About This Report

St Clare’s Catholic Primary School, Narellan Vale is registered by the Board of Studies (NSW) and managed by the Catholic Education Office (CEO), Wollongong, the ‘approved authority’ for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual School Report provides the school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education. The Report also outlines information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance to the school community during the year and the achievements arising from the implementation of the School’s Annual Action Plan. Following its submission to the Board of Studies, the Report will be available on the school’s website by 30 June 2009.

The Report demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies, the school community and the Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Wollongong. This Report has been approved by the Director of Schools to ensure compliance with all NSW Board of Studies requirements for Registration.

Further information about the school or this report may be obtained by contacting the school:

St Clare’s Catholic Primary School
Box 116,
Narellan NSW 2567
Ph: (02) 4647 2845
Fax: (02) 4647 2847
Email: info@stclares.woll.catholic.edu.au

Parish Priest: Fr Michael Williams PP

Principal: Kevin J Devine
Date: 16th December 2008
Vision Statement

To Create and maintain a Catholic Learning Community grounded in the person of Jesus, the tradition of the Catholic Church and the lives of Ss Clare and Francis and resulting in a school where children learn that they are of great value, that they have many gifts and that they can make the world a better place.

Message from Key School Bodies

Principal’s Message

As new Principal of St Clare’s Catholic Primary School Narellan Vale, I have pleasure in presenting the Annual School Report for the 2008 School Year.

The annual report provides an opportunity for the community to reflect on and celebrate the significant achievements that have occurred this year. I have appreciated the wonderful support of the teaching staff and parent body in further enhancing this school’s reputation as a place of quality learning and teaching. I am particularly grateful to the many parents who have volunteered their time, talents and treasures to assist in providing the many and varied experiences and opportunities to the students of St Clare’s. I thank the Parents and Friends (P&F) Executive for their efforts in maintaining and improving the facilities and resources of this school.

Parent Involvement

The Parents and Friends Association (P&F) have assisted with many activities throughout the 2008 School Year. Our Care Committee continued to provide support to the families of this community.

The Fundraising Committee introduced a number of new initiatives that proved popular, including the outdoor cinema night, the kids disco and the purchase of named pavers for the prayer garden.

The Fair Committee did an outstanding job in building community through this major fundraising event. It was wonderful to see the community come together to make the Fair such a success. Some of the major expenditure of the P&F went to increasing the number of guided reading packs available to the Early Stage One and Stage One classes as well as providing new sporting equipment to the school.

Throughout the year the P&F supported a number of working bees to improve the school grounds as well as assisting during World Youth Day events.

Parents and Friends Association, President

Student Leadership

In 2008 there were many opportunities for Year Six to put their leadership into practice. The introduction of our weekly school parliament has given the Year Six students opportunities to
make their voice heard. It has produced many ideas and given us an understanding of how our
country is run and how intense it can be to be put in charge of the country.
The leadership of our school is not just about ourselves, empowering others is important as
well as we are not the only members of our community. Our role as leaders is to Guide,
Support and Serve and help younger students to handle conflict. This year we have been
buddies to the Kindergarten children, leading them in their first year of independent reading.
We have held chess competitions, busking days and shared reading during lunch times for
younger students.

The results of our collaboration with our teacher mentors have emerged, with plans for a
rainwater tank and a new infant playground for the future children of our school. We met with
our Principal, Mr Devine, and created a design for a play area suitable for younger students
with the help of a designer. Using our School Parliament to choose worthy causes, we have
had many opportunities to run fundraising events such as assisting with the organizing and
running of the White Elephant Store which was held at our School Fair this year and raising
money for cystic fibrosis and the MS society.

Year 6 Student Leaders

School Profile

St Clare’s is a Catholic Primary School situated on a pleasant green field site on Holdsworth
Drive, Narellan Vale, in the parish of Camden. St Clare’s was established in 1994 to serve the
needs of the developing suburbs of Narellan Vale, Mount Annan and Currans Hill. From its
humble beginnings in 1994 with an enrolment of 45 and a staff of just 4 it is anticipated that at
the start of 2009 there will be a staff complement of 40 and a student enrolment of 606,
incorporating three streams throughout the school. Children are accommodated in a range of
modern, well-resourced, air-conditioned rooms.
At the start of 2009 the students will move into six new classrooms that will be ready for
occupation. The new rooms are of a flexible open-plan design, allowing for a high degree of
collaborative learning to take place. In 2009, the new rooms will be occupied by the Early
Stage One and Stage One classes, enabling the school to create a junior precinct.

