‘Renmark High School is a leader in education. We develop the academic, physical, emotional and spiritual skills, knowledge and attitudes within students to enable them to meet future challenges as responsible, proud and respected people.’
Introduction

The culture at Renmark High School is fantastic. We are an exciting, engaged and student focused school.

Leading Renmark High School over the past year has been an honour and a privilege. In every classroom exciting things are happening all focused on getting better at engaging our students in their learning. I have been a part of the Renmark High School community for many years and I must say that 2015 was one of the best.

Our SACE results in 2015 were much improved. Our ‘traffic light’ system ensured we were quicker to respond to students who were not on track with their assignments. This approach appeared to assist more students to meet their deadlines. We will head into 2016 with cautious optimism that our results will further improve.

The introduction of the Renmark School Partnership in 2015 saw the leaders of all of the public schools in Renmark and surrounds come together. The purpose is work collaboratively to develop the best learning opportunities for the young people in our community. The main goal to come out of the partnership is to make learning more personalised. There is still much to be done, but progress has been good. I want to thank and further encourage everyone involved in these efforts. Renmark High School plays a significant role in the partnership and it is important that we lead the way.

We value the reputation of Renmark High School very highly. Our reputation is a precious asset to the wider Renmark community and we want it to be even better in the future. When issues arise or mistakes are made, we seek to address them by putting in place people, structures and processes to ensure there is no repeat. In 2016 and beyond we will continue to do our best to create and deliver wonderful learning opportunities for our students in partnership with our parents.

I would like to thank my colleagues for their hard work and support throughout the year. We have a staff of amazing individuals with extensive skills, experience and exciting perspectives. Our school prides itself on its collaborative and cooperative approach to learning.

I would also like to extend my appreciation to all the other people who have contributed to the success of Renmark High School in 2015. Their individual and collective contributions to the school have been enormous with unwavering focus on providing what is best for the students.

At the end of 2015 we farewelled Orio Denti. I want to personally acknowledge the excellent leadership of Mr Denti, as he guided the school in creating learning opportunities that are more engaging and personalised for young people. I wish Orio, Alice and the girls all the best in their adventure in Adelaide.

I encourage all parents to take the time to come in and discuss your child’s learning with us. We want to work with you to design a personalised approach to your child’s learning package that is stimulating and sets him/her up on a strong trajectory towards employment.

David Crouch
Principal
For the second year in a row, the Governing Council found it difficult to fill some crucial roles on sub-committees including School Pride/Grounds and Policy due to our small numbers. For the same reason, the Canteen Committee met infrequently. We also lost of our secretary midway through the year as a result of moving. I would like to give special thanks to Raelene Harvey and Kerri Turk who took on the bulk of this work. I hereby put a call out to anyone to please come on board to help us out in 2016. If you have ever had a comment or a thought about the school we could use your help.

At the start of Term 2 Principal Orio Denti took on a special DECD literacy project so the school welcomed David Crouch as Acting Principal for the last 3 terms of 2015. David’s enthusiasm, input and dedication to the role have been invaluable, with many positive changes being put into place. I truly believe we are heading in the right direction with a wide range of learning opportunities available to our students.

There was significant disruption to our Technical Studies classes at the start of the year with the workshop out of operation for much of Term 1. This was mostly because of the age of the school and many machines not meeting new compliance standards. I would like to thank Dave Benda for his role in project management, ensuring the bulk of the work was completed so classes could resume as normal in Term 2.

Despite many students gaining entry into preferred courses this year, the school saw a need to focus on improving SACE results as our highest score was relatively low in comparison with like schools. School leaders and staff implemented many initiatives, including Academic Coaching, in a bid to improve results. Hopefully we will be able to reflect positively on these changes when this year’s results are published in mid-December.

This year saw a full 12 months with our new Canteen Manager Corbin, at the helm. Reports indicate all students and staff appreciate the range of healthy meal options and competitive pricing. Corbin has also taken on the lunchtime orders for the Renmark Primary School and the canteen has improved following the spending of money to improve infrastructure.

I had the pleasure of supporting the Youth opportunities Program and being present at all 3 Award Ceremonies this year. I would like to thank both mentors for their great work as they are leaving us next year.

Unfortunately, work commitments prevented me from participating in Australian Business Week this year however I did view the trade displays which again proved to be of a very high calibre. The school also decided to offer a new Enterprise subject this year giving students the opportunity to experience running a self-employed business. Renmark High was highly successful, featuring in 5 out of the 8 awards. A special mention must go to class teacher, Simon Turk and David Crouch who introduced the subject to our school’s timetable offerings.

