



GATEWAY
COMMUNITY HIGH



Child & Family Services



WHERE YOU CAN
ACHIEVE.
BELONG.
GROW.

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

2021

This report is prepared by Gateway Community High to meet educational and financial reporting requirements for the 2021 reporting year. It fulfils the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) requirement for registration and accreditation for Non-Government Schools in NSW.

Gateway Community High would like to thank:

- NSW Education Standards Authority
- The Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment
- The NSW Department of Education
- The Association of Independent Schools NSW

- The Alternative High School Advisory Group volunteers who worked tirelessly since 2018 to bring our vision and concept to the reality of opening in 2021.
- The Board of Directors of Macquarie Community College for their commitment and investment in this purpose-driven educational initiative.
- The Staff of Macquarie Community College who have worked on and supported this project and continue to do so.
- The Board of MCC Child and Family Services.

- Community College and Special Assistance School colleagues and leaders for their generosity and mentoring.
- Local school Principals and leadership staff, counselling and allied health practitioners, and individuals and organisations that have become our referral networks.
- Government and opposition politicians and staff who supported and took interest in our goals.
- Like minded NGOs and community organisations that have provided practical assistance, services, support for our students, donations and programs including Youth Insearch, CCA, Phoenix House, The Resilience Centre, C3 Church Carlingford.

- The Staff of Gateway Community High.
- The students and their families who made the decision to enrol in our new School.

Report completed and published June 2022

This report was compiled by:

Theresa Collignon: Group CEO, Macquarie Community College

Staff of Gateway Community High: Principal, Teaching, Wellbeing and Administration staff

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Acknowledgement of Country

Gateway Community High is located in Carlingford, in the northwest of Sydney and we respectfully acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands on which we gather, the Burramattagal people of the Eora nation.

1. MESSAGE FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

The Board

It is with pride and a sense of achievement that we present the first ever Annual Report for Gateway Community High (2021) as an account of the School's operations and achievements throughout its first year. The establishment of the School as a key initiative of MCC Child and Family Services (a wholly owned subsidiary of Macquarie Community College) has been a demonstration of our commitment to creating and providing inclusive and affordable learning opportunities. Our offering of a new model of school education is driven and guided by our guiding philosophies and values.

Given the challenges of creating, opening and running the School in the unpredictable COVID-19 environment it is a credit to the courage and optimism of our students and families, staff and community members who worked towards their goals in a year like no other.

We congratulate the students on their achievements and thank the staff, volunteers, State and Federal Government bodies, supporters, referral agencies and professionals, and the school community members for their dedication and support. Without that support the School would not be able to provide the unique services and opportunities that characterise Gateway Community High.

Based on the achievement of milestones and outcomes of 2021 we look ahead with confidence in the School's continued development, improvement and growth as we deepen our capacity and capability to engage our students in their learning and personal journeys within our unique learning environment.



Sue Westbrook

Chair of the Board,

MCC Child and Family Services

Group CEO and Representative of the Proprietors

What a remarkable year. It is a delight to be able to share the achievements of our first year of operation of Gateway Community High. What started as an idea almost 5 years ago has now become a reality for the young people who took up the challenge to seize a new opportunity on their learning journey.

It has been an honour to be part of creating a unique schooling experience where young people can feel a sense of belonging, where their personal growth and wellbeing is as important as their academic achievement, and where we aim to help them find a pathway to the future they aspire to.

My thanks go to the amazing advisory group, our volunteer directors, College and School staff and collaboration partners who shared in the vision, and who together completed the myriad tasks great and small to collaboratively create Gateway Community High.

My appreciation goes to the families and carers for their trust in us, and their tireless support of our students and for the School.

My admiration goes to the students who were courageous in making the decision to start afresh in a new school setting. My congratulations go to those who made it through the challenges of Covid. Bravo to the students who completed their Year 9 studies and are now well into Year 10. To our first ever Year 10 graduates – I could not be more proud of seeing you receive your Record of School Achievement as part of your pathway to a bright future.



Theresa Collignon

Group Chief Executive

Macquarie Community College

In the words of our students



Source: Huber Social wellbeing survey conducted December 2021

2. CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Executive Summary

Gateway Community High is a registered and accredited non-denominational, independent secondary school, created to provide opportunities for young people to thrive in an alternative educational setting tailored to support their learning and belonging.

Our Stage 5 (Years 9/10) program offers a flexible, engaging and practical learning environment for a small cohort of students to reconnect with their education and set a new direction.

Gateway Community High's approach is specifically designed for the inclusion of motivated young people who may have not felt supported or included in a traditional school setting and are at risk of disengaging from their formal education.

As a Special Assistance School we provide motivated young people with a gateway to learning in a unique environment that offers a positive, personalised and inclusive experience. This provides an opportunity, and for many a second chance, to develop their capacity to learn and gain a sense of meaning and purpose. We aim to empower them to create better futures for themselves, their families and their communities.

Initial Registration approval and establishment: September 2020 – December 2020

Inauguration date: 1 January 2021

Full Registration: Year 9 and Year 10 to 31 December 2026

DESE Numbers: AGEID 87254 - MCC Child and Family Service Ltd | AGEID 87255 - Gateway Community High

NESA Number: 78225

Business Structure

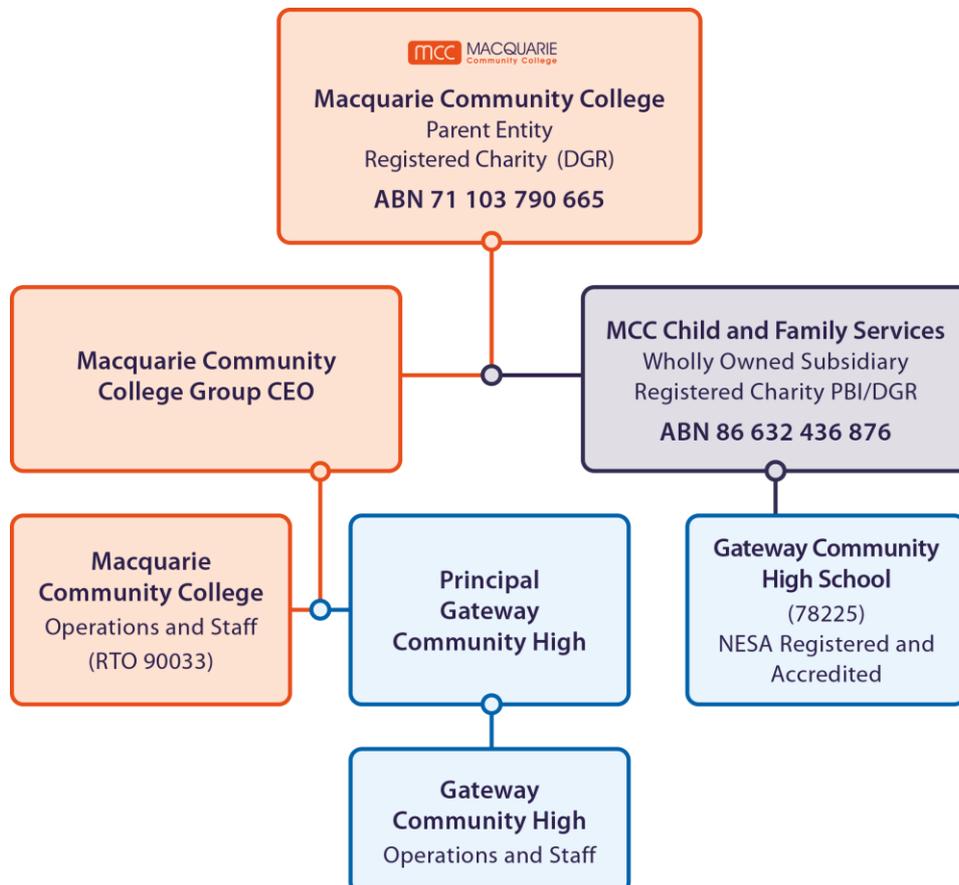
Gateway Community High is a registered business name of MCC Child and Family Services (MCC CaFS). The company was created in 2019 as wholly owned subsidiary of Macquarie Community College (MCC) with the object of establishing services for young people and their families, including school education.

