School Improvement Unit
Report

Surat State School
1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Surat State School from 23 to 24 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location:</th>
<th>Robert Street, Surat</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education region:</td>
<td>Darling Downs South West Region</td>
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<tr>
<td>The school opened in:</td>
<td>1874</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year levels:</td>
<td>Prep to Year 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current school enrolment:</td>
<td>71</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indigenous enrolments:</td>
<td>5.6 per cent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students with disability enrolments:</td>
<td>9.8 per cent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</td>
<td>963</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year principal appointed:</td>
<td>2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of teachers:</td>
<td>12 (full-time equivalent)</td>
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<td>Nearby schools:</td>
<td>Roma State College</td>
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<td>Significant community partnerships:</td>
<td>Maranoa Regional Council (Development Officer), Allied Health, Surat Early Childhood Education Centre team</td>
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<td>Significant school programs:</td>
<td>Robotics Club, Playgroup, Surat Early Years Program</td>
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1.3 Review methodology

The review was conducted by a team of two 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 two days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
  - Principal
  - Head of Curriculum (HOC)
  - Seven teachers
  - Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN)
  - Twelve students
  - Parents and Citizens’ Association (P&C) president
  - Community Development Officer
  - Two teacher aides
  - Administration officer

1.4 Review team

Alan Sampson  
Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)

Carole Boatwright  
Peer reviewer
2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- Staff members, students and parents hold the school in high regard. Staff members demonstrate an understanding of the importance of positive and caring relationships to successful learning and work actively to build partnerships with students, parents and the community.

  Community members commend the school for the proactive work in engaging the wider school community in planning and feedback regarding school development. The four key values of respect, safety, commitment and responsibility are reinforced through reward systems in most classes. Artefacts are displayed in prominent locations around the school to remind students of key values. The school motto *Commit, Succeed, Excel* is used by teachers to reinforce the values.

- The principal and teaching staff members are united and committed to the School Improvement Agenda (SIA) that is established in reading and numeracy.

  The recent improvement in National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) data is attributed by staff members to the sharper focus on reading. It is apparent a range of other priorities are being implemented across the school with targets for each of the priorities varying in depth regarding high expectations. A clear and consistent strategic planning process based on collaboration with all stakeholders is yet to be developed.

- The school has published a comprehensive Standardised and Diagnostic Data Collection Overview outlining data collection timelines, expectations of classroom teachers in recording of data and instruments to be used.

  Most teachers articulate the difficulty in balancing planning and teaching delivery with time to collect and record the broad array of data sets. Some teachers advocate for a reduction in the number of data sets used.

- Teachers develop their curriculum units and agreed assessment tasks in consultation with their Head of Curriculum (HOC).

  The school has developed a wide range of curriculum support documentation which clearly details expectations for teaching across the Australian Curriculum (AC) using the multi-age Curriculum to the Classroom (C2C) resources as the key reference. Teachers are aware of what they want students to know, do and apply to be successful with their learning. Guides to Making Judgements (GTMJ) aligned to the planned assessment tasks are a part of this process. Some teachers indicate they do not use the curriculum plan as a working document due to its expansive nature.
• Parents, students and members of the wider community express the view that the stability and professionalism of staff members is highly valued within the community. The principal has taken proactive steps with the region and universities to endeavour to ensure there is a quality pool of teaching staff members.

• The school is considering strategies to enhance the profile of junior secondary area. A clear junior secondary identity and response to this challenge is yet to be articulated.

• Classrooms are welcoming places in which to learn and teachers take pride in the presentation of these environments. Students report their classrooms are conducive to learning and they feel supported by their teachers in the learning process. Some students interviewed indicated they would like to see more extension activities and a greater variety of learning experiences to engage them in the learning. A pedagogical framework documenting the preferred school teaching and learning strategies is in place. Teachers application of the strategies associated with explicit teaching are embedded across all learning environments. Teachers' connection to the full range of strategies documented in the pedagogical framework and feedback to teachers from instructional leaders varies.
2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Develop and communicate the strategic planning process for establishing and monitoring school priorities.

- Review the pedagogical framework with a view to condensing the key strategies and aligning explicit feedback from instructional leaders.

- Review and condense the curriculum plan to ensure relevance and accessibility for all teaching staff members.

- Re-develop the data plan and associated skillings to ensure the range of data compliments the teaching and learning process.

- Collaboratively develop a school community action plan to identify a junior secondary identity and opportunities for leadership and mentoring of younger students.