This report is prepared by Western College Alesco Learning Centre to meet educational and financial reporting requirements for the 2015 reporting year, in accordance with the Commonwealth Government’s Schools Assistance Regulations 2009 and the NSW Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards requirements for Registered and Accredited individual non-government schools.

Western College Alesco Learning Centre would like to thank;

The Australian Government Department of Education
The NSW Department of Education and Communities
The Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES)
The Association of Independent Schools NSW
The Board of Directors and staff of Western College Inc.
The Students of Western College Alesco Learning Centre
The Parents & Guardians of Western College Alesco Learning Centre students

Published 29th June 2016

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We hope that as you read this annual report you will embrace the passion we share in engaging young people with finding success in our unique educational setting.
Message from key school bodies

Chairman’s message

Conversations surrounding Western College’s Alesco Learning Centre occupy a significant place in boardroom discussions – including the school’s consistent growth, stories of engagement from students and teachers and discourse on how this new business unit operates within the broader services offered by the college. The synergy between the training division and the school is positive and productive as the specialised business training offered supports the ongoing learning and strengthening of prevocational skills for the students.

As I noted in last year’s report, one of our challenges was to address the capacity of the college’s physical structures. With growth comes the need to expand and provide appropriate facilities for our staff and students, and while we have made strong inroads into this area this year, the same challenge will apply for 2017. The board, in consultation with the team, will continue to plan and assess the most appropriate options for the future in this regard.

The year ahead will have its challenges and opportunities, and with the support of our teachers, tutors and administration team we look forward to seeing the Western College make even more positive contributions to our community in 2016.

Rod Crowfoot
President
Principal’s message

The past year has been in many ways challenging for Western College, but rather than shrink from that challenge, the team has embraced the opportunities presented by the constant evolution of the educational and political landscape, and the college has emerged all the stronger for it.

It has been immensely satisfying over the past year to watch great ideas bloom into great initiatives that have the ongoing potential to genuinely and positively impact people’s lives. As it has done for more than 60 years, the college works to enhance the lives and achievements of individuals and employers, in turn making Western College stronger in the process.

In 2015, the Alesco Learning Centre ran for its first full year of operation since opening its doors. Through the dedication of staff, the students received intensive support in their efforts to succeed. For some, this came with small steps; for others the improvement was profound. Combined with supporting programs including self-awareness, health and wellbeing and vocational education, these initiatives have eased or removed barriers to student success and provided practical and meaningful solutions.

As CEO of Western College, the achievements and dedication of our students and staff are a constant source of pride. As always, we thank our many supporters and partners for their continued support and for making the great work of this college possible and sustainable.

Despite the shifting landscape of education, our future remains bright. The overwhelming response to the alternative pathways offered by Alesco has seen our enrolments swell to almost beyond our physical capacity, so plans for new premises remain a focus. The dream will move closer to reality in 2017 with the announcement of a significant injection of funding from the NSW Government towards the new building.

With the new year now well underway, I take this opportunity to thank our students, supporters and staff who continue to go beyond the call of duty.

Valerieanne Byrnes
CEO
Our Board 2015

Board Members
Rod Crowfoot – President
John Dixon – Treasurer
Patricia Logan – Secretary
Michael Adams
Warren Frew
Mark Gardner
Geoff McKechnie

Honorary Life Members
Gai-Ellen Palmer
Jenny Heather
Andrew Boog
John Dixon

Board members (Warren Frew absent)
Contextual information about the school

History of Western College
Western College Alesco Learning Centre (ALC) is a part of a multi-faceted not for profit community college situated in Dubbo, NSW. The community college was established in 1948 with a clear purpose: to address low levels of literacy and numeracy among citizens with no formal schooling and to build community capacity by offering vocational and personal interest training and education to all. Some 66 years later, the college remains true to its founding purpose and has expanded its youth outreach service to include the newly established ALC.

We have a VISION for education as the foundation for social justice and for strong, healthy communities in the Orana Region. Our MISSION is to be an inclusive community college providing educational services in concert with other capacity-building, community-focused organisations throughout the region. We VALUE innovation, respect and inclusivity as we strive to support marginalised students to learn, grow and succeed in a smaller, more informal and supportive individual-focused learning environment.

Our second year in operation
Our second year of operation began with 78 enrolments on census date, 13th March.

