

# Mackay Central State School

## Executive Summary





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## 1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from School and Region Reviews (SRR) at **Mackay Central State School** from **2 to 4 August 2022**.

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 implement 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 SRR and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SRR [website](#).

### 1.1 Review team

Louise Wilkinson	Internal reviewer, SRR (review chair)
Perry Trattos	Peer reviewer
Valerie Hadgelias	External reviewer



## 1.2 School context

<b>Indigenous land name:</b>	Yuwi (Yuibera / Yuwibara)
<b>Location:</b>	Alfred Street, Mackay
<b>Education region:</b>	Central Queensland Region
<b>Year levels:</b>	Prep to Year 6
<b>Enrolment:</b>	193
<b>Indigenous enrolment percentage:</b>	35 per cent
<b>Students with disability percentage:</b>	12 per cent
<b>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</b>	920
<b>Year principal appointed:</b>	2017



### 1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, Head of Department – Curriculum (HOD-C), Head of Department – Student Services (HOD-SS), Business Manager (BM), Learning Support Teacher (LST), Diverse Learning (DL) teacher, eight teachers, early years coach, five teacher aides, administration officer, lead cleaner, schools officer, Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) executive representatives and two members, 87 students, and 19 parents and carers.

Community and business groups:

- Scripture Union (SU) chaplain, volunteer community chaplain, Indigenous community member, Adopt-a-Cop and The Smith Family local program coordinator.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Mackay State High School principal, and Mackay West State School principal and pedagogy coach.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Mayor of Mackay City Council, State Member for Mackay, Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) Central Queensland Region, Principal Advisor – Positive Behaviour for Learning (PA:PBL) Central Queensland Region and ARD.



## 2. Executive summary

### 2.1 Key findings

#### **Students speak highly of staff, with an appreciation of a ‘whatever it takes’ attitude to improve their learning and wellbeing.**

There is a school-wide belief that every student deserves a quality education, and staff members tailor supports to the needs of their students. Students, families, staff and community members consistently express pride in the school, acknowledging its historical significance in the local area. There is a sense of mutual trust and respect. This is supported by the 2021 School Opinion Survey (SOS) with high common positive agreement in survey items, including 100 per cent of students, parents and staff agreeing that ‘This is a good school’. School leaders identify the significance of staff wellbeing as an additional focus, identifying it as key to supporting a whole-school positive culture.

#### **School leaders articulate investment in their expert teaching team.**

A high priority is placed on the ongoing professional learning of staff members and the development of a school-wide self-reflective culture focused on improving classroom teaching. Teachers express a strong commitment to continuing to build their professional capability and precision of their practice. An established ethos of collaboration and teamwork among staff members is demonstrated, in addition to appreciation of the work of school leaders in driving improvement. The Annual Performance Development Plan (APDP) process occurs with all staff members. Teachers align their plans with the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) and the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL).

#### **The leadership team articulates a shared commitment to school improvement.**

School leaders work together, coordinating their efforts alongside staff members, to develop and deliver agreed whole-school approaches aiming for every student to learn and achieve their best. The school motto, ‘*Striving To Excel*’ exemplifies this effort. The principal works closely with a team of key staff members referred to as ‘Leaders of Learning’, some of whom are early into their leadership roles, to implement school priorities. The principal expresses a desire to collaboratively design a model of instructional leadership and build the team’s leader capabilities. Staff members express support for the school direction and acknowledge the school leaders guide them to ensure ‘everybody is on the same page’.

#### **School leaders identify the impact high-quality teaching and learning has on student achievement.**

Leaders view the continuing development of staff into an expert teaching team as central to improving outcomes for students. They are united in their belief that quality teaching is essential for ensuring that all students will succeed. High expectations for student learning demonstrated in classrooms are reflected in the whole-school approach to pedagogy documentation. Leaders identify the school is on a journey in pursuit of what they term as ‘powerful pedagogy’. They express a desire to provide teachers further opportunities to





explore new ideas on how to effectively deliver curriculum content, with a strong imperative of increasing student engagement in learning. School leaders identify that following this is a next step to consolidate the school's agreed repertoire of pedagogical practices and to quality assure their implementation.

