School Strategic Plan 2010 – 2012

School Context

Denison State School is situated in Emerald which is in the heart of the Central Highlands of Queensland. The Bowen Basin coalfields, large grazing properties and large scale fruit, cotton and grain production are important industries. Many of these industries rely on the water from the nearby Fairbairn Dam which is the second largest in Queensland with a surface area similar in size to Sydney Harbour. As at September 367 students attend the school from P – 7. Students from the town and surrounding rural areas attend the school, many travelling on buses. Multi-age groups are the basis of the primary classes with dedicated Literacy and Numeracy Blocks provided each day. The inclusive curriculum caters for a diverse range of students with the support of a Special Education Unit (Established as Cluster hub in 2009), Guidance Officer (0.4 FTE) and Support Teacher: Learning Difficulties (0.5 FTE) and Head of Curriculum (0.5 FTE). A high itinerancy exists in the school with more than half of the existing students enrolling in the last two years. Since the introduction of full time Prep, the numbers have grown significantly from an average of 270 prior to 2007 to the 367 at present. This increase has meant that all available classroom space is occupied and application for additional class spaces is under way. The School Climate is supported by a Responsible Behaviour Plan that focuses on positive strategies and Restorative Justice, and the use of a Positive Thinking Room. Denison is part of the “Driving School Improvement Project”, led by Mark Campling for the next 18 months. This project will have a profound influence on the school and the leadership models used for the future.

Vision and Values

Our vision at Denison. State School is:

"Learning from the past and growing into the future".

The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating. The paths to it are not found but made, and the activity of making them changes both the maker and the destination.


Through this vision our school community will provide opportunities for every student to develop the skills to become a life-long learner and be an active participant not only in the Australian context, but also in the global community.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Key Strategies</th>
<th>Desired Outcomes/Performance Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Spelling   | Spelling continues to be an area for improvement - identified through performance in NAPLAN. Explicit teaching strategies that embed literacy in all KLA need development. This is the chosen area for Denison in partnership with Emerald North to improve as part of the School Improvement Advance Project with ADG Mark Campling. | • Analyse item data from NAPLAN tests  
• Review and redevelop School Spelling Program with explicit strategies identified in alignment with the Essential Learnings  
• Implement the use of the analysis tool from the “Words our Way” program as well as the South Australia Spelling Test to gauge movement.  
• Implement weekly spelling tasks with focussed skills.  
• Provide newsletter items for parents to inform them on how the process is travelling.  
• Use the Data Driven Conversation method to drive improvement working down from the school to class to individual levels.  
• Use data to make teaching decisions to improve student outcomes as the beginning. | • Baseline samples with be collected and conversations generated from the analysis of the data.  
• Students utilise skills checklist  
• Specific lists used when implemented by DET in 2010.  
• Target - All Year Twos to be able to spell the Basic 100 sight words by the end of that year.  
• Improvement in NAPLAN Tests with performance = or > NMS  
• A corresponding improvement in the Reading and Writing areas of NAPLAN.  
• Cross campus co-operation and project development with Emerald. |
## Focus Area Rationale

### Numeracy

An analysis of numeracy results and feedback from teachers, parents and students indicate that most students gain the basic number facts but fail to use these in problem solving situations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Strategies</th>
<th>Desired Outcomes/Performance Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Review problem solving and number fact strategies within school.</td>
<td>• The numeracy results as measured by Year 2 Net and NAPLAN will improve to match the National Average.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implement a greater use of inquiry situations into the maths area utilising more of the ‘Ways of Working’ methods to implement the Essentials.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improve the data gathering tools to focus on data based decision making as the method to improve student achievement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop strong accountability and performance monitoring systems.</td>
<td>• Remedial and intervention plans will be based on data driven decision making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Share performance information across the school and school community including parents.</td>
<td>• Resourcing and Professional Development will be linked to the needs identified through the process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide guidance to parents on ways to assist their child’s learning.</td>
<td>• Target - all students are appropriately engaged, challenged and extended, including those at the higher band levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop a Denison Maths program with the following:</td>
<td>• An explicit Maths Program for all teachers P-7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- content to be presented one term to a page - all maths strands to be represented on the term page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- maintain strand sequence in same position across year levels and term</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- include examples of concepts where necessary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- cover page with Ways of Working, working mathematically</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 7 year level document to all teachers for pre &amp; post strand knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- weekly plans to be mapped by teachers from term document</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- columns to allow recording of resource use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUTURE FOCUS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop investigations – daily, weekly, unit level</td>
<td>• Community satisfaction with facility – SOS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop term by term year level assessments</td>
<td>• Greater use of The Arts Syllabus across all year levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Integrate number facts into Smart Moves</td>
<td>• Development of a whole school Arts syllabus utilising the new facilities to demonstrate through active participation the achievement of the students’ level of skill development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## SUPPORTING RESOURCES

