



Annual Report 2024

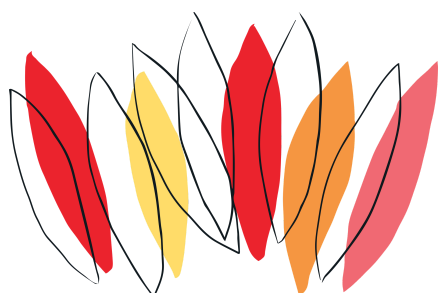
Learning
done differently



Alesco
Secondary
College

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The Waterlily is the symbol for Atwea College and Alesco Secondary College. A Waterlily is a very unique flower - it is strong, and beautiful in its simple geometric design.

A Waterlily will grow to accommodate whatever size vessel it is planted in – it will keep on growing until it's reached its full potential. To this end, the waterlily is representative of our students, and the pot is the size of the opportunity provided to them by their learning experiences.

Without water, a Waterlily doesn't have the strength to grow towards the sunlight on its own. Atwea and the community of support we give our students is much like the water that holds up a waterlily. We are there to assist and support the learner to reach their full potential. We surround and nurture the learner to grow and develop ever upward with strength.

- Head Office
- Atwea College
- Alesco Secondary College

Geawegal

Worimi

Tuncurry

Wonnarua

Maitland

Raymond Terrace

Tomaree

Abermain

Cessnock

Awabakal

Head Office
Northlakes

Newcastle

Charlestown

Darkinung

What we do

Alesco Secondary College is an accredited non-government independent school, offers a flexible high school environment that supports students who may not thrive in traditional schooling.

Our Vision

To provide quality and accessible learning opportunities that enhance people's lives and unlock their potential.

Our Mission

To continuously improve our services in accordance with our values to respond to learners' needs.

Our Values

Integrity

We demonstrate a consistent and uncompromising commitment to the highest personal, professional, and ethical standards.

Innovation

We embrace new ideas and are open to moving forward with a positive curiosity to the possibilities. We challenge ourselves to continually improve and positively influence the things that can be achieved.

Inclusion

We strive to create an environment where a diverse range of people can access opportunities and be valued. We intentionally design strategies for the active engagement of all, especially those who may need support for their successful involvement.



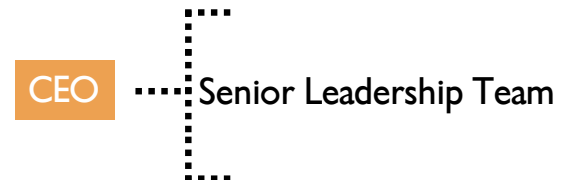
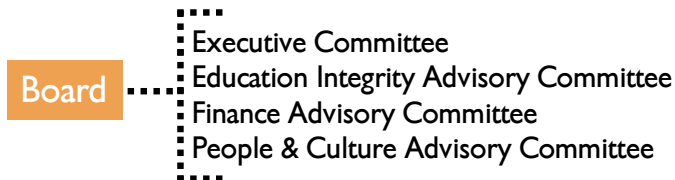
Atwea College



Alesco Secondary College

Governance Framework

The Atwea Board of Directors sets and oversees plans and policies for the sound management of Atwea College and Alesco Secondary College, including the organisation's culture, values, strategic direction, financial performance, operational objectives, remuneration framework, and risk governance.



Board of Directors

Our board of directors provide independent oversight, counsel and decision-making support to the Senior Leadership Team.

The board meets at least six times annually and provide expertise in the areas of education, finance, audit & risk and people and culture.



Jane McConville Chairperson

Jane has been on Atwea's Board since 2019 and Chairperson since 2023. She currently sits on the Executive Committee and the People & Culture Advisory Committee. Jane brings over two decades experience working across national not-for-profits, education and consulting firms and holds qualifications in law, environmental science and governance.



David Larkman Deputy Chairperson

David joined the Board in 2020 and was appointed Deputy Chairperson in 2023. Currently on the Executive Committee and the Finance and Audit Advisory Committee, David brings a wealth of expertise in driving operational efficiencies including significant system transformations and steering high performing teams.



La Toya Pinner

La Toya joined as an Emerging Director in 2023 and was appointed a Director in 2024. La Toya is a proud Gamilaraay, Gawambaraay and Wiriyaraay woman from the Gomeroi Nation, who provides professional support within First Nations consultation and stakeholder engagement on construction projects. La Toya is a member of the Finance and Audit Advisory Committee.



Cass Phillpott

Cass joined the Board in 2022 and sits on the Finance and Audit Advisory Committee. She has worked across a range of industries for over 20 years, including mining, local government and education. Cass has a sound knowledge and understanding of the finance, commercial and governance requirements for non-government schools.



Darrell Evans

Darrell joined the Board in June 2023 and sits on the Executive Committee and the Education Integrity Advisory Committee. Darrell is a transformational change-leader in education and is founder of globalDARBE, a consulting and training company. Darrell was a former Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), and Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching), in universities, and is currently an honorary professor at The University of Newcastle.



Seamus Fagan

Seamus Fagan is a dedicated advocate for inclusive education, with a distinguished career in enabling learning and english language teaching. As an Honorary Associate Professor at the University of Newcastle and former Director of the ELFS Centre, he has supported students facing educational challenges. Recognised for his contributions, he was awarded life membership in multiple national education bodies and made a Member of the Order of Australia in 2020. Seamus continues his commitment to accessible education through his role on the Board of Northern Settlement Services.



Pru Killick

Pru Killick is a dynamic strategic and operational leader with almost two decades of experience in HR strategy, learning and development, service operations, and governance. She has honed her expertise in high-growth environments, including leadership roles in the SaaS sector, contributing to Silicon Valley Series A funding and a US-based acquisition. Pru has a passion for people, innovation, and organisational growth.



Gillian Malcom

Gillian is a certified internal auditor and a practicing accountant with significant experience in risk management and business continuity from her roles in the Coal Mining Industry (Long Service Leave Funding) Corporation, Westpac and Defence Housing Australia. She is passionate about embedding sound risk management practices in supporting Atwea achieve its strategic objectives. Gillian sits on the Finance & Audit Advisory Committee.

Chris Seysener resigned from Board effective April 2024.

Advisory Committees

Alesco College draws on the expertise and advice of three advisory committees that meet throughout the year to guide the organisation. The Finance and Audit Advisory Committee and People and Culture Advisory Committee consist of members of the Board of Directors. The Educational Integrity Advisory Committee is made up of Board members together with other experts.

Finance Advisory Committee

Cass Philpott	Chair
David Larkman	Director
Gillian Malcolm	Director
La Toya Pinner	Director

Education Integrity Advisory Committee

Donna Hensley	Chair
Darrell Evans	Director
Seamus Fagan	Director
Sharon Cooper	Committee Member
Greg Preston	Committee Member
Janina Sukikowski	Committee Member

