



Education &  
Communities

# Riverina Environmental Education Centre Annual School Report 2014



## School context statement

The Riverina Environmental Education Centre (REEC) is a facility of the Department of Education and Communities (DEC) located within the grounds of the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) in Wagga Wagga.

REEC is one of 25 Environmental Education and Zoo Education Centres run by the DEC.

The Riverina Environmental Education Centre is committed to supporting Public Education in the Riverina. The Centre's teaching programs are science and geography based reflecting the partnership with the Office of Environment and Heritage.

A key goal of REEC is to provide students with high quality learning experiences in natural environments.

REEC provides programs to support schools with environmental and sustainability education.

Programs are conducted on site at REEC, at other sites in Deniliquin, Griffith, Temora, West Wyalong, Corowa, Adelong, Thredbo, Yarrangobilly and other local sites.

REEC also provides support, training and resources for teachers.

REEC is used as a training and meeting venue for schools and other organisations.



Senior Science group at Lake Cowal

## Principal's message

During 2014 REEC has undergone further improvements with the continued development of the new study sites at Adelong Falls, Deniliquin, Hay and Griffith which provide opportunities for schools in those areas to participate in EE programs.

REEC has continued its emphasis on the provision of new and innovative ways to deliver

environmental education programs across the region with the development of new study sites and the use of electronic devices for recording and delivering information.

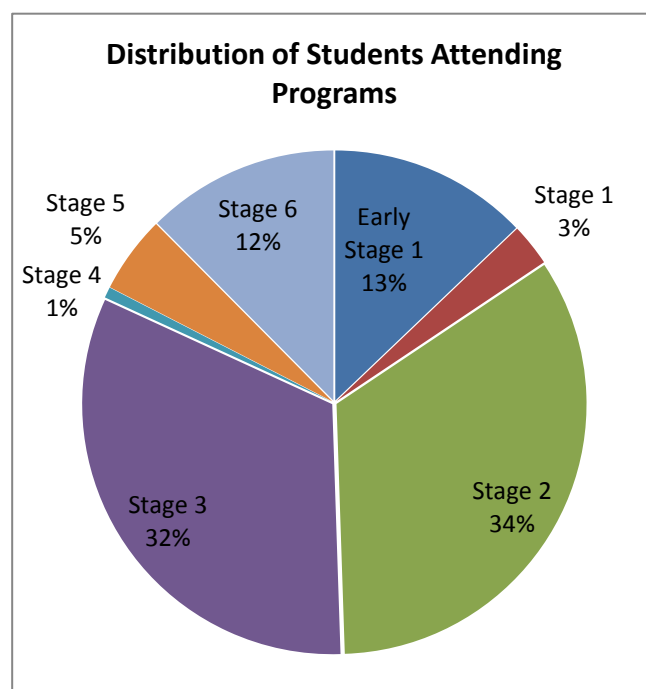
The new science based Year 6 Talented Student Program has been successfully implemented

I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous school self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school's achievements and areas for development.

Paul Greenwood (Principal)

## Visitation (Student information)

REEC provides learning activities for students in a variety of formats including class visits to REEC and various study sites, incursions, video conferences, regional programs and excursions for mandatory fieldwork.



## Workforce information

The Centre has a teaching Principal, one Teacher, a School Administration Manager and a General Assistant.

## Workforce composition

Position	Number
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	
Assistant Principal(s)	
Head Teachers	

Classroom Teacher(s)	1
Teacher of Reading Recovery	
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	
Teacher Librarian	
Teacher of ESL	
School Counsellor	
School Administrative & Support Staff	2
Total	4

There are no Indigenous staff employed at the Centre. REEC works closely with the DEC Aboriginal Education Team and consults with members of the local aboriginal community for advice and assistance.



### Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Qualifications	% of staff
Degree or Diploma	100
Postgraduate	

### Professional learning and teacher accreditation

REEC staff attended several conferences and training courses as part of professional development. Staff also completed on-line training modules.