MCC is a leading not-for-profit adult community education provider serving North-Western and Western Sydney for more than 70 years. MCC is an established Registered Training Organisation (RTO 90033) that has helped tens of thousands of students to attain qualifications, skills and community connections by creating and providing affordable Vocational Educational Training (VET) courses in Child Care, Aged Care, Business, Computer Basics, English Language skills and more, as well as hundreds of short courses for engagement in life-long learning.

MCC Child and Family Services is a registered not-for-profit charity with both Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) and Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) Status.

The Board of MCC Child and Family Services is the governing body of the School. The School Principal is appointed by the Board and reports to the Board and the MCC Group Chief Executive Officer.

Our Structure



Our Program

Gateway Community High offers the NSW Stage 5 curriculum for Years 9 and 10 that leads to the award of the Record of School Achievement (ROSA).

We focus on the fundamentals with additional teaching hours devoted to the compulsory subjects of Mathematics and English, Science, Human Society and its Environment (HSIE) and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE).

Gateway Community High is a small community of learners and is ideally suited to students who:

- Will thrive outside a mainstream educational environment
- Are looking for a place of belonging and safety
- Are interested in learning, and willing to put in effort to succeed
- Could benefit from extra support and attention to re-engage in their education
- May have missed some language, literacy or numeracy fundamentals
- Are looking to build their pathway to future VET or Stage 6 (Years 11/12) studies.

The School's approach includes a focus on:

- **Achievement** – students setting and achieving progress towards their educational and personal goals.
- **Growth** - social and emotional growth and improved wellbeing through relationship building, developing trust and interpersonal skills.
- **Belonging** – feeling welcome, respected and supported in a learning environment that is individualised and inclusive.

This approach supports students who face various barriers to learning and is backed by a small intake of students overall and small class sizes, where personalised attention and assistance can be provided.

Our learning opportunities and experiences aim to enable our students to develop the skills, values and attitudes needed both in learning and in life, whether that be for further study or future employment. Apart from gaining knowledge we aim to excite our students about the benefits of flexible, solution-focused thinking, the importance of respect for oneself and others and a willingness to take a positive approach to trying something new or trying again.

The commitment and approach of the School is underpinned by our belief that engaging in life-long learning is transformational and empowers young people to create better futures for themselves, their families and their communities.

Our Philosophies

The philosophies that drive us

A positive, personalised and inclusive community of learners



Agency

Young people can take control of, and responsibility for, their learning.



Student-centred

Individualised learning pathways; support and guidance to achieve goals.



Authenticity

A fresh start is possible for all; positivity and truthfulness matter.



Community

Our community of learners must feel valued, safe and have a sense of belonging.



Our Values

Our Values inform our approach

A positive, personalised and inclusive community of learners



Respect and Relationships

Treat all others with consideration and dignity
Listen and respect other points of view
Make meaningful personal connections and friendships
Demonstrate that positivity and kindness matter
Value and work on stronger relationships



Learning and Development

Commit to acquiring knowledge and skills
Explore, be curious and be willing to learn from mistakes
Participate and share your ideas
Reflect on your personal and academic progress



Empowerment and Engagement

Be proactive, taking charge of your future
Be a champion of fairness and justice
Make informed decisions, ask for help
Plan, then take your next steps
Contribute to making school a great place to be



Diversity and Inclusion

Celebrate and embrace our differences
Accept people for who they are
Understand our different abilities and backgrounds
Be fair and suspend judgment
Be a great team player



Achievement and Accountability

Set a goal to accomplish something worthwhile
Take pride in achieving your personal best
Help others achieve and excel
Take responsibility for your own actions towards yourself, others and the environment



Safety and Belonging

Be confident that you can be your best self every day
Care for yourself and others
Resolve differences in a constructive, peaceful way
Be honest and trustworthy - your word is your bond
Feel valued and confident



Compliance

Gateway Community High achieved 5 years of full registration and accreditation after its initial inspection in May 2021.

Auditing of the School's operations against regulatory requirements is undertaken by the New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA), including for re-registration and accreditation or on the basis of random inspection.

The operations of the School adhere to the requirements of key legislation and acts, including:

- The Australian Education Act, 2013
- Education Act 1990 (NSW)
- Children's Guardian Act (2019)
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW).
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013 (NSW)
- Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)
- Crimes Act 1900 (NSW)
- Civil Liability Act 2002 (NSW)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Institute of Teachers Act 2004
- Building Code of Australia (2013).
- Explosives Act 2003
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- Food Act 1989
- Ombudsman Act 1974
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)

Operational requirements for insurance, Goods and Services Tax (GST), and payroll are implemented under the auspices of Macquarie Community College Limited. Operational requirements specific only to the operations of MCC CaFS and Gateway Community High such as Workers' Compensation insurance and PBI status are engaged directly.

School Premises

Gateway Community High is located at 263 Marden Road, Carlingford in Northwest Sydney in a dedicated precinct of buildings on the campus site owned by Macquarie Community College.



The School precinct has three separate buildings surrounding a garden and courtyard and includes the original sandstone cottage home of the Principal of Carlingford Public School c.1886-1887. The site has been used by MCC for adult and community education since 1989 and the buildings were reassigned for school use in order to facilitate the establishment of the School.

The School has 2 large classrooms and various break out rooms. The school is fully equipped with fibre to the premises, laptops for all students and staff, hi-speed wi-fi, large monitors and kitchen facilities.

