School Improvement Unit
Report

Cecil Plains State School
Executive Summary
1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Cecil Plains State School from 2 to 4 June 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>Taylor Street, Cecil Plains</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education region:</td>
<td>Darling Downs South West</td>
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<tr>
<td>The school opened in:</td>
<td>1898</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year levels:</td>
<td>Prep to Year 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current school enrolment:</td>
<td>63</td>
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<td>Indigenous enrolments:</td>
<td>8 per cent</td>
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<td>Students with disability enrolments:</td>
<td>9 per cent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</td>
<td>916</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year principal appointed:</td>
<td>2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of teachers:</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>Nearby schools:</td>
<td>Dalby State High School, Dalby State School, Dalby South State School, Pittsworth State High School, Pittsworth State School, Brookstead State School, Mount Tyson State School.</td>
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<td>Significant community partnerships:</td>
<td>PIPPAS – Parents Involved in Pre-Prep At School</td>
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<td>Unique school programs:</td>
<td>Ag Science, AUSLAN, STARS program, The YES message, The Cecil Challenge</td>
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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 Principal Supervisor
- a school visit of three days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
  - Principal, Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN), Teaching Practice Support Teacher
  - Eight teachers
  - Seven teacher aides
  - Four parents
  - Lions Club president, Progress Association president
  - Six students
  - Kindergarten director

1.4 Review team

Phil Savill  Internal Reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Tom Beck   Peer Reviewer
2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- Cecil Plains State School has a calm, supportive learning environment.
  The teaching and support staff work effectively to provide a safe and supportive environment. The school’s current work around ‘The Yes Message’ has had a positive impact which is recognised within the school community.

- A school improvement agenda has been developed and communicated to the wider community.
  The principal articulates a commitment to improvement and recognises the need for an explicit improvement agenda understood by all members of the school community. The school has a stated agenda to improve the literacy and numeracy of students with a focus on reading, spelling and number.

- The pedagogical framework which informs classroom teaching is an emerging practice.
  The documented pedagogical framework which is structured around the Dimensions of Teaching and Learning is evident throughout the school. The school has completed some initial work in regards to the framework but there is limited evidence of ongoing development and implementation to consolidate the framework in the day-to-day work of all teachers.

- Data is collected to benchmark student progress but there is an opportunity to use diagnostic data in a strategic way to inform teaching and learning.
  PM Benchmark, PROBE, PAT-M and PAT-R are used to collect data in regards to student progress. At this time, this data is not used in a systematic way to inform teaching and learning strategies in the classroom. There is an intention to shorten data cycles in order to better track student progress and respond to their learning needs.

- Clear, documented feedback protocols are yet to be established for staff and students.
  A long-term professional development plan is yet to be put in place that reflects the school improvement agenda. Staff have indicated their willingness to be coached, modelled to and provided with feedback about their practice. Staff have also indicated a desire for professional development in providing feedback to students.

- The school enjoys a high level of human resourcing. Eight teachers are allocated for the Prep to Year 9 enrolment of 65 students.
  A strategic approach for the delivery of a coherent teaching program that impacts on all students throughout the school is yet to be developed. The five teachers currently allocated for the seven students in Years 7-9 express a desire to be better equipped to meet the learning needs of students throughout the school especially in the area of reading.
Parents are looking for strong leadership from the school principal to take Cecil Plains State School to the next level to ensure its future viability.

There is a proud history surrounding the school but due to rural demographic decline the enrolments are falling. The school community is keen to re-establish Cecil Plains State School as the school of choice in the broader local area.
2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Develop and implement a systematic whole school approach to building teacher and leadership capacity including high quality professional development, coaching, mentoring, feedback and supervision along with recognition of teacher expertise.

- Ensure clear communication to teachers, students and parents of high expectations for teaching and learning, behaviour and attendance across the whole school.

- Develop clarity and cohesion between the various school programs through the review and refinement of an explicit pedagogical framework and a whole school curriculum framework. Ensure that these documents capture the Cecil Plains State School's way of teaching and learning in a multi-age, Prep to Year 9 setting.

- Review the use of teaching staff to ensure that this resource is used to its potential to teach all students throughout the school.

- Provide professional development for staff which aligns with the school improvement priorities particularly in the area of reading and numeracy.