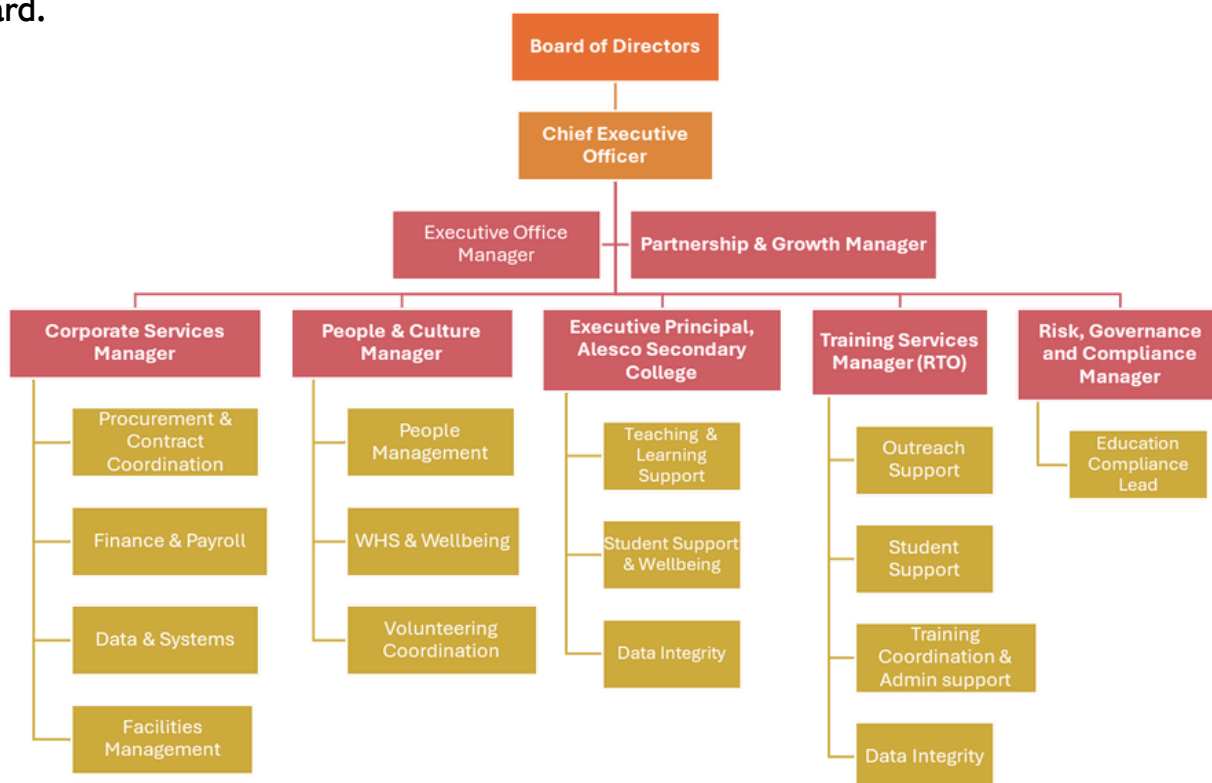
People & Culture Advisory Committee

Pru Killick	Chair
Jane McConville	Director

Organisational Structure

Atwea College is committed to delivering high-quality, accessible education through strong leadership, strategic oversight, and a culture of continuous improvement. Guided by our Board of Directors, our Senior Leadership Team, maintains a student-centred approach while fostering partnerships with industry, community, and government.

Together, we strive to create meaningful educational opportunities that support individuals, businesses, and communities across the region. The following chart outlines the key roles within Atwea College, demonstrating how our leadership is structured to drive our mission forward.



Senior Leadership Team

Atwea College's leadership team is structured to ensure operational excellence, and a strong commitment to student success. Our team works collaboratively to oversee the delivery of high-quality education, innovative learning programs, and community-focused initiatives. With a focus on integrity, inclusion, and continuous improvement, each service stream plays a vital role in supporting our students, staff, and stakeholders.

Helga Smit

Chief Executive Officer

Helga is an accomplished executive leader with over 30 years of diverse international experience in strategy, HR, training and operations, across both for-profit and not-for-profit sectors. Known for a strong humanistic and quality-driven approach, Helga brings valuable perspectives to executive teams and boards, fostering partnerships throughout the organisation. With a focus on customer-centric strategies, Helga has successfully driven optimal business outcomes whilst empowering employees and caring for community. Helga holds an Honours Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Psychology and Industrial Sociology, with additional qualifications in education, community sector management and auditing.

Simon Gelder

Corporate Services Manager

Simon has three decades of experience in accounting, finance and commercial management across a range of industries including manufacturing, services, transportation and logistics, shipping and infrastructure. Simon's leadership skills include strategic development, change management, systems implementation, and corporate governance. Simon holds a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Newcastle and is a Fellow of CPA Australia (FCPA).

Rowan Cox

Executive Principal, Alesco Secondary College

For over 30 years Rowan has been dedicated to the education sector, with a particular focus on accessible, community-based learning. Over the past 26 years, she has demonstrated strong leadership at Atwea College, serving in various roles that reflect her commitment to innovative education and student success. Rowan holds a Bachelor of Social Science (Sociology) and additional qualifications in education, business, counselling, youth work, and community services.

Aisha Choudhari

People and Culture Manager

Aisha Choudhari is a highly accomplished People and Culture professional with over 12 years of experience spanning customer service, operations, and human resource management. Renowned for her expertise in organisational development, employee relations, learning and development and employee engagement, Aisha has consistently demonstrated her ability to align people strategies with business objectives. Aisha's holistic approach to HR, combined with her strong capabilities in policy interpretation, stakeholder engagement, and process improvement, make her an invaluable asset to the organisation.

We acknowledge and recognise previous Senior Leaders' contributions, including Judith Ravell, John Radvan, Glen Pearson, Nicola Bartlett, and Simon Kachel.

CEO & Chairperson Report

Dear students, stakeholders and staff,

As we reflect on 2024, we are filled with immense pride for what we have achieved together at Atwea. 2024 was a year of growth, resilience, and transformation. Despite facing challenges, we have embraced opportunities that have strengthened our foundation and positioned us for future success. We are thrilled to share the key accomplishments of the year and the promising direction we are heading.

Key Highlights of 2024

✓ Growth and expansion of student numbers

A key milestone this year was the response taken to the growing demand for places at a number of our campuses, resulting in accommodating applications from our Argenton Campus and Raymond Terrace campus with annexing arrangements in Elernmore Vale and Woodberry. We also had significant growth at our Cooks Hill Campus. Being able to accommodate this increase in demand saw our student numbers grow to 664 students. This expansion has also been accompanied by improved attendance and higher academic results, reflecting the success of our educational programs and the hard work of our dedicated staff.

✓ Successful NESA renewal of registration

In 2024 we successfully completed our renewal of registration for Years 9 to 12 and accreditation for the RoSA and HSC with NESA (NSW Education Standards Authority). This is a crucial achievement for maintaining the integrity and quality of our educational offerings in Alesco Secondary College. This re-registration ensures that we continue to meet the highest standards of vocational education and training, further validating the value and relevance of the programs we offer.

✓ Substantial investment in campus facilities

As part of our ongoing commitment to creating a positive and productive learning environment, we made a substantial investment in our campus facilities through the 'Red, Amber, Green' project. This initiative was designed to ensure that our campuses are conducive to both learning and work. By improving the physical spaces where our students learn and our staff work, we are providing a better experience for everyone.

These upgrades reflect our commitment to creating a welcoming, modern, and efficient environment that supports our educational and operational goals.

✓ Improvement in financial performance

A significant achievement during the year has been the improvement in our financial position. Through careful management and a focus on cost control, we are on track to sustainability, achieving a surplus of \$82,727 for 2024 and another minor surplus projected for 2025. Additionally, we have built cash reserves, which position us to establish a strong foundation moving forward. This improvement in our financial standing is part of our strategy to 'stop, revive, survive' - creating the stability needed to set us up for the future. As we look to the next financial year, our goal is to not only sustain this momentum but to thrive by further optimising our financial performance.

✓ Employee engagement, development, WHS

The resilience of our staff has been instrumental in navigating the challenges of 2024. Our investment in employee development has fostered a culture of collaboration and innovation, which will be essential for our ongoing success. Additionally, we have placed a significant focus on Work Health and Safety (WHS), governance, and compliance across the organisation to establish and nurture a culture built on safety, quality and continuous improvement.

In terms of governance and compliance, we've worked to ensure that all our policies, processes, and practices align with regulatory requirements, further safeguarding the integrity of the organisation and ensuring that we operate with transparency, accountability, and due diligence. One of the highlights of the year in this area was the Employee Happiness Survey conducted in late 2024. The feedback gathered has been invaluable in understanding employee satisfaction and areas for further improvement. It reflects the commitment of our staff to Atwea's mission and their dedication to creating a positive and engaging environment.

✓ Comprehensive company re-alignment

2024 also saw us undertake a comprehensive re-alignment of the organisation to improve our financial viability and refine processes and procedures. These changes have streamlined our operations and set the stage for improved results and long-term sustainability. This re-alignment has positioned us to better meet future challenges and drive enhanced outcomes for our students, staff, and communities.

Challenges and opportunities ahead

While 2024 has been a year of significant achievement, we have also faced challenges, from shifting regulatory environments to the need for financial adjustments. However, these challenges have provided valuable opportunities for growth, particularly in areas of operational efficiency and financial management.

Looking ahead, we will continue to focus on enhancing the student experience, expanding workforce development opportunities, and building on our strong partnerships with industry and community organisations. Our successful growth in student enrolment, coupled with the improved financial performance, sets us on a strong path for continued success in the future.

A commitment to the future

As we move into 2025 and beyond, Atwea is committed to its four core strategic themes:

People: Empowering our workforce and students through cultural alignment to drive growth and achievement.

Community: Strengthening our impact to promote educational empowerment and civic engagement.