The Western College ALC philosophy necessitates a multi-learning facility approach to ensure the environment supports participation. During 2015 we offered both year 9 and year 10 at four campuses; our Head Office at 37 Cobbora Road, Erskine Street Campus, Myall Street and Wellington Campus.

Alesco classes
Designed to deliver the Record of School Achievement through six individual core subjects with an optional introductory vocational subject cluster for Term 4 – operating from the main college campus at Cobbora Road.

Baby on Board
Designed to deliver the Transcript of Study through a flexible project based program and the availability of a crèche operating from the main college campus at Cobbora Road.

Transition
Designed to deliver the Transcript of Study through a flexible project based program. With an optional introductory vocational subject cluster available. Operating from both the White Street Campus

Vocational Class
The Vocation Class operates from our Erskine Street campus, and is one of our longest running programs. The Vocation Class caters for disadvantaged and marginalised students by addressing common barriers to education. The program focuses on helping early school leavers remain in or re-enter education and training. With a focus on literacy and numeracy, communication and building confidence and self esteem, the positive outcomes of this program are a result of the practical and social skills developed by the students. All of our programs actively acknowledges and practices cultural sensitivity and promotes interaction between all cultures. Strong collaboration between Indigenous and Non Indigenous participants is encouraged, and similarities in experience for all groups are emphasized.

The school maintained its registration as as:

- Independent
- Accredited for Record of School Achievement (RoSA) and can offer an alternative pathway through our transition and vocation classes through the Transcript of Study (ToS)
- Co-educational
- Non-denominational
- Special assistance school
- Years 9 and 10
Concept, growth and new directions
The Western College ALC grew from a national award winning program – called Links to Learning – targeting at-risk youth.

The advertising and promotional campaign carried out during the launch of the school in 2014 was complimented during 2015 by student liaison staff working in the community with partnering community organisations to identify new students and support current students.

During the year, preparations continued for the next stage. Plans to house the school in a new building on the vacant block of land located at the southern end of the main campus continued to evolve with the goal of offering Years 7-12 by 2017.

2015 was a pivotal time in compliance for the school being audited and inspected by BOSTES for:

- Commencement of delivery/stage 5 at Wellington Campus, Term 1
- Stage 5 registration renewal for main campus, Erskine St Campus, Myall St Campus and Wellington Campus.

The result of the audit was that Stage 5 was approved until 2020 and the application to extend the school curriculum to Stage 6 in 2016 was successful.
Student outcomes in standardised national literacy and numeracy testing

The greatest measure of success for 2015 has been seeing more young people really understand the value of education and therefore actively choose to continue on to further education of some form.

In Term 4, 2015, Western College Alesco Learning Centre (ALC) engaged Education and Training Out West to conduct literacy assessments with our Stage 5 students. The objective of the assessments was to better understand students abilities and where they may require additional support and intervention. Areas tested were:

- Reading
- Comprehension
- Writing
- Spelling

Overall, it was found most students were working below average skill levels for their age group. We have created the position of Learning Support Teacher to better understand student needs and to help teachers develop strategies to assist students.

Assessment fairness

Western College ALC does not determine overall grades by assessment task results alone.

Assessment is the ongoing process of gathering, analysing and reflecting on evidence to make informed and consistent judgements to improve future student learning and in the process improve teaching and assessment quality.

Assessment for improved student learning and deep understanding requires a range of assessment practices to be used with three overarching purposes:

- Assessment FOR learning - occurs when teachers use inferences about student progress to inform their teaching;
- Assessment AS learning - occurs when students reflect on and monitor their progress to inform their future learning goals;
- Assessment OF learning - occurs when teachers use evidence of student learning to make judgements on student achievement against goals and standards;

Our assessment of students is primarily an internal process but the school supports and values external assessment providers such as NAPLAN and subject specific instruments.

As part of the teaching programs, teachers plan a variety of assessment tasks related to each objective of the course. The results of assessment are used to plan further learning appropriate to each student’s needs and talents.

Records are kept of assessments and made available to those who need them for planning or review purposes.

To ensure fair assessment, tasks are planned so that disabilities do not invalidate the measurement by affecting the student’s ability to display learning.

