



School Improvement Unit Report

Mackay North State High School Executive Summary



1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at **Mackay North State High School** from **6 to 9 September 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:	Valley Street, North Mackay
Education region:	Central Queensland Region
The school opened in:	1964
Year levels:	Year 7 to 12
Current school enrolment:	1347
Indigenous enrolments:	11 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	6 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	975
Year principal appointed:	2015 (acting)
Number of teachers:	86.7 (full-time equivalent)
Nearby schools:	Fitzgerald State School, North Mackay State School, Pioneer State High School
Significant community partnerships:	n/a
Unique school programs:	School of Excellence in Music



1.3 Review methodology

The review was conducted by a team of four 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 four days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
 - Principal
 - Three deputy principals
 - 10 Heads of Department (HOD)
 - Head of Special Education Services (HOSES)
 - Guidance officers
 - Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLAN)
 - Master teacher
 - 46 teachers
 - Four teacher aides
 - 112 students
 - Business Services Managers (BSM)
 - Three administration officers
 - Four ancillary staff
 - Parents and Citizen's Association (P&C) president
 - Tuckshop convenor
 - Four parents
 - Community counsellor and Indigenous Elder, Aunty Vanessa
 - Two community partner representatives



1.4 Review team

Karyn Hart	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Meredith Wenta	Internal reviewer
James Baker	Internal reviewer
Trevor Gordon	External reviewer

2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- School leaders are committed to improving student outcomes for all students.

In recent times there have been changes so as to clarify the improvement focus and changes to members of the leadership teams. Staff members indicate a lack of clarity regarding who is responsible for leading different aspects of the improvement agenda.

- A comprehensive whole-school data collection and analysis plan which identifies school targets, data to be collected, responsibilities for analysis and the purpose of the data is developed.

The plan includes a model for data analysis which informs teachers on how data can be used to improve teaching and learning. Some faculties have adopted the model and there are examples of how systematic analysis of students' data has resulted in changes to pedagogical practices and enhanced student outcomes. The model is yet to be implemented as a whole of school priority.

- The school is driven by high expectations and a belief that all students are capable of success.

Parents, students and staff members speak positively of the school's strong sense of community and students and parents comment frequently on the professionalism and commitment of staff members.

- The school is rich in tradition and has been described as a school of choice for many years which is largely attributed to the music excellence program.

The school enrolment has been decreasing steadily since 2013 and is now approximately 300 students below capacity.



- Teaching spaces are well presented and provide stimulating environments in which students can learn.

The ongoing maintenance and development of the grounds and is seen as a priority.

- Teachers are open to feedback and identify a range of strategies to seek support and engage in professional learning conversations.

It is apparent that the school has not yet established a whole-school approach to coaching and mentoring at this stage.

- The faculties have sequenced plans for curriculum delivery which teachers generally understand and implement.

Consistency of curriculum planning across faculties is not yet apparent with a variety of approaches, proformas and IT platforms being used.

- There are numerous examples of structural differentiation where students are placed in groups with common learning needs.

Some teachers have developed teaching strategies and learning experiences which are utilised to support differentiation in their classroom. High performing students express support for the extension classes and/or activities across subjects which enable them to achieve their full potential.

- There is evidence of professional learning conversations between Heads of Department (HOD) and allocated teachers to build a culture of learning and feedback.

An opportunity exists to implement a school-wide teacher feedback process that aligns with the school's pedagogical framework.

- The school seeks ways to enhance student learning and wellbeing through the development of strong school and community partnerships

Sharing of pedagogical practices across the primary secondary interface is yet to be developed.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Clearly define and communicate the roles and responsibilities of the executive leadership team and other leadership teams and continue to provide Professional Development (PD) to build the capacity of the teams.
- Implement a quality assurance (QA) process led by school leaders to ensure a coherent sequenced plan for curriculum delivery that informs quality teaching and learning.



- Develop and implement a whole-school approach to mentoring and coaching that includes supervisory, instructional and peer-to-peer coaching and walk-throughs to recognise the importance of effective feedback, self-reflection and intrinsic motivation for teachers' professional growth.
- Implement a school-wide teacher feedback process that aligns with the school's pedagogical framework.
- Fully implement the whole of school data collection and analysis plan with a focus on developing the skills of teachers to reflect on data and develop individual strategies to improve learning outcomes.
- Further develop, document and implement differentiated learning experiences for high performing students across all subjects.