Partnerships: Building and nurturing strategic partnerships to fuel collective advancement and innovation.

Sustainability: Advancing environmental and financial sustainability to ensure long-term resilience and impact.

We are excited for the opportunities that lie ahead and look forward to another year of growth, innovation, and success.

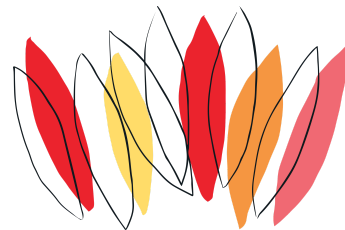


Helga Smit
Chief Executive Officer



Jane McConville
Chair

Principals Report



2024 has been a year of improvement, resilience, and renewal across Alesco Secondary College. As a multi-campus Special Assistance School, we have not only met the challenges presented to us but have embraced them as opportunities to strengthen our foundation and refine our vision. Through a collective commitment to student wellbeing, educational achievement, and operational improvement, our school community has continued to evolve - adapting to rising enrolment demand, enhancing academic outcomes, and reinforcing the inclusive, nurturing environment that defines Alesco.

Responding to Community Demand

The demand for places at Alesco continues to be strong. Building on the momentum of 2023, we experienced significant interest in the Lake Macquarie and Raymond Terrace areas. This resulted in the introduction of additional classes at both campuses, along with the continued expansion at Cooks Hill. As a result, Alesco's overall enrolments grew by nearly 50% in 2024. This growth was accompanied by improved attendance and higher academic achievement, reflecting both the effectiveness of our educational programs and the dedication of our staff.

Financial Re-Alignment

Following the financial challenges of 2023, the 2024 school year focused on careful financial stewardship across all campuses. Through disciplined budgeting, strategic planning, and strong leadership, we significantly improved our financial position. The financial realignment not only stabilised our operations but positioned us for more sustainable growth into the future.

Facilities and Infrastructure

2024 presented ongoing challenges with infrastructure, particularly in maintaining water-related issues across multiple sites. Leaking roofs and inadequate drainage were recurrent concerns throughout the year. Early in Term 1, a widespread mould issue - triggered by extreme wet weather events and humidity - emerged across all campuses. Our immediate priority was the health and safety of students and staff. Once the scale of the issue was identified, comprehensive professional remediation was undertaken at each site. Preventative measures and building improvements were also implemented to mitigate future risks. The experience strengthened inter-campus coordination and highlighted the adaptability and resilience of our school community. As a result, we emerged with healthier, safer learning environments across the college.

Successful Re-registration and Accreditation

A key achievement in 2024 was the successful renewal of registration for Years 9 to 12 and accreditation for the RoSA and HSC with NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). This milestone reflects the quality and integrity of our curriculum delivery and ensures that Alesco continues to meet the highest standards in secondary education. It also validates the relevance and impact of the programs we offer, particularly for students facing barriers in mainstream education.

Academic Achievements

Alesco serves a unique student cohort, many of whom face significant barriers such as homelessness, mental health challenges, and experiences of trauma. Despite these realities, our students demonstrated commendable academic growth and engagement throughout the year.

Key academic highlights from 2024 include:

- **Increased Representation in Higher Bands:** Subjects such as Visual Arts, PDHPE, and English Studies saw more students achieving Band 5 results, a testament to the high-quality teaching and increased student motivation.
- **Reduction in Low-Achieving Bands:** There was a noticeable decline in the number of students performing in Bands 1 and 2 across multiple subjects, indicating stronger foundational learning.
- **Sustained Performance in Mid-Tier Bands:** Students performing in Bands 3 and 4 showed stable progress, which is particularly encouraging given the complexities many of them face.
- **First-Time High Achievements:** English Standard students achieved Band 5 results for the first time, and Visual Arts saw a significant rise in Band 4 outcomes.

These results reflect the positive trajectory of our students' learning journeys and tireless efforts of our teaching staff.

Student and Parent Feedback

Feedback from families remains a cornerstone of our continuous improvement efforts. Parents consistently report strong levels of trust and satisfaction with Alesco's commitment to student wellbeing and academic support. Key strengths identified include staff approachability, access to resources, and a strong focus on student mental health.

Areas identified for further growth include enhanced communication around bullying prevention and more consistent engagement with families around academic reporting. We are committed to strengthening these areas through proactive communication and inclusive practice.

The Semester II 2024 Student Survey, our fifth to date, has continued to provide valuable insights into the student experience. While students acknowledged our supportive and inclusive environment, they also highlighted areas for development in communication, facilities, and targeted academic support. We recognise the importance of campus-level leadership in ensuring survey feedback is gathered consistently and acted upon meaningfully.

Whole School Activities

This year also marked a notable increase in whole-school and inter-campus events. These opportunities allowed students to come together as a united Alesco cohort, fostering connection and shared identity. Events included the Netball Gala Day, Anzac Day Service, Alesco Olympics, NAIDOC Week celebrations, Science Week activities, and our first combined Senior 2 Graduation.

For students who spend most of their time in a small and often highly individualised settings, these events provide a vital opportunity to build community, celebrate their progress, and recognise that they are part of something bigger than themselves.

2024 has shown us that, with the right support, belief, and opportunities, our students can thrive. Alesco remains steadfast in its mission to provide inclusive, engaging, and transformative education for you people who need it most. I extend my sincere thanks to our dedicated staff, supportive families, and resilient students who make Alesco such a special place to learn and grow.

Student Awards

Ashlee Curnuck has been awarded the Tim Crakanthorp Social Justice Award for her strong commitment to fairness, integrity, and accountability. Ashlee is a student who leads with strong morals, always striving to do what is right and encouraging those around her to do the same. She holds her friends and peers to high standards, fostering a culture of respect and responsibility within our school community. Her dedication to social justice and unwavering belief in doing what's right make her a truly deserving recipient of this award. Congratulations, Ashlee!



Shardonnay Sojenka has been awarded the Sharon Claydon Community Spirit and Leadership Award for her outstanding dedication to our school and community. As a strong role model, Shardonnay consistently seeks ways to make Alesco a better place for all, leading by example and inspiring those around her. She is a passionate advocate for our school, demonstrating maturity, initiative, and a commitment to positive change. Her leadership and unwavering dedication have made a lasting impact, and we are incredibly proud to recognize her achievements. Congratulations, Shardonnay!



Kailey has demonstrated outstanding character, leadership, and dedication in our school community. The Pat Conroy Citizenship Award recognises a student who embodies values and acts of kindness, service, and a commitment to making a positive impact on other members of the community.

Kailey has demonstrated exceptional compassion, perseverance, and a strong moral, consistently working to uplift her peers and contribute to a more inclusive, positive, and supportive environment. Her dedication, respect for others, and a willingness to go above and beyond to help those at Alesco Charlestown makes her the perfect student for the Pat Conroy Citizenship award.



Alesco Secondary College is a Special Assistance School which places emphasis on the strengths in provision of services to students, including:

- The creation of small, safe, supported environments;
- Using an empowerment approach with students, rather than a model of power and control;
- Understanding that access through education allows the inclusion of other support mechanisms.

Connected with these service provisions are the key principles of Alesco:

- The student is the centre of the education plan, and all plans revolve around the needs of the student educationally, emotionally and socially;
- That there is rigor in the educational program provided;
- That students have the opportunity to experience a learning environment influenced by choice and empowerment and undertake a NESA-based curriculum.

Alesco offers education in Years 9 – 12. Students have the option to complete a RoSA only, or an ATAR or non-ATAR HSC. For HSC completion our students study a compressed curriculum combining preliminary and HSC study for 3 subjects in the first year (Senior 1) and repeating this pattern of study in the second year (Senior 2). Some of our students opt to complete their HSC over an extended period of time and these students are classified as our Senior 3 students.

We are one school, many campuses, which means each of our 10 programs across 7 campuses is managed by a Head of Campus who has the delegated authority of the Principal on day-to-day matters, whose practices are supported operationally by the Deputy Principal. We have a Principal who oversees our compliance, strategic direction, policy development and financial management. Our Principal is also a member of the Senior Leadership Team of our Authorising Body, Atwea College and reports to the CEO of that organisation. This means we leverage the strengths of our structure and still remain responsive to the differing needs of our many communities.