Students access the School via public transport, walking or by car, generally driven by a parent/carer.

Quality Control and Continuous Improvement

As a new school we are exceptionally committed to continuous improvement, learning from and leveraging what works, staying open to new ideas and approaches and re-thinking what needs improvement.

We have learned a lot in our first year of operation as a result of our commitment and investment in

- Ongoing professional development of employees and directors.
- Teacher professional development workshops relevant to accreditation through AISNSW and other external bodies.
- Programming and other areas for focus in conjunction with advice from NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA).
- Regular interaction with the network of similar Special Assistance schools, especially those run by NFP colleagues in the metro area and other community colleges in regional areas.
- Evaluation of teaching and learning strategies and approaches.

- Regular staff meetings.
- Student assemblies.
- Open two-way communication with the parent/school community by email, phone, newsletter and in-person meetings.
- Community gatherings (Covid permitting).
- Individualised meetings with students and parents/carers.
- A Social Impact measurement project commissioned by the Board with Huber Social focused on a longitudinal study of student wellbeing outcomes.

Memberships and Affiliations

Gateway Community High is a member of the New South Wales Association of Independent Schools (AISNSW), which provides a peak body to support the operations of independent schools. AISNSW has been a tremendous source of advice and support since the outset and we look forward to continuing to build close working relationships with them.

The School also maintains networks with similar schools, local schools and professionals that refer students to us and a range of community organisations and agencies.

We have developed a strong ongoing working relationship with The Resilience Centre for staff training and also for the provision of on-site counselling service for students 2 days per week.

Communications

At Gateway Community High we believe in the importance of keeping open lines of communication with parents and carers and the greater school community in order to serve the best interests of the student. Being a small school, and especially during the Covid lockdown of Semester 2, proactive, outbound communication with students, parents and carers was a key priority for staff.

Based on our philosophies of Agency, Authenticity, being Student-Centred, and building Community the School takes an open and transparent approach when communicating with students, parents and carers, the broader community and stakeholders.

Communications also accords with our privacy and legislative requirements.

Regular Communications

Examples of regular communications include:

- Regular in-person and on-line information sessions for any interested students, families or referral agencies. The sessions outline the unique aspects of the School's philosophy and approach and the enrolment process so that all potential students and their families are fully informed about the unique nature of the School.
- One-on-one meetings with staff where families and the student can be given information about their child's academic progress, social and wellbeing matters, engagement in their schooling, interpersonal skills, issues about attendance and behaviour.
- Newsletters circulated to families containing relevant and specific information about upcoming events, highlights, activities.
- Access to information and relevant forms available from the School's website.
- Individual calls and in-person meetings arranged by teachers with parents and carers as the need arises, and/or vice versa.
- Student reports provided to students, parents/ carers twice per year.

- Invitations extended to visitors, members of parliament and the community to Special events. In 2021 Gateway Community High hosted parents, carers and stakeholders to welcome and orientation events, our Official Opening, mid-term and end of term events and the Graduation/end of year event. Some plans were cancelled or limited on numbers due to Covid and the requirements of the NSW Public Health Order.
- Staff check their school emails daily or as soon as practical.
- Staff may correspond directly with students via their Gateway Community High. email address and, where necessary by phone from the School. During lockdown a daily call was made by the SLSO/wellbeing officer to check in with students on their wellbeing and engagement.
- Staff maintain professional boundaries with respect to digital and social media, and privacy of home contact details.

3. STUDENT OUTCOMES IN STANDARDISED NATIONAL LITERACY AND NUMERACY TESTING

The School registered to use online Naplan testing for the first time in March 2021. The School provides each student with a laptop and students were assisted where needed to use this for the Naplan testing.

In our inaugural year the School results in 2021 for year 9 students completing Naplan testing were as follows:

Source: [My School - Gateway Community High](#)

Average Result	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
Gateway Community High Year 9 2021	551	476	557	532	548
Similar Schools	553	516	564	550	564
All Schools	577	551	580	573	588

Not all students enrolled in Year 9 in 2021 participated in the Naplan tests. We acknowledge that many of our students experience anxiety and barriers to participating in timed testing and assessment and are also apprehensive of receiving their results. We appreciate the efforts of all who were willing and able to attempt or complete the testing, and respectful of those that did not.

The students and teaching staff see the Naplan results as part of many inputs and feedback for academic and personal progress.

The School specifically focusses on building confidence and progress in the fundamentals of language, literacy and numeracy including giving many additional timetable hours to the teaching of English and Mathematics. We do this because they are critical to success in all other subject areas. In-class support is made available for students where required. A lower grading of students in standardised testing is a reflection of the School's consistent effort to re-engage our young people with education and to equip them to achieve their maximum potential.

4. THE GRANTING OF RECORDS OF SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT

Eligible students who leave school before receiving their Higher School Certificate (HSC) receive the New South Wales Record of School Achievement.

In 2021, Gateway Community High had nine (9) of our Year 10 students deemed to have fulfilled the requirements for their Record of School Achievement (RoSA).

Year 10 Results 2021 (Source: Schools Online)

Course name	Students in School	Students in State	School Pattern (%)						State Pattern (%)					
			A	B	C	D	E	N	A	B	C	D	E	N
English 200 hours	10	89368		50	20	20		10	13.32	28.8	35.62	15.64	5.98	0.63
Mathematics 200 hours	9	89574		55.56	22.22	22.22			15.34	22.86	32.01	22.68	6.57	0.54
History 100 hours	9	89382			33.33			66.7	15.54	27.95	34.29	15.18	6.52	0.51
PDHPE 100 hours	8	89382		25				75	18.52	36.79	31.43	9.65	3.32	0.29
PDHPE 200 hours	1	18669			100				14.5	32.03	35.43	13.2	4.28	0.56
Science 200 hours	9	89344		66.67	33.33				13.87	25.17	36.37	17.72	6.22	0.64
Geography 100 hours	10	89378	20	20	30	20		10	15.9	27.94	34.11	15.25	6.3	0.49

These results embrace and recognise the persistence and positive achievement for some of our students in simply being able to complete their Stage 5 schooling. At Gateway Community High we target a Stage 5 cohort of students that may have been disengaged from education or have been overcoming individual challenges impacting on their education for some time prior to enrolment.

The incoming students to Year 10 in 2021 were all impacted in their year 9 studies in 2020 by the Covid-19 Pandemic. Covid caused extraordinary disruption to their learning and connections to their school communities, as well as significant mental health impacts for many.

Most of our students in 2021 entered the school with lower than average attendance rates and/or grades lower than their potential due to the barriers they experienced during their schooling in prior years. As a result, the number of students who achieved an A or B grade in any given subject is generally lower than the State averages.

5. PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND TEACHER STANDARDS

Staff professional development opportunities were undertaken in person and virtually in 2021 with some planned events impacted by Covid-19 lockdown in Terms 3 and 4.