REEC teaching staff attended:

- The annual Western EECs conference at Red Hill EEC
- The Aboriginal Studies Association annual conference

Staff completed the following Professional Learning courses:

- Managing iPads with Apple Configurator Training Course
- Plugging into Nature- Learning outside the classroom with iPads
- Preparing and Responding to Bushfires
- Core Financial Literacy for DEC Employees
- Consultative Decision Making
- Child Protection Awareness Training
- Anaphylaxis and First Aid Training



New Sensory Path at REEC



## Financial summary

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

Date of financial summary	30/11/2014
<b>Income</b>	\$
Balance brought forward	39804.39
Global funds	26639.40
Tied funds	7525.84
School & community sources	52923.15
Interest	1770.54
Trust receipts	0.00
Canteen	0.00
Total income	88858.93
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	24252.60
Excursions	1886.76
Extracurricular dissections	0.00
Library	0.00
Training & development	194.93
Tied funds	8118.42
Casual relief teachers	435.76
Administration & office	7953.76
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	1503.20
Maintenance	3970.52
Trust accounts	0.00
Capital programs	0.00
Total expenditure	48315.95
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	80347.37

REEC received funding for the development and implementation of an iPad learning program on Aboriginal Culture. A portion of the funds have been allocated for the continuation of this program over the coming years.

Each year some funds are reserved for future asset replacement and the purchase of new assets and learning materials.

A full copy of the school's 2014 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.



REEC provides Incursion programs for isolated schools

## School performance 2014

- **Enhanced Strategic Partnerships** with other Environmental Education providers to deliver EE across the region have proven successful enabling a greater range of studies across the region.
- The new study sites in Corowa, Narrandera, Deniliquin and Griffith have been utilized in 2014
- Ran the regional **'Envirochamps'** leadership program involving 18 public schools in partnership with Lake Cowal Conservation Centre
- The development of the Adelong Gold Mill Ruins study site has provided a study area for schools in the area which reduces costs while providing more meaningful study in their local area.

## Significant programs and initiatives – Policy and equity funding

### Aboriginal education

REEC has support from the local Aboriginal community to teach Aboriginal cultural programs. REEC utilises a re-constructed traditional campsite at the Centre to conduct studies that educate students about the traditional Aboriginal inhabitants of the area, their relationship with the land and their use of bush resources.

REEC has worked collaboratively with the Riverina Aboriginal Education Team to develop the iPad Aboriginal Culture Learning program. Funds were allocated from the National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014 to create an iBook resource and teaching activities.

Staff from REEC and the local ACLO presented this program at the Aboriginal Studies Association annual conference at Sydney University.

Aspects of Aboriginal culture and knowledge are integrated into most of the Centre's programs.



Winter Gunyah at Campsite

### Multicultural education and anti-racism

All REEC programs are suitable for students from various cultural and religious backgrounds. REEC promotes a racism free learning and working environment.



### Other significant initiatives

#### 2014 Envirochamps Project Report

18 public schools enrolled, with 96 students participating in workshops and successfully completed projects in the 2014 Enviro Champs program.

With the help of a diverse range of enthusiastic mentors, including School principals, Assistant Principals, Classroom teachers and Learning support officers, students demonstrated the capacity to collaborate organise and complete school based projects that highlighted their care and commitment for their local environments.

The growth in student confidence and leadership skills was evident at the Enviro Champs finale held out Junee High School. All students spoke confidently and passionately about their projects, action plans and learning journeys throughout the duration of the task.