Student Enrolments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>573</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The Enrolment Policy and Procedures can be found on the Catholic Education Website:
www.ceowoll.catholic.edu.au then go to the link Policies.
Student Attendance for 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94.3%</td>
<td>93.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staffing Profile

There are a total of 30 teachers at St Clare’s School.

School Leadership
The School Leadership Team was made up of the School Principal, an Assistant Principal, a Religious Education Coordinator, 3 two point Middle Leaders and 1 single point Middle Leader.

Teachers and Support Staff
The staff consisted of 21 fulltime teachers 9 part-time teachers and 6 classroom support staff. Of the 21 staff there was a full time Reading Recovery teacher, a Physical Education teacher and 1 School Librarian.

Administrative Staff
The school Administrative team consisted of 1 Senior School Support Officer and 2 School Support Officers admin, a support officer, Library, 1 support officer Learning Technologies and 1 Canteen Supervisor.

Teaching Staff Experience
The teaching staff had a range of teaching experience:

- 3 teachers were in their first year of teaching;
- 1 teacher had 1-2 years teaching experience;
- 5 teachers had between 3-5 years teaching experience;
- 3 teachers had between 6-10 years teaching experience;
- 7 teachers had between 11-15 years teaching experience;
- 3 teachers had between 16-20 years teaching experience; and,
- 8 teachers had more then 20 or more years of teaching experience.

Of the 30 teaching staff at St Clare’s during 2008 five teachers have completed post-graduate studies.
Teacher Standards
Teacher qualifications fall into 1 of 3 categories for all teaching staff responsible for delivering the curriculum:

| Teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by AEI - NOOSR* | 100% |
| Have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia within AEI-NOOSR* guidelines but lack formal teacher qualifications | % |
| Do not have qualifications as above but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context | % |

*Australian Education Institution – National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition Staff Retention

Staff Attendance
The average daily staff attendance rate for 2008 was 98.39%.
The staff retention rate is high at St Clare’s with 94.4% of the teaching staff remaining for the 2009 School Year. This figure takes into account one member of staff on maternity leave.

Professional Learning
Professional learning opportunities are highly valued and sought by all members of St Clare’s school staff. During 2008 school personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes.

These included:
• The introduction of the Diocesan Learning and Teaching Framework;
• The implementation of the School Review and Improvement Framework;
• A Stage based approach to Early Literacy Development;
• School based spiritual formation of staff;
• Further development in the area of Learning Technologies; and,
• Assessment and Reporting.

School based expenditure on professional learning in 2008 was equivalent to $485 per teacher. This is in addition to expenditure on professional learning opportunities provided by the Catholic Education Office (CEO).
Culture of the Catholic School

St Clare’s Catholic Primary School seeks to promote its own Catholic Identity and the traditions of the Catholic Church by ensuring that there is a visible presence of the Catholic Faith, expressed through the religious symbols within classrooms and throughout common areas in our school. In 2008 there has been a focus on providing quality prayer experiences and liturgical celebrations. The Religious Education Program is delivered daily in classrooms using the units of work from the Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum.

The most significant event for the students was the Journey of the Cross and Icon and World Youth Day 08 (WYD 08). In the lead up to WYD08 the students visited Magdalene Catholic High School to venerate the WYD Cross and Icon. Some of the students of St Clare’s joined students from the other Catholic schools within the parish to offer praise and worship through liturgical dance. The day culminated in the students from Magdalene organising some fun activities for students. During World Youth Week the school community played host to a number of international pilgrims by providing accommodation and hospitality to the visitors.

The liturgical life of the school continued with a number of grades celebrating Friday Mass with the Parish Priest Fr Michael. On two occasions in 2008 the students were actively involved in organising the celebration of Sunday Mass within the Parish. Each Monday classes took responsibility for organising the morning liturgy and highlighting important feast days and celebrations that occur within the liturgical year. The students engage in daily prayer experiences in their classrooms that also support the Catholic life of the school.

The sacramental life of the parish was supported once again by the school with a number of staff acting as Sacramental Associates assisting in the preparation of the children in the parish for the reception of the sacraments.

