It is with pleasure that I present the 09/10 Annual Report outlining another year of significant achievements across the whole school community.

The school’s vision statement was reviewed during 09/10 by all teaching and support staff and we continue to aspire to the following common beliefs:

- to further develop a supportive, inclusive and equitable learning environment for all students who access programs or are enrolled full-time or part-time
- to further develop relationships with neighbourhood schools through shared programming that is targeted to provide unique student-centred curriculum
- to model positive teaching and learning practices and to use the community as a resource that provides experiences and opportunities for transition in a real world where students can continue on a pathway to being productive learners
- to welcome parents/carers and personnel employed in related agencies and services to participate and share ideas and knowledge within the school’s support framework.

Staffing and Enrolments

The role of Teacher-in-Charge was re-advertised as an expression of interest for 12 months in December ’09 and Ms Genevieve Andrews was again the successful applicant. This year Genevieve is teaching the early childhood class in the Green Room for 3 days per week. We have welcomed four new students as enrolments to this class this year. At the present time, there are 12 full-time students and five dual enrolments accessing the school. It was unfortunate that two full-time students relocated with their families to the mainland in early March. Their departure occurred after the census date and therefore at this stage the staffing quota has not been reduced. There have been three new enrolment enquiries recently and we can only hope that the student numbers will grow rather than decline.

Mr Ted Barrance has transferred from the Burnie campus to take up a full-time position on the Senior Class in the Blue Room. Ms Jo Corvinus is teaching the students occupying the Yellow Room and will continue in this role until Mrs Karen Slade returns from maternity leave in August. Mrs Bronwyn West is employed on Wednesdays and is responsible for liaising with parents/carers and other agency personnel e.g. Gateway Services, Devonfield Enterprises and The Don College to organise work experience placements and transition pathways for senior students.

Mrs Jacqui Astley is again employed on Mondays and Wednesdays as the music teacher and due to the increase in teacher FTE received from the beginning of 2010, the school is able to employ a physical education teacher for one day per week on Tuesdays. Already we are noting the positive benefits of Miss Rebecca Clarke’s role. She has taken some time to observe and note each student’s strengths and weaknesses in order to develop a gross motor and Learn to Swim programs for students to successfully acquire new skills and intensively practice either individually or within a small group situation accompanied by 1 to 1 support.
The team of teachers are working in collaboration with Genevieve available at all times to discuss and solve daily issues whenever they arise.

**Links program**

Ms Cathy Bester who replaced Mrs Glenda Sharman in Term 3 2009 is again supporting students who are enrolled from regular schools into the Links program at both campuses.

There are five students, each accompanied by a teacher assistant from their regular school that access the room adjacent to the music room every Wednesday. This initiative continues to be a full day's program which includes circuit work in the gym supervised by DHHS Paediatric Physios together PODD communication strategies planned by Mrs Felicity Lovatt, music therapy and also ongoing ICT support by Ms Lynne Ryan one day per fortnight.

**PODD**

Whilst the funding package ($20 000) received from LSNW to support the PODD program was reduced this year, the overall re-assessment of students undertaken in December 2009 by Mrs Felicity Lovatt who continues to work ‘hands-on’ with individual students and the support term clearly displays the overall improvement in student communicative intent. Please note the attachment. It is gratifying to highlight the positive efforts of continuous and strategic professional learning, the need to meet the demand to create and actively design resources for individual students combined with the dedication and enthusiasm of class teachers and teacher aides who are actively utilising PODD, Makaton signing and direct speech demonstration. The acquisition of further skills, knowledge and understanding has formed the basis of all student IEP reviews and dialogue centred on realistic goal setting as well as curriculum development, planning and delivery across both campuses.

**Professional Learning for Staff**

Professional Learning Days held on specified student free days have again been applied for and all staff from both campuses were able to meet, share best practice, discuss ongoing issues and strengthen collegial trust and support.

The morning’s program on Monday 20th July entitled ‘Mind Matters’ was planned and led by Mrs Sharon Rush, Senior Social Worker and Mr Bruce Cameron, Manager of School Support NW. Staff members from both campuses were divided into small working groups to review and reflect on the school’s vision statement that was formulated in 2006/7. The groups rotated and individual staff members identified and wrote down the values in order of importance that currently underpin the daily practices currently in place across both school settings. This activity clearly identified the values according to specific strengths and weaknesses.

The afternoon session was led by Mr Peter Symonds from Ability Employment who outlined the latest research and work experience placement models that he noted during a study tour in the US. Peter’s input prompted SOSE NW and Ability Employment to apply for a Schools First Funding Award and whilst our application was unsuccessful, our intention is to reapply again this year.
The final Professional Learning Day for 2009 was held on Friday, 30th October. The morning session was led by Felicity Lovatt with a focus on further building an AAC Community of Learners by utilising practical PODD skills to ultimately develop the school's communication policy.

