Overview
In 2014 the GRG funds were prioritised into four target groups – literacy, numeracy, EAL/D and professional learning. With a range of qualitative and quantitative data available to inform decisions, it was decided that a hybridised approach would be appropriate and this aligned to our pedagogical framework, curriculum structure and professional learning model.

Literacy Strategy
ALL JUNIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS:
- Cross curricula NAPLAN preparation which included, in particular, generic structure and close reading of curriculum texts across curriculum areas.
- Developing reading priorities and strategies. Rigorous reading strategies implemented in all core curriculum areas with the completion of a whole school strategy supported by whole school professional learning on the PFD in 2015 to continue the program.
- BOOST program written and implemented by specialist teachers with identified students.

SMALL GROUPS
- Tutorials – targeting individual students based on academic and NAPLAN data. Small group structure utilised with a specialist teacher addressing content from a range of curriculum areas.

Numeracy Strategy
ALL JUNIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS:
The GRG funding has been used to review all junior work programs and assessment items in relation to literacy and numeracy demands. Significant professional learning has been completed with staff via the PLC (Professional Learning Communities) structure to better understand the criteria. This in turn has led to improved practice by teachers so that students receive meaningful feedback to inform their learning. There has been a focus on the language of numeracy and a whole school literacy strategy has been written.

SMALL GROUPS:
A school based program for students who don't reach curriculum standards has been implemented. This program aligns to ACARA grades 5 - 7 standard (for Year 8) and an 8 standard (for Year 9). With the outcome ideally transitioning the student into mainstream when possible, dependant on the individual needs of the identified students.

WHOLE SCHOOL:
Procedures and policies have been implemented around a whole school approach to numeracy. All work programs across all curriculum areas are currently being mapped for numeracy and linked to the procedures. The result being a consistent approach across all criteria areas to support student learning.

Data analysis has been completed and a professional development program is in progress which highlights the difference between numeracy and mathematics. This emphasises the responsibility across all curriculum areas.

Extra lessons on numeracy skills have been integrated into Kedcare lessons. Numeracy programs have been run for both extension (U2B) and lower band (L2B) students.

More teacher aides have been employed and placed in maths classes allowing more one to one opportunities for students to work with both teacher aides and teachers. This has also resulted in more maths tutorials being offered.

ESL
SMALL GROUPS:
Within the Year 8 cohort a group of 12-14 students were identified as needing the most intensive level of support. A Year 7 primary teacher was employed to act as a core teacher and to teach English, Maths, Science and History with a focus on the explicit teaching of literacy and numeracy. Pre and post testing as well as other forms of formative assessment have been utilised to monitor the language acquisition and application of this group.
CLASS GROUPS:
Seven teacher aides were employed to provide in class support to core ESL teachers. This enabled one to one and small group activities to be orchestrated with a focus on formative assessment to inform teacher practice.

Professional Learning

Using the Australian Professional Standards and our Professional Development Plans, teachers self-identified their strengths and weaknesses in the teaching of literacy and numeracy across their curriculum areas. The data strongly indicated that staff were keen to engage with and collaborate with their peers for the purpose of professional learning. A literacy and numeracy co-coaching program was established. Called Professional Practice Partners, teachers are able to access a coach for assistance in developing and receiving feedback on their teaching of literacy and numeracy. Teachers choose from a ‘menu’ to best access the feedback and support they would like to collaborate around. Each PLC in the school has a co-coach attached. A Yellow Pages directory is under construction to enable increased collaboration around specific skills.

FINDINGS

Which strategies were most successful?
The strategies and data underwent review and completion of the first cycle of action research on the 17th of November 2014 by the HOD (Head of Department) - Junior Secondary and the Deputy Principal School Performance in consultation with the HOD – MATHS, HOD – ENGLISH and HOSES - ESL. The most significant success has been experienced in the small groups with survey data indicating a high level of engagement from both teachers and students.

Evidence of the gains achieved through the strategies:
Evidence is available through:
- Survey data of students who have participated in the small groups and U2B and L2B projects. Across the projects 92% of students increased their result across a band.
- PatR data pre and post testing within the target groups - 90% experienced an improvement in either language or numeracy acquisition.
- Academic reporting - an increase in the students results in both behaviour and effort reporting has been significant indicating an increase in student engagement and reengagement through the programs being offered to both EAL/D and mainstream students.
- Teacher formative assessment data indicates increased engagement especially in the smaller tutorial or class groupings.
- Class Action Plans completed with a focus on literacy and numeracy acquisition - completed by 92% of teaching staff.
- Student Learning Goals completed by students in years 8 to 12.
- Video data – school based teacher models for teaching literacy shared amongst 100% of staff in professional learning strategy. An increase in KLA involvement across the middle school.
- BOOST data – an increase in the number of targeted students included in the hybridised program. Impacted on class formation and scaffolding with an increase in the number of students achieving at C level or above.

What are the plans for 2015 GRG
Our data cycle review period was on the 17th of November 2014. Our Action Research project will enter into its second stage in 2015. As our critical friend, we are working with Dr Sherilynn Lennon from Griffith University. Having identified disengagement as an issue, we are seeking to identify why and how to re-engage our learners around the critical issues of literacy and numeracy in the Junior and Middle Secondary phases of learning. Peter Cuttance, Associate Professor from Melbourne University, is also assisting us with our review. We are the only Queensland state school working with AiTSL on the issue of engagement and reengagement in the Learning Frontiers project. This project is enabling us to identify the reasons why some of our students, especially boys (NAPLAN data) are not engaging in literacy and numeracy learning and to implement strategies to address this issue in 2015 utilising GRG funding. Furthermore the issue of QCE attainment will also be addressed.