St Clare’s students were actively engaged in social justice initiatives and charitable causes, through their financial support to the Caritas, Catholic Missions, St Vincent de Paul Society, the Good News program-supporting people with disabilities within the Macarthur, an appeal to assist the Kiribati WYD08 pilgrims, the MS Society and Cystic Fibrosis NSW.

Student Welfare

St Clare’s Catholic school seeks to be a place of belonging where all are treated with dignity and respect. The school community strives to be a place of justice, proclaiming the Gospel message of hope.

In 2008 a new student award was introduced to acknowledge students who displayed leadership qualities. A number of students were recognised for their contribution to this community. The student of the week award focused on values that supported the principles of the National Safe Schools Framework.
The school maintained the services of a school counsellor who attends the school on two days each week to support and assist students and their families who may have been experiencing difficulties in their personal or family life. The counsellor was able to provide some group sessions in 2008 to support families with strategies in dealing with anxiety.

There has been a continued effort to promote the importance of valuing diversity with school visits from the indigenous elders of the Minto Reconciliation Group during National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week and the students of Mater Dei School continued their integration program again this year.

Student leadership opportunities were enhanced this year through the introduction of the school parliament for the Year Six students. The students were called upon to make a significant difference in providing meaningful and sustained improvements to school facilities, resources and management. One spin off from this democratic process was the establishment of a Student Council.

Transition to school programs were a feature in 2008, with the Year Six students involved once again in visiting their local Catholic high school to undertake a five week induction and transition program. Kindergarten orientation and transition was modified to include class visits and spot checks from an Occupational Therapist and Speech Therapist. The process aimed to provide parents and students with a more comprehensive and smooth transition to school.

The students in Stage Two participated in the National Child Protection Week poster Competition and a number of students had their work recognised and published.

The Complaints & Grievances Procedures can be found on the Catholic Education Office website: www.ceowoll.catholic.edu.au then go to link Policies.

In compliance with the NSW Reform Act 1990, Corporal Punishment is banned in ALL Schools within the Diocese of Wollongong.

Access to all policies and guidelines can be obtained by contacting the school office.

**Financial Summary**

The school received a Commonwealth Grant of $22,513 from the Investing in Our Schools Program to assist in providing blinds to the new Early Stage One and Stage One block. Some of the funds were used to purchase blinds and tinting for the school library as well as providing new laptop trolleys and a ‘Smart Board’.

At the end of the year the school invested $50,000 for the purchase of new laptops, in order to replace aging technology. These will be available for use in the new school year.
A large injection of funds $24,000 went to increasing the number of reading resources available to students in Early Stage One and Stage One, to help promote Literacy. The school is most grateful to the P&F for their generous donation.

Further resources were purchased to support the schools Physical Education program.

A number of relatively minor maintenance items were completed, including the concreting of pathways and the improvement of drainage in the area adjacent to the canteen.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St Clare’s for the year ended 31 December 2008. This data is taken from the 2008 financial return to the Australian Government, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.
Learning & Teaching

Introduction
At St Clare’s Catholic Primary School all Board of Studies (BOS) requirements are met as the school seeks to provide quality-learning opportunities for all students. This year has seen the introduction of the document “How effective is our Catholic school?”. This has enabled all staff to consider areas that need to be further developed as well as areas that St Clare’s is performing well in. In 2009 the school community look forward to further utilising this document to help generate school review and improvement. At the core of this focus will be how to continue to improve and maximise learning outcomes and potential for all students.

Curriculum and Pedagogy
In 2008 the school has places a strong emphasis on improving Literacy outcomes for students in K-2. This resulted from the analysis of Reading Recovery entry levels. The school aimed to further develop teachers and support staff in the various episodes of a Literacy Block. At St Clare’s, the belief is that the greatest improvements to student learning can be made by enhancing the quality of teacher instruction. This will continue to be a focus area for the school in 2009 with an emphasis on Stage Two.

This year has also seen the implementation of the Diocesan Learning and Teaching framework at St Clare’s. As a pilot school the framework was introduced to staff through a number of staff meetings. Several staff members were able to attend the professional learning day conducted by Jenny Gore at the beginning of the year. The focus at St Clare’s has been to look at the assessments planned particularly in the areas of English and Mathematics. Staff members coded these assessments and also were encouraged to change some components of the assessments in order to make them more open ended and challenging.