A few initiatives are being explored for 2016; firstly, the installation of renewable energy such as solar power to the school, and secondly, a ‘Bring Your own Device’ program, aiming to provide every student with access to a laptop for school and home use. More information will be forthcoming as these initiatives progress.

I had the pleasure this year of working with School Leaders, Brayden Jenke and Nicholette Bakaj who were willing participants in discussions at council meeting and conducted themselves professionally. Both were very pleased to report to the student body that, after 3 years of hard work, we anticipate the completion of the beach volleyball courts in 2016.

I would like to say thank you to Acting Principal David Crouch, Deputy Principal Amy Evans and Bursar Ernest Van Niekerk for their help throughout the year in my role as Governing Council Chairperson. I would also like to acknowledge the wonderful teaching staff, SSOs and volunteers, along with the students who make up this great school. There are many positives to look forward to.

Finally, I would very much like to thank our small band of Governing Council volunteers: Nicole Forsyth, Tania Shaw, Sally Giles, Tammy McBride, Joy Smith, Renmark Paringa Council representative David Sims and teacher representative Kerri Turk for their support. I would also like to make special mention of Raelene Harvey’s work as this sees the end of 6 consecutive years of service to Governing Council as the last of her children completes their schooling. Her input and knowledge will be sorely missed.

Paul Hutchins
Governing Council Chairperson
Highlights

Renmark High School is a rural school striving to provide the best learning opportunities for our young people. We are not afraid to push the boundaries to ensure our students receive an education relevant to the constantly changing global environment. We are always looking to be innovative, develop collaborative partnerships and create exciting opportunities for students.

One of our main goals for 2015 was to develop consistency across classrooms and ensure students understood the purpose of their learning. Before beginning a series of lessons, all staff were asked to be explicit about the learning intentions and the steps to success with their students. This approach has raised the standards expected of students and Renmark High School and significantly increased student engagement.

We are prepared to take on bold initiatives. An example in 2015 is our Enterprise Academy. This initiative received significant recognition throughout South Australia. We recently received a government grant to see if we can turn this concept into a specialist facility for other educational organisations to tap into.

Renmark High School students were big winners in the Adelaide University Enterprise Challenge. The Nitro Cloud Project won 6 out of the 8 sections they entered which is an amazing accomplishment!

The Enterprise Academy is all about connecting learning to the real world. I’m excited about the opportunities this academy presents to Renmark students and encourage everyone to watch this space as the program evolves!

The re-introduction of the school drama production was another significant highlight in 2015. The production was fantastic and engaged a large group of students in an interdependent project.
9 students achieved an ATAR score above 90.

The number of A grades achieved by RHS students is on a steady upward trend, while D/E grades have decreased to 6%.

Stage 2 Results

96.7 Top ATAR Score

Renmark High School achieved a VET completion rate of 7%, which is significantly higher than the state average of 1%.

VET Results

- Certificate II: 12
- Certificate III: 10
- Certificate IV: 4

One Merit Certificate awarded for English Communications.
Site Improvement Plan

The vision for Renmark High School is to respect learners as they work towards fulfilling their potential. Each day, we strive to adhere to our school values as they are the foundation for a great school.

‘Powerful Learners’ is the terminology you are likely to hear and see throughout 2016 at Renmark High School. We want our young people to become skilled life-long learners. Independent thinkers who are organised, persistent, optimistic and resilient. We believe the phrase ‘Powerful Learners’ encapsulates this goal perfectly.

Feedback suggests we must work with students to construct learning activities that drive them to take on a challenge instead of just taking the easy way. It’s vital that we empower students to negotiate projects and have more autonomy about how they go about it.

Over the course of 2015 we have worked on our procedures for preventing and responding to all forms of bullying and inequity. We have raised our expectations about how we all interact with each other. We have learned more about restorative justice so that we are aware about how our actions can impact on learners in a negative way.

We want Renmark High School to be an environment where students feel safe and comfortable to be themselves. We want students to feel confident they can tackle new challenges without being belittled. We are raising standards at Renmark High and will continuously improve the quality of the teaching and learning at our school.

We aim to have a high quality teacher in every classroom. Research is clear, it’s the quality of the teacher that will make the most impact on a young person’s learning outcomes and attitude to education. Our code of cooperation is linked to our school values and is a key driver to connect student learning to the performance of the teachers. In 2015, we continued this work with an expectation that teachers apply their professional development learning to their practice. As a result of this we expect to see our teacher development closely linked to improved outcomes for students.
Site Improvement Plan

In 2015 we maintained our momentum for professional learning in literacy, numeracy and embedding the use of technology for meaningful learning. We have strengthened our teachers understanding to explicitly teach writing genres to ensure a consistent approach across the school. Our aim is to reduce variation across classrooms to avoid confusing students as they move through the year levels.