Periodically, all teachers at a year level in a subject use a common assessment task. All teachers measure student performance in the task according to the same criteria. Assessment results of these tasks allow comparison of different teaching strategies, enabling teachers to identify and select the more effective strategies.

ALC has also created an assessment committee whose role is to validate assessment tasks and student grading.
Professional learning and teacher standards

In 2015 the College employed 10 teachers who were responsible for delivering the curriculum, one of whom acted as head teacher. Six teachers were employed full time, three were part time and one was casual. The College also employed nine student learning support officers, five of whom were full time employees and four were part time. In addition to teaching and support staff, our we employed a student welfare officer on a full time basis and an administration assistant on a part time basis.

All staff are encouraged to participate in professional learning. In 2015 the professional learning undertaken included the following internal and external training:

- Taking Care - Mental Health & Wellbeing Crisis Managing - Effectively Managing Incidents Student Individual Education Plan Development
- Effective Behaviour Management and BM Plans
- Youth Mental Health First Aid Training
- Child Protection Legislation: Reportable Conduct and Allegations Made Against Employees.
- Child Protection Legislation: Exploring Professional Boundaries
- Student Welfare and Behaviour - Mental Health (Depression, Anxiety and Self Harm) - Best Practice School Support
- Non Crisis Intervention Training - Whole School Behaviour Management Plans
- Risk of Serious Harm Training

http://www.education.vic.gov.au

Staff at Alesco’s first birthday celebration
Workforce composition

In 2015, among our staff there were:

- Ten members of the teaching staff
- A head of student welfare
- Nine student learning support officers
- Two part time crèche personnel
- One lab assistant
- One school administration assistant
- Five corporate services staff shared with the college

Seven of the Alesco staff are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait background

Full time staff
Valerieanne Byrnes - Principal
Peter Cook - Acting Head of School (RoSA) & English
Erifili Davis - Teacher, Manager of Vocational Programs
Paul McLeod - Teacher
Fiona Gough - Maths
Wendy Thomas - English
Hinekura Quinlan - Wellington PCYC Teacher
Matthew Wright - Science
Kerry Lee - SLSO
Matt Plant - SLSO
Mibby (Edith Eastwood) - SLSO/Trainer
Jason Ayre - Lab Assistant (Science)
Shane Riley - SLSO
Kate Davis - Head of Student Welfare

Part time staff
Kathleen Green - Dubbo PCYC Teacher
Dianne Stafford-Smith - Relief teacher
Kate Ellem – Learning Support Teacher
Jane Menzies - School Administration
Marteen Smith - SLSO
Laken Carrett - SLSO
James Gray - SLSO
Carolyn Dallinger - SLSO

The school is also supported by the following College staff:

Administration
Marianna So – Administration Manager
Bridget O’Donnell - Receptionist

Marketing & Business Development
Annette Ferguson - Website and Social Media Officer / Graphic Design Consultant

CEOs Office
Valerieanne Byrnes - CEO & Principal
Marzenka Leszczynska - Finance Consultant

Alesco staff at the end of term 1 2015
Student enrolment, attendance and retention

Enrolment
Alesco’s second year of operation saw a total of 132 students enrolled throughout the year. In addition to the four classes from 2014, we offered an additional Year 10 class at Cobbora Road Campus and offered a combination class in Wellington Campus for Stage 5.
Management of non-attendance

Each period has a class roll maintained by the teacher and submitted to administration at the end of each day. If a student does not arrive for school or is absent from a class/s during the day the parent/guardian is notified on the day. Attendance is analysed weekly to identify patterns of attendance. All absences must be explained with a parental permission note, medical certificate or confirmation of appointment attendance slip.

If students are found to be at risk of not completing the course criteria due to attendance, the principal or delegate will notify the student and the parent or caregiver in writing. A copy of this letter is then maintained on file. The principal has the discretion to allow a student to continue with the program if they believe the student’s merit warrants it.
Post school destinations
Alesco’s student welfare officer maintains a keen interest in our students and their future goals, and encourages continued communication with students after leaving our school. From our enrollees in 2015, 86 students left for a variety of reasons. 21 moved out of the region, 13 found employment, eight went into Government care, and seven left to focus on parenting their children. Of 10 students who left to attend another local school, three returned to Alesco, three remained at their new school and four left the new school; their status is unknown.