Parents were invited to attend student led conferences in Term Two. These gave students the opportunity to show parents their work as well as for parents to have a conversation with the classroom teacher. Following this reports were sent home in Terms Two and Four. In 2009 the objective is to generating a report for Years One-Six that gives parents a greater indication of what their child is capable of as well as specific areas for development.

Information and Communication Learning Technology (ICLT) has continued to be used to promote learning opportunities for students. With the assistance of a school support officer, students have received additional support in using technology as a tool to improve learning.

Cross Curriculum
In 2008 the school once again celebrated National Simultaneous Story time. Students were also encouraged to enter in the Premier’s Reading Challenge to promote a love of literature. Over 200 students took up the challenge and were rewarded with certificates of recognition.

This year students have some opportunities to represent St Clare’s in the community. These include attending the dawn service on ANZAC Day, selling Mater Dei Peace eggs and representing the school at many sporting events.
Meeting the Needs of All Students

Teachers at St Clare’s are committed to ensuring that all students’ needs are met. Students with special needs are identified and monitored. Teachers implement a variety of strategies to provide a learning environment that takes into consideration the variety of needs in the classroom. This differentiation of the curriculum provides support structures for those students in need, whilst catering for those more able students through more challenging experiences. Teachers who have children with special educational needs in their classes implemented an individual education (IEP) to identify academic, social and emotional needs. Transition meetings were held each term to inform parents of progress and keep communication between home and school.

The School Review Committee met regularly to communicate with, and support teachers of students who were experiencing difficulties accessing the curriculum. These meetings provided staff with the opportunity to discuss the learning needs of individuals with their peers. They also enabled teachers to consider a range of alternative strategies to support those learners in the classroom.

The Reading Recovery program continues to support students in Year One with an intensive one to one reading program. In 2008, 20% of the students in Year One took part in the program and were successfully discontinued. In addition to this the students in Years One and Two were given additional Literacy support from a school support officer.

Expanding Learning Opportunities

Grades were involved in incursions and excursions this year. These included the Year One visit to the zoo, Year Two’s visit to the Aquarium and Wildlife World, Year Three’s experience life on a tall ship, Year Four’s visit to Mt Annan Botanical Gardens, Year Five’s Camp at Berry and their visit to the Cascades to monitor the Sydney Water Stream Watch Program, and Year Six attending the camp in Canberra. These excursions provided the students with hands on experiences to complement the curriculum content being covered in the classroom.

In the area of Physical Education students participated in a number of sporting carnivals and gala days as well as participating in the school based athletics carnival and cross-country. In 2008 the school staff included the addition of a physical education teacher. The students received a weekly hour session with the teacher in addition to their class sport time.

St Clare’s has also seen the addition of a music van in 2008. The mobile service provided 68 students with the weekly opportunity to learn an instrument in music. A school band was also formed with the assistance of a parent and several students were involved in rehearsing weekly as part of the group.

This year students from Stage Three were given the opportunity to enter in the University of New South Wales assessments in Mathematics, Science and English. St Clare’s also was represented in the Diocesan Public Speaking Competition with the Year Five representative achieving first place in the Diocesan final.
Professional Learning
The school staff has been open to ongoing professional learning in order to improve and enhance student learning. This has been evident in 2008 as staff members have been committed to inter-school visits with neighbouring schools and engaging in professional dialogue to improve outcomes. Professional learning days have involved all staff. These have focussed on the spirituality of staff by exploring the different phases in one’s life through the symbolism of seasons. Staff members also participated in professional learning in the area of School Review and Improvement (SRI) and were involved in workshops which considered different key areas and how these could be improved.

Other professional learning included opportunities of peer observations in Literacy and Numeracy, analysis of the National Assessment Plan for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) data, attendance at spirituality courses including Journey and Berekah and mentoring beginning teachers. Middle leaders were involved in a Literacy and Numeracy forum to identify issues and strategies to enhance this area. A number of staff members were also present at the launch of the Diocesan Learning and Teaching Framework.
Student Achievement

The school uses a variety of assessment strategies at key points in the learning framework. These include teacher observation, projects and presentations. The school also participates in the national Literacy and Numeracy testing program (NAPLAN) for the purposes of diagnosing individual learning needs and reviewing whole class teaching programs. Information on student progress is communicated on a regular basis and external assessment results are discussed with parents on an individual basis annually.

Religious Literacy Assessment

The Religious Literacy Assessment program for Year 4 students was successfully implemented within the school in 2008.

