



**DICKSON COLLEGE**  
excellence opportunity community

# **DICKSON COLLEGE BOARD REPORT 2012**



Figure 1: Entrance to Dickson College

This report supports the work being done in the ACT Education and Training Directorate, as outlined in the Strategic Plan 2010-2013 “Everyone Matters”. It complies with reporting requirements detailed within the Education ACT 2004 and the National Education Agreement.



**ACT**  
Government

Education and Training

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The school website is [dicksonc.act.edu.au](http://dicksonc.act.edu.au).

Inquiries about this publication should be directed to:

Dickson College  
Phillip Ave.  
Dickson ACT 2602

General Inquiries:

Telephone (02) 6205 6455

## About our school

### Introduction to School

Dickson College, a senior secondary college situated in the inner north of Canberra is one of the original ACT colleges. It is located close to Canberra's civic centre and the Australian National University. College facilities include a large library, theatre, cafeteria, gymnasium, computer rooms, multimedia studio, music practice rooms and recording studio, weights room, adjacent playing fields and specialist rooms for practical subjects. The college is committed to providing a supportive, innovative and educationally enriched learning environment to its 800 students. Together we work to develop informed, caring, creative and confident global citizens. The college prides itself on an excellent academic record and individually tailored programs for students across the curriculum. These include a 'Bridging Program' for students with a refugee background, a Special Education program, an Intensive English School and an alternative Year 10 Program. Dickson College is a nationally Registered Training Organisation and provides numerous vocational options. A counselling system and a transition and careers program support all students as they make a range of choices. The college works in close partnership with the community and is involved in several productive school community projects.

## Student Information

### Student enrolment

In 2012 there were a total of 763 students enrolled at this school.

### 2012 Student Enrolment breakdown

	Number of Students
Male	426
Female	337
Indigenous	15
LBOTE	117

Dickson College has the only Secondary Introductory Intensive English School (SIEC) in the ACT and all students learning English initially attend the SIEC while gaining basic competencies in reading and writing. These students range from year 7 to year 12. In addition, Dickson College has a large number of international private students from overseas in years 11 and 12.

## Student attendance

The following table identifies the attendance rate of students by year level during 2012. Student attendance rate is the percentage of school days attended by students in each year level at the school. Student attendance is measured over two school terms; that is from the first day of the school year for students in term one to the last day of term two.

Year Level	Attendance Rate %
7	97.0
8	94.1
9	98.0
10	94.0
11	88.3
12	87.0

The attendance policy at Dickson College is based on requirements set out in the Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) Policy and Procedure Manual 2010 ([www.bsos.gov.au](http://www.bsos.gov.au)). Students at Dickson College are strongly encouraged to attend, not only in order to meet requirements, but also in order to fully engage with college life and benefit from the college experience. Students who have been sick, or absent with parental leave for some other valid reason, are expected to fill out a leave of absence form when they return to college. The form is available from student services and the Dickson College website. This absence form either has a written explanation for the absence by the parent/carer, or a doctor's certificate attached. Classroom teachers are expected to contact parents about unexplained absences for individual students, in the first instance. Student services monitors attendance generally, and periodically notifies parents/carers via email or letter about unexplained absences, where the number of absences is of sufficient concern to suggest the student may V grade any particular unit/s. Students who are at risk of V grading and therefore at risk of not qualifying for a year 12 certificate are closely monitored, and case managed by a member of the student services team. Students who are case managed may be put on attendance contracts to assist them to meet BSSS requirements. Students who are absent for extended periods due to illness, bereavement, significant sporting representation or other valid reason are encouraged to see student services about any special consideration that may be granted, such as extension without penalty for assignments.

## Staff Information

### Teacher qualifications

All teachers meet the professional requirements for teaching in an ACT public school.

The proportion of teaching staff with certificates/degrees/diplomas and a postgraduate qualification is shown below.

Qualifications	% Teaching Staff
Certificate/Diploma/Degree	100
Postgraduate	58

## Workforce Composition

In 2012 the workforce composition of the school is highlighted in the following table.

Role	Total
Administrative Officers	16
General Service Officers or Equivalent	1
School Leader A	1
School Leader B	2
School Leader C	10
Teachers *	53
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>83</b>

**Note:** This table includes pre-school staffing

There is 1 indigenous staff at this school.

## Volunteers

Volunteers worked approximately 220 hours in 2012.

