Introduction

2013 has undoubtedly proven to be a year full of enormous achievements for our students, teachers and school. Our numbers in the primary have grown and we have double streaming up to and including grade 3, and in 2014 up to grade 4.

Our theme for this school year was “Making a Difference”. As a school community we believe we did make a difference – to ourselves, to those close to us, and in the wider community.

In Term 1 our focus was to make a difference to ourselves - to strive to be the best we possibly can, not just in terms of our own personal development, but also in relation to how we treat those around us, especially our classmates, our teachers, our family and our friends. In Term 2, each class took on an individual project and money was raised to be donated to charity. Some of the activities included a cake stall, a morning tea, an obstacle race and the creation of colouring pages. In the following term, each grade level as a group committed to an assignment that involved making a difference to something or someone in our society. Perhaps the highpoint of the year was a school wide initiative that included a week long project helping asylum seekers. In line with our theme it seemed a fitting culmination to the year to stage a concert on Mitzvah Day.

One of the most important lessons we shared as a community of learners was that it is vital that we take the time to stop and appreciate what we have, reflect on what we have achieved and be cognisant of, and committed to, the needs of those around us, especially those less fortunate than ourselves.

As part of our need to ensure our children are prepared for this ever-changing world in which we live, we are constantly reviewing programs and implementing well thought-out changes. This year, our college has ensured that our staff and students remain abreast of relevant improvements and developments in technology and we have invested substantial capital in the expansion of our IT infrastructure including the procurement of new desktop computers as well as the purchase of a bank of iPads for primary year students.

Our staff remain perched at the cutting edge of pedagogical research and to this end have been part of two pilot programs - Managing Change, which aims to ensure that the transition from preschool to primary years is as smooth and productive as possible, and we have also worked closely with the Department of Education and the private sector to implement our exciting Digital Citizenship project which ensures our students have the competency to engage safely, confidently and productively with each other and with the world in the digital age. The school has also embraced Feurstein as a way of teaching and three of our staff have been trained in this method and we have already begun to see the benefits of the program.

Another initiative this year occurred when our grade 4 and 5 students worked closely with a leading New York film producer and director to create a 30 minute film titled “Unmake a Bully - Left Out.” The film dealt powerfully with some of the complex issues that underlie interpersonal relationships between students, particularly peer pressure, the meaning of true friendship, honesty and bullying. The movie provided our students not only with the opportunity to be involved in all parts of the filmmaking process including scripting, sound recording, camera techniques, wardrobe, props, storyboarding and of course acting – needless to say an area in which our students particularly excelled. The premiere was held at Celebration Evening and next year it will be part of the Children’s Film Festival in Sydney.

Another highlight this year was our school production “Oy Vey Broadvey”. Our theme was to look at Jewish composers and the enormous impact they had on theatre and film throughout the 20th Century. The wonderful melodic voices and undeniable talent of our children was evident from moment the curtain went up and the power and charm of their performances did not subside until the final curtain fell. We are also proud to say that our students not only provided wonderful entertainment to the audiences at the Phoenix Theatre but on numerous occasions throughout the year delighted many in the broader community, particularly senior citizens, with their renditions of the beautiful songs in a variety of locations.
The opportunity to be involved in professional development for all our staff has also definitely “made a difference” to our students, as well as to the teachers themselves. Robyn Klein, our Director of Curriculum, will also highlight in her report the impact of our educational programs and teacher training that have occurred throughout this year. During the course of 2013 our teachers have also implemented the Australian National Curriculum, reviewed their planning documentation and further incorporated the use of technology such as iPads into their teaching.

We continued to build on the wonderful strengths of our Jewish learning, life and traditions throughout the school. All major Chaggim were celebrated with typical Sholem spirit and style. Major events included the Purim Parade, Model Sederim and Yom Haatzmaut day activities. Sholem’s reputation for developing students with a strong love of Jewish traditions, history and culture goes from strength to strength. It is a testament to the dedication, knowledge and talent of our Jewish Life teachers that we are able to live our traditions and festivals with such ruach.

Our Yiddish staff were also involved in numerous professional development opportunities. Through generous donations from the Pinya Krystal Foundation, two of our staff attended a conference in Strasburg and the entire department participated in a two week intensive program with a lecturer from the USA, Brukhe Kaplan. This year, we also created the new role of Informal Educator, who worked closely with the staff and provided added programs for our students and parents.

The preschool team, under the leadership of Cheryl Israelsohn, have provided our kinder students with wonderful creative opportunities to learn in a nurturing and caring environment. They have given the students the tools to be inquisitive learners, to take risks and guided them to work together in a cooperative and collaborative manner.

All our staff - teachers, assistants, administrators and maintenance people, come to school each and every day passionate about their roles and work tirelessly for the college and the students. Each person has an important role to play and I would like to express my sincere appreciation for their professionalism, dedication and the positive effects they have had on our students. Together the staff have made a wonderful positive impact on our school community and ensured that the constant change and growth that occurs during school year has been overwhelmingly positive and empowering. Our teachers made a difference. With every lesson planned and delivered, with every unit of learning created and implemented, with every report written or assessment made, with every problem listened to, they made a difference in the lives of our students. Each of these acts have been committed with love, patience, skill and dedication.

To all of the staff, who worked so tirelessly during the year, I say a resounding and heartfelt thank you. They are the ones who give of themselves each day – on the good days, the bad days, and all of the ones in between, to make our school the very special and unique place that it is. Elissa Gray, who has been with us for 14 years, has decided to leave due to new teaching regulations. She brought passion, dedication and skill to the school, particularly in the regards to Yiddish learning and to the school musicals.