### The Arts

The school community has nowhere that is suitable for indoor activities. The BER Commonwealth funding will allow the school to provide a facility for the school and community. Once complete this will provide the scope for the introduction of more drama and performance based curriculum offerings. These were expressed in many of the parent surveys and also by several student and staff surveys.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Strategies</th>
<th>Desired Outcomes/Performance Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Make submissions for funding</td>
<td>• The facilities will be complete and in service by 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop plans with P &amp; C committee and Facilities personnel.</td>
<td>• Community satisfaction with facility – SOS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Liaise with Regional Council to utilise the performing arts funds for regional centres.</td>
<td>• Greater use of The Arts Syllabus across all year levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Purchase equipment that will enhance the productions in the hall.</td>
<td>• Development of a whole school Arts syllabus utilising the new facilities to demonstrate through active participation the achievement of the students’ level of skill development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop a school program with greater emphasis on the Arts especially in the areas of Drama and Dance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Denison State School is a multi-age learning environment which supports Preparatory – Year Seven students. The school provides a learning program that provides the values and direction to meet the needs of the diverse groups within the school community.

The school is committed to the values of **Excellence in Endeavour, Respect for People, Integrity in Service, Professionalism in Performance, Environmental sustainability and Unity in Purpose**. Through the learning programs and individualised pathways to learning, students are able to work with an appropriate level of challenge that also allows them to meet success.

Denison State School greatly values the active contribution of the school community and actively includes parents, local groups, community organisations and industry partners to interact to provide relevance and connection to the local Emerald community.

The curriculum is organised in integrated units within which all KLAs are covered. During the next three year cycle there will be a focus on explicit teaching of English skills, Numeracy and ICTs. Professional development for staff, resourcing, and evaluating student progress in these areas are key actions for the next three year period.
TSR Report

The TSR Process involved communication to the whole school community of the purpose of this strategic planning cycle. A robust process of consultation followed with parent groups, staff and students. Surveys were provided to all families with the fortnightly Newsletter; to all staff including aides, specific sessions at two P&C meetings and to the student leader body. Each group identified the successes of and what they liked about Denison and the challenges over the last three years and suggestions for the future. All groups had been given copies of all CDW data and had analysed this to prepare the SAROP documents annually. This process also took into account the significant resources that would result with the Building the Education Revolution (BER) funding of $2.5 million and the National School Pride (NSP) of $165 000 that would be delivered by 2010. Analysis of Destination 2010 Action Plan, Annual Operation Plans, School Achievement Data and School Annual Reports were an integral part of the process. Additional analysis of this data was also provided by David Eborn as part of the “Driving School Improvement Project.” Follow up meetings prioritised these issues forming commendations and recommendations for the next strategic cycle. These form the key focus and direction of the School Strategic Plan for 2009 -2011.

Executive Review of 2007 – 2009 Strategic Plan

The focus of the 2007-2009 Strategic Plan was threefold with a goal in each area of Learning, Schools and Workforce.

In the area of Learning, the main focus was on improving Literacy throughout the school by reviewing the Whole School Literacy Plan focusing on reading and writing. There was also a focus on developing student profiles and improving the results of the Year 3, 5 & 7 results. The dedicated Literacy and Numeracy Blocks were a key strategy over the last two years with explicit teaching in uninterrupted periods for at least four of the five days in the Maths and English curriculum areas. In the Year 2 Net Results over the three year period there were no significant improvements in Literacy results; however there was an improvement in the numeracy result in 2008 to levels similar to the Queensland average. This was a 23% improvement on the previous year's results and was pleasing due to the increased PD of First Steps and the use of strategies gathered from the school's participation in the Numeracy Project. Results in 2009 were similar to 2008.

Results in the Year 3, 5 and 7 tests were mixed. During this period we experienced rapid growth in numbers of students and a significant number of the students who enrolled were already targeted for support from their previous schools. Results for Year 3 and 5 are still below the state and like school results over most of the three years with the exception of Numeracy which showed an upward trend in 2008. The Year 7 results for 2008 however were significantly improved and in most cases equivalent or higher than the State and like Schools. This represented an almost 40% turnaround from the 2007 results. In Literacy and Numeracy the students were 100% above the National Minimum Standards and at or above State results on overall scores. The most pleasing aspect of this was that five of these students had been below the benchmarks when they did their Year 5 test in 2006 and with support all had at least achieved above benchmark results.

A 10 – 25% improvement in Numeracy performance has occurred in all classes in 2008 when compared to 2007

Another goal of the previous plan was to improve Networks throughout Emerald Schools. This was successful with Denison forming a strong commitment from the other schools in numeracy as a result of the Numeracy project. Events involving all schools included PD with Jan Cavanaugh, Principal Business
Meeting Sessions, moderation meetings for Literacy and Numeracy and also QCATs. ICT was also another area that had success with the completion of a computer lab which was utilised not only by Denison staff and students but also as a PD hub for teachers throughout the Emerald District and also CSDE parents and staff. This was further enhanced by the replacement of all computers over five years of age and the purchase of ten Electronic Whiteboards. Staff commenced applying for their ICT certificates, one has completed his licence and is now used as a district and local moderator of Certificate applicants.