The school cohort consisted of 78 Year 4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on 1 September and 83 completed the Extended Task (Part B). The Extended Task is based on the Unit One With God’s Creation and was completed during the first half of Term 3.

The performance of each student was described as developing, achieving or extending.

The students were very well able to identify the Ten Commandments and their guiding principles, had a very sound understanding of the creation story from Genesis. They were able to explain key aspects of the story of Zacchaeus and could use knowledge of the Scripture to explain Mary’s openness to God. Areas that have been identified for improvement include improving the student’s ability to match scriptures with the liturgical season and identifying the parts of the Liturgy of the Word. Overall there was satisfaction with the students’ performances in the Religious Literacy Assessment.

For Part A 14.1% of students were placed in the developing level, 70.5% in the achieving level and 15.4% were in the extending level.

For Part B 12% of students were placed in the developing level, 61.4% in the achieving level and 26.5% were in the extending level.

Combining Parts A and B, 14.1% of students were placed in the developing level, 64.1% in the achieving level and 21.8% were in the extending level for Religious Literacy.

NAPLAN

The school participated in the National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in 2008, for the purpose of diagnosing individual progress in Numeracy and Literacy to parents and teachers as well as providing vital information to the school regarding the teaching and learning program offered at St Clare’s. Information from the National Assessment was forwarded to individual parents and the school towards the end of Term Three this year.
St Clare’s Primary School, Narellan Vale
Student Achievement 2008

National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy
Student Achievement in Bands

The National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) was introduced for students in Years 3 and 5 in May this year. NAPLAN replaces the previous State-based Basic Skills Test and the results provide valuable information about student achievements in Literacy and Numeracy. Analysis of the results is used at school level to support the enhancement of literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students. Year 3 results are reported in Bands 1 to 6 with Band 6 representing the highest achievement and Year 5 results are reported in Bands 3 to 8 with Band 8 representing the highest achievement. Please Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

### Student Achievement of National Minimum Standard

The lowest Band for each year (Band 1 in Year 3 and Band 3 in Year 5) represents students who are achieving BELOW the National Minimum Standard (NMS) in each aspect of NAPLAN. Students in the second Band for each year (Band 2 in Year 3 and Band 4 in Year 5) represent students who are achieving AT the NMS. Students in all other Bands are achieving ABOVE the NMS.

### NAPLAN 2008: % in Bands

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YEAR 3</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>National</td>
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### NAPLAN 2008: % AT or ABOVE NMS

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<th>YEAR 3</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
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<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
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<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>95%</td>
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<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>94%</td>
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Parent, Student & Staff Satisfaction

The parent survey that represented the views of 25% of the families of this school indicated that 98% of the parents surveyed felt that the school helped their child develop a knowledge and understanding about Catholic Tradition; the same number of respondents agreed that there were various opportunities for the parents to be involved in school. In another aspect of the survey over 94% of families responding agreed that teachers were genuinely interested in the welfare of their child and that the school provided a safe and supportive environment. The survey indicated that 24% of parents would like further information about their child’s progress, and 22% would like to see the school offer more co-curricular activities for their children.

The staff survey indicated a positive view of learning and safety in this school setting.

Of the students surveyed 98% believe that their teachers encourage them to the best of their ability, 95% of those surveyed indicated that they understood their rights and responsibilities. Only 88% of students indicated that they felt safe at school, however, 94% of students indicated they had people they could approach for help if they had a problem, and 91% of students were proud of their school.

School Review and Improvement

School Review and Improvement is an ongoing process of self-evaluation measured against a commonly agreed set of criteria. By the end of 2008 all schools have begun the transition to the new School Review and Improvement process.

School Review and Improvement components reviewed in 2008:

- Planning for Improvement- implementing the School Review and Improvement process.
- Reporting Student Achievement - undertaking a review of the current school reporting processes.
- Teaching Practices- developing a common approach to the teaching of Early Literacy.
- Assessment- using the Diocesan Learning and Teaching Framework to improve the quality of assessment tasks.
- Use of Resources and Space- to build six new learning spaces.

School Review and Improvement components to be reviewed in 2009:

- Vision and Mission- to review the existing statements to ensure relevance.
- Curriculum Provision- to review the Mathematics and Science and Technology programs offered to students.
- Parent Involvement- increase opportunities for parents to be further engaged in student learning.
- Environmental Stewardship- develop a plan to ensure an environmentally sustainable school.