Cessnock

2024 was an exciting year for our campus where we welcomed our largest student cohort to date along with several new staff members. Our students were immersed in a range of exciting adventures such as Newcastle Baths, Hunter Valley Zoo, Alesco Olympics, Newcastle Museum Dinosaur Exhibit and Hunter Homeless Connect Day. Our campus initiated several successful learning programs such as our numeracy program and engagement with our local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG).

In addition to this our Vocational Education and Training students have experienced great success through their hospitality course and our creative arts students performed in Amaze: Hit The Lights!, our school's variety performance night.

We are looking forward to increasing the number of young people we can support through their education. We are also looking forward to seeing our largest senior cohort yet complete their first HSC courses and farewell those who successfully complete their final year.

Charlestown

Alesco Secondary College Charlestown had another fantastic year of growth in 2024. Students engaged in a variety of enriching experiences. From tackling the Alesco Olympics and competing in the Alesco Netball Gala Day, to learning at the Murrook Cultural Education Centre, and catching waves with the Philippa Anderson Surf School, the year was filled with opportunities. Highlights also included our Pride Week celebration, ice skating, and hosting the annual Amaze performance night.

Exciting upgrades were completed in early 2024, transforming our hall into two spacious classrooms, a dedicated student support office, and a functional hall space for our students.

We look forward to welcoming even more students in 2025 and continuing to provide a supportive and engaging learning environment.

Cooks Hill

Alesco Secondary College Cooks Hill Senior

Throughout 2024, we've focused on initiatives such as Driver Training, White Card certification, Careers Expos, Work Placement programs, volunteering opportunities, and partnerships with HVTC to equip students for a broad range of career paths. We experienced record participation in excursions like Treetops and the Dolphin Cruise. A group of dedicated students even formed a band, performing at several school events, including the Amaze: Hit The Lights! performance night.

We have experienced strong retention rates and consistently high attendance across the year. Notably, we had our largest graduating class to date—celebrating a significant milestone in academic achievement. We were especially proud of one of our Senior 2 students, who received the prestigious Paul Mather Award.

As we look ahead, we remain focused on expanding these meaningful opportunities in 2025.

Alesco Secondary College, Cooks Hill Junior

Our team worked to pilot ideas and initiatives new to Alesco, by explicitly teaching Wellbeing within the PDHPE curriculum, implementing shorter 45-minute lessons and elements of the Berry Street Education Model for year 9 only, our success can be measured by high student retention rates and improved attendance overall.

With the initiation of Alesco's first student Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG), empowering students to have a voice and agency within their school and ensuring Aboriginal Cultures and perspectives are embedded. Alesco Junior was also incredibly grateful to work with Aunty April Newman to implement authentic and enriching cultural experiences into our program.

Learning and wellbeing opportunities were provided, including Literacy and Numeracy support groups, Alesco Netball Gala Day, the Alesco Olympics, Splash and Slide Dolphin Cruise, Escape Zone, Sydney Museum, Sydney Aquarium and we had student representation at Alesco's performance night, Amaze: Hit The Lights!

As Alesco Junior transitions to Alesco Stage 5 in 2025, we continue to support our students to reach their full potential.

Northlakes

In 2024, Northlakes students embraced new experiences, from exploring the wonders of Hunter Valley Wildlife Park to the Alesco Olympics. We participated in multiple wellbeing workshops and a silent disco that showcased our commitment to inclusive and creative celebrations. The appointment of our new Head of Campus brought fresh leadership and inspiration.

We worked closely with Newcastle Children's Court, Interrelate Connect, and Support to provide valuable connections and advocacy for our young people. Through participation in Hunter Homeless Connect Day, and volunteer efforts with Survivors R Us and Ronald McDonald House, our students demonstrated compassion and a commitment to making a difference. Northlakes participated in NAIDOC celebrations, Sorry Day and made strong connections with The Wollotuka Institute at the University of Newcastle where one of our students was selected to engage in their education program.

2024 also marked significant milestones, including hosting our largest senior formal to date, a memorable evening that celebrated student achievements in style. We look forward to another year of learning, leadership, and success!

Northlakes Annex

The year 2024 marked the establishment of additional classes for Northlakes known as the Northlakes Annex to accommodate the demand for year 9 places. This brought many new faces to our school. We established strong relationships within the community, through our partnership with the local Woodlands Lodge Nursing home. Students and residents bonded over shared art projects and games, creating intergenerational friendships. Excursions to Spring-loaded, Bowling, and Speers Point Park built friendships and strengthened school community.

Students participated in events like "Dress as Your Twin" Day and Halloween, offering students moments of joy and creative expression. These activities complemented our focus on wellbeing and learning.

Staff continue to celebrate the strong attendance rates, a testament to the safe and supportive atmosphere that our school provides.

Raymond Terrace

Raymond Terrace has historically been one of our highest demand campuses, and 2024 was no different. We started the year with the capacity to accommodate two more classes, which saw us engage in strategies specifically focused on the retention and success of our senior students. With additional staffing and strong wellbeing focus, retention rates were impressively high, reflecting the positive and engaging environment created for both students and staff.

As the year progressed, we realised there were still many young people in need of a spot at Alesco, which resulted in the creation of three more classes, which also became known as the annex.

The year was marked by meaningful connections, strong academic focus, and a sense of pride in building something new. It was an incredibly rewarding experience for everyone involved, setting a solid foundation for continued success and development.

Raymond Terrace Annex

The Raymond Terrace Annex Campus has experienced significant growth and development throughout 2024. Term 2 officially commenced with two Stage 5 classes.

Over the course of the year, the annex has continued to evolve, with the introduction of larger learning spaces, improved services, and access to a broader range of resources.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the dedicated staff, students, parents, and caregivers for their ongoing support of the Raymond Terrace Annex. We also gratefully acknowledge the broader community for their encouragement and support, which has enabled us to continue delivering valuable services to our local community.

Tomaree

Tomaree had an additional classroom in 2024, this growth meant that more students could benefit from gaining a placement at Alesco. The addition of the school bus in 2024 meant that students were able to consistently get to school without the hassle of public transportation and relying on parents/carers. This initiative also meant we were able to enrol students from further away than our catchment area. This has been invaluable resource provided to our students.

Our students have participated in new initiatives, our year 10 cohort were a part of a new initiative with Regis nursing home, linking students with the residents in the aged-care-facility. The juniors participated in an array of activities to make the campus more aesthetically pleasing, including creating a bee garden, painting murals and decluttering storage spaces.

Tuncurry

In 2024 the Coast Campus focused on career development and transition into adulthood. 80% of our graduating class left Alesco with secured employment or enrolment in further education.

We had our first-ever overnight excursion to the University of New England. Students participated in university-style lectures, explored student accommodation, and engaged in campus activities. In the wellbeing space, students participated in excursions, including Tree Tops High Ropes, Wild Nets, Big Buzz, scuba diving, and a visit to the Stingray Centre in Nelson Bay. Year 10 students engaged in the Rural Fire Service (RFS) Community Program, where they learned practical skills and the value of community service. As a result, three students proudly joined the RFS.

Three students successfully complete School-Based Apprenticeships, each securing full-time apprenticeship offers. Additionally, three students took part in School-Based Traineeships in Early Childhood Education, on track to graduate in 2025. While other graduating students received early university or TAFE offers.

Overall, 2024 was a year of significant achievement and we look forward to building on this momentum in the coming year.



Student Body

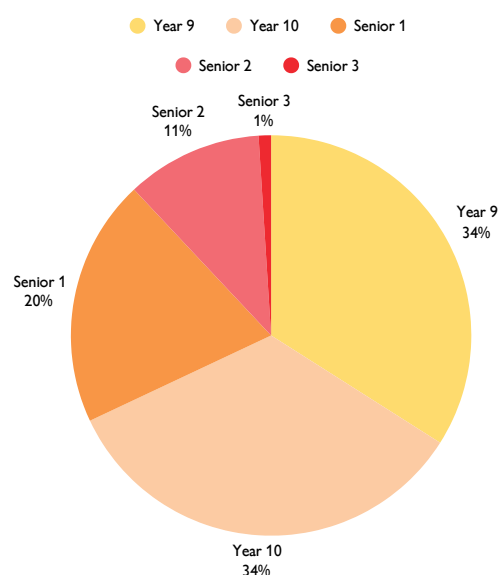
Characteristics

Alesco Secondary College is proud to serve a diverse, dynamic, and inclusive student body across Years 9 to 12. Our students come from a wide range of socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds and bring with them a wealth of individual talents, interests, and learning needs.