Volunteers made valuable contributions to supporting programs for students in the areas of literacy support, individual tutoring for students in the SIEC, music programs and wellbeing initiatives.

## School Review and Development

The ACT Education and Training Directorates *Strategic Plan 2010-2013* provides the framework and strategic direction for the school's plan. This is supported by the *School Improvement in ACT Public Schools Directions 2010-2013* and the *School Improvement Framework* which are the overarching documents providing support to achieve high standards in student learning, innovation and best practice in ACT public schools.

All ACT public schools participate in a four year cycle of school review and development. Schools take part in a continuous cycle of review comprising annual self assessments against their school plans. In the fourth year schools undergo an external validation process. This process provides an independent and unbiased assessment of the schools progress towards achieving system and school priorities.

Dickson College was validated in 2011. A copy of the validation report can be found on the school website.

## **School Satisfaction**

Schools continually use a range of data collection tools to gain an understanding of the satisfaction levels of their parents and carers, staff and students. In August 2012 the school undertook a system survey to gain an understanding of school satisfaction at that time. Staff, parents and students from year 5, and above, with the exception of students in special schools, took part in an online survey.

## **Overall Satisfaction**

In 2012, 87 percent of parents and carers, 97 percent of staff and 88 percent of students at this school indicated they were satisfied or highly satisfied with the education provided by the school.

These results as well as the continual review of school performance across the four domains of schooling: learning and teaching, leading and managing, student engagement and community engagement contributed to the development of the school plan. This plan is available on the school website at [dicksonc.act.edu.au](http://dicksonc.act.edu.au)

## **Professional Learning**

Professional learning is valued highly at Dickson College. Staff outline areas of interest and those for development in their professional pathways. The College facilitates staff access to professional learning on an equitable and cost effective basis. The emphasis is always student outcomes and for 2012 wellbeing initiatives were the major focus.

## **Learning and Assessment**

### **Performance in literacy and numeracy**

Students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in all ACT schools participated in the National Assessment Program-Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). This program assesses skills in reading, writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation and numeracy.

In 2012, 85.71 percent of year 7 students and 100 percent of year 9 students were exempt from testing based on nationally agreed criteria.

As students were either exempt or withdrawn from NAPLAN testing there is no data to report in 2012.

### **Outcomes for College Students**

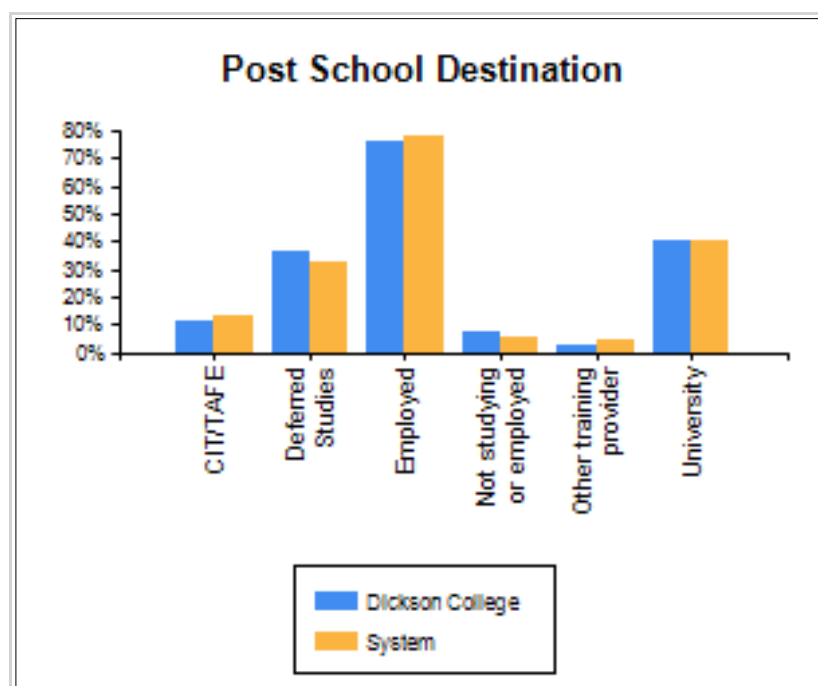
Year 12 outcomes are shown in the following table in relation to the percentage receiving a Year 12 certificate and the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

<b>Year 12 Outcomes</b>	<b>Total</b>
Percentage of year 12 students receiving a Year 12 Certificate	85.14
Percentage of year 12 students receiving a Year 12 or equivalent VET qualification (without duplicates) within the school setting	85.71
Percentage of year 12 students receiving an ATAR	54.29
Percentage of year 12 students in top 5 percent of ATAR	6.57
The median ATAR for year 12 students	80.70

**Source: Board of Senior Secondary Studies, December 2012**

### Post school destination

The following graphs show the post school destination of college students who were awarded a Year 12 Certificate in 2012. As many of the respondents were engaged in both study and employment, the percentage total is greater than one hundred percent.



