Dalyellup College

2015

Independent Review Findings
Disclaimer

This document reports the findings of the Department of Education Services' review and verification of the school's self-review. The school's self-review has been complemented by information provided by the Department of Education, the School Curriculum and Standards Authority and the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority.

The findings of the independent review are forwarded to the School Principal, the Board Chair, the Director General of Education and the Minister for Education.

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School and Review Details

Principal: Mr Jeff Macnish
Board Chair: Mr Alan Snow
School Location: Wake Drive, Dalyellup WA 6230
School Classification: SHS 6A
Number of Students: 779
Reviewers: Mr Kevin Pilkington (Lead) and Mr Greg Clune
Review Dates: 24, 25 and 26 June 2015

Purpose of the Review

The purpose of the independent review is to provide assurance to the school and its community, the Director General of Education and the Minister for Education on the extent to which the school has met its commitments as outlined in its Delivery and Performance Agreement (DPA) and associated Business Plan.

The focus of the review is on:

- how well the school has implemented self-review
- how well the school has improved student learning (achievement, progress and engagement) for all students
- how well the school has created an environment that promotes learning and student well-being
- how well the school is placed to sustain and improve its performance.
Review Methodology

The school has been required, under the DPA, to undertake annual self-assessments of its performance. The outcome of these assessments formed the basis for the school's self-review. The school sent its self-review documentation to the IPS Review Team, Department of Education Services one month prior to the commencement of the review.

The IPS reviewers supplemented the information provided by the school with information on the school's achievements, its processes and its student performance data from a number of sources which included:

- the My School® website
- the Department of Education School Performance Monitoring System
- Schools Online reports
- School Curriculum and Standards Authority Year 12 Student Achievement data.

Reviewers analysed the evidence presented in the school's self-review documentation and developed lines of inquiry where further verification was required.

An agenda for the two review visit days was subsequently negotiated with the school to enable the gathering of evidence to verify claims made by the school. During these two days the reviewers sourced evidence to support the school's self-review claims through observation and discussion with leaders, teaching and support staff, board members, parents and students. During the visit, the schools in the Dalyellup Cluster also met with the reviewers for the cluster self-review discussion.

The evidence provided by the school, along with information gathered by the reviewers prior to and during the review visits, was used as the basis for the verification of how well the school has met its commitments as outlined in the DPA and Business Plan.

This document reports on the findings of the independent review.
School Context

*What are the important features of this school's context that have an impact on student learning?*

Dalyellup College is located 160kms south of Perth in the Shire of Capel and in close proximity to the southern suburbs of Bunbury. Having developed from the fastest growing and largest primary school in the State and expanding to a kindergarten to Year 11 college, the final de-merger of the college into two primary schools and a separate Year 7 to 12 secondary facility occurred in 2013. At the same time, it became an Independent Public School as part of the Dalyellup IPS Cluster which includes Dalyellup College and two of the contributing primary schools, Dalyellup Primary School and Tuart Forest Primary School.

The campus and its facilities are state-of-the art as it has expanded to accommodate the rapid growth of the area. The campus was first occupied in 2009 and ever since has been undergoing a constant building program, concluding in 2015 with the completion of the $30 million Stage 2. Close collaboration between architects and educators has resulted in an enviable learning environment. Surrounded by native bush to the south and open playing spaces to the north, the college presents as an inviting modern facility.

Matching the facility standards has been the establishment of infrastructure that caters for the needs of the students. Curriculum offerings tailored to transition students from school to further education or the workforce have been developed and strong links established with community. Strong pastoral care structures are in place to support students in their emotional and social development. Information and communications technology (ICT) is a focus of the college and significant resources have been allocated to its establishment, maintenance and accessibility.

The demographics of the intake area have changed significantly in recent years with the opening of more land for housing estates in close-by locations, availability of affordable house and land package deals, an increase in rental properties available and the construction of public housing. In 2009, the Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) was 1019 and the distribution of families by quartile was skewed to the middle and top quarters with only 3% in the bottom quartile. The ICSEA in 2011 was 1030. In 2014, the ICSEA was 977 with the distribution skewed to the bottom two quartiles with 70% of families and only 7% in the top quartile.
The social impact of this in the college has been a need to significantly increase the resources allocated to student support and positive behaviour reinforcement.

