

Mackay State High School

Executive Summary



School
Improvement
Unit



Queensland
Government



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1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU) at **Mackay State High School** from **11 to 14 June 2018**.

The report presents an evaluation of the school's performance against the nine domains of the [National School Improvement Tool](#). It also recommends improvement strategies for the school to consider in consultation with its regional office and school community.

The report's executive summary outlines key findings from the review and key improvement strategies that prioritise future directions for improvement.

Schools will publish the executive summary on the school website within two weeks of receiving the report.

The principal will meet with their Assistant Regional Director (ARD) to discuss the review findings and improvement strategies

For more information regarding the SIU and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SIU [website](#).

1.1 Review team

Lee Goossens	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Richard English	Peer reviewer
Julie Learoyd	Peer reviewer
Tom Robertson	External reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Milton Street, Mackay
Education region:	Central Queensland Region
Year opened:	1912 1962 - present location
Year levels:	Year 7 to Year 12
Enrolment:	1077
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	12.8 per cent
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	4.7 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	956
Year principal appointed:	2009
Full-time equivalent staff:	82 teachers 37 support staff
Significant partner schools:	Mackay West State School, Victoria Park State School, Mackay Central State School, Walkerston State School, Dundula State School, Chelona State School, Homebush State School, Mackay North State High School, Pioneer State High School, Sarina State High School, Mackay Northern Beaches State High School, Mirani State High School, Central Highlands schools, Mackay Engineering College, Mackay Region Transition Network – Heads of Special Education Services (HOSES) from all schools
Significant community partnerships:	Central Queensland (CQ) University – community engagement, Mackay Regional Council – Domestic Violence Taskforce Group, Meals on Wheels, Harrup Park Country Club
Significant school programs:	Academic Excellence Academy, Sporting Academics: rugby league, football and netball; Accelerated Reader, Words their Way, Cattle Show Team, Schools bands: stage, concert and strings; Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Fair



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, three deputy principals, ten Heads of Department (HOD), six Year Level Coordinators (YLC), eight Professional Learning Team (PLT) leaders, 58 teachers, Business Manager (BM), guidance officer, 22 teacher aides and support staff, 57 students and 10 parents and volunteers.

Community and business groups:

- Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president, Mackay Engineering College supervisor, Mackay and District Secondary Schools Principals Association chair, The Smith Family program manager and Regional Chaplaincy Forum chair.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Victoria Park State School, Mackay Central State School, Walkerston State School, Chelona State School, Homebush State School, North Mackay State High School, Pioneer State High School, Sarina State High School, Mackay Northern Beaches State High School and Mirani State High School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Mayor of Mackay Regional Council, State Member for Mackay and ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2018	School Improvement Agenda 2018
Investing for Success 2018	Strategic Plan 2015-2018
Headline Indicators (Term1, 2018)	School Data Profile (Semester 1, 2018)
OneSchool	School budget overview
School improvement targets	Whole School Curriculum Plan 2017
School pedagogical framework	Professional development plans
School data plan	School Opinion Survey
Responsible Behaviour Plan	School newsletters and website



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

Teachers are united in their commitment to improve the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.

The principal and other staff members describe and highlight the academic, cultural, sporting and social achievements, and accomplishments of the school. Teachers support the school-wide improvement agenda that aims to bring improved teaching and learning practices and enhanced learning outcomes for all students. The benefit of collegial engagement and peer support is highly valued.

A strong collegial culture of support amongst teachers exists.

A positive and supportive environment is apparent within classrooms and across the school reflected by the interactions between students and staff members. The school promotes student diversity and values the varying cultural backgrounds of all students. Students and parents report that teachers work hard to help students improve their learning. The positive and caring relationships between teachers and students are identified as a strength by all stakeholders.

The school has been focusing on a number of initiatives to drive improvement.

The school communicates an Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) of maximising student achievement with high expectations for student attendance, positive student engagement and consistent quality pedagogy. Staff members indicate the need for a sharp and focused direction for the school's future to inform and drive the strategic agenda and to provide a framework to align improvement initiatives.

The school's executive team and the wider leadership team engage in local cluster networks.

The introduction of Professional Learning Teams (PLT) in 2018 has been well received by teachers as an alternative to the previous practice of staff meetings. It is recognised building and improving network relationships with others including regional office contributes to building leadership capacity and density.

The school has published a pedagogical framework to guide learning and teaching practices within the school.

The school leadership team recognises that highly effective teaching is the key to improving student learning throughout the school. The school has a locally developed approach that incorporates the Art and Science of Teaching¹ (ASoT) and the elements of Explicit

¹ Marzano, R. J. (2007). *The art and science of teaching: A comprehensive framework for effective instruction*. Ascd.



Instruction (EI). The key dimensions of ASoT that specifically refer to higher order thinking are not readily identified in the framework.

The school has a documented whole-school plan for curriculum delivery.

Faculty curriculum planning is explicit, coherent and sequenced for curriculum delivery across the years of schooling and provides clarity regarding what teachers should teach and students should learn. General capabilities, including critical thinking and problem solving are less apparent in curriculum delivery. A whole-school approach and plan for the implementation of the requirements of the Australian Curriculum (AC) is an area for further development.

The school budget highlights resourcing priorities in the school.

The school is currently managing financial and human resources in a tight financial environment. The school's recently appointed Business Manager (BM) is working closely with the principal to develop and enact more refined and detailed budgetary practices. There is capacity for greater clarity regarding how the strategic planning processes have been employed and the budget process enacted.

Extensive partnerships are apparent across the school.

The school is well established within the Mackay community. It actively seeks ways to enhance student learning and wellbeing by partnering with parents and families, other education and training institutions, and local businesses and community organisations. For over 100 years the school has educated an extensive range of students who now have professional, business, cultural, sporting and community leadership positions within the Mackay district and beyond.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Develop a sharp and focused agenda to inform the future direction of the school providing a strategic framework for aligning and collaboratively driving the school's improvement agenda.

Form close and ongoing links with regional staff including the Assistant Regional Director (ARD), in order to strengthen the capabilities of the leadership team and PLT leaders to assist in the effective implementation of the key recommendations for school improvement.

Review the research and clarify the position of ASoT within the school's pedagogical framework and provide opportunities for whole-school discussion and exploration of the agreed pedagogy across the school.

Develop a school-wide, explicit, coherent and sequenced plan for curriculum delivery based on the AC that clearly identifies what teachers should teach and students should learn.

Develop and implement transparent and collaborative processes for the construction of the school budget and the allocation of resources within the budgeting process, aligned to the school's strategic plan.