The students utilised many differing forms of presentation software to enhance the quality of their speeches. Technologies used included:

- MS PowerPoint
- Prezi
- iMovie
- Adobe Premiere
- Movie Maker

This year's program included participants from a diverse range including:

- Gifted and Talented
- Diagnosed disabilities
- Learning Support Assistance
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- Large comprehensive public schools
- Rural and remote small schools

The 2014 Envirochamps program showcased a wide array of innovative environmental projects that included:

- Promoting healthy eating at schools via Fruit and Vegie Crew
- Our edible bush tucker garden and recipe book
- Community walking track with animal identification signs and activities
- Worm Farming – recycling food waste
- Native Outdoor Learning Area
- Recycling rain water for vegetable gardens
- Fish pond and garden
- iRecycle – whole school recycling
- Outdoor learning area regeneration
- Flower power composting
- Worm Towers
- Insect Hotels
- Playground cleanliness – a school house competition
- The Bucket List – recycling for the chooks
- Preventing Headless Chickens – vermin proofing poultry sheds

The predominating theme for this year was utilising the excess waste within their local environments and utilising this free resource to value add in another area of the school.

The students showed an amazing capacity to recycle and re-use existing resources to operate a near cost free project. Materials that were recycled included:

- Food Scraps
- Paving Tiles
- PVC Tubing
- Rubber tyres
- Rainwater Tanks

- Abandoned worm farms, compost bins and raised garden beds.

If the scope of their project required an initial implementation expense many schools showed the ability to be creative in their approach to generating revenue. A highlight was the number of schools that held local fundraising events and raised amounts greater than \$500.

#### Participant Schools

1. North Wagga Public School
2. Ladysmith Public School
3. Griffith Public School
4. Matong Public School
5. Rankins Springs Public School
6. Gundagai Public School
7. West Wyalong Public School
8. Griffith North Public School
9. Adelong Public School
10. Beckom Public School
11. Cootamundra Public School
12. Ungarie Central School
13. Parkview Public School
14. Weethalle Public School
15. Franklin Public School
16. Sturt Public School
17. Quandialla Central School
18. Bongongo Public School



Hiking to Mt Kosciuszko- Alpine Study

## Environmental Education for Sustainability

REEC environmental programs encourage the development of positive student values toward the environment and participation in protecting it.

Teaching programs promote student action for the environment. Staff practice good environmental citizenship and act as role models

Buildings have supplementary power by solar cells and wind generator.

The grounds are maintained to provide habitat for local species of birds and animals. An extensive dripper irrigation system has been installed to conserve water. Rainwater tanks are utilised for watering gardens. Food scraps are composted and a wormfarm is maintained



Nest box at REEC

## School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

### School evaluation processes

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used include:

In 2014 we conducted a comprehensive review of our teaching programs and commenced the process of linking each study to the new Australian curriculum

### School planning 2012-2014:

#### School priority 1

**Visitation:** The Centre is used for maximum benefit for students and schools in the Region

### Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014:

- REEC taught 4772 students from 114 schools
- New staff member was inducted and trained
- REEC staff assisted schools with school based environmental programs associated with the Envirochamps program. 18 public schools participated in the program
- The Traditional culture Study has been reviewed and refined with consultation. New artefacts have been sourced and added to the collection



Student perform the Welcome dance

### Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

- New staff will be trained to conduct studies at all sites
- New teacher will be trained in all programs
- Studies will be revised to address the new curriculum
- Development of a new iPad Learning-Wiradjuri Culture and History program

#### School priority 2

Maintain the Regional Environmental Education Centre Network. The network of providers work cooperatively to deliver Environmental Education across the region

### Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2014:

- REEC and Lake Cowal Conservation Centre ran the regional 'Envirochamps'



Leadership Program with 18 public schools participating in the program

- Ran several joint studies with LCCC at West Wyalong, lake Cargellico, Tullibigeal, Griffith and Wagga
- Worked with Adelong Falls Gold Mill Ruins group to run 3 programs at the Adelong site
- Ran a Waste Reduction program in conjunction with RAMROC for schools in the Narrandera Shire



Alpine Study Stream

#### Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- REEC will work cooperatively with LCCC to coordinate the Zoo-mobile visits
- REEC and LCCC will coordinate EE programs in the Griffith area.
- REEC will run a Waste Reduction program in conjunction with RAMROC for schools in the Narrandera Shire
- REEC staff will attend the annual Western EEC conference