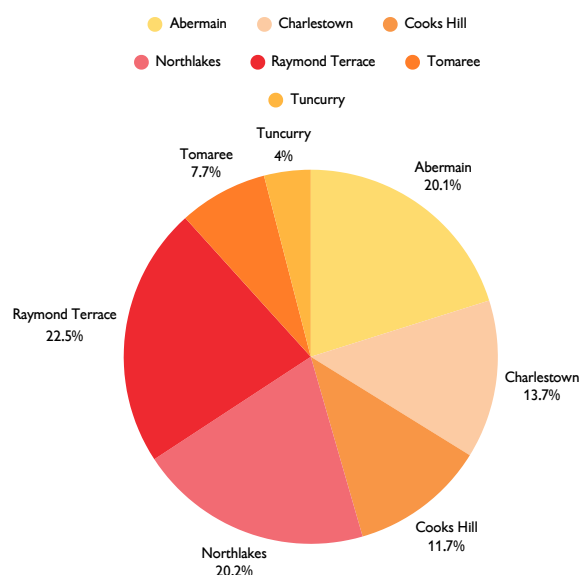
As a Special Assistance School, Alesco is built on the understanding that each student's journey is unique. Many of our students have faced significant life challenges, and these experiences shape the way they engage with education. We believe in an inclusive and flexible approach to learning—there is no 'one-size-fits-all' model.

While education is a requirement, attending Alesco is a choice—our students actively choose to engage in a learning environment that supports their individual needs and goals. We foster an environment where students are encouraged to be self-motivated and take ownership of their learning. Our positive, respectful culture supports students to grow in confidence, make informed decisions, and develop into active young adults within their communities.

We prioritise respectful relationships and open communication. By involving students in decision-making and providing opportunities for voice and choice, we recognise and honour their emerging independence and individuality.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island students account for 19% of all enrolments.



Granting RoSA

	NEW English		PDHPE		Science		Geography		History		NEW Maths	
	Alesco	State	Alesco	State	Alesco	State	Alesco	State	Alesco	State	Alesco	State
A	3.89	12.17	1.28	17.5	1.73	12.90	0	14.82	0	14.92	3.47	14.63
B	23.80	29.48	12.39	39.61	9.52	24.48	2	29.28	3	28.36	14.78	21.47
C	32.90	36.83	41.02	31.23	32.90	36.51	15	35.09	11	35.21	30	34.42
D	30.73	15.32	27.35	8.64	32.03	19.19	5	14.55	11	15.06	36.08	21.49
E	8.65	5.10	17.94	2.94	23.80	6.15	15	5.51	12	5.66	15.65	7.49

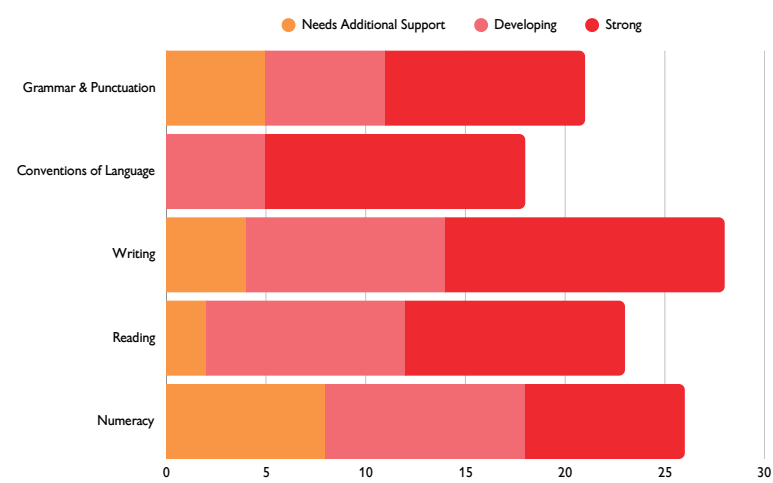
Senior Secondary Outcomes

Alesco Student Enrolled in Vocational Education	Total	YR 10	YR 11 (S1)	YR 12 (S2)
Number of students undertaking vocational or trade training	55			
Alesco students enrolled in VET courses on campus	55	0	14	41
Total number of students enrolled in SBATs	5			
SBATs enrolled in external TAFE course	5			
SBATs enrolled with ATWEA	0			

Senior Secondary Outcomes - Students in Year 12 attaining a Year 12 certificate or equivalent VET qualification	
Total students	110
Students attaining	39
Percentage	35.45%

NAPLAN

In 2024, 31 students participated in the Year 9 NAPLAN test.



HSC Results

Aboriginal Studies

	Alesco %	State %
Band 1	0	5.27
Band 2	63.63	14.75
Band 3	27.27	19.23
Band 4	9.09	23.45
Band 5	0	26.35
Band 6	0	10.93

Community and Family Studies

	Alesco %	State %
Band 1	7.14	1.43
Band 2	42.85	5.84
Band 3	21.42	20.74
Band 4	28.57	30.99
Band 5	0	26.95
Band 6	0	0.55

Earth & Environmental Science

	Alesco %	State %
Band 1	7.14	1.63
Band 2	42.85	9.95
Band 3	21.42	24.73
Band 4	28.57	30.99
Band 5	0	26.95
Band 6	0	5.71

English Standard

	Alesco %	State %
Band 1	0	0.66
Band 2	14.28	6.94
Band 3	42.85	25.09
Band 4	14.28	53.88
Band 5	28.57	12.85
Band 6	0	0.55

English Studies Examination

	Alesco %	State %
Band 1	0	14.28
Band 2	66.66	39.57
Band 3	33.33	34.74
Band 4	0	10.99
Band 5	0	0.33
Band 6	0	0.06

Food Technology

	Alesco %	State %
Band 1	0	2.15
Band 2	14.28	9.71
Band 3	66.66	26.51
Band 4	19.04	29.18
Band 5	0	22.85
Band 6	0	9.57

Hospitality Examination (Food and Beverage)

	Alesco %	State %
Band 1	0	0.58
Band 2	0	3.75
Band 3	0	21.04
Band 4	0	45.33
Band 5	0	25.65
Band 6	0	3.61

Mathematics Standard 1 Examination

	Alesco %	State %
Band 1	0	1.54
Band 2	7.69	8.78
Band 3	23.07	32.02
Band 4	23.07	34.5
Band 5	46.15	19.68
Band 6	0	3.45

Modern History

	Alesco %	State %
Band 1	0	1.33
Band 2	52.38	8.13
Band 3	33.33	18.98
Band 4	9.52	32.31
Band 5	4.76	28.8
Band 6	0	10.43

PDHPE

	Alesco %	State %
Band 1	0	1.12
Band 2	33.33	7.77
Band 3	44.44	23.81
Band 4	11.11	32.31
Band 5	11.11	26.44
Band 6	0	8.51

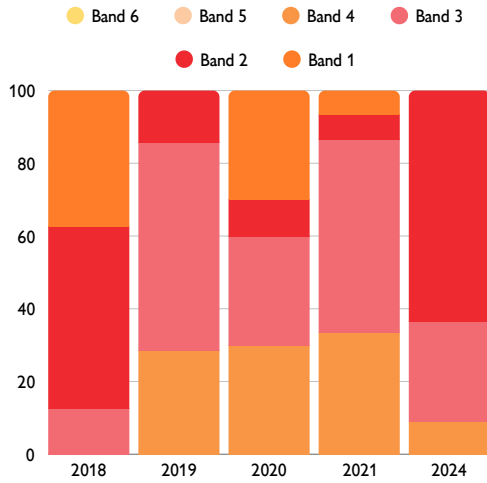
Visual Arts

	Alesco %	State %
Band 1	0	0.04
Band 2	0	0.54
Band 3	15.38	5.48
Band 4	76.92	26.99
Band 5	7.69	49.81
Band 6	0	17.11