*Of 10 students who moved to another school:
- 3 returned to Alesco
- 3 remained at their new school
- and 4 left the new school and their status is unknown
Enrolment policies and characteristics of the student body

Enrolment
Entry is permitted following a student interview and assessment of needs. Prior to enrolment at Western College ALC students are required to attend an interview with the principal to discuss their previous schooling and why they want to attend our school. Students are asked to share any relevant health history or behavioural incidents, as well as their support networks and peer networks. We welcome parents and guardians to attend this interview with the student, however it is the student who will be the focus of the interview. Those who participate in the interview with an openness and willingness to embrace change have the best chance of gaining a position within the school.

The following pieces of legislation are relevant to Western College ALC’s enrolment policy and practice:

- Disability Discrimination Act
- Race Discrimination Act
- Anti-Discrimination Act

These acts make it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the grounds of their disability or race by refusing to enrol them at the school. The school is committed to fulfilling obligations under the law in this enrolment policy.

Students who are successful in the enrolment process will receive written notification of their offer of placement and commencement date at the school. When a student accepts the offer, they are required to fill in an enrolment package which includes:

- all contact details
- an emergency contact person
- prior learning history
- personal and medical information
- disability confirmation
- travel forms
- information and photo release forms

Enrolment of students with specific challenges
Enrolment applications that indicate a student has specific learning challenges will require clarification of the exact nature of the student’s needs and the strategies required to address them. The student will be referred to our Head of Student Welfare who will assist with assessing individual measures and actions requested to support the child. External service providers will also be accessed as necessary. The Head of Student Welfare together with teaching staff will then consider the following:

- The specific challenges faced by the student;
- The parents’, staff and student’s views on whether the measure or action is reasonable and to what extent the measure or action would enable the student to participate in the school program;
- The effect of the adjustment on the student’s ability to achieve learning outcomes, ability to participate in programs and independence;
- The effect of adjustments on anyone else involved including the school, the staff and other students.

This information is collated into an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) which is reviewed and update regularly.

Students participating in the Second chance Program had the opportunity to work with dogs who had already been trained.
Referrals and community engagement

The majority of our students were self referred or encouraged by their parents, guardians or sponsors, and many were referred by law enforcement agencies. A smaller number were encouraged by their parents to enrol or referred by their previous school.

Parent and guardian involvement

2015 continued the enrolment discussion with parents and guardians and liaison with parents throughout the term to discuss particular student needs.

Our vocational program included accredited and general interest topics such as infrastructure, community services, beauty and animal care.

Parent and Community Engagement (PaCE)

We encourage parents and guardians from the indigenous community to join our PaCE (Parent and Community Engagement) program. The program targets parents, families, carers of students and some students themselves and is also open to the general community. Our creche facilities enabled parents of young children to attend which included our Baby On Board mums from Alesco. The focus of this program is specifically about encouraging interaction and advocacy within the school system and building healthy relationships within family and community. In 2015 the program was run by Alesco teachers and support staff, some of whom are indigenous people, and included inspirational visits from Wirajuri man Herb Smith talking about how he built his business ‘Dreamtime Tucka’ and Aunty Pat Doolan who mentored the students through the program, as well as many creative and educational activities.

In 2015 we had a total of 20 enrolments over 20 classes. Some of the positive outcomes for students included finding employment and continuing education at university.

Learning Assistance

Forty three percent of our students have a formal diagnosis requiring learning modifications, and the remainder have observed and/or referred learning challenges. Learning challenges require adjustment to environment and/or process. The challenges facing these students fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Cognitive
- Sensory
- Physical
- Social/emotional

Gender distribution

Gender distribution was fairly equal during 2015 with 69 males and 63 females.

Cultural characteristics

Students are all Australian-born and 53 of 67 students identify as Indigenous Australians.
Referral source to all Alseco programs 2015

Students with special needs

Diagnosed disability
Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander
Observed and referred diagnosis
Living out of home

Gender distribution

Male
Female
School policies

Enrolment policy
Western College ALC is a school specifically designed to re-engage disenfranchised and at-risk young people.

Our school aims to provide opportunities to young people, primarily aged 15-17 years, who are unable to complete their education within the traditional school environment.