	<b>College (%)</b>	<b>System (%)</b>
CIT/TAFE	11.3	13.0
Deferred Studies	36.0	32.7
Employed	75.8	78.2
Not studying or employed	7.0	5.7
Other training provider	2.7	4.1
University	39.8	40.1

Source: Planning and Performance Data, 2012

While many students will go on to further education as the graph indicates, the majority of students decide to take a gap year and either work or defer their studies. While this graph reflects the immediate post school destination it is not indicative of the eventual outcomes.

### **Performance in other areas of the curriculum**

Dickson College has a proud tradition of quality education and exciting opportunities for our school community. Our success is due largely to the recruitment and development of talented and dedicated teachers and support staff across all areas of our college.

Pushpa Ekenayake received a 2012 ACT Public Education Award for her remarkable work in supporting staff and students in the Secondary Introductory English Centre (SIEC) and the Refugee Bridging Program. Dickson College teacher Ros Phillips was also acknowledged for making a significant contribution to supporting young refugees studying at the Secondary Introductory English Centre.

Our Refugee Bridging Program received more accolades when Dickson College was awarded the 2012 Multicultural Award for Education because of our dedicated program that assists students from many diverse countries that include Burma, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Iran and Iraq. This acknowledgement was due to the leadership and determination of Ros Phillips, the executive teacher of the SIEC and Refugee Bridging Program. Furthermore, two of our refugee students, Sah Wah and Abu, were finalists in the ABC Heywire competition.

The high standards at Dickson extend to all of our programs, including technology. In 2012, the Dickson College Brickwork and Blocklaying team won the prestigious Children's Week Award for their collaborative work with Turner School to construct long-term garden beds for the school kitchen garden program.

I.T. teacher Andrew Moss won the 2012 Australian Computer Society Education Award for developing the Unmanned Airborne Vehicle Challenge program. This award recognised the innovative and engaging way that information technology and engineering is presented at Dickson College. The U.A.V. program integrates a wide range of disciplines, including aerospace, computers, business development, maths, physics and communication skills. This award was presented at the A.C.S. annual awards night recently held at the Boathouse Restaurant in Canberra.

Three Dickson College students of Chinese were recognised for their achievements at the 2012 ACT Mandarin Presentation Contest and Awards Ceremony, held at the Centre for Teaching and Learning on Friday 2 November.

Nelle Mahoney, who teaches Japanese and English, completed a very worthwhile project of mentoring teachers in other schools to support the study of Japanese language and culture - Mentoring and Reflecting: Languages Educators and Professional Standards (MoRe LEAPS), under the auspices of the NALSSP Strategic Collaboration and Partnership Fund. On September 27th, Nelle presented the results of her mentoring project at the Centre for Teaching and Learning



Dickson College students benefit from amazing opportunities made possible by their teachers. Dickson College was represented brilliantly at the prestigious TEDx Canberra talks held at the Canberra Playhouse. Hannah Coleman, a year 12 student, took to the stage in front of about 700 people to deliver a passionate talk about the challenges she overcame while battling the effects of Lyme disease.

## **Progress against School Priorities in 2012**

### **Priority 1**

Improve student engagement and achievement

#### **Targets**

- Improvement in Student Satisfaction Survey data relating to student engagement
- Develop an evaluation tool to measure the effectiveness of “Hubs of Creative Excellence and Opportunity” in relation to improved student engagement and achievement
- Increase in student enrolment
- Increase attendance and retention for young people at risk
- Increase in MasterClass opportunities available for student involvement
- Improvement in the proportion of Year 12 students who receive a Tertiary Entrance Score (TES)
- Increase in students obtaining VET certification
- Develop opportunities to share best practice and professional dialogue

#### **School improvement domains covered with this priority**

Learning and Teaching, Leading and Managing, Community Engagement, Student Engagement.