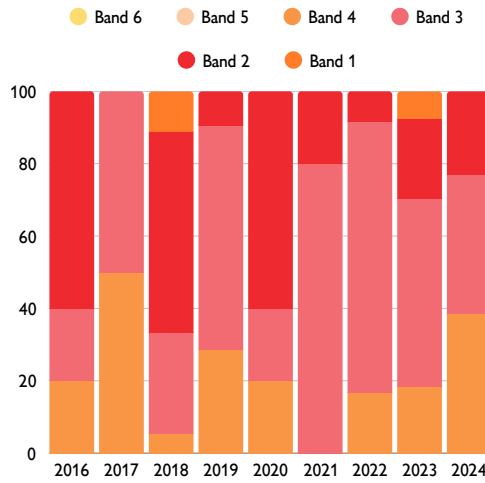


Trends in HSC Performance

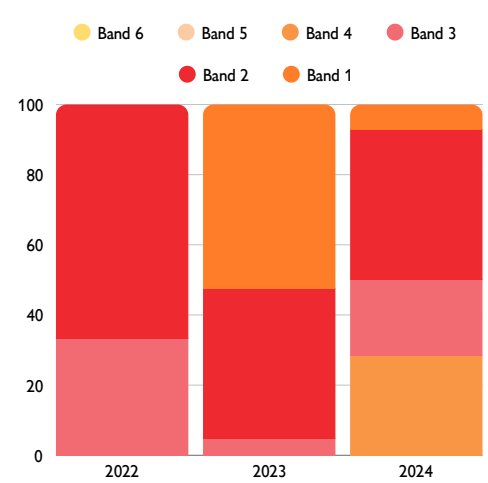
Aboriginal Studies



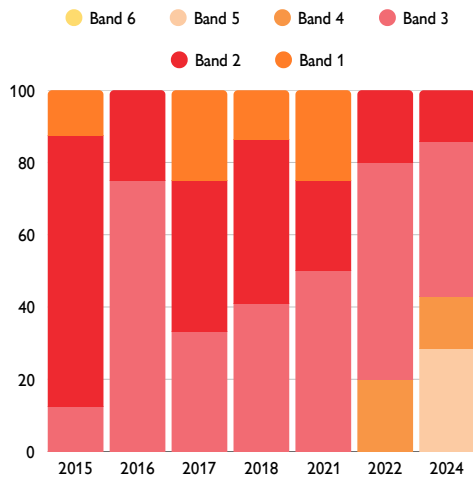
Community and Family Studies



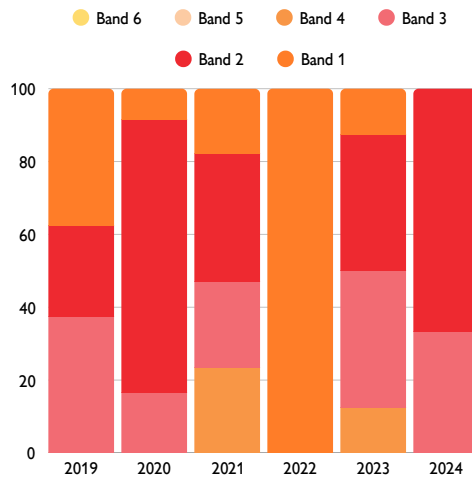
Earth and Environmental Science



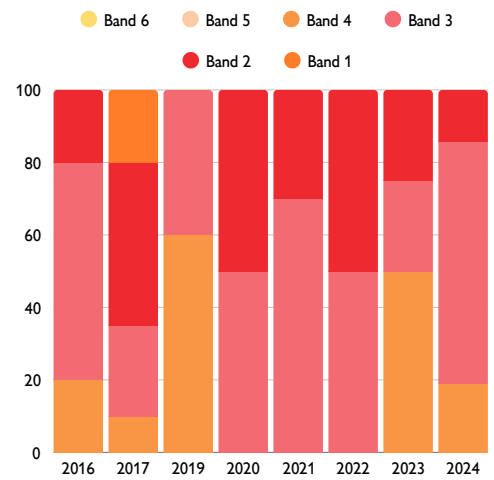
English Standard



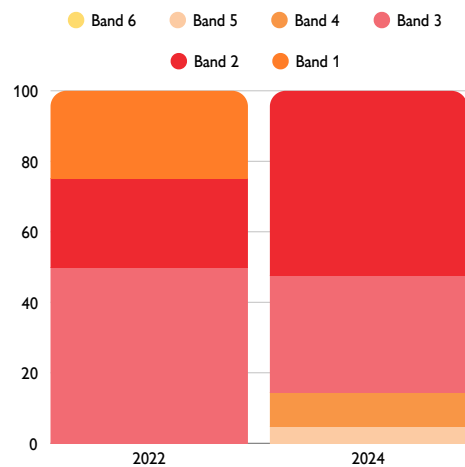
English Standard Examination



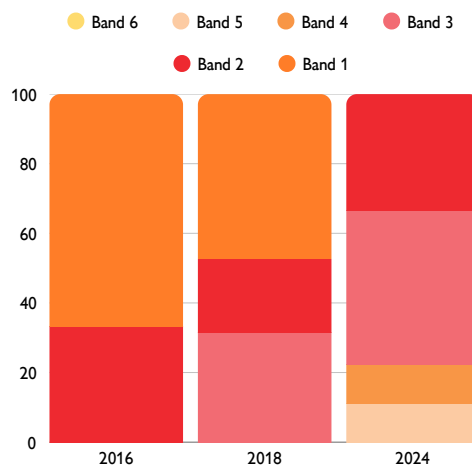
Food Technology



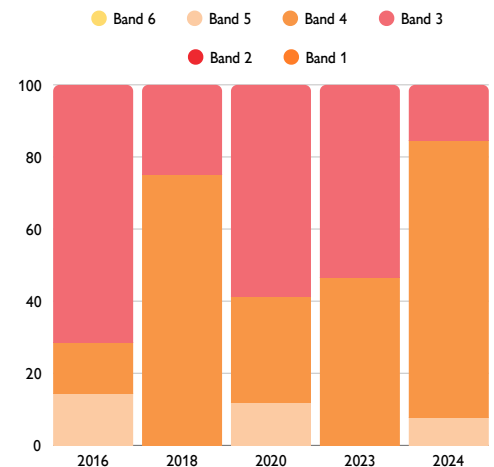
Modern History



PDHPE



Visual Arts



Management of Student Non-Attendance

Student attendance is a core priority of Alesco, and the support provided to students with low attendance is reflective of the Alesco model.

The Alesco Student Handbook, which is provided to all students and their caregivers, provides information regarding their responsibilities in relation to attendance. Students and caregivers are reissued the attendance information at intervals determined by the students' adherence to attendance expectations.

Early intervention at Alesco is aimed at reducing poor attendance and increasing the number of students who finish a school year and ultimately complete Year 12.

At Alesco, student attendance is managed with acknowledgement and understanding of each student's individual situation such as health, housing, and relationships. As such, all students whose circumstances impact adversely on their attendance are offered support to address the underlying problems and are afforded flexibility in how they access their learning whilst managing external stressors.

Alesco Secondary College diligently checks students' attendance on a daily basis, and through the use of a Parent/Carer Attendance Contact System, accurately record absences.

Alesco Secondary College actively promotes and monitors regular attendance, including the provision of attendance updates and discussions during weekly meetings. Where an issue is identified, students may be referred to the Student Wellbeing Office for follow-up. Additionally, each term an attendance check is conducted to identify students who are displaying concerning patterns of attendance and may need support.

The Alesco Student Attendance Policy includes process maps for the following scenarios:

- Daily roll marking
- Student attendance management
- General attendance
- Sporadic attendance
- Where a student proactively leaves
- Withdrawal
- Appeal
- Re-engagement

Student Attendance

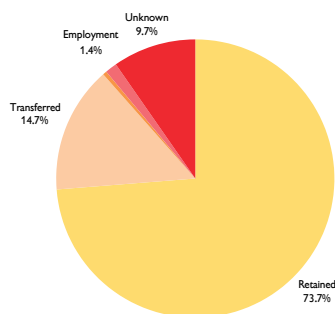
Year	Average
Year 9	73.14%
Year 10	72.86%
Senior 1	79.28%
Senior 2/3	79.64%
Whole School Average	76.23%

Student Retention

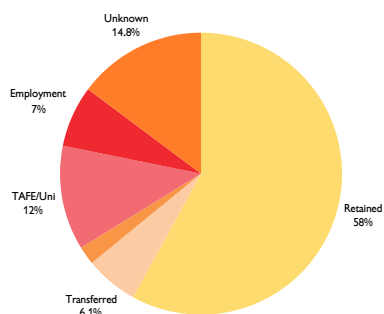
Year	Average
Year 9	91.24%
Year 10	88.03%
Senior 1	89.92%
Senior 2/3	72.38%
Whole School Average	85.39%

Post School Destinations

Year 9

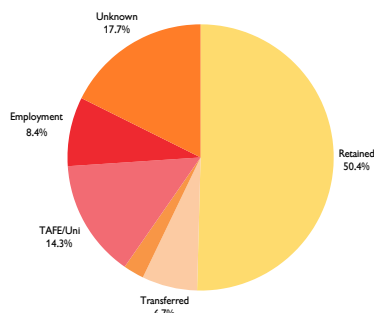


Year 10

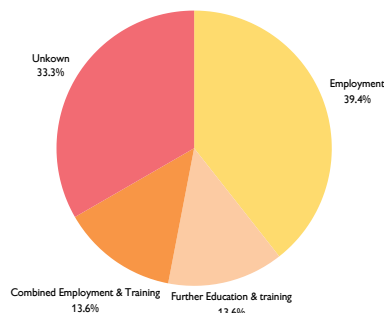


*Unknown Students withdrew from the school year and did not disclose a post-school destination.