A key focus for upskilling was whole team engagement in the development and improvement of all approaches to teaching and learning as well as administrative and compliance processes through staff team meetings and individual projects.

Professional Development Activities 2021

Teaching and support staff employed at Gateway Community High, in addition to MCC and MCC CaFS Board Directors and some key staff of Macquarie Community College participated in a range of professional development activities in 2021. The following professional learning activities were undertaken in 2021:

Program or activity	Mode	Participants Semester 1	Participants Semester 2
Identifying and Responding to Children and Young People at Risk - AISNSW	On-line	4	4
Complispace Child Protection Training – Complispace assurance module	On-line	8	5
Peer visit to Warakirri College (Blacktown)	in person	4	
First Aid – HLTAID 001- 004 Macquarie Community College	In person	4	
Attendance and School Refusal Workshop - AISNSW	In person	2	
Emergency Management Training – First 5 Minutes	In person	4	
ITC systems training – School pro, One note, education perfect, Zoom, CompliSpace	In person and on-line	6	3
Governance Modules overview; 1 – 4 AISNSW	On-line	16	
K-12 wellbeing webinar - AISNSW	On-line		1
Workshop for new schools - AISNSW	In person	3	
Disability Standards for Education Assistants	On-line		1
Promoting and Protecting Student wellbeing and mental health	On-line	1	

Gateway Community High had 3 dedicated teaching roles in 2021 - one full-time (1.0) and one part-time (0.8) classroom teacher in addition to the Principal (0.4 teaching load).

In addition, the School had a full-time student liaison and support/ wellbeing officer plus an additional casual teacher's aide working on site (in Terms 2 and 4).

School administration and other corporate services (e.g. payroll, finance, marketing, property and ITC) were provided by individuals or contractors/service providers under a formal managed services agreement between MCC and MCC CaFS. This agreement was formally reviewed as part of the School's financial viability assessment (by AIS NSW) for NESA registration and inspection purposes.

Level of accreditation	Number of teachers
Conditional	0
Provisional	1
Proficient	5
Highly Accomplished	0
Lead Teacher	0
Total Number employed in 2021	6

Teacher Qualifications

Category	Number of teachers
Teachers having teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution and holding a bachelor's degree within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines.	6

5. WORKFORCE COMPOSITION

Gateway Community High positions in 2021 included:

- 1 x full time Principal (0.4 teaching load)
- 1 x full-time classroom teacher
- 1 x part-time classroom teacher (0.8 FTE)
- 1 x full time student learning support and wellbeing Officer
- 1 x casual teacher's aide
- 1 x full time administration officer

All staff were Australian citizens with no stated Indigenous heritage.

The School contracts Macquarie Community College to provide professional and managed services such as accounting & finance, HR & payroll, ITC, governance support, marketing, property and related services.

6. ATTENDANCE

Student Attendance

Gateway Community High is a Year 9 and 10 school that specifically targets students who may have disengaged from their schooling.

Average student attendance rates in 2021:

- Year 9 average attendance rate was 75.70%
- Year 10 average attendance rate was 68.33%
- Percent of students attended school on average each school day in 2021 was 72.48%.

Management of Non-Attendance

The School works proactively with students who may have issues and circumstances at home which prevent them from attending regularly.

The Principal or their delegate will:

- Follow-up with students and parents/guardians if a student consistently misses certain subject periods.
- Ensure there is a conversation with the student in relation to the circumstances of any unexplained consistent absence upon their return.
- Follow-up with nominated parent/carer of any student who is absent for more a few days without contact with the School.

Student circumstances are considered in making sure they are supported if facing challenges which are restricting them from attending school.

The Principal or delegate will also reaffirm with the student and their parents/carers the legal ramifications of being absent from school consistently.

The School may develop an Attendance Plan in consultation with a nominated parent/carer, and/or a guardian approved by a youth service (e.g. Department of Communities and Justice or Children and Adolescent Mental Health) for students who have enrolled with or are developing poor attendance patterns.

These plans may include:

- Suitable and achievable programs (e.g. student attends partial day or part-time until full-time return)
- Monitoring and timely reporting of student absence
- Student welfare initiatives
- Curriculum changes and
- Review date/s.

During Lockdown in Semester 2 daily, proactive outreach by staff was a significant focus to ensure enrolled students were participating in their education program. Measures included a daily whole school morning gathering on Teams, use of Education Perfect and One note, regular email and telephone outreach.

7. RETENTION OF STUDENTS

Given that Gateway Community High is a single Stage 5 School, and that 2021 was the first year of operation, no retention statistics for year-to-year progression statistics from Year 9 to 10 are available.

Of the 16 year 9 students enrolled in Term 4 2021, 100% of them continued into Year 10 studies in 2022 at Gateway Community High.

8. POST SCHOOL DESTINATIONS

All the 11 students who were enrolled in Term 4 of Year 10 in 2021 have managed to secure placements into further education or work.

We are very proud of their achievement in completing their Year 10 of schooling and delighted that many of the students continue to share their success stories with us.

As a sign that our students have actively and purposefully re-engaged in their education it is highly significant that all but one student is currently engaged in further learning – either to complete their formal Schooling to Stage 6, or to complete Vocational Education and Training qualifications.

- 2 are enrolled at a mainstream school
- 2 are enrolled at an alternative high school
- 5 are completing Stage 6 or VET studies at TAFE
- 1 is enrolled in an apprenticeship and working
- 1 is working and not currently studying

We applaud each of these students in making the most of their learning opportunities while at Gateway Community High and setting a new direction for the next stage of their learning and employment pathways.

Numerous school sessions during 2021 included skills development for job seeking, career planning and skills attainment in order to prepare the Year 9 and Year 10 students for life after Gateway Community High. It is wonderful that this has been effective for our very first graduates and the Year 9 students that have continued their learning to Year 10.

In December 2021, we were pleased to host our inaugural graduation ceremony for our first cohort of Year 10s.

The ceremony included an opening address from Jim Taggart, OAM, Board Member and a special guest address from Mariam Mohammed (co-founder of Money Girl, a social enterprise delivering financial literacy to young women).

Two graduates spoke about how attending Gateway Community High has changed their lives for the better.

“It was a memorable year and moving forward I feel more comfortable than ever. Taking a massive step into the real world after being here is no longer going to be such a slap in the face”

“The constant push in a healthy way was all that was needed for me to push to my full potential”

“ Gateway has helped me so much! I’ve bettered myself so much since I have been here and set goals” “You’ve really helped me become who I am standing here today”

Student Awards were also presented to Year 9 and Year 10 students for Effort, Improvement, Commitment, Leadership and the Principal's Award.