Another goal was to engage in more PD for Literacy and Numeracy. Over the three year period staff participation in PD for Denison was above the EQ required percentage of 10% of gross budget. In most years it was between 15 and 18%. This figure would be higher in reality as it fails to take into account local expertise which is not included in the calculation methodology. The school also had a new website constructed using Joomla technology which further improved communication with parents and also offered an access point for staff PD.

Visioning/Goal Setting process

The school community – students, parents and staff reviewed the school plans and systemic data. A series of questions were developed to elicit the responses for each group. Community forums were conducted with the Parents, Staff and Students. Each group was asked ‘What was good?’ and ‘What needed improvement in the school?’ Data was also made available to inform participant’s decisions.

The findings from the review document and visioning processes were then prioritised using a discussion based decision making process showing success and level of importance. Those issues identified as very successful and very important formed the basis of commendations of the SSP. Those that were in the area of importance based on knowledge of DET imperatives for the next three years were identified for future focus as Denison’s School Strategic plan 2010-2012.
COMMENDATIONS  
*Identified from School Plans and Data [some areas will not be identified]*

**LEARNING**
- Numeracy performance has improved consistently over the last two years in the school with Year 7 students achieving 100% above the benchmarks for the first time in the school’s history. All students’ results in 2008 improved on the previous year’s performance. Denison was chosen as the only school from Fitzroy Central-West to be involved in the DET State Numeracy project.
- The development of the school’s curriculum to align with the Active Citizen model.

**SCHOOLS**
- The construction of the Computer Lab and improved ICT measures over the last three years using the ICT Index; specifically bringing the ratio of computers to students down each year and by 2010 to the State target of 1:5 for primary students. The purchase of Electronic Whiteboards and increased integration of ICT into the curriculum of all students.

**WORKFORCE**
- Staff Morale has increased by 15% over three year period from a 77% to a 93% satisfaction rate in three years. This is significantly higher than the State Satisfaction result of 79%.

CHALLENGES  
*Identified from School Plans and Data [some areas will not be identified]*

**LEARNING**
- A significant increase in the number of students in the last three years from around 270 to 370. A large intake of Prep aged students from 26 in 2007 to 59 in 2009. An expected increase to 60+ in 2010. A large transient population across other year levels and an expected increase in SEU students with five ASD to Prep next year from the SEDU and transfers from the Catholic School.

**SCHOOLS**
- The building of a new hall, library extension and three new classrooms to cater for continued growth. The complexity of sharing a site with CSDE especially the Library and also the music room.
- Maintenance of school infrastructure due to declining viability of the existing coolers and declining buildings.

**WORKFORCE**
- In 2010 there will be a significant staff turnover due to transfers, pregnancy, leave applications and also increases due to growth. The position of deputy principal will also be available from 2010 and this will be a juggling act with timetabling and the continuance of the Head of Curriculum position. The position of BSM was also commenced in mid 2009.
KEY FOCUS AND DIRECTION 2010 - 2012

Three areas were then determined for review – Spelling, Number, The Arts. The working parties used a variety of inquiry tools – surveys, data analysis, discussions and interviews to discover the needs of the school’s program. These will be the focus of the School Strategic Plan.

LEARNING and TEACHING

- Spelling performance continues to be below the National Benchmarks in the school and has been chosen to be linked to the Driving School Improvement Project with Mark Campling. The challenge is to learn from this project and to use that knowledge to link into all KLAs to develop a data based decision making process to further school improvement and student learning over the next three years.
- Numeracy gains were made following the school’s participation in the Numeracy Leader’s Project. The challenge is to continue to utilise the knowledge gained from that process to assist students to make the leap from knowing number facts to using them as the basis for improving problem solving in Mathematics.
- Due to the input of the BER and the National School Pride funding the school will have a new hall and additional Library spaces. The focus is to develop The Arts at Denison to ensure that all students will gain from the acquisition of these resources. There has been in the past a shortage of spare space for activities for the performance based applications and now that this has been rectified it will require a reinvigoration and rethinking of further application of this syllabus area.
ENDORSEMENT

A collaborative and consultative process was utilised that sought the input and opinions of staff, students and parent/community members to assist in the Triennial School Review process for the period 2007 -2009

The key strategic directions for 2010 -2012 reflect the findings of our school self-assessment process. The strategies and targets outlined in the School Strategic Plan 2010 -2012 respond to student and school performance and local factors, and will contribute to the achievement of beyond Destination 2010 outcomes.

Signatures:

_________________________  ___________________________  ___________________________

Principal                P & C President     Executive Director Schools