Bruce Cameron and Sharon Rush were again our leaders for the remainder of the day. The specific strengths and weaknesses identified at the earlier PL day were revisited and utilised in the context of gaining a broader understanding of the 2009 Organisational Health Data with increased feedback to inform future discussions and planning at both campuses.

- helpful aspects that were learnings i.e. My personal vision for the school, all staff working on positive intentions, future collaborative planning for students
- what we could do better e.g. create more time to focus on planning in greater depth, involve all staff in the dialogue
- from here on in – approach situation with positive intentions, input into whole school planning to be facilitated by a team approach – Principal & Teachers in Charge together with teaching and support staff.

‘Leading for High Performance’ conversations
Interviews were planned according to the L4 framework and held during Terms 2 & 3 '09 between senior staff members, teachers and TA’s on an individual basis with the Principal at both campuses. This process utilises a question/answer format and is essentially a performance feedback process that generates information gathering and sharing. It allows the participant to give opinions that are recorded against agreed performance expectations. The process became a genuine exchange that focused on shared understandings and will continue this year as a means of reflection and further individual goal setting.

Physical Environment
The BER project across both campuses will be officially celebrated this Wednesday, 21st April. There is no doubt that the release of Federal Govt funding of $300 000 was of great benefit across both campuses. Sincere thanks to Mr Lyle Catlin, Senior DoE Project Officer who supervised the project. Mr Phil Dingemanse from Birrelli Architects together Mr Andrew Gurr from Fairbrother Pty Ltd who planned and prioritised the works and at all times considered the needs of the school in relation to on-site demolition, noise levels and planning the bulk of the work to be done during the Christmas-New Year break.

The Devonport campus is now equipped with the following:
- a library resource area that utilises organised learning spaces for all students and staff members - Mrs Michelle Anthony was a great advisor at the planning stage.
- a disabled toilet facility that promotes a ‘no lift’ policy with the installation of ceiling tracking and ceiling hoist to maximise student comfort and overcome former O H & S issues
- relocation of laundry
- new skylights in passage area
- re-sealing of carpark and bus turning area.
25 years of Service Awards
Mrs Jacqui Astley and Mrs Janet Coxan were honoured at the end of 2009 for their continuous DoE employment and ongoing service to students at this campus. Janet has been working on this site since 1983 – what a feat!

Fundraising
The Devonport Campus has been so fortunate in gaining acknowledgement from various local community clubs, businesses and members of the general public who have organised events, assisted to write submissions and donated time, effort and money to support initiatives to assist our students.

BP donation - $5 000 to purchase new therapy equipment for early childhood class
MyState Financial - $2 500 to develop wheelchair accessible sustainability gardens
Zonta Club of Devonport - $1088 raised at a curry night held on 30th June ‘09
- $2000 raised at a Fashion Parade held on 6th October ‘09

Tasmania Community Grant approval - written with support from Zonta Club members to purchase and install Liberty Swing at Devonport Campus
Father’s Day Raffle - $122.50
Potato Drive - $150
Soiree organised by Trudy Schmidt - $300
Woodrising Ladies group - $735
Audrey Campbell Old Time Dance & MadHatter’s Wesley Vale - $400

The commitment and generosity made by ordinary people is truly encouraging!

Alternative Programs
Personal skill development, friendship building, citizenship and fun between the students and staff across both school campuses and regular schools, continues to strengthen due to the following planned events and initiatives:

- Surf Experience Day
- Anzac Day Commemoration
- Daffodil Day
- Autumn Picnic at Buddy School – Natone Primary
- Billy Tea Bush Band Dance
- Combined Sports Day for Special Kids
- Dracula’s Party
- ‘Artist in Residence’ program and art exhibition at D’port regional library
- Learn to Swim program
- Christmas picnic held at the D’port pool
- Slip Stream Circus performance
- Overnight camp at Hagley Farm School
- Combined end of term assemblies

In Conclusion
As I’ve collated the information for this year’s report I am genuinely overwhelmed by the highlights and initiatives that have been successfully achieved during 2009/10.
All members of the School Association play an important role in attending meetings, listening and providing feedback and actively supporting new proposals and policies. In particular, I sincerely thank Janet Coxan whose term is coming to a close. Janet outwardly displayed her contribution as a member of the School Association who represented the staff. I appreciate Janet’s commitment to circulate meeting notes and reports to fellow staff members thus giving them opportunities to share, discuss and make comments where appropriate.

Once again, 2009/10 has been a successful year. Lastly, I express my gratitude to the dedicated teachers, teacher assistants, ancillary and interagency staff who continue to positively work as a team to enrich every student’s educational pathway. My role as Principal across two campuses is positively assisted by the ongoing commitment of all members of this school’s community.

Yours truly,

Grace Brown
Principal
School of Special Education NW.

19.04.2010