School Improvement Unit
Report

Bwgcolman Community School

Executive Summary

Great state. Great opportunity.
And a plan for the future.

Queensland Government

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Bwgcolman Community School from 2 to 4 March 2015. It provides 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 review and report were completed by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU). For more information about the SIU and the new reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the Department of Education and Training (DET) website.

1.2 School context

Location:	Creek Road, Palm Island
Education region:	North Queensland Region
The school opened in:	1964 (previously Palm Island SS from 1938)
Year levels:	Pre-Prep to Year 12
Current school enrolment:	376 including 54 pre-Preps (27 FTE)
Indigenous enrolments:	99.5 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	13 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	625
Year principal appointed:	2012
Number of teachers:	16 classroom teachers
Nearby schools:	St. Michaels Catholic School
Significant community partnerships:	Cathy Freeman Foundation, Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation, Queensland University of Technology AIMS Project and YUMI Deadly Maths
Unique school programs:	Mindi Group Constructions

1.3 Review methodology

The review was conducted by a team of three reviewers.

The review consisted of:

- a pre-review audit of the school's performance data and other school information

- consultation with the school's assistant regional director

- a school visit of three days

- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:

    - Principal, Deputy Principal and 2 Heads of Department (HODs)

    - Guidance Officer (GO), two students with disability teachers, Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN)

    - 16 class teachers and three specialist teachers

    - Seven teacher-aides

    - Three Community Education Councillors (CEC), four School Attendance Officers (SAO)

    - Queensland Health staff

    - Mayor, indigenous community member, State Member

    - Ten parents

    - Catholic school principal

1.4 Review team

Bert Barbe	Internal Reviewer, SIU (Review Chair)
David Curran	External Reviewer
Alex Neilsen	Peer Reviewer

2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The consistent Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) has clarified and focused the attention of staff members on the two core priorities for the school.

  The leadership team have sustained the focus on improved attendance and reading for more than three years. Data walls in each sector of the school visually reflect this focus and communicate the agenda in a variety of ways to staff, students and community members. Staff tell stories of improved reading outcomes for students.

- Teachers have differing levels of data literacy, reflective of the mix of graduate, early career and senior teachers on staff.

  The Heads of Department (HODs) collate, analyse and display data sets for each sector of the school. They are beginning to meet with teachers to discuss class data to adjust planning for teaching delivery. Data is stored on a central spreadsheet with plans in place to transfer the process to OneSchool and class dashboard over the year. Senior experienced teachers analyse their own class data, but new graduates and early career teachers require support to develop their data literacy skills.

- There is considered placement of senior staff to build teacher capacity in areas of the school.

  School leaders have carefully considered the staff mix and strategically placed newer teachers beside experienced staff members to assist them to plan and deliver curriculum in a community school setting. Teachers are accompanied by their teacher-aides to early home visits to families to ensure cultural protocols are maintained. There are no formal coaching and mentoring processes in place.

- The whole school curriculum overview has recently been reviewed.

  The Heads of Department have worked with interested staff to review the whole-school curriculum plan and the draft now identifies a two year cycle of unit delivery to flexibly meet the changing multi-age class groupings across the school.

- Class teachers are starting to differentiate their planning in the school priority of reading

  Class teachers are grouping students according to reading data, however in most classrooms, students rotate through the same rotational activities rather than providing differentiated tasks and challenging work for high achieving students.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Maintain the focus on attendance and reading. Monitor progress towards targets and continually evaluate the effectiveness of these programs.

- Build teacher data literacy skills.

- Further develop a systematic whole-school approach to the provision of feedback, coaching and mentoring for all teachers.

- Monitor and review the vertical and horizontal alignment of curriculum delivery to ensure it meets the needs of all students and the requirements as set out in the Australian Curriculum (AC) and Queensland Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Framework (QCARF).

- Strengthen teacher capability to deliver evidence-based differentiated teaching and learning strategies for the full range of students, including high achieving students.