School Improvement Unit
Report

Robertson State School

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Robertson State School from 23 to 27 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

Location:	Musgrave Road, Robertson
Education region:	Metropolitan
The school opened in:	1980
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Current school enrolment:	722
Indigenous enrolments:	1 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	2 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	1132
Year principal appointed:	July 2007
Number of teachers:	40
Nearby schools:	Sunnybank State School, Coopers Plains State School, MacGregor State School, Sunnybank State High School, Salisbury State School.
Significant community partnerships:	Northshore Tutoring, Splitz Gyms, Helping Hands.
Unique school programs:	Fast ForWord, Maths Diff, Multi-age for Gifted and Talented, Orchestra Program, School Choir

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 Regional Director

- a school visit of three days

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

    o Principal and Deputy Principal

    o Head of Curriculum (HOC) and Master Teacher

    o 26 teachers

    o 15 teacher aides

    o Parents

    o Business Services Manager (BSM)

    o 14 student leaders

    o School Council Chairperson

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

1.4 Review team

Lyal Giles   Internal Reviewer, SIU (review chair)

Sharon McMorrow   Peer reviewer

Mel Phillips   External reviewer

2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- **The establishment of the consistent approach to the teaching of reading as a priority is valued by all staff.**

  Most teachers are using a consistent approach to the teaching of reading within the school. This approach is highly valued by all staff and recognised as a key driver for school improvement. The improvement agenda is expressed in terms of specific improvements sought in student performances in reading and writing. Some staff identified that both agendas were too broad.

- **The school has an agreed researched-based pedagogical framework.**

  The pedagogical framework was adopted after considering research, evidence of best practice and staff participation in an international workshop. The framework is yet to be embedded school-wide. The school's Marzano[1] Mentoring Team has plans to align the pedagogical framework with school priorities.

  Explicit instruction is identified as the preferred framework for lesson structure and delivery. Learning goals are stated at the beginning of lessons. Some students state that they are not provided with explicit feedback about what actions are needed to improve their progress.

- **The school uses a range of differentiation practices within the school to support the learning needs of students.**

  Individual Curriculum Plans (ICPs) are implemented for students requiring substantial adjustments to their learning programs. These plans are developed for accelerated students and for students with disabilities who are accessing the curriculum at an alternative level to that of their peers. The ICPs inform teachers' differentiation both in and out of the classroom.

- **A coaching and feedback process to support teachers in the implementation of reading and writing is emerging.**

  Teachers participate in reading and writing professional development and a range of associated collaborative processes. Mentoring, coaching and feedback occur in some classes each term. Coaching, feedback and observation is yet to be expanded across the school. Teachers identified a willingness to engage in this process and receive feedback.

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[1] Marzano, Robert J. 2007, *The Art and Science of Teaching: A Comprehensive Framework for Effective Instruction.* ASCD, Alexandria, VA.

- The school has a strong reputation for their high achievements in academic, instrumental and choral music pursuits.

  The school has a strong academic reputation within the school community. This is reflected by the significant number of parents seeking enrolment to the school out of catchment. The school has a highly successful choir program that is well recognised within the wider community. Instrumental music is highly regarded within the school community and this is reflected in the achievements of the schools program. The school currently has four strings orchestra programs within the school and a junior and senior concert band.

- The school has a rigorous process for identifying and supporting English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) students.

  Various screeners and standardised tests including Brigance, Oral Language and Minilit screeners are utilised in Prep to identify the support needs of non-English speaking children. Intensive intervention programs are implemented to support students to develop to their full potential. Teachers are encouraged to respond to differences in cultural knowledge and experiences and to cater for individual differences by offering multiple means of representation, engagement and expression.

- There is strong evidence of alignment of curriculum, assessment and reporting.

  The school has a published curriculum plan that provides a clear overview of how units of work relate to the Australian Curriculum content descriptors. The Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) resources is used extensively for lesson plans, resources and assessment with a mix of five week and ten-week units.

- The school has engaged in a number of successful partnerships to improve learning opportunities and support for the school.

  The school employs a marketing officer to actively promote the efforts and achievements of the school. This strategy has supported the positive image held of the school within the community. Recent successful business meetings have been held with the principal to develop ongoing partnerships with large organisations.

  School leaders have begun to establish a cluster approach with neighbouring schools to establish strong links with pre-Prep programmes. Strong links are developing with neighbouring schools to support students transitioning to high schools.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Review the school improvement agenda to further narrow and sharpen the agenda and establish clear targets and timelines linked to student improvement. Ensure that this agenda is widely understood and communicated to all staff.

- Continue to develop the school's reading program that aligns to the school's current practices and clearly outlines the methods to teach reading within the school.

- Implement a coaching and feedback program to develop consistency and accountability for the implementation of school-wide programs and the pedagogical framework.

- Develop the establishment of individual learning goals and success criteria, aligned to the school priorities, which allow students to monitor their progress. Communicate these learning goals to parents to inform them of how they can support their children's learning.

- Investigate the collaborative development of a whole school curriculum plan that is relevant to all students and builds on their existing knowledge including high achieving students.

- Continue to strengthen the relationship with local high schools to ensure that the academic needs of students moving to high school are being met.