

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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## **REMARKABLE RESULTS AS ADELAIDE ‘SUPER SCHOOL’ CELEBRATES ITS THIRD BIRTHDAY**

Roma Mitchell Secondary College has dramatically improved its South Australian Certificate of Education completion rate – which is just one of the many major achievements the school is celebrating this week on its third anniversary.

The Gepps Cross school which opened its doors in 2011 as part of one of South Australia’s biggest education reforms, amalgamated four previously existing schools, Gepps Cross Girls High, Enfield High, Ross Smith Secondary and Gepps Cross Senior Schools.

In the latest SACE results, Roma Mitchell Secondary College (RMSC) recorded an enviable 92 per cent completion rate, compared to its predecessors’ rate of just 57 per cent. Bucking a global trend showing declining numbers of girls participating in maths and science subjects, the school has actually had to add extra classes in physics and specialist maths to cope with the interest from female students.

Roma Mitchell Secondary College Principal Sandy Richardson said there had been a significant turnaround in the way students engage with their education.

“Our clear and determined focus has always been on raising the level of academic performance and the stellar achievements of our students have been beyond our expectations.”

“Outstanding results in sciences, arts and sports have been a hallmark of our first three years and our school community is rightly proud of these terrific accomplishments,” she said.

Education and Child Development Minister Jennifer Rankine said the creation of Roma Mitchell Secondary College – along with five other schools - was the biggest infrastructure investment in education in more than 30 years.

“The College has gone from strength to strength, not just academically, but also in terms of attendance rates, sporting success and positive engagement with the community,” Ms Rankine said.

“An independent report into the six schools shows that retention rates and NAPLAN results have improved, students want to come to school and they are proud of their school.”

The school is also providing a fertile ground for the next generation of sporting champions, producing state representatives in national competitions in sports such as football, soccer, netball, cycling and rugby, with a student also recently travelling overseas to be considered for a world-class international program.

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As well as seeing excellent results in its specialist sports programmes in soccer, hockey and cycling, Roma Mitchell Secondary College also has a growing reputation in developing students identified as 'gifted and talented' along with specialist maths programmes, as an increasing number of students target University courses in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects.

In 2013, the college was the first South Australian public school to win the state level of the international 'Tournament of the Minds' annual problem-solving competition in almost 20 years. The team of seven year 8 and 9 students from the gifted and talented program placed second across Australia and New Zealand that same year, a remarkable achievement.

This year, Roma Mitchell Secondary College also introduced the International Baccalaureate Middle Years program, one of only a handful of public schools in South Australia to do so.

The world-class international curriculum, which complements the Australian curriculum but develops broader learning skills, is being undertaken by all 240 Year 8 students in 2014. The IB program will be rolled out to Years 9 and 10 in 2015 and 2016 respectively.

Ms Richardson said despite some early scepticism about the development of the so-called 'super school', the results that Roma Mitchell Secondary School is now achieving proved that the move has only been positive for its 1200 students.

"We have a fabulously committed team of teachers and support staff, we now have students more engaged than ever in their learning and we're achieving really positive results," she said.

"To have achieved so much in three years is a huge endorsement for the school and we're very excited about what the next three years may hold."

## **ENDS**

### **Available for interviews and comment:**

Education Minister Jennifer Rankine, Principal Sandy Richardson, teachers and students

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### **About Roma Mitchell Secondary College**

Roma Mitchell Secondary College was established in 2011 from the amalgamation of Gepps Cross Girls High, Enfield High, Ross Smith Secondary and Gepps Cross Senior Schools. Its 1200 culturally diverse students benefit from a broad curriculum tailored across its smaller co-education, girls and special education campuses.