The selection criteria for Western College ALC focuses on eight key areas:

- Learning difficulties/disabilities
- Behavioural difficulties/disabilities
- Social disadvantage
- Age
- Academic achievement
- Financial disadvantage
- English as a second Language/ Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- Isolation

Case management will be provided to all students who are enrolled in the school but Western College ALC is not in a position to manage students who cannot operate within the adult learning environment.

All students who apply to attend Western College ALC within the designated intake times shall be offered an interview as part of the application process. Student’s acceptance into the program is dependent on their presentation at interview and their demonstrated ability to work within the policies and philosophy of ALC.

All students who are enrolled at Western College ALC will need to undergo a literacy and numeracy assessment if the teaching staff deems it necessary. This may be conducted prior to enrolment if required.

Procedural fairness
The concept of procedural fairness is derived from the principles of natural justice. A process that demonstrates procedural fairness is one in which:

- Decision makers act fairly and provide reasons for decisions;
- The person affected is given a fair hearing;
- All parties to a matter have an opportunity to present their case where an adverse decision or finding is made;
- The decision-maker is impartial and acts without bias when making the decision;
- All relevant arguments are considered and irrelevant arguments are excluded; and
- The decision, the reasons for the decision and the evidence upon which the decision is made are explained and are capable of review.

Student welfare policies
Policies relating to student welfare include referral of students to local support services when a student has issues that are impinging on the student’s ability to learn, and a strict confidentiality policy to which all college staff must adhere.

POLICY 5A.1: Duty of care
POLICY 5A.3: Role of staff in child and young person’s care and protection
POLICY 5A.4: Mandatory reporting requirements of alesco learning centre staff
POLICY 5A.5: Working with children’s checks applying to guest speakers and volunteer Workers (including work experience supervisors)
POLICY 5A.6: Reporting suspicion of risk of significant harm to young person to CS
POLICY 5A.6: Reporting suspicion of risk of significant harm to young person to CS
POLICY 5A.7: Reasonable suspicion of risk of significant harm to a student
POLICY 5A.9: Procedures where concerns about risk of significant harm relate to the actions of a student, trainee or apprentice
POLICY 5A.10: Additional procedures where concerns about risk of significant harm relate to issues of reportable conduct.
Other policies
Western College Alesco Learning Centre seeks to provide a safe and supportive learning environment which:

- Supports the social and emotional wellbeing of students
- Encourages academic achievement
- Minimises risk of harm

The following policies are in place and are reviewed regularly.

| POLICY 1.4 | Staff code of conduct |
| POLICY 1.8 | Student supervision |
| POLICY 1.9 | Students traveling in staff vehicles |
| POLICY 1.11 | Drug and alcohol |
| POLICY 1.12 | Confidentiality |
| POLICY 1.13 | Staff relationships with students |
| POLICY 2.17 | Disability provisions for students |
| POLICY 3.1 | Equality of opportunity |
| POLICY 3.2 | Access and equity |
| POLICY 5B.1 | Notification of concern for student welfare |
| POLICY 5B.2 | Referral to support services |
| POLICY 5B.3 | Accepting referral to support services |
| POLICY 5B.4 | Individual education plans for students |
| POLICY 5B.5 | Application for funding assistance for students with special needs |
| POLICY 5B.6 | Student medical disclosure and medication |
| POLICY 5B.11 | Harassment, discrimination & anti bullying |
| POLICY 5B.13 | Request for police assistance |
| POLICY 5B.32 | Student complaints |
| POLICY 5B.22 | Student access to own records |
| POLICY 5B.25 | Students rights and responsibilities |
| POLICY 5B.29 | Student drug and alcohol |
| POLICY 5B.30 | Weapons |
| POLICY 6.1 | Student discipline |
| POLICY 6.2 | Procedural fairness |
| POLICY 6.3 | Corporal punishment |
| POLICY 8A.5 | Assurances in relation to 'responsible persons' and good character |
| POLICY 8A.6 | Complaints or grievances received by the school |

The policies are available in the Student Handbook which is given to each student on enrolment and available by request from the principal. Policies are reviewed regularly.

Students experimenting with pressurising a watermelon by placing elastic bands around it. The outcome was very messy!
Curriculum and school activities

Curriculum and school activities

English
Developing proficiency in English enables students to take their place as confident communicators, critical and imaginative thinkers, lifelong learners and informed, active participants in society. It supports the development and expression of a system of personal values, based on students’ understanding of moral and ethical matters, and gives expression to their hopes and ideals.

