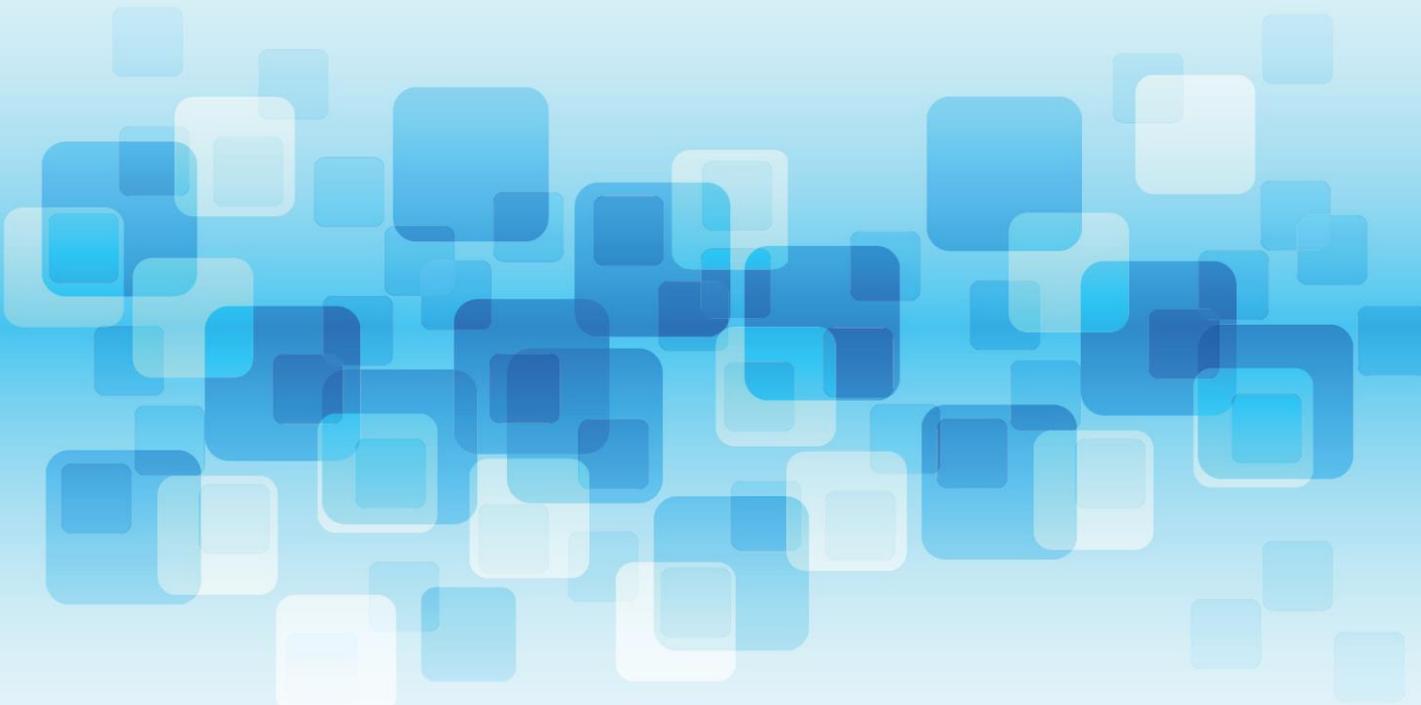




School Improvement Unit Report

Denison State School Executive Summary





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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Denison State School from 2 to 4 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

Location:	Gray Street, Emerald
Education region:	Central Queensland Region
The school opened in:	1997
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Current school enrolment:	451
Indigenous enrolments:	5 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	3.7 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	981
Year principal appointed:	April 2016
Number of teachers:	24 (full-time equivalent)
Nearby schools:	Capricornia (Emerald Campus) School of Distance Education (CSDE), Marist College, Emerald State School, Emerald State High School, St. Patrick's Catholic College, Emerald North State School, Emerald Christian College
Significant community partnerships:	Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA) Read project, joint campus with CSDE, Emerald State High School
Significant school programs:	Year 8 mathematics honours program



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 Assistant Regional Director (ARD)
- a school visit of three days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
 - Principal, 1 deputy principal and Head of Special Education Services (HOSES)
 - Master teacher, 22 teachers and nine support staff
 - Business Services Manager (BSM) and two administration staff
 - Facilities officer and canteen convenor
 - 11 student leaders and 45 other students
 - Parents & Citizen's (P&C) Association president and treasurer
 - 17 parents and/or community members
 - Principal and Head of Department (HOD) of local secondary school
 - State member for Gregory, Mr Lachlan Miller
 - Guidance officer, regional office Indigenous education officer

1.4 Review team

Louise Wilkinson	Internal reviewer, review chair
Timothy Farrell	Peer reviewer
Dave Manttan	External reviewer



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- Interactions between staff members, students, parents and community members are caring, supportive and inclusive.

The school is held in high regard by the local community. The physical learning environment is clean, tidy and well maintained. The classrooms are orderly with a strong focus on learning and student wellbeing. Parents express confidence in how the school supports positive student behaviour.

- Teaching staff are committed to continuous improvement of their teaching practice and are open to receiving observation, mentoring, coaching and feedback.

Formal supervision and feedback is developing for probationary and pre-service teachers. A formal, focused whole-school collegial engagement process for all other teachers is emerging to ensure consistency of quality pedagogy and a sustained culture of collaboration.

- The school leadership team acknowledge the need to develop a consistent and whole-school approach to the teaching of reading.

Teaching staff currently use a range of strategies in the teaching of reading in the early phase of learning. In the upper school there is a concentration on teaching comprehension. A documented and practising whole-school approach to the teaching of reading is yet to be developed.

- The school leaders encourage the tailoring of teaching to the needs of students. Teaching staff members are committed to every student succeeding.

Teachers take care in the setup of the physical environment and organisational procedures for their classroom to address the needs of students. Consistent differentiation in teaching strategies to meet the needs of the full range of students across the school is not yet evident.

- Some teaching staff are monitoring and tracking student achievement and performance over the year.

The school has devised a planning document and process, data snapshot, which class teachers use to identify differentiation strategies for groups of students in curriculum subjects. The tracking and monitoring of individual student performance with appropriate interventions and supports across the school is yet to be developed.

- The school promotes a culture of inquiry and innovation in mathematics.

A whole-school approach to the teaching mathematics/numeracy is developed through innovation and expansion of high yield teaching strategies, which includes Explicit Instruction (EI), Flick the Switch and inquiry-based learning. The extent to which a culture of inquiry and innovation is more broadly implemented across the curriculum is not yet apparent.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Develop a classroom observation and feedback culture involving all teaching staff to provide support, advice and feedback on high yield teaching practices to enact the intended curriculum and improve student learning.
- Document and implement a consistent and whole-school approach to the teaching of reading.
- Develop teacher capability to differentiate pedagogy and content to meet the learning needs of individual students in every classroom.
- Develop a whole-school system to regularly track, monitor and respond to student learning.
- Build a culture of inquiry and innovation across all areas of the curriculum.