Graduation Video



9. ENROLMENT POLICIES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENT BODY

Gateway Community High uses *Complispace* as the source of its policy framework and customises these to our operating context as a small, independent Special Assistance School.

Enrolment Policies and Procedures

Student Enrolment Policy

<p>Source of Obligation</p>	<p>The NSW Registration Manual (3.8) requires the Principal of the School to keep a register, in a form approved by the Minister, of the enrolments of all children at the School.</p> <p>The NSW Registration Manual (3.6.2) requires the School to provide a safe and supportive environment by maintaining a student enrolment register.</p>
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Student Enrolments	Gateway Community High keeps a register of enrolments of all children at the School in Student data base (Schoolpro).
Information for Register of Enrolments	<p>The register of enrolments records the following information for each student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name, age and address • the name and contact telephone number of parent(s)/guardian(s) • date of enrolment and, where appropriate, the date of leaving the school and the student’s destination • for students older than six (6) years, previous school or pre-enrolment situation • where the destination of a student below seventeen (17) years of age is unknown, evidence that the Department of Education has been notified of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the student’s full name ○ the student’s date of birth ○ the student’s last known address ○ the student’s last date of attendance ○ parents’/guardians’ names and contact details ○ an indication of possible destination, other information that may assist officers to locate the student ○ any known work health and safety risks associated with contacting the parents/guardians or student.
Records of the Register of Enrolments	The register is retained for a period of seven years after the last entry is made, and copies of information in the register are stored off-site at regular intervals.
Implementation	The Principal and appointed delegates are responsible for the effective implementation of this Policy.

Enrolment Procedures

Information Required upon Application to Gateway Community High

As a school that assists students in a range of circumstances, Gateway Community High requires detailed information about potential students when they are applying to enrol.

Gateway Community High has a very small intake (maximum 30 in 2021) and generally has a waiting list. Term 1 commencement is supplemented by rolling intakes throughout the year as spaces become available.

This information collected for enrolment may include:

- Personal details including name, age, address, date of birth (note: proof of identity through birth certificate, passport or other identification is required)
- Parent/guardian/carer contact details
- Current living arrangements
- Emergency contact details
- Referral details where relevant
- Demographic Information such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and employment of parents/carers
- Disability, medical condition/s and/or medication requirements where applicable
- Assessment/support details including any reports from psychologists, psychiatrists, and/or counsellors
- Previous education details including school reports and Naplan
- Other training or employment information.

This information is gathered through the *Application for Enrolment Form*. No application will be progressed to interview without this application form.

Enrolment Procedure

- All enquirers and referral networks are encouraged to access information on the website, enquire by email or call the school. They are then generally contacted for an initial discussion about the School and invited to attend an information briefing session prior to submitting an application.
- Upon review of an Application for Enrolment Form, contact will be made with the Parent/Carer. A suitable interview time may be made for all parties.
- Where information provided is incomplete and/or further information is required in order to provide deeper information about an individual's particular circumstances staff may follow up with their prior school and/or professionals involved in the 'team' around the student, including a referral agency or health practitioner, social worker, learning or disability support practitioner.
- The Principal or appointed delegate will personally interview each applicant before enrolment and consider each applicant's interview responses regarding their ability and willingness to support the Gateway Community High ethos. A tour of the facilities may take place during the interview.
- The Principal or appointed delegate reviews all information and makes a decision regarding acceptance and start date.

- The Principal or appointed delegate will inform the applicant verbally about the outcome of their application and, if successful, a commencement date may then be arranged.
- Students accepted for enrolment will be entered into the Student Database, including details of their commencement date.
- An Information Pack is sent to the nominated parent/guardian/carer and a student induction process will be followed.

Selection Criteria

Places are strictly limited and demand for places is high.

Being a small community of learners in our Special Assistance setting we seek to make the opportunity available to young people who:

- Are interested in learning, and willing to put in effort to succeed
- Could benefit from extra support and attention to re-engage in their education
- Will thrive outside a mainstream educational environment
- Are looking for a place of belonging and safety
- May have missed some language, literacy or numeracy fundamentals
- Are looking to build their pathway to future VET or Stage 6 (Years 11/12) studies.

Initial and Ongoing Enrolment

Enrolment at the school in 2021 was a two-phase process:

- Phase 1 – Initial enrolment at the school for a limited trial period of a minimum two weeks.
- Phase 2 – Confirmed enrolment after the student successfully completed the initial enrolment period.

Phase 1 – Initial enrolment (trial period)

During the initial enrolment period the School assessed how the student was responding to the school environment in relation to the following criteria for confirmation of enrolment:

- Attendance
- Engagement
- Social interaction
- Attitude towards learning

The School communicated with the student and their parents/carers during the initial enrolment period about how the student was progressing in relation to the criteria for renewal of enrolment as identified above. If the student's enrolment was not confirmed the student's enrolment at the school ceased with the student and family supported in confirming enrolment elsewhere.

Phase 2 – Confirmation of enrolment

After successful completion of the initial enrolment period, the School confirms ongoing enrolment at the school subject to the student and their parents/carers meeting the school's requirements for continuing enrolment.

Continuing enrolment at the School is subject to the student abiding by the School's code of conduct, the terms and conditions of the signed enrolment agreement and values-driven behavioural expectations. Breaches will result in students progressing through the formal discipline process.

Cessation of Enrolment

A student's enrolment may cease in the following circumstances:

1. expiry of the initial enrolment period, with no renewal of enrolment offered
2. withdrawal of enrolment by the student and their parents/carers
3. termination of the enrolment by the school on the grounds of discipline or a breach of the School's Code of Conduct.

Where a student's enrolment ceases, the student and their parents/carers are required to inform the School of their post-school destination, that is whether the student has enrolled in education or training at another education provider or is in employment and who the education/training and/or employment is with. Where a student is under the age of 17 and the School has not been informed of their post-school destination, the school is required to report that the student's destination is unknown to the NSW Department of Education.

Relevant Forms and Documents

1. Information session slides and FAQs for applicants (on website)
2. Application for enrolment form (on website)
3. Referral Form (optional)
4. Enrolment Agreement
5. Pre-enrolment risk assessment form
6. Interview Notes
7. Offer letter
8. Confirmation of Enrolment letter

Characteristics of the Student Cohort

Students who attend Gateway Community High are young people who, for many and varying reasons, have not thrived in a mainstream school setting, causing them to disengage from their full time learning in early secondary schooling, or even in primary school. Some have experienced an emotional or psychological challenge, or trauma and didn't feel sufficiently supported in a mainstream system. Some students are from families who are genuinely interested in exploring alternative educational models.

The majority of students in Stage 5 at Gateway Community High have mild to moderate mental health issues and often also have one or more conditions that benefit from learning support including mild autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyscalculia.

Due to lower than full attendance at school in prior years many of our students many have some catching up to do in terms of performing at their intellectual and academic potential or at the pace of their usual age level cohorts.