Our SACE results in 2014 did not meet our expectations and were a surprise that resulted in some deep reflection. Therefore in 2015 we introduced academic coaching to assist our Year 12 teachers. Every Year 12 teacher was paired with a member of the leadership team to assist with a regular, rigorous monitoring of student work. This meant we acted more quickly to help our students get back on track. Communication with parents improved in 2015 but there is a lot more work to do. Our goal for the future is to increase the number of A grades achieved by Renmark High students and significantly reduce the number of D and E grades. This will see our average ATAR score improve over time.

Our Numeracy results are below the standards outlined by DECD. Our analysis suggests that we need greater emphasis on establishing a strong foundation of numeracy skills. Research has proven that a student must have solid number skills by the end of Year 8 otherwise they will struggle with complex and abstract mathematics.

Data analysis recommends that we consider introducing a bias towards multiplicative thinking over additive thinking. This will require us to learn more about proportional reasoning and generalisation and then design lessons that cover these topics for students in Year 8, 9 and 10. A challenge will be to encourage all teachers, regardless of subject area, to actively seek opportunities to introduce numeracy to their lessons. We are confident that by introducing these strategies we will see more students increase their numeracy skills over time.
Better Schools Funding

In 2015 Renmark High School received just over $100,000 from the Better Schools Funding. These funds were used to employ a Literacy and Numeracy mentor to assist every teacher at Renmark High School. We know that expert teachers make the biggest difference to student learning. By employing a mentor to help our teachers be better teachers, we can improve student outcomes.

Seeing the results from the literacy and numeracy professional learning the mentor undertook was a highlight of receiving this funding. This knowledge was shared with all staff members and is helping to address the variation we see in different classrooms across the school.

Financial Report

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Renmark High School
Shining a light on the future

**LITERACY & NUMERACY**
Focus on rich assessment tasks
Sharpen focus on explicit teaching
Whole school agreement on building foundational and sophisticated skills

**LITERACY & NUMERACY**
Encourage all staff to use ‘traffic light’ monitoring effectively

**WELL-BEING**
Improve student transitions
Strengthen restorative practices
Explore connections between Positive Psychology, and Growth Mindsets

**ENGAGING CURRICULUM**
Teachers negotiate and co-construct learning in authentic contexts
Design meaningful learning connected to individual passion

**ENGAGING CURRICULUM**
Promote more interaction and dialogue in learning

**EXPERT TEACHERS**
Build teachers confidence in moderating and assessing student work against performance standards
Focus on SACE improvement strategies and share the learning with other schools

**EXPERT TEACHERS**
Agree on performance development approaches
- Reflective practice
- Evidence based improvement
- Embed TfEL Professional Standards for Teachers
- Innovative use of ICT
Student Achievement

NAPLAN

The NAPLAN test provides us with a barometer to measure the standards of our Year 9 students each year.

Our first priority with the NAPLAN test is to analyse the results and understand how individual students are performing. This provides us with information on how we can better help individual students and monitor their work throughout the year.

Our second priority is to compare how we rate against other schools. Our NAPLAN mean scores have remained steady over time but tend to be approximately 20 points below similar schools around the state. Our scores are also 20 to 40 points below all public schools around the nation.

Our progress data for students from Year 7 to Year 9 is not where we want it to be. This suggests that our students are taking longer to settle into secondary school learning than we thought.

All schools aim to increase the number of students in the top level skills bands in NAPLAN and Renmark High School is no exception. This will be our goal in 2016 and beyond. Our target will be 35% in the top 3 skills bands in Reading, Writing and Numeracy.

Senior Secondary

The hard work put in by staff and students in 2015 saw nine students achieve an ATAR score above 90. The top result for Renmark High School was 96.7. One student received a merit award for top marks in a subject.

Looking at the data, it is clear that over the past 5 years our Year 12 Stage 2 grades are trending in the right direction. A grades are increasing while D-E grades are trending downwards.

We have improved our tracking of student progress throughout the school year. This will be further improved in 2016 with regular meetings with families of students who need extra support.