**School leaders identify the right of every child to access education appropriate to their needs.**

There is an explicit whole-school expectation of differentiated teaching and learning across the school to support the learning of every student. The wide diversity of the student population is welcomed and embraced. Many students are from linguistically diverse backgrounds. Procedures are established to identify barriers to learning for groups and individuals, with tailored support processes. These are undertaken through a Response to Intervention (RTI) model, using four tiers of differentiation. Bandscales are used with students who speak Indigenous English as an Additional Language or Dialect (IEAL/D) and English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) learners to provide supports in developing their competency in Standard Australian English (SAE). Some targeted intervention occurs to support understanding, and participating in, classroom learning activities. Many teachers express a desire to strengthen their knowledge and skills to explicitly and actively teach SAE and respond to the learning needs of students from linguistically diverse backgrounds.

**A co-designed Yarning Circle takes pride of place at the front of the school.**

Intentionally positioned, this significant space was co-designed over a number of years with a school community reference group consisting of local Indigenous and non-Indigenous representatives, many of whom have a strong association with the school as former or current parents and staff. This space is regularly utilised by classes for reflection and self-regulation. Key members of the school and local community provide ongoing advice on culturally inclusive practices to assist teachers to engage Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students. Teachers identify they are exploring how to develop deeper connections and strengthen relationships with more parents and carers. School leaders and some staff members identify a need to expand their cultural capability and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures to embed perspectives in the school.

**The whole-school approach to collegial engagement is underpinned by a coaching and feedback framework.**

Leaders regularly engage with teachers individually and as a whole group to support quality planning and delivery of curriculum. They recognise there is a significant amount of expertise within the teaching team and support opportunities for colleagues to share their practice. Since the last review, protocols and processes for collegial engagement have been agreed to, documented and enacted. The school's coaching and feedback framework is acknowledged as adapted from an international model of instructional coaching with input from additional sources. The framework outlines learning walks and instructional coaching and how these are intended to operate. Some teachers indicate that they would welcome



more feedback on their teaching practices from colleagues and leaders. Many processes included in the framework are optional and full participation is yet to occur.

**The use of data with transparent processes informs school-level decisions, interventions and initiatives.**

Teachers and school leaders take full accountability to know and understand each student's progress. An extensive data review process led by school leaders is established. Rigorous strategies are developed to improve student attendance, learning, behaviour and wellbeing. The recently revised and approved data plan provides a comprehensive overview of the suite of data sets used in the school. It is clearly aligned to school and systemic priorities and clarifies the purpose, desired outcomes, responsibilities and timelines for data use. A 'collaborative review of student data' process occurs in a timely manner across the year. The goal of the collaborative review is to investigate achievement and improvement data to identify patterns of improvement and/or concern and inform current and/or future needs and directions.

**Community members articulate the school provides a much-needed educational facility of historical value in the centre of the city.**

Many community members identify the school as being at the heart of the community. Parents acknowledge that parent-teacher partnerships are strong, student-centred and respectful. Public confidence is expressed in the school's ability to meet the needs of a diverse range of students. School leaders demonstrate they have strategically built upon school-community partnerships for mutual benefit. Community partners express appreciation that their connections to the school further enhance their own reach to the community. An updated 2022 Parent and Community Engagement (PaCE) framework identifies partnerships with parents as critical in working with the school to improve student learning and wellbeing.





## 2.2 Key improvement strategies

Develop an instructional leadership model to drive the school's future Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA).

Develop a consolidated repertoire of agreed practices for the whole-school approach to pedagogy and build in systematic Quality Assurance (QA) processes in their implementation.

Further build teaching team capability in addressing the learning needs of IEAL/D and EAL/D students.

Expand staff members' cultural capabilities to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures in teaching and learning and develop stronger connections with more parents and carers.

Collaboratively develop a systematic process to actively engage all teachers with the coaching and feedback framework.