Our students come from a full range of socio-economic backgrounds and suburbs ranging from the local Parramatta/Ryde area, the Hills, the upper North Shore, and the Western suburbs. We have a diverse range of students from relatively advantaged to disadvantaged and vulnerable families or care situations.

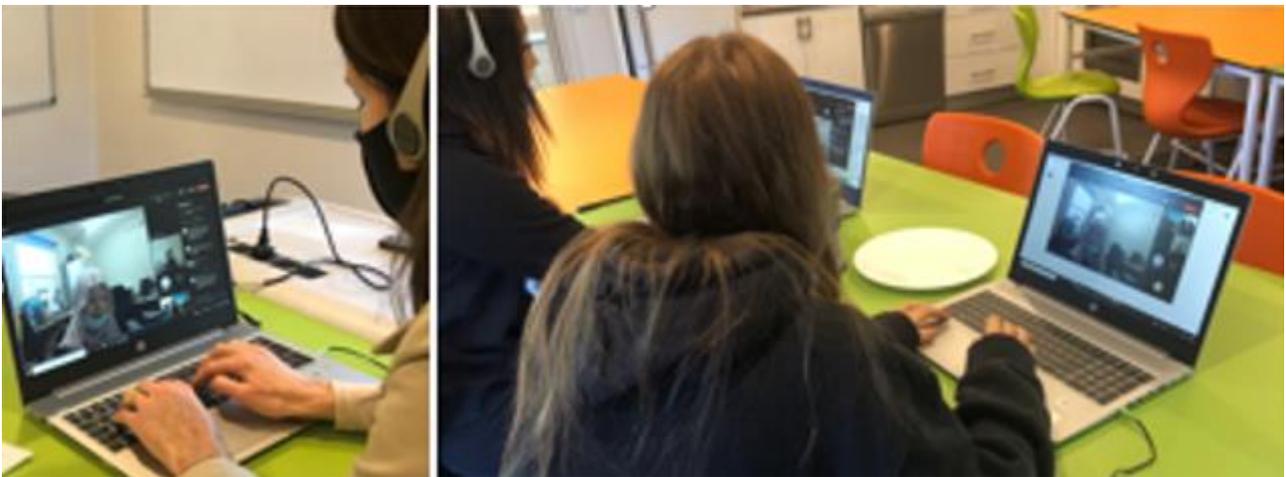
Some students were overwhelmed by the large volume of people at a mainstream school or couldn't deal with the competitive mainstream environment. Some students missed months of school because of the impact of Covid disruptions or employment income and personal impacts within their family including family breakdown or change of housing.

Some students may have been previously “labelled” as naughty or troubled.

Some have experienced being bullied or indeed accused of being a bully, harassing others or not having any friends at school, struggling with gender or sexual identity, found to be disrespecting teachers, swearing and inappropriate behaviours or gestures, not complying with uniform rules, and/or lacking the ability to regulate their emotions.

Some students may, as a result of the above have been suspended from their previous schools, had attendance issues, and spent time in lunchtime or after school detention or have been on warnings, or a variety of discipline levels.

At Gateway Community High all of these students are working alongside one another and learning to get along, respect differences and learn to operate within our values frameworks so that all can feel able to **Achieve. Belong. Grow.**



Cooking Program - Pancake Making

10. KEY SCHOOL POLICIES

All policies were new in our inaugural year and submitted to NESAs in March 2021 as part of our registration process.

Gateway Community High School adopted the *Complispace* policy bank and has customised and contextualised these to our Special Assistance environment.

As part of the inspection and post-inspection process, and in keeping with our commitment to continuous improvement during the establishment years of the new School, these were regularly reviewed and where necessary built upon, especially at the level of procedures. All policies were fully reviewed in detail for follow up submission to NESAs in March 2022.

Key Policies are organised in categories as per the requirements for Registration with particular focus on Safe and Supportive Environment (Child Protection, Student Duty of Care, Bullying, Code of Conduct), Staffing, Curriculum, Attendance, Discipline and Property/WHs areas, especially Covid-safe policies and compliance under the NSW Public Health order.

Policies on Privacy, Complaints Handling and Procedures for Handling allegations of Staff Misconduct and reportable conduct are available on the [Gateway Community High website](#).

11. SCHOOL DETERMINED IMPROVEMENT TARGETS

In 2021, the School's key target areas for greatest improvement related to (1) Student Attendance and (2) Student Wellbeing.

Focus on Attendance

Being our inaugural year, the main objective was to re-engage our students in learning by encouraging and rewarding attendance and active participation in their classroom work, regardless of their diverse starting points and academic goals.

The fast-changing COVID-19 environment added some challenges to ensure that students were able to engage in person in Terms 1 and 2 – and remotely in Terms 3 and 4 until classes on site resumed in mid-November 2021. A small number of students (3) attended in person almost daily during lockdown, all others were able to access classwork on OneNote, Teams video conferencing and use of *Education Perfect* software. All students had contact with staff on teams, Zoom and by phone.

Strategies to encourage student attendance included:

- Timely and regular conversations and follow up
 - Every day any student who was late or not in attendance for classes was spoken with by key staff.
 - Individual outbound phone calls were made to parents/carers to discuss reasons for non-attendance of the student on any day or in periods when a student was absent.
 - Follow ups from staff directly with students through school email.

- Positive reinforcement and recognition for attendance
 - Personal attention and encouraging words. All students in attendance warmly welcomed, regardless of time of arrival or duration of attendance on any given day. A special welcome back or “we missed you” for the those that had been absent.
 - A system of rewards that celebrated and recognised attendance. A system of merits and “raffle tickets” were a popular and effective way to support good habits – one attendance was equal to one ticket per day in a weekly raffle and one merit “voucher”. Prizes were given for 10 merits and a certificate and gift voucher for 30 merits. At the end of Term and the end of the year further awards were given for students with high attendance.
 - To support positive behaviours Merits were also awarded for working well in class and kindness to their peers.

It was gratifying to see significant commitment to attendance in 2021 versus attendance in 2020 for some students.

The major focus on improving attendance was to make lessons and activities engaging and to back bring some joy to the process of learning, especially for those with a negative self-view of their academic performance, against their own assessment of their potential, their unmet expectations about their results or in comparison to others or compared to prior performance.