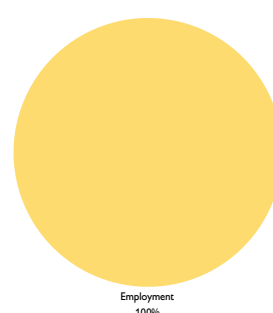
Senior 1



Senior 2



Senior 3



School Policies

Enrolment Policy

The Alesco Enrolment Policy provides information on the requirements to apply, enrol and record student enrolment, as well as how to end an enrolment.

The policy addresses the key areas of:

- application for enrolment
- waitlist for enrolment
- interview for enrolment
- retaining student files
- access to information
- withdrawal of student enrolment

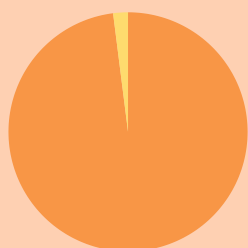
Other policies

Alesco has the following policies in place:

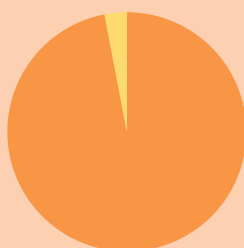
- Child Protection and WWCC Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Student Management and Support Policy (including discipline)
- Student Wellbeing Policy (including anti-bullying)
- Student Attendance Policy

All policies are available for viewing at www.atwea.edu.au/high-school-at-alesco

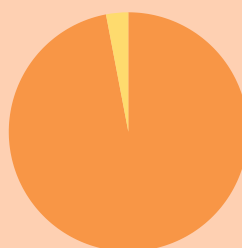
Alesco Student Feedback/Satisfaction



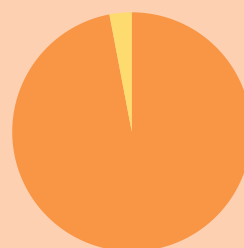
98% said their teachers try hard to help them learn.



97% said that Alesco helps them to work towards their goals.



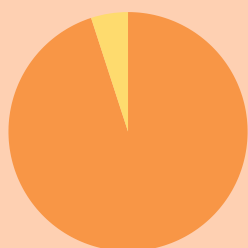
97% agree that Alesco is a supportive and positive environment.



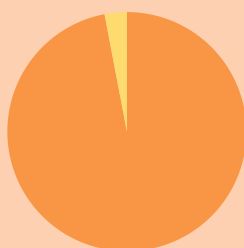
97% said they feel safe at Alesco.

Parent/carer Feedback/Satisfaction

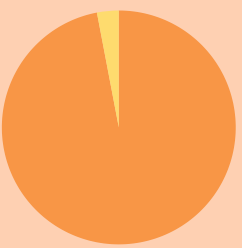
Student and Parent feedback is based on results of surveys conducted in Semester 2, 2024 involving 188 students and 139 parents representing all campuses.



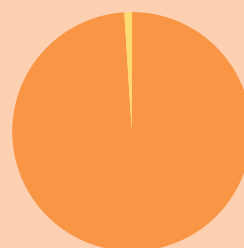
95% said that Alesco balances the needs of their child's learning and wellbeing.



97% said that Alesco tries to bring out the best in each child.

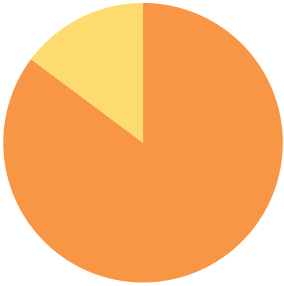


97% said that Alesco staff are approachable when they have questions or need to advocate for their child

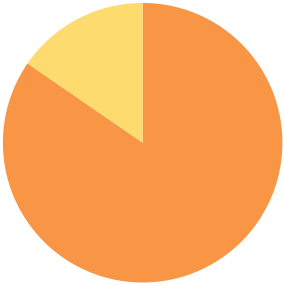


99% said that they are likely to recommend Alesco to others.

Teacher Feedback/Satisfaction



85.2% rated their performance, engagement and contribution to their campus as above average

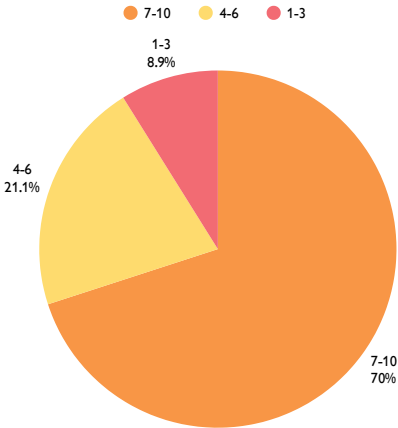


84.6% felt that support offered in their roles was above average

Teacher Feedback/Satisfaction is based on results of surveys conducted in Term 3 of 2024 involving 54 responses.

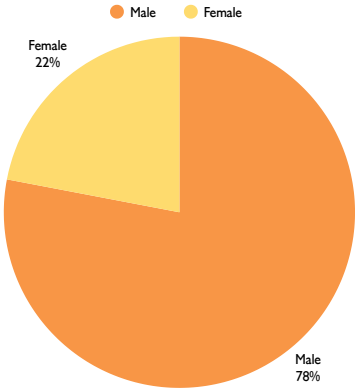
As part of the wider organisation collectively in Term 4 of 2024, with a response rate of 46.9%, Atwea staff rated their happiness out of 1-10:

63% of Staff rated their happiness at a 7-10
29% of staff rated their happiness at a 4-6
8% of staff rated their happiness at a 1-3

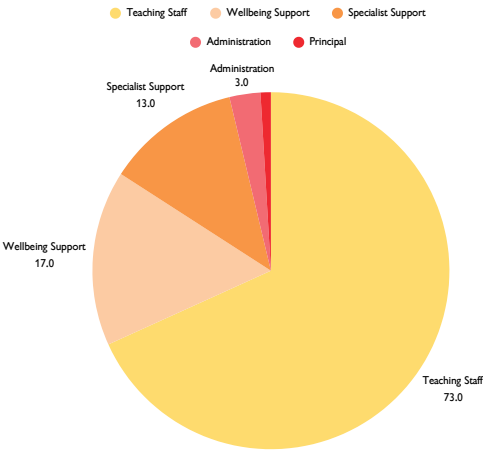


Workforce Composition

Staff Gender



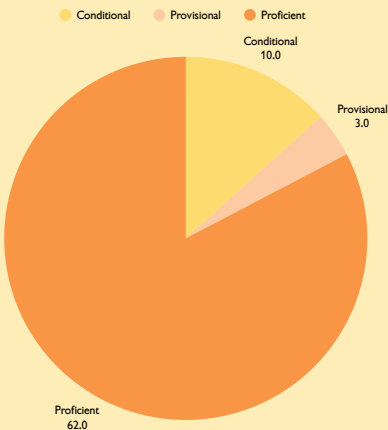
Staff Function



In 2024, 3 Alesco Secondary College employees identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Full-Time Equivalent Staff	
Teaching Staff	73
Full-time equivalent teaching staff	67.4
Non-teaching staff	37
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff	34.7

Teacher Accreditation



Professional Development

Alesco staff have actively participated in a range of professional development activities throughout 2024.

Staff understand the value of continuous development and the positive impact that it has on the educational journey of our students.