I would like to thank SACPA and our parent body, for also partnering with us to “make a difference” in our children’s lives. With your support and assistance, our dreams for the children have been able to become reality. Together we are empowering our children to love to learn, to be inquisitive, to take on challenges, and to have an impact on the world around them.

New furniture and equipment was purchased as well as interactive TVs, new resources and general equipment. In the play yard, it is wonderful to hear the sweet sounds of our new outdoor musical instruments. The preschool students have enjoyed the benefits of many new resources. We look forward to 2014 and what the new year will bring - the introduction of individual iPads for all students from grade 4 to 6, the expansion of the school grounds to include Habonim, the upgrading of our facilities, including the installation of a lift, further
incorporation of e-learning and Feuerstein into our curriculum and of course new opportunities for learning for all our community.

In 2013 we had a highly successful Annual Appeal, and were also the recipient of a number of major donations, including a bequest from the Estate of Mary Starr. We also received generous donations from Mr. Don Marejn, Mr and Mrs Zelman Elton, William & Rita Rogers Charitable Foundation, Mr and Mrs. David and Doris Burstin, Mr. and Mrs. Leon and Judy Goldman, Mrs. Dina Munzer, Mr. Nathan Fink, Mr. Charles Holckner, Mrs. Rosa Stabey, Mr. Adam Ryan and other generous donors.

Grounds and facilities

What a pleasure it is to walk into the grounds at Sholem Aleichem College and work in such an environment. Each year we have been fortunate to receive funds from the federal government to assist us with our grounds, buildings and facilities. In 2013 we were provided with 2 grants for secure schools funding- for the preschool and primary. This included the guard house, fencing, cameras, window protection, access ramp and a new speaker system throughout the College and a new switch board in the preschool. Over the summer we also upgraded our electrical supply to the primary school via a Block Grant.

As our numbers and classes grow, we also had to furnish new classrooms. In 2013, we had double streaming up to and including grade 3. In 2014 we will continue our growth with double classes that include grade 4. A pressing issue is future space for our students- classrooms and play areas. As part of our strategic planning for the future, we are working on a masterplan for a precinct in Elsternwick together with Kadimah and Habonim.

In 2013, every classroom now has new or recently purchased furniture. The rooms are inviting and student work is constantly on display. With the assistance of SACPA we have purchased 36 ipads and will now have class sets available for each grade level.

The upkeep of our grounds are the responsibility of our maintenance department, and this year, our new maintenance personnel have been excellent, taking a pride in our college and ensure the grounds are clean, swept and everything is in good order.

We are also in the process of establishing OH and S process and risk management policy and procedure as required by new legislation. It is important that we provide our staff, students and community with a safe and healthy workplace.

Together we have and we will “make a difference”!

So the question we asked ourselves at the end of 2013 was - did we change for the better and did we make a difference? The answer is we did.

Our challenge and our promise is to ensure that in 2014 we strive to do even better, and continue to make a difference – to build on what we have achieved, and to go ever forward to be the best that we can be.

A shaynem dank

This report has been distributed to the community via email, a link in the school newsletter and on our school website.
**Staff**

In 2013, Sholem Aleichem College Primary School employed 1 principal, 11 full time, 18 part time (direct and indirect) teaching and 6 administration staff. The principal, Helen Greenberg, has completed her 7th year in the role.

| Teachers               | Qualifications 2013                  |  |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Tammy Bolaffi          | B. Ed                                | Dip Children’s services |
| Connie Filidis         | Dip. Media and Communications        | B. Arts/Journalism      |
| Constantine Roubos     | B. Dental Science                    | B. Ed                  |
| Einat Orbach           | B Ed (Primary)                       | Grad. Dip. Ed (Primary) |
| Simone Sann            | B Ed                                 | Post Grad. Cert. in Ed. Studies |
| Reyzl Zylberman        | B. Arts/Ed. (Secondary)              | B. Arts                |
| Rachel Joseph          | B.Sc                                 | M.Ed                   |
| Natalie Samuel         | B.Ed                                 | Dip. Modern Languages   |
| Steven Charisis        | Dip. Ed                              | B.Ed                   |
| Selina Rutko           | B.Ed (primary)                       | M.Ed                   |
| Dvora Zylberman        | B.Arts/Ed. (Arts)                    |                        |
| Freydi Mrocki          | Dip. Teach                           | VIT Yiddish            |
| Mandy Rajch            | B.Ed (Primary)                       |                        |
| Anne Gawenda           | B. Arts                              | Dip Ed                 |
| Joanne Davis           | B. Arts                              | Dip Ed.                |
| Etty Arbel             | B.Spec. Ed                           | VIT Hebrew             |
| Deb Samuel             | B Ed                                 | Dip T,                 |

|  |  | Cert Adv coaching |
Attendance & Satisfaction rates

Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Name</th>
<th>Qualifications</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helen Greenberg</td>
<td>B.Arts, Grad. Dip. Ed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elisa Gray</td>
<td>B.App Sci (Sp Pathology), VIT Yiddish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joel Halperin</td>
<td>B.Art, Dip. Ed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maureen Carroll</td>
<td>Dip T, B.Ed, M.Ed, Ph.D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Nachsatz</td>
<td>Dip T, B.Ed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miriam Chester</td>
<td>Dip DN, VIT Yiddish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elissa Gryngas</td>
<td>B.Ed (Primary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearl Sclarr</td>
<td>Dip Ed, B.Ed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robyn Klein</td>
<td>Dip T, B.Ed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samantha Kirzner</td>
<td>Dip Com Serv, B.ECE, Post Gra. Sp. Ed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharlene Wertheimer</td>
<td>Dip Teach, Grad Dip Sp.Ed, M. Ed (Spec. Ed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sally Holzer</td>
<td>TPTC, B.Arts, Grad Dip (Pr). Music Ed.</td>
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Overall, staff attendance rate was high with some staff taking long service leave and leave without pay. At Sholem we believe, happy staff who feel valued will have a positive impact on our students and their performance. Even though an official survey was not undertaken, on many occasions informal feedback was sought. Staff opinion was also gleaned at staff appraisals. The staff felt Sholem is definitely an excellent working environment, with many opportunities to become involved in professional learning.