#### School priority 3

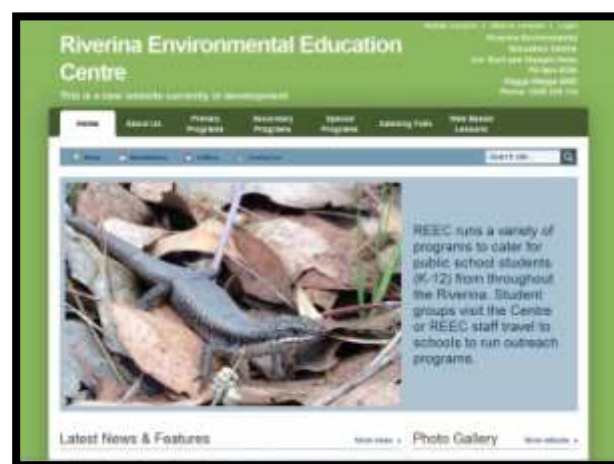
Incorporate Technology: Technology is used for administration and safety purposes and to enhance teaching programs. Mobile devices used in studies and for remote access

#### Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2014:

- iBook on Traditional Culture has been produced with the assistance of Aboriginal Education Unit, Field of Mars EEC, local Aboriginal community members and National Parks and Wildlife Service for distribution in 2015
- iPads have been integrated into the traditional culture study to record activities and document learning
- Teacher completed iBook creators course to gain skills to develop further iBooks to complement studies
- Connected classroom used for meetings and pre-visit communication
- New material is being added to the website
- Electronic booking system operating using excel spreadsheet to track bookings and for data analysis

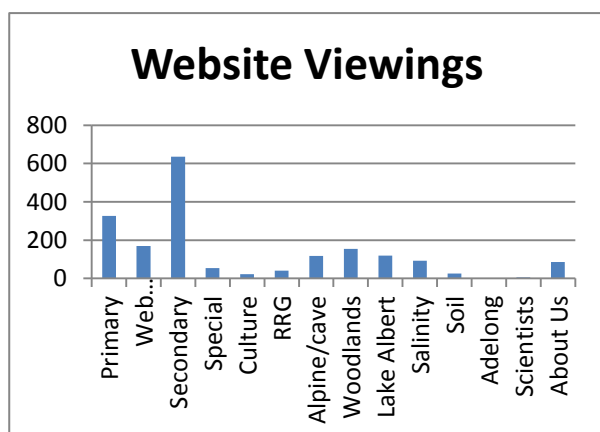
#### Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- New website will continue to be developed. We respond to feedback from teachers and students.
- Staff training will be conducted to develop technology skills
- Increase the use of mobile devices to support authentic learning in a variety of settings
- The integration of iPads into the Traditional Culture study



Website Home Page





Statistics: June-December

## Student and teacher satisfaction

In 2014, REEC sought the opinions of students and teachers about the Centre's studies.

Evaluation surveys were completed by visiting teachers. Feedback indicates a high level of satisfaction with the Centre's programs and staff. Students found their experience enjoyable, memorable and informative. The support material on the website is being used by teachers and students.

## Future Directions

### 2015-2017 School Plan

NSW DEC is implementing a new school planning process for 2015-17. The new plan will be published on the school's website from the beginning of Term 2 2015.

REEC has been actively consulting with the community, conducting meetings and analyzing survey results to establish strategic directions



Aboriginal Culture Day

## About this report

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school's practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school's future development.

Paul Greenwood- Principal

Darron Watt- Teacher

Dawn Miller- School Administration Manager

## School contact information

Riverina Environmental Education Centre

PO Box 5336 Wagga Wagga 2650

**Phone:** 69329134

**Fax:** 69315084

**Email:** riverina-e.school@det.nsw.edu.au

**Web:** riverine-e.schools.nsw.edu.au

School Code: 5734

Parents can find more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the report and have the opportunity to provide feedback about the report at:

<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/learning/emsad/asr/index.php>

