School Improvement Unit
Report

Quinalow Prep-10 State School
1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Quinalow State School from 27 to 29 July 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location:</th>
<th>Progress Street, Quinalow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education region:</td>
<td>Darling Downs South West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school opened in:</td>
<td>1901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year levels:</td>
<td>Prep to Year 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current school enrolment:</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous enrolments:</td>
<td>4.5 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students with disability enrolments:</td>
<td>3.4 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</td>
<td>955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year principal appointed:</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers:</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nearby schools:</td>
<td>Bowenville State School, Jondaryan State School, Kaimkillenbun State School, Kulpi State School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant community partnerships:</td>
<td>Maclagan Kindy, Maclagan Lutheran Church, Peranga Bowls Club, Peranga Catholic Church, Quinalow Hall Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique school programs:</td>
<td>You Can Do It! Program, Secondary Buddy System, Quinalow and District Swimming Club</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 and Support Teacher- Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN)
  - 11 teachers, including specialist teachers
  - Two cleaners and the school facilities officer
  - Three administration officers
  - Six teacher-aides
  - 35 students
  - Six community partners, including a local Adopt-a-Cop and religious education volunteers
  - Director of the local kindergarten
  - Deputy Principal of a local state secondary school
  - 11 parents, including the president of the Parents and Citizens’ (P&C) Association

1.4 Review team

Gary Austen  Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Shona McKinlay  Internal reviewer, SIU
Peter Kelly  Peer reviewer
2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- School staff are committed to the school and its students.

  Many school staff articulate a strong personal commitment to the school and its students. There is a positive, collegial environment involving most staff. Staff are genuine in their desire to promote student achievement and wellbeing.

- The whole school community demonstrate an interest in and aspiration for further school improvement. There is broad support for the school amongst the community and most people speak optimistically of the school’s capacity to improve.

  Many students, staff, families and community members describe concrete ways they believe the school can improve. There are varying levels of confidence in the school, however most people interviewed recognise the potential for the school to improve if key elements, which include communication, responsiveness and partnerships, are effectively addressed.

- Most teachers articulate a desire to work in teams and share professional practice across the school.

  Teachers regularly share resources and ideas about teaching in informal ways. Formalised opportunities to share practice, observe the work of colleagues and build collective capability are not evident.

- School leaders and teachers recognise the need to develop a whole school curriculum plan.

  Teachers predominantly use the Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) resource to inform classroom teaching. The curriculum is driven by individual teachers and therefore alignment of learning across the school is not apparent.

- There is evidence of varying levels of confidence with the way in which the school manages student behaviour.

  Students, staff and parents express concern with the way in which student behaviour impacts upon learning, wellbeing and confidence in the school. The school has recently commenced implementation of the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) Framework. There is evidence that in recent times the school has had a stronger implementation of the school behaviour plan, including the application of consequences for higher-level disruptive behaviours and high expectations for improved attendance.
The school has a number of stated priorities for school improvement; however, a clear agenda that draws upon the commitment and effort of all members of the school community is not evident.

Plans for school-wide improvement strategies do not appear to have been widely implemented nor have they impacted significantly on the day-to-day work of teachers. Teachers are aware of the school reading strategy, using the Sheena Cameron\(^1\) reading program and are implementing aspects of this in a staged way.

The school has made gains in the percentage of students meeting the national minimum standard in literacy and numeracy.

The percentage of students achieving at or beyond the national minimum standard in most areas of literacy and numeracy, over the 2008-2014 period, has improved notably. Challenges exist for the school in affecting similar rates of improvement across the school means, and particularly for students in the Upper Two Bands (U2B) of National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) performance.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

- **Develop a whole school curriculum plan.**

  Access a package of regional support to develop and implement a whole school curriculum plan. Embed quality assurance processes within the design to ensure alignment with the Australian Curriculum and the P-12 Curriculum and Assessment Framework and a clear process for collaborative planning and evaluation. Utilise school and additional regional financial and human resources to build opportunities for broad input to design. Use shared planning processes to enable the delivery of a locally responsive curriculum for students.

- **Develop and implement a shared leadership model.**

  In partnership with regional personnel, develop and implement a shared leadership model and a team of expert teachers across the school. Use distributed leadership as a vehicle to unlock the potential of staff in being active and committed partners in the school improvement agenda.

- **Implement a deliberate and comprehensive community engagement strategy, with reference to the Parent and Community Engagement Framework.**

  Strengthen the way in which parents are engaged as learning partners in their child’s education. Identify key internal and external stakeholders, strategies to engage partners in building school and community commitment and efficacy in delivering sustainable school improvement.

- **Narrow and sharpen the school improvement agenda.**

  Narrow and sharpen the school improvement agenda to include specific strategies, targets, timelines and milestones for success. Build broad knowledge and ownership for the improvement agenda and communicate this widely with the school and broader community. Establish systematic processes to regularly report the progress of the school improvement agenda and to build community confidence in the school.

- **Develop and implement a shared vision for the school.**

  As a school community, develop and implement a shared vision that encompasses the key elements of shared commitment, trust, high expectations for learning and strong partnerships. Articulate and consistently reinforce these high expectations in all aspects of the schools operation, which includes improved attendance, behaviour and learning to develop a strong sense of belonging and pride in the school.