Students
The average attendance rate for 2013- total days (prep to year 6 was 172 days)

- Prep: 95%
- Grade 1: 96%
- Grade 2: 95%
- Grade 3: 97%
- Grade 4: 97%
- Grade 5: 98%

It is clear absenteeism is not a concern. However, student punctuality is an issue that is being addressed.

Overall we are delighted with the results of the Student Satisfaction Report. Its findings show Sholem Aleichem College to be a place where students feel happy and safe, have good interpersonal relationships with their peers and teachers, and enjoy coming to school. They feel appropriately challenged and satisfied with their learning and are enthusiastic and engaged learners.

Parents

A 68 page independent report on parents’ views and overall satisfaction levels was delivered K2 Consultants.

The overwhelming response was one of a high level of satisfaction with the school and respect for its core values and the delivery of educational programs. Key themes that emerged consistently from the report were the high value placed by parents on the strong, supportive and inclusive nature of the school community, the dedication and professionalism of the staff and the love of school and of learning engendered in the children.

The report’s findings furthermore highlighted the strong contribution to the school by the Wellbeing Centre and the positive sense of leadership instilled in students. School reporting and parent teacher interviews were generally perceived to be well handled and professionally managed. Special Education programs were seen to be effective and delivered in a manner that was caring and competent and Behaviour Management policies within the school were regarded as broadly successful and effective.

Some concerns were raised in respect of communication with parents, many of which were centred around a sense of information overload and timeliness of communication. Effective strategies have been implemented to address these problems including the updating of the school’s website and stronger emphasis on streamlining and enhancing electronic communication.

Curriculum

The beginning of the year was a smooth transition incorporating the new Australian curriculum into the school with staff feeling comfortable with the structure of the curriculum and feeling confident in their knowledge to begin its implementation.
2013 saw a shift in both our thinking and teaching styles at Sholem Aleichem College. We became much more digitally aware, introducing better wifi, upgraded technology, e-programs and introducing class banks of iPads as teaching tools to compliment student learning. The teachers were involved in many professional development seminars to improve their I.T. skills, knowledge and ways of presenting information to our students.

The College was involved in a government sponsored pilot program with 5 other schools from Victoria to trial a new curriculum on ‘digital citizenship’. This program helped develop a culture of ethical computer behaviour in Grades 2, 3 and 4 and will be incorporated into the 2014 curriculum.

Jolly Phonics program was a new initiative for our Preps. A child centred approach to teaching literacy uses a multi-sensory method to motivate student achievement.

The Premiers’ Reading Challenge and ‘Read like a Demon’ projects encouraged our children to celebrate literacy and improve their reading and comprehension skills.

The Life Education program delivered age appropriate knowledge to support informed health choices and develop and practice skills /strategies to help students make individual decisions and recognise the values and attitudes that may influence their lifestyle choices and behaviours.

The Feuerstein program was introduced into Years 1 - 4 focusing on enhancing students’ cognitive functions to improve decision making, planning and flexible thinking, and help participants gain confidence in their abilities to achieve their potential.

Staff Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) focused on improving student automatic responses in number counting, sequencing and tables.

Art, Music, P.E. and Drama continued to enhance the students’ learning experience and help develop confidence and capacity in the overall learning experience.

**Professional Development:**

The College supported professional development by giving teachers opportunities to attend the following seminars and workshops throughout the year. Teachers completed the following:

- Using iPads in the classroom
- CPR and Anaphylaxis training
- Learning with iPads
- Peer observations
- The Big Write
- Understanding Adolescent Boys
- ICT and the Australian Curriculum
- Enhancing literacy skills, critical thinking and shared inquiry
- Record keeping
- Read Like A Demon seminar
- iPad conference
- Implications for Teacher Quality National agenda for Victorian Independent Schools
- How to Read data for assessment –
- Interactive Skills for Student Engagement for Primary Schools
• Goal setting for students with Special needs
• Art Therapy in Schools
• Research Project
• Book week art
• Digital Citizenship
• Yiddish Conference
• Dvora and Reyzl Zylberman to Yiddish Conference France
• Deb Samuel to Feuernstein seminar in Israel
• Digital Citizenship
• Autism
• introducing digital citizenship
• Teaching Traumatized Children
• Enhancing Literacy Skills
• Teaching literacy: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics and Fluency
• Feuerstein
• Early Years Action Project
• Inspirational Coaching
• Inspirational Leadership
• Jolly Phonics Spelling and Grammar

Residential Programs

Grade 3
The purpose of this camp is to give our students a unique beach/ocean experience. It is also a significant opportunity for our students to develop both their personal and social skills and confidence.

The students:

• Fed pelicans at San Remo
• Visited the Nobbies
• Had the experience of seeing the penguins in the evening
• Enjoyed outdoor education activities
• Participated in beach activities
• Visited the Koala Conservation Centre

Grade 4 & 5
Beechworth is one of Victoria's best preserved former gold mining towns, situated in the north-east of the state between Wodonga and Myrtleford. The students spent four days exploring the history of the area and learning more about life during the 19th Century.