#### **Progress against outcomes and targets**

To improve student engagement and achievement in 2012 the college actioned the following.

The Refugee Bridging Program caters for students at risk due to a background of torture and trauma, coupled with English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) requirements. This program was the recipient of the 2012 ACT Multicultural Education Award. A successful outcome of this program saw in 2012 a 50% increase in the number of students receiving a Year 12 certificate.

Dickson College is committed to providing students with creative and innovative learning opportunities. In 2012 the following examples illustrate the diversity of opportunities that were accessible to students:

- The Global Challenges Conference at the Australian National University (ANU)

- As part of the Sports Coaching unit (Sports Studies course), students visited cluster primary schools and led sports activities for the younger students.
- The Girls Only Physical Education (PE) class visited Turner Primary school and taught sports activities to the year 6 students.
- Our 'Brick & Block' students designed and built garden beds and built and installed a Rooster Shed at Turner Primary School. Students experienced an authentic work environment working with professionals from the Australian Brick and Block Training Foundation. This project was recognised in the 2012 Australian Children's Week Awards. They also received the Commissioner's Award, selected and presented by Alasdair Roy, the ACT Children and Young Persons Commissioner.
- The Guitar Tuition Program in partnership with Fretvision provided the opportunity for students from our Refugee Bridging Program and Secondary Introductory English Centre to learn how to play or to improve their musical skills. This project was also recognised in the 2012 Australian Children's Week Awards.

Preparations have already commenced to further expand the creative hubs of excellence and opportunity in 2013.

A "Class Act" committee was established to identify and record on video examples of best practice in the classroom at Dickson College and cluster high schools for the purpose of sharing these examples with college and high school staff to improve teaching and pedagogy. Staff members at Dickson and Lyneham were filmed. Three videos were shown at whole school staff meetings – the pedagogy highlighted in each was discussed against Quality Teaching model (QTM) criteria.

In relation to our targets these actions resulted in the following:

1. Student Satisfaction Survey data shows an increase in the proportion of students who were satisfied or highly satisfied with the education they were receiving at this college. According to the survey results, student satisfaction for the education at Dickson College increased from 85% in 2011 to 88% in 2012.
2. In-school surveys were developed for use in 2013 to measure student responses to opportunities (such as Science Symposium and Global Challenges Conference at ANU).
3. Enrolment numbers for mainstream year 11 and 12 increased from 712 in 2011 to 725 in 2012.
4. We had outstanding success with the 2012 Connect 10 program for students at risk. Certification rates increased from 6 students to 13 in 2012 .
5. There was an increase in the proportion of year 12 students receiving a TES from 49% of the year 12 cohort in 2011 to 59% in 2012.
6. The median ATAR for the college also increased from 77.65 in 2011 to 80.7 in 2012.
7. VET Certification Data from the Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) indicates a slight decline in VET attainment and certification. The number of students receiving at least one vocational certificate decreased from 119 in 2011 to 115 in 2012.

8. The number of **partially** completed a vocational certificates increased from 277 in 2011 to 407 in 2012.
9. The number of vocational certificates that were issued decreased slightly from 187 in 2011 to 166 in 2012.

## Priority 2

Maximise our community well-being through positive practices within Dickson College and our network.

### Targets

- Staff, both teaching and non-teaching include explicit goals in their pathways plans.
- Improvement in student satisfaction data relating to wellbeing.
- Increase in student attendance.
- Increase in student retention.

### School improvement domains covered with this priority

Learning and Teaching, Leading and Managing, Community Engagement, Student Engagement.

### Progress against outcomes and targets

A draft Anti Bullying policy was developed with input from staff, parents and students and has been presented to the School Board. Further consultation subsequently resulted in the policy being redeveloped to align closely with the college's positive practices ethos and was renamed the Respectful Relationships Framework.

A Student Welfare Officer was employed and planning was in place for the officer to develop and run targeted small group sessions to support students in developing resilience in students identified as being at risk. Due to health reasons, the officer had to vacate the position. The recruitment process to find a replacement officer is underway at Directorate level.

One hundred percent of staff included a well-being goal in their pathways plan.