We know we can't improve results unless there is a shared understanding of what constitutes high quality work. Therefore we have increased our knowledge of the moderation process to reduce the number of students who are marked down. This aligns directly with our success criteria work.
Student Achievement

Vocational Education & Training (VET)

Students at Renmark High School have an amazing opportunity to gain nationally recognised accreditation through our VET courses. We also work with other Riverland High Schools to provide greater variety for our students. We go to great lengths to provide flexible learning opportunities to ensure a young person can pursue the path they wish to take. Students can complete (or work towards) a Certificate I, II or III or a Certificate IV qualification.

We are extremely proud of our VET program. Many students have achieved their South Australian Certificate of Education thanks to the broad range of opportunities we offer at Renmark High School. Through our VET program students can:

• Develop practical work-related skills that improve their employability.
• Gain an understanding of the world of work.
• Gain a taste of an industry before they commit to a career in that industry.
• Get a head start in a pathway before they leave school.
Attendance

Our attendance rate falls just below 90% as a result of a small number of students who do not prioritise attending school. This small number of students has a large impact on our attendance rate which is unfortunate.

The attendance rate for Renmark Year 8 students starts at 92% but falls steadily by 1% each year to 86.5% in Year 12. We will continue to further refine the implementation of the Attendance Plan in 2016.

Maximising learning is a joint responsibility between school and the home. If a student is reluctant to attend, there is always a reason and we are committed to working with families to find out why and develop strategies to overcome this. More and more families are coming in to talk over attendance issues in an attempt to resolve them which is extremely positive.

Destination

Students leaving Renmark High School fall into five categories: *Moving interstate, transferring to another local South Australian government school, transferring to a non-government school, employment and learning with a Registered Training Organisation. The majority of students leaving Renmark High School left for employment or to enrol elsewhere.

We are a country school in a region struggling to maintain a strong economic climate. We find a large number of families move to seek employment elsewhere. Families also look for more diversity and wider curriculum offered by a larger schools in the city.

In the past we had families looking to move to other local high schools in response to their strong traditions, values and student results. I am pleased to report that this trend has reduced significantly in 2015.

Renmark High School graduates looking to study at university are usually accepted into the course of their choice. Some students take a GAP year to work or travel following their Year 12 studies.

We will be paying closer attention to the ‘unknown’ group in order to learn more about the reasons people have for leaving Renmark High that are not mentioned above.
Client Opinion

Feedback assists us to get better at what we do. Each year we survey staff, parents and students to gain an understanding of how we are performing in the eyes of our key stakeholders.

Unfortunately we only received three responses from parents, which is too small of a sample to draw any conclusions from.

**Student Survey -**

The information gathered from the students was important to us. The top four responses were:

- We feel safe at this school
- My teachers expect me to do my best
- My school looks for ways to improve
- My school gives me opportunities to do interesting things

Feedback from the student survey suggests we need to:

- Improve student voice by listening to the opinions of young people
- Improve the environment they use for learning and break time.
- Manage issues better when they arise

**Staff Survey -**

We received 15 responses to the staff survey. There were some positive responses from this survey that we are proud of:

- Teachers using a variety of teaching strategies to engage students
- Teachers clearly explaining what students are learning
- Assessment processes provide information about students
Staff Qualifications

All teaching staff at Renmark High School are registered teachers and meet the mandatory requirements of DECD. The diversity of our staff is positive with a mix of very experienced teachers and early career teachers.

It is always our intention to maintain a safe and secure environment for students at our school. All community volunteers and parents are screened and inducted before working with students as required by DECD.

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Behaviour

Renmark High School staff and students understand the importance of working together in a democratic classroom where everyone has a sense of belonging. The classroom environment is founded on strong values and an understanding of how people interact in a friendly and optimistic manner.

RHS like all ‘people’ organisations, has issues arise between individuals and/or groups from time to time. These are resolved and documented as quickly as possible using our school and DECD procedures. We appreciate the support we receive from families when we need to investigate an incident and discuss ways forward for the students.

We believe in Restorative Practices to approach wrongdoing and promote positive relationships and healing. Renmark High School students have a few years with us before they embark on the world, so we work together on moving away from traditional models of punishment for wrongdoers to one of education, accountability and meaningful change. We want changes in behaviour to occur and not have repeat offenders.

The number of incidents at RHS is low by comparison to many schools. Student compliance is high. One thing we could improve on is creating opportunities to listen more to what the students think and need for their success to be maximised.

In 2015, we have had the need to suspend students for threatening the good order and values our school has. There have been low levels of violent incidents and this has been trending down for some time.

We are laser like with our focus on spending more time on developing the skills of staff to connect and personalise learning experiences. By doing this, the light will begin to shine on activities that students are passionate about with the teachers alongside facilitating the learning. We are energised by this goal and plan to report on progress throughout 2016.