Some of the activities the students experienced over their camp stay were:

• Lunch at Glenrowan
• Visit Kate’s Cottage – an authentic replica of the original Kelly homestead
• Participated in a scenic walk that follows the Beechworth historic gorge
• Had an evening of folk songs, stories and bush dancing
• Visited the courthouse and museum
• Learnt from members of the Old Morse Codians on how the telegraph and Morse Code systems work
• Visited Australia’s only remaining example of the buildings that stored gunpowder and gelignite used in mining
• Took a guided walking tour of the historic precinct
• Sat around the campfire learning how to prepare damper and some basic bush craft
• Visited the Beechworth Sweet Company
• Enjoyed an educational honey tour – learning about the importance of bees, hear about the history of honey making and watch how the honey is harvested, packed and distributed
• Visited the gaol and hear tales of great escapes, took the place of prisoners, climbed the guard tower and visited Ned Kelly’s cell
• Attended a blacksmith demonstration
• Visited the Avenel Maze

2013 was an important year in the Jewish Studies department where areas such as curriculum development and professional development were a focus and where important advances were made that will have far reaching effects on the Jewish studies program and our delivery of that program.

All Yomtoyvim were celebrated in the usual joyous manner. Purim, Pesakh, Sholem Aleichem’s birthday and Yom Haatsmaut were enjoyed with all the traditions that have become part of our Sholem way of celebrating and Lag b’omer and Shevues and of course the high holidays and Khanuke too with their charming traditions have become high spots in our school year.

At every opportunity the children are encouraged to bring tsedoke to school whether it is on a regular basis every Shabes Siimkhe or on special occasions like Purim, Shevues or Mitsve Day.

Another event which had a huge impact on the Yiddish teachers and immediately translated into approaches in the classroom, was the visit and the subsequent intensive Yiddish course run by the wonderful Brukhe Caplan. Brukhe’s instruction and continued involvement with teachers by internet, was more than just a stimulating episode, it focussed on an area that we had identified needed work and gave the teachers a new and innovative strategy to take straight to the classroom. Reports on its success have been glowing.

Streaming was started in term 2 after the teachers assessed the need in their classes. Grade 2 and 3 Hebrew classes were streamed and we monitored carefully but the teachers reported that they noticed immediately how the more homogenised groups worked well. Grade 3 yiddish too was streamed with the split separating out the children who need lots of basic reinforcement. That too worked very well.

In every classroom teachers delivered their programs to maximize the children’s enjoyment and absorption of Yiddish and Hebrew. This is done through class sets of readers, Tal Am workbooks and the new Yiddish readers, which are theme-based and which usually integrated with the children’s general studies through song, drama, literature, art and craft, drills, games and, of course, computers. The new readers have become part of every Yiddish classroom by now and with the help of our volunteer readers, parents, grandparents and friends of the school, the children are reading regularly. The Sholem language classroom is a safe and joyful place. The atmosphere in the rooms is warm and inviting and loving and our children seem to naturally love languages. The addition of a Yiddish assistant has been very productive both in and out of the classroom with teachers enjoying the benefits an extra Yiddish speaker in the lesson brings and a huge increase in the output of resources.

The school play was again performed twice to critical acclaim with the three language approach showcasing the ability of our students.

The position of Informal Jewish Educator has been filled beautifully by Reyzl Zylberman. Reyzl has totally immersed herself in the demands of this position bringing fresh and innovative programs, new displays, new initiatives and in general a breath of fresh air into more established traditional ones.
Reyzl has made sure Yiddish and Hebrew displays are prominent around the school, has run yontev cooking sessions for parents and children and has implemented a regular Tuesday lunch time Jewish Studies art class. She has been instrumental in planning for all our celebrations and has made herself available to everyone in the department with the same open hearted warmth for all. The expansion of our one Mitsve Day activity to a week long program of mitsve activities was her initiative. Reyzl is a ‘can do’ person. Nothing seems to be too difficult. She is an ornament to the school.

We have been considering carefully, for a couple of years now, the impact of our Holocaust studies on the children of Sholem Aleichem College since the tragic losses that some children suffered in recent years. To help us navigate this difficult subject, we invited Zvi Civins from the holocaust centre to talk to and with us around this issue. We also spoke at length to two child psychiatrists to discuss the impact that this subject might have on primary age children and then we considered deeply our approach. This led to a change in our usual approach which had been to include all children in our April 19 Ghetto Akademie. It also led us to consider the underlying philosophy of our Holocaust Education which is to teach the children about the trauma without traumatising them which has an impact of course on what we tell the children, when, and using what language.

A program was set in place for 2014 and which will be communicated to parents.

This year’s Yom Hashoa assembly was commemorated during the second week of term on April 19th. The ceremony was attended by grade 2 to grade 5 children and the program was prepared by Reyzl and Freydi on the subject of the heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto as it was the 70th anniversary of the uprising.

This year the school choir was involved in the Communal Holocaust Commemoration at Robert Blackwood Hall as well as our own Sholem ceremony. The children who took part in the community ceremony, were a credit to the school and to their parents. They performed with dignity and respect as always. At school the grade 5 group were instrumental in running the whole Ghetto Academie. The warmth and humanity that our children display always moves us.

Reyzl and Dvora Zylberman were assisted in their trip to study Yiddish in Strasbourg France and came back energised and full of praise for the intensive Yiddish course.

