for senior school is good.*
- + *Overall our experience has been very good and we would recommend the school up to Year 10 but there needs to be some fixes with the Year 11 and Year 12 subject choices and having suitable teachers for them.*
- + *I would say that Unity has some wonderful teaching staff that provide a lot of support and encouragement to all students.*
- + *Wonderful! On par with many other well-known city schools, but as a country school more personified nurturing, family inclusive and community committed!*
- + *So blessed to have this great school in our community.*
- + *I would highlight the over and above levels of support our sons have received, particularly in Year 12, the quality of education that we feel they have received and talk about the value of the Christian environment/ethos.*
- + *We will be recommending Unity to others.*
- + *Wonderful facilities, caring staff, genuine care.*
- + *Unity supported my daughter's education and were willing to work with the family to get the best options.*
- + *I love the school. I have had such a great experience and so have my children.*
- + *The facilities and teachers are amazing and caring.*

The College continues to offer a broad range of options to communicate with families through SMS messages, the College Website, E-News Emails, Facebook page, Parent/Teacher Interviews, Letters, Phone App, Daymap and Phone calls to home. Parent and community functions such as the annual Food Festival and other family events enable parents to get to know each other on an informal basis.

We also value the feedback from students which is regularly sought and supplied through School Leaders, Year 9 Ambassadors and SRC Representatives. All feedback is important to us, positive or negative, is treated with respect and is taken into account as we form strategies for 2020. It is heartening to see that enrolments increased significantly in 2019 and this trend continues in 2020.

# Financial Summary

With enrolments growing, the Finance team focus on ensuring accessibility to affordable education at Unity remains a key priority. Rationalisation of fee structures has continued to deliver a comparatively low fee outcome for families, with annual changes in fees consistently below 'Cost of Living' (CPI) measures.

Sustainable growth necessitates a commitment to on-going development of both educational programs and college facilities. To facilitate this development, resources were provided in key areas such as Learning Support, refurbishment & upgrading of learning areas, and numerous projects to improve our extensive grounds – a key asset of Unity College.

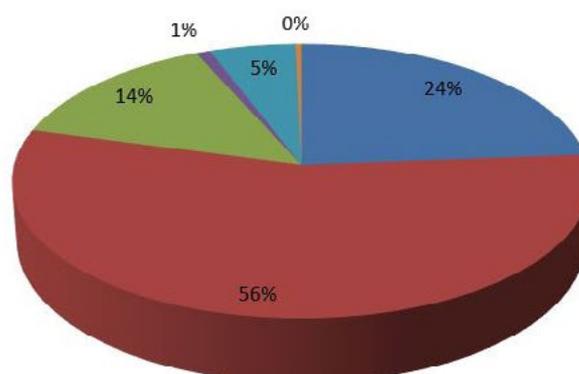
Unity College continues to enjoy many strong partnerships with regional businesses, professional and sporting organisations. All of which serve to provide not only educational opportunities for our students but also facilities that can be utilised by individuals and groups throughout the community.

We also acknowledge the important partnership and the support received from LESNW (Lutheran Education SA, NT & WA). We look forward to their continued support as we consolidate and build our financial position into the future.

Below is a summary of our Recurrent & Capital Income for 2019.

2019 Income	
Fees	\$2,974,905.00
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants	\$6,935,277.00
State Recurrent Grants	\$1,759,152.00
Other Tuition Income	\$111,989.00
Other Income	\$677,679.00
Capital Income	\$44,607.00
Total Income	\$12,503,609.00

■ Fees ■ Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ■ State Recurrent Grants ■ Other Tuition Income ■ Other Income ■ Capital Income



# Governance Report

The governing body of Unity College (College Council) is responsible for the oversight of the College and it is to this body that the Principal reports, while Council charges the day-to-day management of the College to the Principal. Council is involved in ensuring that the Strategic Plan, policies and statutory regulations governing a school are met and acquitted with due diligence.

Sitting on this Council in 2019 were 6 members of Lutheran congregations of the Unity College Association as well as two additional non-Lutheran members. Ex Officio members of Council include the Principal, Business Manager and Principal’s PA (minute secretary). The Association is also represented by a Pastor from within the congregations and this year Pastor Peter Heintze from the Coonalpyn Parish has fulfilled that role. Other Executive Staff attend as required. The Council held nine meetings in 2019, with member attendances recorded as follows:

Lutheran Members	Meetings attended 2019
James Bormann (Chair)	8
Matt Kruschel (Vice Chair)	8
Tracey Woidt	8
Sonia Schutz	7
Greg Herrmann	7
Bronwyn Schirmer	7
Non-Lutheran Member	
Nathan Wegener (joined in June 2019)	5
Shawn Hicks	6

Representatives from fifteen Lutheran congregations form the *Unity College Association* - the founding body of the College - and they met twice in 2019 as constituted on 25 June and 3 December.

While the performance report specifically relates to teaching staff, we acknowledge the ongoing expertise and dedication of our non-teaching staff. In particular we pay tribute to the retiring staff, Phil Zanker (Business Manager) and Heather Bishop (Finance Manager) for their 20 plus years of service each. These positions were replaced by Michael Obst (Business Manager) and Tamara Pfeiffer (Finance Manager). We also have employed a part time HR Co-ordinator, Georgia Lloyd.



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