Geography
The study of geography enables students to critically assess the ideas and opinions of others and to form and express their own ideas and arguments. In so doing it forms a basis for active participation in community life, ecological sustainability, creating a just society, promoting intercultural understanding and lifelong learning. We offer students the following topics: Australia’s physical environments; changing Australian communities; issues in Australian environments; and Australia in its regional and global contexts.

History
The study of history investigates the actions, motives and lifestyles of people over time, from individuals and family members, to local communities, expanding to national and world history contexts. It introduces the idea that history contains many stories and that there is never only one uncontested version. In Stage 5 students will investigate the following: Australians at war (World Wars I and II); rights and freedoms (1945–present) and The Holocaust.

Science
Scientific inquiry is a distinct way of finding answers to interesting questions and solutions to important problems about the natural world locally, nationally and globally, including shaping sustainable futures. Scientific knowledge provides explanations for a variety of phenomena and enables sense to be made of the natural environment and the made environment. Scientific experiments at Alesco are based within a “real world. We feel that by offering students experiments in which they can engage and recreate deepens their understanding and improves participation.

Personal development, health and physical exercise (PDHPE)
PDHPE provides the opportunity for young people to explore issues that are likely to impact on their own health and wellbeing and that of others, now and in the future. The issues that affect young people include physical activity, mental health, drug use, sexual health, nutrition, supportive relationships, personal safety, gender roles and discrimination.

Mathematics
Mathematics provides students with knowledge, skills and understanding in number and algebra, measurement and geometry, and statistics and probability. Mathematics at Alesco makes clear the links between the various components of mathematics, as well as the relationship between mathematics and other disciplines. Students learn to apply their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding in a broad range of contexts beyond the mathematics classroom.

VET Courses
The following VET courses were offered: Preparing for Work Business and Beauty Community Services Certificate II Agriculture Certificate II Animal Care Numbers at Work Certificate of General Education for Adults (CGEA) Aboriginal History Spreadsheets Foundation Skills Using digital technology at work Investigating health and wellbeing

Students from the VET Beauty class learning about application of makeup
Innovative activities during 2015 included art classes in which the students used their curriculum content as the basis and inspiration for their artwork. They were also encouraged to think about the infrastructure for the new school site and express their ideas through art.

Teachers and students from Alesco attended the AIS STEM Symposium and what an awesome time they had!! STEM stands for Science, Technology, English and Mathematics. Students Dayna Behsman and Bailey Cubby along with their teacher Erifili Davis presented their project “Journey through Wambool”, an interactive map of the Macquarie River using Google My Maps. Their project was given an enthusiastic reception by the other educators present at the event.

A design competition to create a vessel that would allow the dropping of an egg without breaking was the highlight of the term for some students. This exercise really engaged the students and had them thinking outside the square and using learning from science and maths classes in a creative and practical way.

Our stage 5 class at PCYC created scaled replica of the solar system which dealing with the actual distances proved to be very challenging.

Our goal to have some student artworks entered in the art section at Dubbo Show was rewarded with the winning of some awards. An encouragement award, a highly commended, a second placing and a fabulous day at the show saw many proud smiles around the school.

Year 10 student Jorden Newton delivered the “wow factor” to speech and drama adjudicator, Helen Marchant, in the Solo Character Sketch section at the Dubbo Eisteddfod. As reported in the Daily Liberal on 2nd June 2015 ‘Jorden’s love for limelight was evident on stage, as the youngster took home first prize out of eight other contenders’.

Our students went out to Beni Forest as part of the Our Bush, Our Kids program. John Duggan, an archaeologist from the Office of Environment and Heritage, showed the class how to make traditional tools using traditional methods and materials. This program is related to outcomes in Stage 5 science, history and geography.

Crèche
Our crèche is located in the converted board room at the main campus in Cobbora Road. The crèche allows young mothers to continue their schooling while their children are cared for by qualified childcare workers.

The mothers and their babies are transported to the college daily in the college bus, driven and coordinated by Mibby Eastwood, who is also our Youth Worker and was a trainer in the Links to Learning program.

A lesson on making traditional Aboriginal tools in the Our Bush, Our Kids program held at Beni Forest
School determined improvement targets

Goals for 2015
The goals for 2015 were to encourage students, parents and guardians and community representatives to assist us to improve to meet the needs of students and the community.