Elisa Gray informed us that she will not return to Sholem next year. We thank her for her years of dedication and service and for her deep commitment to our College.

The ISV project “a living dictionary” was completed and the final dictionary is being cut and edited for presentation to the school.

The year ended with the Jewish Studies Department implementing a new, detailed and documented method of handing over from present teachers to prospective teachers for next year.

Walk down any corridor at any time of day, stop at any door, listen to the songs, the voices, the laughter, the languages and feel the yiddishkeyt. The love of Yiddish language and literature and the Hebrew language, are palpable here. The joy that we take from the festivals and the adherence to our values of a lifetime make this a very special place. The college is a warm and inviting place where the students instinctively feel the sense of community that is so important to us. Long may it stay that way!

Creative Arts

2013 has been a fantastic year for Art at Sholem Aleichem College.
The discipline is highly regarded by students and the college is fortunate to have a teacher of exceptional quality, creativity and dedication in Joanne Davis. The creative arts give students the ability to express themselves in unique and personal manners and to display skills beyond those required by the more academic areas of the curriculum.

Students were involved in many whole-school collaborations, such as the Grade 3 Literature artworks hanging in the library which supported their literacy units on the novels Alice in Wonderland and Stuart Little. The students learned illustration techniques such as shading and cross-hatching, and the finished artworks looked wonderful.

Students in the upper years also had opportunities to further their painting skills in a fun and messy way when they helped paint the back drops for the annual college musical.

All primary students took home a ceramic artwork which they sculpted. The pieces were fired and glazed and they looked magnificent.

Preps and Grade 1 students explored sensory techniques which are integral to creativity—using texture and colour to express their ideas.

A big focus in 2013 in Art was creating and responding to the elements of art by seeing and using colour, line, space, texture and shape. Students used these elements not only in their own art works, but were encouraged to see how other artists used them too.

The highlight of the artistic year was the 2013 art exhibition in Term 4, where a large variety of art forms could really be seen and appreciated by the whole school community. The quality and variety of expressive artworks in the forms of paintings, drawings, sculptures, prints, textiles and ceramic was really a credit to the creativity of our wonderful students at Sholem Aleichem College.

Music

Music plays a large part in the life of a Sholem student. Whether it is singing at an assembly, performing at a concert or taking part in a soiree, our students relish the opportunity to display their substantial musical talents and abilities.

Our busy musical year began with wonderful performances from some of our talented students, who entertained our new parents at the annual dinner.

During the first week of school, the grade 3 children were introduced to our ensemble instruments. At a special evening, they were given the opportunity to play violins, clarinets, flutes and cellos. They were then asked to choose their favourite one, with the understanding that they will continue playing that instrument for four years. I am pleased to report that the children have enjoyed their lessons, and they have progressed very well with their playing this year. I look forward to their continued growth and further enjoyment.

Each week the children enjoy a fun filled music lesson incorporating the many musical concepts of the curriculum. Choir and instrumental is taught to grades 3, 4 and 5, and recorder to the grade 2 children. This year was a remarkable year for the Grade 2 children as they showed wonderful progress with their recorder playing. I look forward to their participation in the instrumental program in 2014.
Once again the Grade 5 choir was invited to join the children of the other Jewish day schools in a combined choir. They sang at the annual Yom Hashoa Commemoration which was held on Thursday 4th April, at the Robert Blackwood Hall.

Our continued alliance with the Mitvoh Klub enabled the children to perform regularly throughout the year singing in Yiddish, Hebrew and English. We were also fortunate to entertain the residents of Smorgon House where the grades 4/5 ensemble group and choir performed beautifully. The children’s performances brought delight and a tear or two to the elderly audience as they happily sang along!

On Thursday 29th August, Jewish Care invited the grade 4/5 children to entertain the ‘Healthy Ageing Clients’ at the Caulfield Synagogue. This function was held to celebrate the forthcoming New Year and our children were able to mingle with the audience, and offer their personal good wishes.

We were also fortunate to have some elderly visitors, who came to listen and enjoy our children performing.

It is with much pride that I witness many more children audition for the annual music soiree, each year. This indicates the growing love and dedication to studying an instrument both within and outside the school.

This year, once again, we held two separate performances as the number of children wishing to perform was far too great!

As usual we were treated to these wonderfully talented children who performed with professional precision and obvious enjoyment!

Our musical this year was ‘Oy Vey Broadvey’, a compilation of songs celebrating Jewish composers on Broadway. Each class sang and danced to the ever popular tunes of There’s No Business like Show Business, Puttin’ on the Ritz, Rainbow Connection and too many more to mention! What a spectacular display of talent!

Mazel-tov to everyone!

On Sunday 20th October, the grade 3 children performed at Malvern Park. This was a ‘Little Doers’ function, which raises money for various charities.

The children sang their songs from Oy Vey Broadvey, showing their talent to the very appreciative audience.

The grade 4/5 children performed at the Classic Theatre as part of the Jewish Film Festival, on Thursday 21st November. They sang beautifully, I am always so proud of the angelic voices our children produce. Such nachas!

The Celebration Evening was held on Monday 9th December at the St Kilda Town Hall. Classes performed songs in Yiddish, Hebrew and English, continuing our Broadway theme, concluding with the whole school singing Rhythm of Life.

Both the senior and junior school ensemble groups played, showing their growth and musicianship. What a wonderful performance!

Another successful busy musical year! The students of Sholem are truly a talented group of student who make us proud of their talent, dedication and love for music and their desire to share music in all its forms with the wider community.