The success of wellbeing strategies (e.g. the inclusion of a wellbeing goal in staff pathways plans and the explicit focus on wellbeing in pastoral care groups) is reflected in the student satisfaction data. This data shows that the perception of students that teachers take their concerns seriously increased from 76% in 2011 to 79% in 2012. The high percentage of students who reported feeling safe at Dickson in 2011 was maintained at 84% in 2012. Students' perception that teachers listen to what they say increased from 78% in 2011 to 83% in 2012. The most significant increase in student satisfaction data was how well students reported that they get along well with their teachers; this statistic increased from 79% in 2011 to 87% in 2012. These improvements reflect a positive school climate in which students can thrive.

Attendance rates show an improvement from previous years but still warrant attention for further improvement.

The percentage of students receiving a Year 12 Certificate increased from 80.7% in 2011 to 92.5% in 2012.

Student Services staff report an increase in the number of students successfully transitioned to other colleges or study, or to employment, which is borne out in Leavers Reports for 2012.

## Financial Summary

The school has provided the Directorate with an end of year financial statement that was approved by the school board. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

The following summary covers use of funds for operating costs and does not include expenditure in areas such as permanent salaries, buildings and major maintenance.

### Professional learning

The average expenditure at the school level per fulltime equivalent teacher on professional learning was \$295.

### Voluntary contributions

This school received \$55710 in voluntary contributions in 2012. These funds were used to support the general operations of the school. The spending of voluntary contributions is in line with the approved budget for 2012.

### Reserves

Name and purpose	Amount	Expected Completion
Dickson College Autonomy 2013	\$80,000	December 2013
IT Equipment 2013	\$30,000	December 2013
Furniture 2013	\$12,114	December 2013
Photocopier 2013	\$15,000	December 2013
Photocopier 2014	\$30,000	December 2014
Aging IT equipment MacLab 2012	\$67,000	June 2012
Staffing VET 2013	\$30,000	December 2013
School Bus 2013/14	\$22,463	December 2014
Photocopier 2014	\$15,000	December 2014

Financial Summary	
31-Dec-12	
<b>INCOME</b>	
Self management funds	1172328
Voluntary contributions	55710
Contributions & donations	24569
Subject contributions	28607
External income (including community use)	46816
Proceeds from sale of assets	1818
Bank Interest	30305
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>1360153</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
Utilities and general overheads	239555
Cleaning	189599
Security	2983
Maintenance	181572
Mandatory Maintenance	
Administration	32790
Staffing	226500
Communication	37286
Assets	75012
Leases	20438
General office expenditure	87735
Educational	170222
Subject consumables	3898
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>1267590</b>
<b>OPERATING RESULT</b>	<b>92563</b>
<b>Actual Accumulated Funds</b>	<b>385446</b>
Outstanding commitments (m	13594
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>464415</b>

## Endorsement Page

I declare that the Dickson College Board has operated in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 2004 including the following sections.

- 39 (4) The school board must give effect to the chief executive's directions.
- 44 (2) The chief executive must end the appointment of a member of the school board of a public school, other than the principal of the school if-
- a) The member is absent from 3 consecutive meetings of the board without reasonable excuse or leave given by the board or
  - b) Contravenes section 49 (disclosure of interests by members of school boards) without reasonable excuse.
- 46 The members of the school board of a public school must, whenever is necessary, nominate a member of the board as a member of any selection panel established by the chief executive to make recommendations to the chief executive about the appointment of the principal to the school.
- 47 (2) However, the school board must meet at least four times a year.
- 48 (10) The school board must keep minutes of its meeting.
- 49 Disclosure of interests by members of school boards.
- 49 (3) The disclosure must be reported in the school board's minutes and, unless the board otherwise decides, the member (The first member) must not-
- a) be present when the board considers the issue or
  - b) take part in any decision of the board on the issue.
- 49 (5) Within 14 days after the end of each financial year, the chairperson of the school board must give the chief executive a statement of any disclosure of interest under this section in relation to the school board during the financial year.

### MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD

**Parent Representative:** Juanita Caddy, Sally Rose, Kate Brodie

**Community Representative:** Vacant

**Teacher Representative:** Ryan Davis-Philp, Andrew Moss

**Student Representative:** Ryan Corkery, Rebecca Courtney

**Board Chair:** Juanita Caddy

**Principal:** Rob Emanuel

**Board Chair Signature:** 

**Date:** 19/6/13

**Principal Signature:** 

**Date:** 19/6/13

I have sighted this Annual School Board Report and verified the data contained in the report.

**School Network Leader:** Mr Steve Kyburz

**Signature:** 

**Date:**

20.6.2013