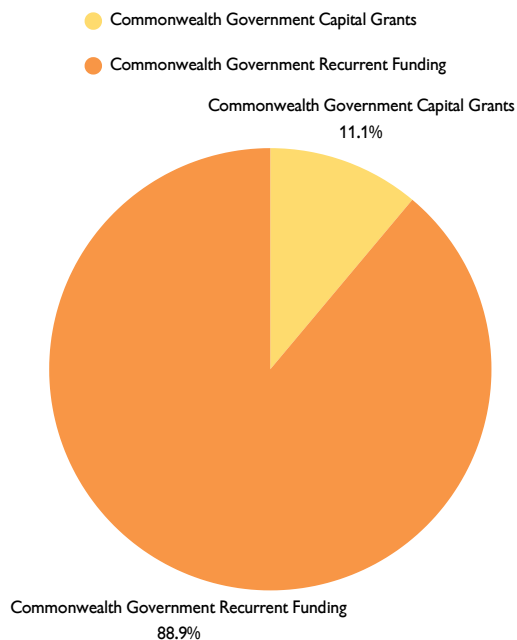
This year's Professional Development program included:

- Bush Fire Management Plans (Presented by WHS)
- Chemical Safety in Schools (Presented by WHS)
- Anaphylaxis Training for Schools and Children's Education and Care
- Cyber Security NSW Essentials Refresher Training
- Fire Warden Training (Presented by WHS)
- First Aid (Presented by WHS)
- Identifying and responding to Children and Young People at Risk (AIS NSW)
- Incident Reporting (Presented by WHS)
- NSW Reportable Conduct and Allegations Against Employees (AIS NSW)
- Work Health & Safety Induction for Employees
- Discrimination, Harassment & Bullying online training via GO1 LMS
- Respect@Work online training via GO1 LMS
- End of Year Appraisal 2024 Learning Module
- Choice Theory -Take Charge of Your Life (Glasser Australia)
- Head of Campus – Leadership Development (Presented by PaC)
- Child Protection Training – Bespoke Face to Face Training (Presented by AIS)
- Child Protection Training – Professional Boundaries between staff and students (Presented by AIS NSW)
- Respect @ Work – Bespoke Face to Face Training around professional boundaries and bullying, discrimination and harassment (Presented by AIS NSW)
- Alesco Collaboration Days
- How Trauma Informed Practice can strengthen Alesco Engagement Presented
- Embedding First Nations Culture in curriculum
- Embedding First Nations Culture in curriculum
- Developing an understanding of ways to meet the needs of diverse learners within a classroom setting
- Looking at the most common diagnosed disabilities at Alesco and how to best support them in the classroom
- Using Explicit Instruction to Illicit Positive Outcomes
- Workplan Training (Presented by PaC)
- Recruitment Training (presented by PaC)
- Conflict of Interest Training (Presented by WHS)
- Positive Duty Respect@ work Training (presented by WHS)
- Right to Disconnect (Presented by PaC)
- HRIS Training (Management notes, leave liability)
- Mould at a Campus (Presented by WHS)
- Enterprise Agreement Communication and Meetings (presented by PaC)
- Child Safe Connect and Engage Workshop (presented by the Office of Children's Guardian)
- SafeTalk training
- Butterfly Foundation – Understanding Eating Disorders in Young People
- Youth Mental Health First Aid

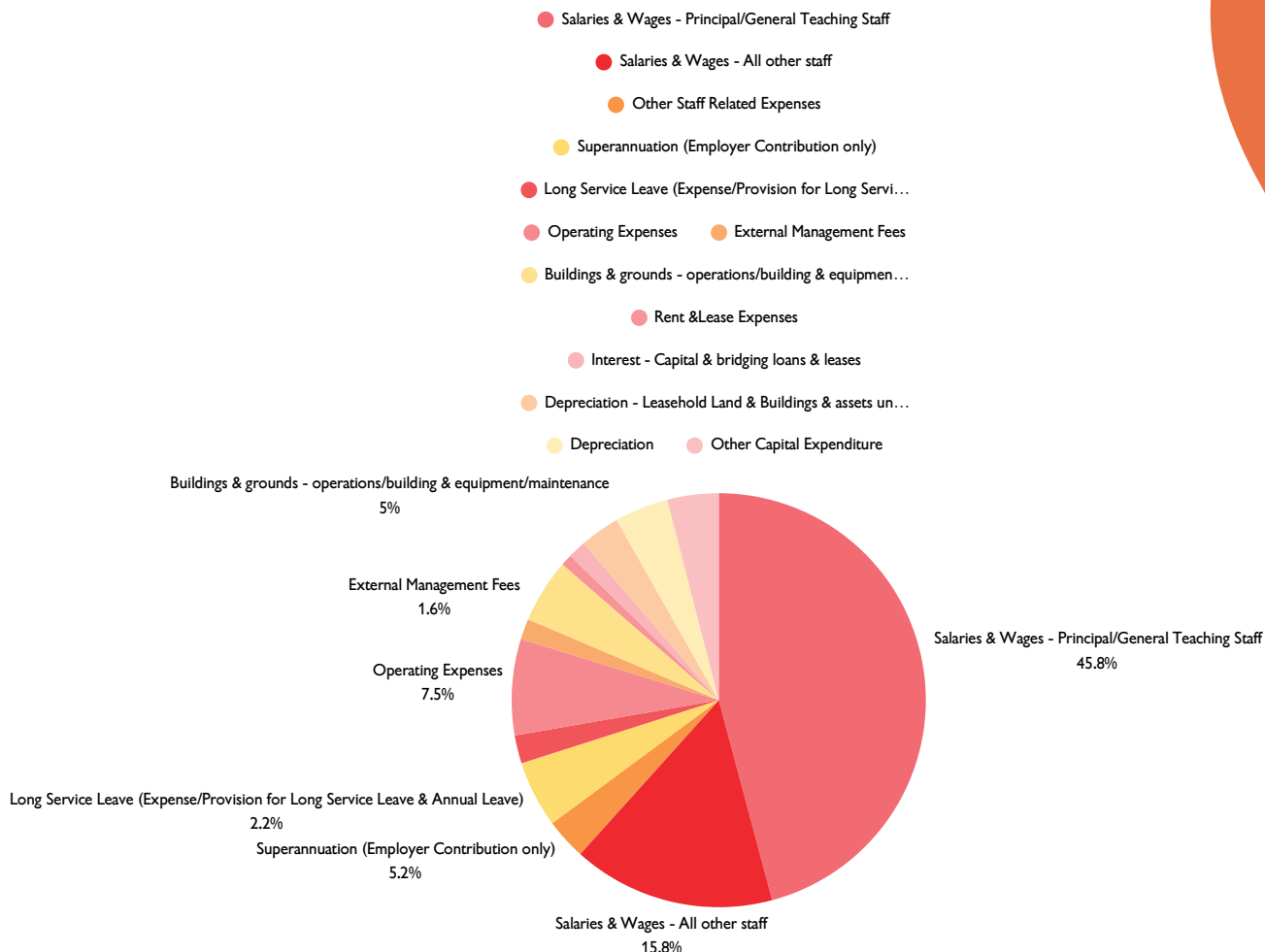


Financial Report

Recurrent/Capital Income



Recurrent/Capital Expenditure





Atwea College



Alesco Secondary College

Had Office/Registered Office

112 Lake Road, Elmore Vale 2287 (Awabakal Country)

Our Locations

100 Laman Street, Cooks Hill 2300 (Awabakal and Worimi Country)
27 Chapman Street, Charlestown 2290 (Awabakal Country)
7 James Street, Argenton 2284 (Awabakal Country)
72 Port Stephens St, Raymond Terrace 2324 (Worimi Country)
7 Austral Street, Nelson Bay 2315 (Worimi Country)
31 Manning Street, Tuncurry 2428 (Worimi Country)
298 Cessnock Road, Abermain 2326 (Darkinjung and Awabakal Country)



Registered Trading Names

Atwea College
WEA Hunter
WEA - Hunter Adult Education and Training
Workers Educational Association - Hunter
WEA Coast
Alesco Senior College
Alesco Secondary College

Workers Education Association - Hunter ABN 61 062 580 634 Incorporated as a Public Company Limited by Guarantee RTO No. 90020

Authority was granted by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission under Section 383 of the Corporations Law on 309 May 1994 to omit 'Limited' from the trading name.

Our Supporters

Government Organisations

Association of Independent Schools NSW
Australian Government Department of Education
NSW Department of Education
NSW Education Standards Authority

We acknowledge all non-government supporters of Atwea and Alesco.

We also acknowledge the Atwea Life Members.



atwea.edu.au
atwea.edu.au/high-school-at-alesco/

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(02) 4925 4200