**Reporting and Assessment**

**Assessment**
The assessment of the students’ development and learning is an essential component of the curriculum and helps to inform continued development, learning and teaching.

Students are observed in a variety of situations and a wide range of assessment strategies are implemented.
At Sholem, the classroom teachers employ a range of formative and summative assessments which demonstrate student achievements.

Summative Assessment
Aims to give teachers and students a clear insight into students’ understanding. Summative Assessment is the culmination of the teaching and learning process and gives the students opportunities to demonstrate what has been learned. It can assess several elements simultaneously, it informs and leads to improvement in student learning and the teaching process and it measures understanding and prompts students towards action.

Formative Assessment
Provides information that is used in order to plan the next stage in learning. It is interwoven with learning and helps teachers and students to find out what the students already know and can do. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked and function purposefully together. Formative assessment aims to promote learning by giving regular and frequent feedback throughout the learning process. This process helps learners to improve knowledge and understanding, to foster self-motivation and enthusiasm for learning, to engage in thoughtful reflection, to develop the capacity for self-assessment and to recognize the criteria for success.

Assessment in the classroom includes:
- using representative samples of students’ work or performance to provide information about student learning
- collecting evidence of students’ understanding and thinking
- documenting learning processes of groups and individuals
- engaging students in reflecting on their learning
- students assessing work produced by themselves and by others
- developing rubrics
- identifying exemplary student work
- keeping records of test/task results
- on-going teacher observation

Reporting
Reporting includes communicating what students know, understand and can do. Reporting involves parents, students and teachers as partners and is honest, comprehensive and understandable to all parties. Reporting to parents, students and teachers occurs through: parent – teacher interviews (bi-annually), student – teacher conferencing (on a regular basis), written reports (bi-annually).

Learning Support
Many factors affect the success or failure in teaching and learning in the classroom. The decisions on what to teach and how to present lessons so that student learning occurs is under the teacher’s control. It is essential that teachers draw on their knowledge base and experience to question, plan activities and respond to the efforts of their students. Educators should constantly search for new strategies and techniques to meet the needs of the diverse school population especially now that more students who are diagnosed with learning difficulties are integrated into regular classrooms. Students with learning problems involve a large group and no single strategy, technique or intervention will tackle all their needs.

The Learning Support Centre aims to support all students with special needs from Preschool to Year 6.
Prep to Year 6 students participate in annual assessments conducted during October and November. The results obtained provide valuable information on groupings of students for extra support or extension in the following year. The assessments used are:

1. Reading Progress Test
2. Single Word Spelling Test
3. Pat Maths

The results are recorded on the Student Performance Analyser program which provides data on each child’s progress as they move through the school. This enables teachers to assess whether the methods, strategies, curriculum and interventions they provide to their students leads to increased learning and appropriate progress. Early intervention is provided to students who experience academic difficulties.

During 2012-2013, the College applied for and was fortunate to be selected to participate in a project assisting students on the Autism Spectrum. This project was run under the auspices of Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) who appointed Mansfield Autism Statewide Services (MASS) to run an “Autism Spectrum Disorder Training and Support Model” for teacher’s and support staff in schools. This model focused specifically on 6 individual students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder diagnosis. The project assisted staff to identify strengths and deficits, develop and implement Individual Learning Plans and Positive Behaviour Support Plans and assistance with transition.

Staff from MASS visited the school each term (Term 2, 3 & 4 of 2013 and Term 1 of 2014) and provided in-service, observation, role modelling, feedback and case consultancy. MASS advocates strongly for a holistic approach which involves working with parents, paediatricians and other Allied Health Workers.

All staff (including specialist staff) attended the PDs presented by Mansfield Autism Statewide Services.

**Responsiveness to Intervention (RTI)**

An essential element of responsiveness to intervention (RTI) approach is the provision of early intervention when students first experience academic difficulties but the main aim is to improve the achievement of all students. It also provides data for accurately identifying children with learning disabilities. A student who displays low achievement and poor RTI may be at risk for learning disability and probably require special education. With quality teaching and support, all students will make satisfactory progress.

Support is provided in the classroom through the use of a variety of teaching strategies, ongoing curriculum based assessments, progress monitoring and differentiated instruction. Students whose performance and rate of progress lag behind their peers are referred to the coordinator Sharlene Wertheimer for further screening and assessment.

Four programs of support are provided for relevant students:

- Gap
- Bridges - Numeracy and Literacy
- Enhancement
- ESL

**Gap Program**

This program is designed to provide reading support to students in Grade 1 who have not achieved the benchmarked reading level.
**Bridges: Numeracy and Literacy**
These programs are targeted at students from years Prep to Grade 6 who require extra support with numeracy and literacy acquisition. Students may be withdrawn from class individually, or in small flexible groupings and may enter and leave the groups as necessary. At times, students receive support in the regular classroom. These are flexible groupings and students move in and out of the groups depending on the support required.

**Enhancement**
This program is directed at students who have been identified as achieving well above the average and it provides extension and acceleration activities. Students work in small groups and participate in activities to prepare them for skills required in the C21st.

**ESL**
The ESL program targets students whose home language is not English.

In 2013, we received funding from Independent School of Victoria for 10 students whilst Jewish Care funded 11 students.

Sharlene Wertheimer, Director of Learning Support assumes the following responsibilities

- Further assessment as requested by teachers
- Meet fortnightly with teachers to assess students’ progress and plan goals.
- Meet with language therapists, psychologists and occupational therapists at least once a term to discuss relevant students’ progress or devise individual learning plans. (ILPs)
- Attend network meetings
- Organize timetables for assistants, visiting teachers and therapists
- Supervise Naplan testing program
- Attend relevant Professional Development Seminars
- Submit Government and Jewish Schools Integration Program funding applications.