- Encourage student engagement within the community with events like entering student contributions to art and performance events such as Dubbo Annual Show, Dubbo Eisteddfod and Indigenous culture activities
- Prioritise the building of new learning spaces in the adjacent property.
- Implementing a campus in Wellington for both youth students and mature aged students.
- Registration as a charitable gift recipient during 2015 and a drive to corporate and philanthropic donors is expected to enable the raising of funds to improve resources available and meet demand.
- Preparation to deliver Year 11 and 12 in 2016 began toward the end of 2014 and will continue throughout 2015.

Achievements for 2015
Three major goals of engaging the students in the community were met with pride during 2015.

Awards for entries in the art section of Dubbo show and Dubbo Eisteddfod, and a great cultural experience in the bush learning about Aboriginal culture.

All of the College’s goals were fully or at least partially met. Our class at Wellington although comprising of many transitional students, focused successfully on Stage 5 curriculum and foundation skills.

The College is now registred as a Charitable Gift Recipient and have put into action a ‘Win A Holiday’ raffle to raise money for the College overall (to be drawn in June 2016).

Goals for 2016
Our continuing goals are set around meeting the needs of students, encouraging student engagement in the community and managing the evolution of the school.

Specifically for 2016, we endeavour to:

- create new learning spaces with a new school site catering for outdoor activities and outdoor learning. Preparation for year 7 - 12 in 2017 will be a priority.
- work with community stakeholders to offer improved pathways
- continue to find employment opportunities, to build skills and confidence
- create additional opportunities to increase our literacy and cultural programs

The prize is $9,000 worth of travel including $1,000 spending money, a Taronga Western Plains Zoo package and a dinner at One7Eight reataurant.

Prize winning entries from Alesco students on display at Dubbo Show
Initiatives prompting respect and responsibility

The College’s focus on respect and responsibility for 2015 was carried out in practical ventures through culture and art.

Early in the year students and staff participated in the Freedom Ride which aimed to bring a greater awareness about to the community about the struggle of our First Peoples for equality and sparked debate about Indigenous affairs of the day, leading to the 1967 referendum which resulted in two amendments to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia.

The students were taken on several trips to our local art gallery Western Plains Cultural Centre where they enjoyed a variety of exhibitions including the local ‘Waste To Art’ exhibition. Discussions about different perceptions and perspectives were initiated in response to the artworks. A day trip to the Dubbo Show to see entries from our students also inspired respect and admiration for the talents and creativity of others. A trip to the movies to see ‘The Martian’ provoked discussion about dealing with adversity and willingness to help help other people.

An opportunity to experience not only how it feels to be in a wheelchair, but the challenge of playing a game of basketball from one gave students insight into sport from the perspective of a person with a disability.

Students thoroughly engaged themselves in a trip to the bush to learn about Aboriginal Culture and the making of traditional tools.

A number of Alesco students, namely the Baby On Board mums, participated in the PaCE program throughout 2015. The program aims to increase engagement of parents and children with the education system and improve relationships within families through a wide range of creative and personal development activities.

Students and teacher having a go at wheelchair basketball
Parent, student and teacher satisfaction

As per the College’s policies, we welcome and encourage feedback from students and their families, as well as our staff.

Feedback from students is encouraged through an open suggestion box and through individual meetings. Parent and guardians are encouraged to contact the school via the newsletter, parent-teacher interviews and during event phone calls.

Western College staff are encouraged to provide feedback through online surveys, team and individual meetings.

Identified areas for improvement included:

- increasing our outdoor facilities
- improving cultural connection
- modifying our programs to cater for external influences

Teachers Erifili Davis and Matt Wright with students Dayna Behsman and Bailey Cubby at the STEM Symposium in Sydney. STEM stands for Science, Technology, English and Mathematics. Along with their teacher Erifili Davis presented their project “Journey through Wambool”, an interactive map of the Macquarie River using Google My Maps.
Summary of financial information

Recurrent and capital income 2015

- NSW DET
- Other Grants
- Commonwealth Recurrent
- Fees and Private Income

Recurrent and capital expenditure 2015

- Capital Expenses
- Non Salary Expenses
- Salaries, Allowance and Related