Some examples of engaging students in different approaches to learning included:

- An in-person workshop with Sculpture by the Sea educators and artists.
- Games and fun activities – Uno, cards, jigsaws, art and other activities shared face to face when on site and “fun/game” sessions established for all students to access on-line during lockdown.
- Drumming “BeatL” program to develop listening and teamwork skills as well as personal growth and resilience.
- Cooking activities including participation in Vocational Educational hospitality units in food preparation and food safety delivered by Macquarie Community College trainers.
- Gardening activities including creating a terrarium at home with kits created and mailed out during lock down.
- Art activities, including colouring, painting, participation in art competitions.
- Watching *Looking for Alibrandi* together (remotely from home) with popcorn.
- The Principal’s weekly poem.
- Show off your pet morning on Zoom.
- Projects within subjects on “real” life activities such as renting a flat, buying a car, selecting a phone plan, creating a weekly food menu and a budget for shopping.
- Activities relevant to the Olympics.
- Student group and individual projects focused on making and building things – sewing, carpentry, electronics.

Focus on Wellbeing

The focus on student wellbeing was very much about engaging with the “whole person” to assist students identify awareness and develop strategies to manage and improve their wellbeing. Actions included being ever ready to provide a listening ear, personal and learning support and demonstrating and encouraging tolerance and acceptance for all – and especially for those that were not having a good day or week.

The benefit of having such a small cohort of students where everything and everyone was new to the environment meant we were “all in this together” to figure it out, and time was dedicated every day to

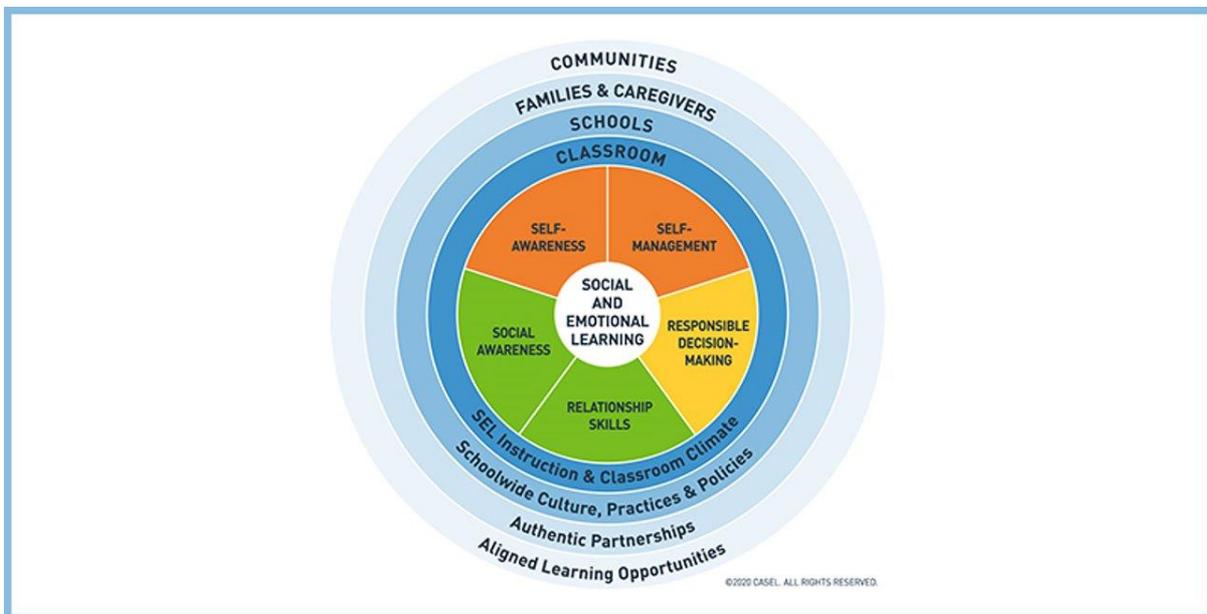
getting to knowing our students in the small school setting, building trust between students as peers and between students and staff.

Without some basic level of wellbeing students cannot learn.

To build capability and reach as well as enrichment activities we actively engaged with other services including:

- Youth Insearch who provided an on-site social worker on a part-time basis.
- Christian Community Aid conducted a drumming workshop program
- Phoenix House staff who provided experience and guidance on pastoral care for youth

A relationship was formed in Semester Two with The Resilience Centre which has developed strongly into 2022. The Resilience Donut and Solution Focussed Thinking are two elements of their work with the team that are developing into a strong foundational focus for our social and emotional wellbeing framework.



During lockdown extra emphasis was placed on daily outreach by staff to ensure personal connectedness between the school and the student and between students as a cohort.



Staff and students had a wellbeing checklist including ideas of things to do to stay positive and connected and to achieve “balance” between schoolwork, health and activity, focus on self and others, trying something new.

Authentic communication and conversations shared about the mental health impact of lockdown and isolation brought compassion and empathy to light. The constant reminder was - try do a complete at least some learning every day, engage in physical activity to get fresh air and sunlight and do things that bring joy or calm such as music, art, cooking, games, keeping up with friends and family. The main message was that “we are all in this together – and we are here for you”.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

In building the culture of the School in our inaugural year we sought to anchor our approach to our values.

Respect and Relationships are in our Core Values statement:

At Gateway Community High this means:

- Treat all with consideration and dignity
- Listen and respect other points of view
- Make meaningful personal connections and friendships
- Demonstrate that positivity and kindness matter
- Value and work on stronger relationships

Respect is a key value we sought to “walk the talk” about” – starting with self-respect and building on that with respect for peers, staff and families, and property.

Primary strategies used by staff and students to place emphasis on Respect included:

- Merits for kindness and working in class which counted towards rewards and recognition including “treats” like chips/ chocolates; gift vouchers and certificates presented at assemblies and events.
- Classroom group discussions giving the students “voice” to agree what is okay and what is not with respect to words and behaviours that will create a place of safety and belonging.
- Discussion, reflection and follow up on the use of foul and/or our sexist/discriminatory language, name calling, the consequences of social media “pile-ons”.
- Seeking to support students to resolve differences between themselves rather than impose staff-dictated solutions.
- Active engagement with students to articulate and create of posters about kindness and bullying that were displayed around the School.
- Positive reinforcement whereby we “catch” students in the act of doing things right rather than wrong, word of affirmation and praise.

The School encourages students to be honesty and transparency. In return, staff will be honest with the students in a tactful and caring manner. Teachers will listen to students and respond in a non-judgmental manner. This in turn promotes respect between staff and students, inspiring students to be responsible for their actions.

Achievement and Accountability are in our Core Values Statement.

At Gateway Community High this means:

- Set a goal to accomplish something worthwhile
- Take pride in achieving your personal best
- Take responsibility for your own actions towards yourself, others and the environment
- Help others achieve and excel

The key area of focus for accountability was having students remain committed to maximising their rare second chance at Gateway Community High to start afresh along their education pathway. To achieve their educational and personal goals they were encouraged and assisted to re-engage in their school education by improving their attendance, and whether present or remote, participating in classwork to the best of their ability on any given day.

12. PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION

We work with all feedback proactively whether it be positive or negative as part of our continuous improvement journey.