**Naplan results**
Sholem Aleichem College works closely with Independent Schools of Victoria to review assessment and reporting. The reflection and review allows for broadening of our offerings and has a direct impact on our curriculum planning. Sholem Aleichem College participates in the annual NAPLAN assessment.

Below are the NAPLAN 2013 results:

Yellow=State
Red=School

YEAR 3
Sholem Aleichem’s School Performance Report | 2013

State School

Reading: Students ABOVE the State and National Minimum Standard 100%
Writing: Students ABOVE the State and National Minimum Standard 100%
Spelling: Students ABOVE the State and National Minimum Standard 100%
G&P: Students ABOVE the State and National Minimum Standard 100%
Numeracy: Students ABOVE the State and National Minimum Standard 100%
FIVE YEAR TREND

Reading
Writing/Structure: In 2013 the genre for writing task remained a persuasive piece.

Spelling:
**Numeracy:**

**Grammar and Punctuation:**
YEAR 5: In 2013, the grade 5 cohort consisted of only 9 students and therefore it is difficult to derive accurate statistical data.

FIVE YEAR TREND

Reading
Sholem Aleichem’s School Performance Report

Grammar and Punctuation

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Numeracy

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Summary
In summary, Year 3 results were significantly above National minimum standard and in comparison to other schools in Victoria we were also well above state level. Since 2009 there has been exceptional progress of our cohort of year 3 students. In 2013, we only had 29 students who sat the Naplan. Even though SAC only had a small number of students, it is clear that our students performed extremely well. When examining trends over the previous years, there has been a marked increase in reading, writing, grammar and punctuation levels. This is a direct correlation to the development and implementation of innovative programs and professional development of staff. It should be noted that in 2011 the genre for writing changed from narrative to persuasive and results for 2013 are reported against a Persuasive Writing scale. With respect to our Year 5 results, even though we had a small number of students and as stated from VCAA “Caution should be used when drawing conclusions from this data, particularly with small groups of students”, in all areas the students are above National and state average, except for spelling where they are above State level.

Finance Report

As our financial results indicate, 2013 was another solid year. Our administration and finance team are working effectively under the guidance of Dianne Rich.

With our steady growth in numbers and improved viability, we are on a strong footing to continue our growth and development. Our finance and administration department has a solid team: Hailey Hobbs, our Receptionist and my Personal Assistant, Fiona Thai, Finance Officer, Despina Frederikos, Preschool Officer, Heidi Schrage and Brad Feldstead, Marketing/Fundraising Officer and Maya Feldman, Enrolment Officer. Even though it is a small team, roles are defined and there has been a marked improvement in communication and professionalism which begins at reception and when you enter the school.

On in the latter part of this year, has the Gonski funding model been available to our school. It is markedly different to previous years and only at the beginning of 2014 were we able to receive figures and distributions. Of course, this affected our ability to budget forecast for the 2014 school year. An area that has changed significantly is funding for students with disabilities.

Our fee collection and concession process is clear and robust.

This year we also received substantial donations and bequests that will assist us with growing the school and providing a wonderful Jewish education to our children.

Thank you to the administration team for helping us achieve another financially successful year.

Marketing and Development

Marketing and Fundraising

The 2013 Appeal was a great success, largely on the back of a major bequest. Overall $400,002 was raised, compared to $155,936 in 2012 and $42,760 in 2011.

Development of a new website has been commissioned, and is anticipated to be live in April / May 2014.

Social media is becoming a larger focus of school marketing, particularly through the school’s Facebook Page.

The school has further strengthened its relationship the AJN and is receiving excellent coverage in the ‘Schoolyard’ section on a regular basis and throughout broader areas of the newspaper in general. Advertising and editorial have been secured for the quarterly Education Features.
Real Estate billboards continue to be used to promote major events and important initiatives of the school, including the enrolment drive.

A campaign to strengthen the upper years of the school has included the offering of bursaries to students who enter the school from the government sector in senior grades of the school.

A more consistent and professional design approach was taken to major school publications and marketing materials including the Annual Yearbook.

Greater emphasis has been placed on generating high quality photographic images for school promotion, rather than relying on an adhoc approach using a variety of low-end digital camera

*Left Out – How to Unmake a Bully*, a 30 minute film produced by the College in conjunction with New York based international award winning filmmaker Mike Feurstein was released and has received an exceptionally positive response. It is currently being considered for a number of major international film festivals.

A *Welcome to Sholem*, full colour booklet was prepared for new Prep students, featuring a school mascot, ‘Sholem Bear’.

**Events**

After the annual appeal, our second largest fundraising event was the annual Business Breakfast. Held at Carousel at Thursday 1 August the event was extremely successful and featured a range of high profile speakers discussing trends in online retail. Gary Peer and Associates were the event’s major sponsor.

The Golf Day was held in Feb 2013. Reports from this event, although broadly positive, were not deemed sufficiently encouraging for the day to be repeated in 2014.

The annual College Carnival was held in November and was a great success. Although this is a SACPA event, the broader school was very well represented with students helping to man the stalls and an art show featuring work from students of all year levels running concurrently.

The School Concert for 2013 was *Oy Vey Broadway*. It was the first time in many years that the College has done a collection of songs rather than a traditional scripted performance. The production was themed around the contributions of Jewish composers and song writers to the broad American theatrical songbooks of the 20th and 21st Centuries and was exceptionally well received by the audiences.

