School Improvement Unit
Report

Laidley State High School

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at **Laidley State High School** from **9 to 11 August 2016**. 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:	Alfred Street, Laidley
Education region:	Darling Downs South West Region
The school opened in:	1985
Year levels:	Year 7 to Year 12
Current school enrolment:	698
Indigenous enrolments:	11 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	7 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	927
Year principal appointed:	2005
Number of teachers:	61 (full-time equivalent)
Nearby schools:	Laidley District SS, Forest Hill SS, Lockrose SS, Kentville SS, Blenheim SS, Thornton SS, Glenore Grove SS, Hatton Vale SS, St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Lockyer District State High School, Faith Lutheran College Plainland

Significant community partnerships:	Lockyer Valley Bringing Employers and Schools Together (BEST), Laidley Cluster, University of Southern Queensland, University of Queensland, TAFE and local and regional employers - partnership for career development, Vocational Education and Training, School-based apprenticeships and traineeships and work education programs, Binnacle Training RTO – Certificate III VET program delivery partnership, Genr8 program - partnership with TAFE, other schools and industry partners, Community Elders, Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foundation, Deadly Choices and KAMBU, Ed-LinQ, Child and Youth Mental Health Services and Child Protection and Investigation Unit, Our Community Centre, Local business donating rewards for school Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) rewards scheme.
Significant school programs:	Co-teaching in junior mathematics, English and science classes, Literacy and Numeracy Intervention classes, Short Cycle Intervention (Literacy, Numeracy and Extension), Personal and Career Development program, Certificate III Programs (Business, Fitness and Community Sport and Recreation), OPAL Program (Opening Pathways to Alternative Learning), Positive Behaviour for Learning.

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 (ARD)

- a school visit of three days

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

  o Principal and three deputy principals

  o Seven Heads of Department (HOD), Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), guidance officer and master teacher

  o 50 teachers, nine teacher aides and 37 students

  o Business Services Manager (BSM), six administration officers and nine ancillary staff

  o Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president

  o Tuckshop convenor, five parents and one principal of a partner primary school

  o Community education counsellor and Indigenous support teacher aide

- o Four community partner representatives

- o State Member for Lockyer, Mr Ian Rickuss

1.4 Review team

Kate MacDonald   Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)

Karyn Hart   Internal reviewer

Joseba Larrazabal   Internal reviewer

2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The improvement agenda responds to areas in need of development and explicit targets have been set to align with this agenda.

  There is evidence of systemic data collection to measure and monitor successes. A general awareness exists amongst staff members and students of the targets for attendance but little evidence of knowledge of other targets.

- The principal clearly articulates his belief that reliable data on student outcomes is crucial to the school's improvement agenda.

  This data is used by the principal to inform and review school-level decisions, interventions and initiatives. The school has developed practices for the collection, analysis and use of data which are documented in the school plan.

- The Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) program is under review by a small PB4L team, with all elements of the program to be considered.

  The team comprises a deputy principal and a small number of teachers. The PB4L processes and practices are not yet aligned or consistently applied.

- The school offers a wide range of courses to cater for the diverse needs and interests of students.

  In addition to regular curriculum, a number of additional school-wide programs are available to students requiring specialist support. These include a well-resourced special education centre and the Open Pathways to Alternate Learning (OPAL).

- The teaching and leadership teams at the school incorporate high numbers of new and beginning staff members.

  Line management through the development of an organisational chart and role statements has been established to develop the capacity of teaching staff members.

Uncertainty exists regarding the organisational chart and role statements in terms of supervision roles and responsibilities.

- There is a strong commitment to developing curriculum and assessment programs to meet the needs of all students

  There is a renewed focus on students in the Upper Two Bands (U2B). Systematic quality assurance of teacher developed unit planning with differentiation strategies is not yet established.

- It is evident that teachers and school leaders are aware of students at different stages in their learning, or progressing at different rates.

  Students are supported by a variety of mechanisms including timetabling, class structures and staff member allocations. Classroom differentiation strategies are not yet consistently planned and implemented.

- Consistent expectations and routines for the management of students to allow effective pedagogy are visible in all classrooms.

  There is evidence that the application of these routines and the consequences for students are not yet consistent. A willingness to address this inconsistency within the school, through the revitalisation of the PB4L program exists.

- Deliberate and strategic use is made of a wide range of business and community partnerships.

  These partnerships allow for access to additional resources not available within the school for the purpose of improving student outcomes. Each partnership has been established in response to an identified need and considerable effort goes into maintaining and nurturing these relationships.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Prioritise the review and implementation of the renewed PB4L framework with broadened consultation processes led by the principal, focusing on clarity and consistency of processes and consequences.

- Systematically monitor and communicate progress towards the attainment of academic performance targets through Heads of Department (HOD) line management meetings.

- Clearly articulate the organisational structure and roles within the school leadership team to ensure a clear line of sight focused on the key priorities of the school.

- Review how the teaching team is implementing the pedagogical framework and examine opportunities to refine and embed the key elements of Explicit Instruction (EI).

- Revisit the classroom differentiation planner as a tool to encourage the inclusion of differentiation as a routine element of classroom planning.