

Spinifex State Secondary College

Executive Summary



School
Improvement
Unit



Queensland
Government



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1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU) at **Spinifex State College** from **5 to 8 March 2018**.

The report presents 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 report's executive summary outlines key findings from the review and key improvement strategies that prioritise future directions for improvement.

Schools will publish the executive summary on the school website within two weeks of receiving the report.

The principal will meet with their Assistant Regional Director (ARD) to discuss the review findings and improvement strategies.

For more information regarding the SIU and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SIU [website](#).

1.1 Review team

Jenny Maier	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Wayne Troyahn	Internal reviewer
Raelene Fysh	External reviewer
Paul Herschell	External Reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Junior Campus: Fifth Avenue, Mt Isa Senior Campus: Abel Smith Parade, Mt Isa Residential Campus: Transmission Road Mt Isa
Education region:	North Queensland Region
Year opened:	2003 (amalgamation of Mt Isa State High School and Kalkadoon State High School into Spinifex State College). Junior Campus opened as Mt Isa High in 1952. Senior Campus opened Kalkadoon State High School in 1977
Year levels:	Year 7 to Year 12
Enrolment:	822
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	39 per cent
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	7 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	892
Year principal appointed:	2017
Full-time equivalent staff:	69
Significant partner schools:	Barkly Highway State School, Mount Isa Central State School, Healy State School, Happy Valley State School, Sunset State School, Townview State School
Significant community partnerships:	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group, Glencore Mount Isa Mines, Queensland Minerals and Energy Academy (QMEA), Mt Isa support agencies, Mount Isa Technical and Further Education (TAFE), Professional Learning Hub
Significant school programs:	Scholar and academic programs, Literacy – reading and writing, Vocational Education and Training (VET), Instrumental Music, Residential Program, student leadership, student support services, transition programs



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, five deputy principals, two Heads of Campus at Senior Campus and Residential College, 11 Heads of Department (HOD), Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), two Business Managers (BM), 60 teachers, 120 students, two tuckshop convenors, two Community Education Counsellors (CEC), school chaplain, two youth support coordinators, president of Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C), eight teacher aides, 21 non-teaching staff and nine parents.

Community and business groups:

- Head of apprenticeships at Glencore, school connection officer at Glencore and head of North West TAFE Mount Isa Campus.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principal Happy Valley State School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- State Member for Mt Isa, Senior Project Officer Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DATSIP), Project Officer Kalkadoon Community, Manager MOB FM Radio Station, Schools Liaison Officer ATODs (Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drugs), Transition Pathways Officer Department of Education (DoE) and ARD.



1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2018	Spinifex Literacy Framework
Investing for Success 2018	Strategic Plan 2015-2018
Headline Indicators (2017 release)	School Data Profile (Semester 2, 2017)
OneSchool	School budget overview
Professional learning plan 2018	Curriculum planning documents
School improvement targets	School differentiation plan or flowchart
School pedagogical framework	Professional development plans
School data plan	School newsletters and website
Responsible Behaviour Plan	School Opinion Survey
School based curriculum, assessment and reporting framework	Spinifex Success Principles



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

Cultural diversity is respected and celebrated across all three campuses of the college.

The tone of the college reflects a college-wide commitment to purposeful and successful learning. This is underpinned by the values of *'respect, responsibility and safety'* that are reiterated regularly on student assemblies and displayed around the college and in college documents. Staff members are united in the belief that every student is capable of successful learning, regardless of background, articulating a 'whatever it takes' attitude. Interactions between students, staff members and parents are polite, caring and inclusive.

The college has established a sequenced plan for curriculum delivery that supports consistent teaching and learning expectations and provides a reference for guiding and monitoring learning across the year levels.

The college has a collaborative approach to curriculum planning that ensures curriculum in Years 7 to 10 is aligned to the Australian Curriculum (AC) and is adapted to meet the learning needs of the local school context. Staff members are fully engaged in the planning process, and with the support of the Heads of Department (HOD) and more experienced teachers, are developing skills in making consistent judgments utilising the AC achievement standards. Preparation for the introduction of the new Senior Assessment and Tertiary Entrance (SATE) processes is well advanced and teachers articulate that they are well prepared for the introduction of the syllabuses in the new Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) system in 2019.

The Spinifex Success Principles make clear expectations for how business is conducted at the college.

These principles are aligned with the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA), published in a single document and communicated to staff. Staff members are familiar with the principles and are able to articulate how they implement them in their day-to-day teaching practice.

The college has adopted Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) as their framework for behaviour management.

Clear behaviour expectations aligned with the Behaviour Expectations Matrix, are communicated to students and displayed in classrooms and other prominent places around all three campuses. The PBL team has identified the need to review and revise the PBL action plan and Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students (RBPS) this year to ensure currency, clarity and consistency of application across the college.

A whole-college approach to literacy is established.

Last year's focus was reading; this year the focus moves to writing. A consistent whole-college approach to the explicit teaching of reading and writing is yet to be embedded in practice.



Priority is given to the college-wide analysis and discussion of systematically collected data regarding student outcomes including academic, attendance and behavioural outcomes and student wellbeing.

Teachers utilise the OneSchool data dashboard to identify starting points for teaching and learning. The college is yet to develop a consistent college-wide approach for deep interrogation of National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results to examine individual student performance and establish targeted cohort and class directions to improve outcomes.

The college continues to support students with digital devices.

Upgrades to connectivity were completed in 2017. Computer rooms are upgraded in alignment with asset replacement provisions. Some teachers and students comment on the high demand for computer access, particularly during assessment time. Teachers' capability in engaging with the digital platform varies. A Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program has been trialled with little uptake by students.

The differentiation map outlined in the Spinifex Success Principles provides detailed expectations for all staff members regarding how to best support students through differentiation of practice.

The differentiation map is based on research and best practice models. There is some evidence of the use of the practices in classrooms. Some teachers indicate they would like to grow their teaching toolkit for the provision of differentiated practices to meet the diverse needs of their students.

The college articulates high expectations for every student's progress and ambitious targets and goals for improvement.

Learning goals are set by all students, in collaboration with their teacher, in advance of each summative assessment piece and these goals are visible in classrooms. Teachers describe this process as a key strategy in supporting the college's priority of setting high aspirations for all students.

A focus on improving post-school transitions is a high priority for the college.

Intensive mentoring and case management of Year 12 students regarding future pathways, be they academic or vocational, are embedded. Further transition occurs between the junior and senior campuses with students from Years 7 to 9 attending the senior campus in the last week of the year to engage in a range of academic and sporting activities. A targeted transition program for Year 9 moving into Year 10 is established.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Develop and implement a consistent whole-college approach to the explicit teaching of reading and writing across junior and senior campuses.

Provide Professional Development (PD) to college leaders and teachers to develop data literacy skills relating to the deep interrogation of NAPLAN and other data.

Collaboratively review and revise the PBL action plan and RBPS to ensure relevance to the current environment, clarity of expectations and consistency of processes across all campuses.

Provide PD to enhance teacher skills and knowledge in differentiation practices.

Expand student access to digital technology and build staff members' capability in digital literacies.