Celebration Night 2013 was a highly polished, smoothly run and very enjoyable evening. It featured presentations from all year levels, the traditional awards and the world premiere of Sholem’s movie: *Left Out - How to Unmake a Bully* (as detailed above).

Regular internal events such as the Annual Staff Lunch, Staff Welcome Breakfast, and New Parents Welcome Dinner were all run with great success and were very well enjoyed by participants.

Grandparents’ Day was a wonderful opportunity for grandparents to come and see the school in action, get a closer glimpse of their grandchildren’s educational journeys and be celebrated for the wonderful contributions they make to the children and the broader College community.

The Father’s Day breakfast was a great success. Held on the Friday before Father’s Day it was attended by over 70 dads and a proved a great opportunity for schmoozing, celebration and appreciation.

**Revenues for 2013**
a. Total revenue $2.755m (100%)
   Fees Charges and Parent Contributions $739k
b. (27%)
c. Government Grants Recurrent $1.019k (37%)
d. Government Grants Capital $675k (25%)
e. Donations and Appeals $321k (12%)

Expenses
a. Total Expenditure $2.113m (100%)
b. Salaries and Salary On Costs $1.686m (80%)
c. Teaching Expenses $300k (14%)
d. Occupancy Costs $108k (5%)
e. Finance Costs $20k (1%)
f. Depreciation $0k (%) (now market value method)
New and enhanced curricula and co-curricula activities

During 2013 the college was proud to deliver a wide range of extra-curricular activities for students. These programs are designed to ensure that students received a well-rounded education that helps them to grow and develop both inside and outside of the classroom and helps us to deliver the whole of person approach required of a modern educational institution.

- The Making a Difference – Our large, community based Tsodekah program.
- Participation in Mitzvah Day
- Involvement in inter-school sports competitions
- Impact Leadership conference – Grade 6
- Participation in Jump Rope for Heart day, Walkathon, football clinic, CPR & lifesaving training
- Annual school athletics carnival
- School camps to Sovereign Hill and Charnwood Outdoor Education Centre
- After school program including Drama, Hebrew and Soccerwise
- Jewish Youth group activities at school
- Annual school musical “Oy Vey Broadvey” involving all College students and staff.
- Participation in community service - Fundraising and performances
- The Premier’s Reading Challenge
- Book Week activities
• Read Like a Demon – Finalist and Book Review Winner
• Excursions
• Upgrading school policies
• Performances by choir/orchestra at public functions
• Professional development seminars/conferences
• Musical Soiree and Art Exhibition
• Yom Tov celebrations
• Meditation course for Years 3
• Life Education Van – Years P-6
• Support meetings with director of Curriculum and learning support coordinator for all generalist staff
• Intensive swimming/water familiarisation program
• Participation in the Literacy and Numeracy Week
• Sport clinics- football, soccer, basketball
• Family Science/problem solving Evening
• Interactive whiteboards and TVs in all classrooms
• GAP program for Year 1 students – early reading skills
• Bridges program (Yiddish, Hebrew & English) for students requiring extra assistance
• Introduction of school sets of iPads for Prep – Grade 6
• Cybersafety
• Exploration and implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLC)
• Continuation of mathletics- interactive maths computer program from Years 2-6
• Instrumental musical program for Years 3,4,5 and 6 students
• Jewish Festival celebrations
• Ability groups across LOTE subjects
• Shakespearean theatre-Language Enrichment opportunities
• Family Life for Years 3 – 6
• Jump Rope for Heart
• Fathers’ Day breakfast
• Grade 2’s to Gary Smorgon House to make Challah
• Shofar making
• Camps – Grade 3 –Phillip Island, Grade 4 & 5 - Beechworth
• Involvement in inter-school sports competitions
• Impact Leadership conference – Grade 5
• Participation in Jump Rope for Heart day, Walkathon, football clinic, CPR & lifesaving training
• Annual school athletics carnival
• After school program including Drama, Hebrew and Soccerwise
• Jewish Youth group activities at school
• Participation in community service - Fundraising and performances
• Art participation in community competitions
• The Premier’s Reading Challenge
• Upgrading school policies
• Performances by choir/orchestra at public functions
• Professional development seminars/conferences
• Musical Soiree and Art Exhibition
• Yom Tov celebrations
• Meditation course for Years 3 & 4
• Life Education Van – Years P-6
• Digital Citizen Program for Years 2,3 & 4
Teacher Well-being: OH&S lifting and sitting at a desk/ pilates

Foci for 2014

- Development of an improvement plan for the college
- Working on student outcomes and using data to improve our teaching and student progress
- Risk Management - documentation to be relevant and up to date
- Embedding technology and technological pedagogy
- Planning for the future growth of the college - facilities, staffing, etc.
- Successfully implementing the new subject areas in Australian Curriculum
- Theme for 2014 “Expanding Horizons”
- To recognize potential and pursue opportunities
- Evaluating and auditing of programs
- Expanding iPads and increase technological understanding and pedagogy
- Every child from year 4 to 6 to BYO iPads
- Development of the role of an Informal Educator
- Teacher improvement professional development culture (self-improvement)
- Improve communication Senior admin - staff, staff - staff, staff - student, staff - parent
- Development of a "scope and sequence" in writing and Yom toyvim for Yiddish
- Expanding Jolly Phonic in Prep and grade 1
- Develop plans to accommodate the need for extra classes in 2015
- Finding new ways to market our College
- Enhancing Jewish identity, languages and culture
- Cutting edge of educational research and implementation
- Masterplan and strategic plan for SAC
- Develop closer links with alumni