Parent/Carers Feedback

The School received many complimentary emails, some delightful thank you gifts and strong words of encouragement and gratitude from parents and carers, and indeed the referral network and stakeholders, for establishing our affordable, inclusive School and being part of a solution for their student.

Of course, not all students and families find that Gateway Community High is the right fit for them, and Gateway Community High may also find that we are not the right environment to provide the specific areas of academic interest or the intense support and expertise some students can be better provided with at, for example, special education or behavioural schools.

Given the unique nature of the small and new school, and some of the challenges and barriers students who seek to enrol at Gateway Community High face, we anticipate and work with the prospect of some student turnover. This enables us to do individual or group intakes through the year, from the waiting list.

Staff Satisfaction

Attracting and retaining staff with the specialist skills needed to support and work within our new and unique Special Assistance School environment was a challenge from the outset, especially with a short implementation time frame between September 2020 and opening in January 2021. Recruitment for new staff in permanent, acting or casual roles especially classroom teaching staff with specific subject expertise was and is an ongoing challenge. Navigating the second year of the Covid pandemic added the challenge of recruiting, on-boarding and then working remotely. The requirement to ensure staffing and on-site visitors met the strict Public Health Order requirements including full vaccination added further complexity.

Four staff members working with Gateway Community High at the end of 2021 continued as staff into 2022 and additional new staff, including a new Principal and learning support teacher and dedicated admin staff, plus additional casuals and fixed term contract staff as SLSOs and teachers have joined the team.

Student Satisfaction

We did not conduct any formal student satisfaction surveys in 2021 but commissioned an independent organisation (Huber Social) to assess progress on key factors that influence student wellbeing.

Macquarie Community College (MCC) and MCC Child and Family Services (MCC CaFS) are very committed to understanding the outcomes for our students and the broader social impact of how we actualise our Purpose and Vision.

As part of our 3-year Strategic Plan the MCC CaFS Board commissioned this work to establish and conduct a social impact measurement project which will form the basis of a 3-year series of longitudinal study of student wellbeing outcomes.

Measurement of social impact has two distinct goals. An immediate measurement of the program's impact at the end of the 2021 school year and an establishment of a measurement system for tracking social impact year-on-year.

The outcomes for the December 2021 measurement are summarised in the below graphic:



The initial survey conducted in late Term 4 of 2021 are the first indicative measure of the impact on our very first students.

Through a comparison with similar samples in the Huber Social database, and as we conduct the 2022 surveys In Terms 1 and 4 of 2022, the School will be able to review progress as a result of our actions in our first year – and develop information and areas for continuous improvement through the first critical three years of operation.

The survey results provided an understanding of students’ wellbeing and needs in addition to providing an established baseline of students’ wellbeing status and needs. This will inform priority needs for incoming students and allow for benchmarking of longitudinal data.

A snapshot of what matters most to GCH students’ wellbeing



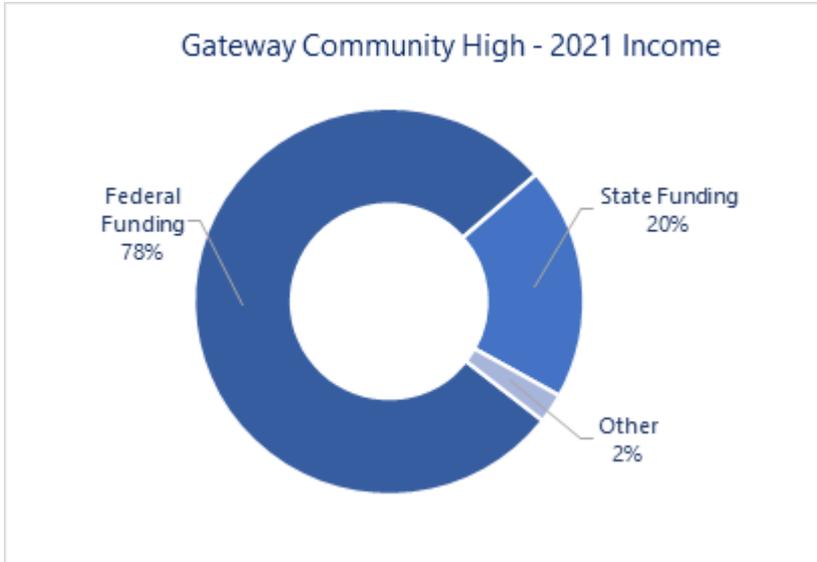
GCH Social Impact Report - Initial Findings

What Matters Most to GCH Students' Wellbeing

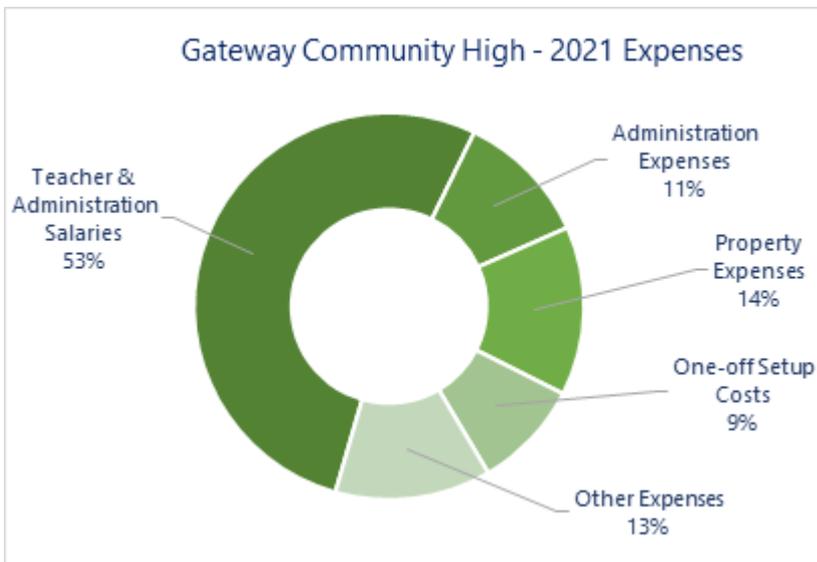
To determine the scope of measurement and understand which factors are most likely to drive high or low levels of wellbeing, we created the Gateway Community High Impact Thesis with the following high level outcomes:

- Connection**
Access to personal relationships and community
- Learning and Work Skills and Opportunities**
Ability to participate in education and access future learning and work pathways
- Safe School Environment**
Access to safe and respectful learning spaces
- Daily Life Skills**
General life knowledge and skills
- Holistic Wellness**
Physical, emotional and mental
- Self-worth**
Confidence and self-love
- Resilience**
Ability to solve problems, handle setbacks and adapt

13. SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION



Federal funding Revenue: \$667,886
State funding Revenue: \$166,967
Other Revenue: \$20,958



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GATEWAY COMMUNITY HIGH

An initiative of |  **MACQUARIE**
Community College

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