Student numbers have trended upward as the college has taken on a new cohort each year until it reached Year 12 in 2013. Currently, there are 779 enrolments and this is expected to increase as the college's reputation for senior secondary provision increases. Students come predominately from white Anglo Saxon or largely mono-cultural background with 4.1% Aboriginal and less than 1% with English as an alternative language or dialect. Student attendance rate at 87.3% is above the State mean (86.9%) but, due to 47 students being in the severely at risk category for attendance, the college has identified this as an area of focus. A transiency rate of 20.3% is significant and reflective of the changing demographics. There are 22 students with a disability attracting Special Education Needs funding.

The college workforce has expanded each year since 2009 as enrolments have grown. The IPS flexibilities have been utilised to attract staff that suit the needs of the college community. The staff are representative of beginning career through to experienced teachers and collectively provide a stable and cohesive workforce.

The college has established effective partnerships with other educational organisations, community groups and agencies to better effect outcomes for students. Support for the placement of students in workforce learning, in particular, has been outstanding in the short time the college has had senior secondary students.

The effective Board is engaged in all aspects of the governance of the college. It has developed its understandings of fulfilling its responsibilities as described in the DPA and has a clear understanding of governance matters. The Board is representative of parents, staff and community. Most members have attended board training provided by the Department of Education. The Board meets four times per year and is well informed regarding student academic performance and financial matters.

The college is resourced in accordance with the guidelines of the student-centred funding model and associated allowances. Sound financial management has seen the development of programs and infrastructure that ensure students’ educational needs are met.
The School’s Self-Review Process

*How effective was the school’s self-review in accounting for its performance during the span on the DPA and Business Plan?*

The college has conducted extensive self-review against its Business Plan targets. The process is embedded in practice and is inclusive and collaborative of college leadership, teaching staff and the Board. Across the three-year span of the Business Plan, targets have been reviewed and modified in response to annual data analysis and judgement regarding the appropriateness of the target. In some cases, such as targets linked to student achievement in the Western Australian Monitoring Standards in Education (WAMSE) testing in science and society and environment, targets have had to be abandoned as the testing is no longer available. Reviewed targets have been restated in the annual operational plans of the college rather than in the published Business Plan.

Analysis of a broad range of data sources informed decision making, including: grade distributions; moderation; Student Achievement Information System (SAIS); National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN); Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE); the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR); post-school destinations, and satisfaction surveys. Rigorous analysis was conducted at whole-college, faculty and leadership levels that reflected on the data. Resultant identification of strengths, e.g., Vocational Education and Training (VET) and weaknesses, e.g., literacy and numeracy and appropriate responses were planned. The college discovered several of its stated targets were in fact strategies which made them difficult to measure in any meaningful way. For example, the target of introducing Positive Behaviour Support Approach (PBSA) is not a target in itself but a strategy to build a positive student learning environment.

As a result of its reflective self-review, the college was able to determine it is underachieving in student academic performance, particularly in comparison to like schools in Years 7–10. The ATAR achievement was poor overall; however, the number of ATAR students during the first two years the college has enrolled Year 12 students is insufficient to provide reliable data. The VET courses have been very successful and in 2014 the college achieved 100% WACE graduation and every student completed at least one Certificate II.
The college mantra of 'be your best' applies to all areas of academic and non-academic endeavour and is aspired to by the staff. Staff expectations are not always matched by student motivation and aspirations. The college acknowledges student achievement levels are not at acceptable levels and it has introduced processes and programs to support students to improve outcomes. The college leadership is very aware of its commitments to the DPA and in response to raising academic standards, has introduced a process of closely monitoring student performance in Years 11 and 12 at individual and cohort levels with quick intervention strategies introduced at the earliest signs of poor progress. Staff performance management processes are linked to the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) standards and also reflect the priorities of the Business Plan.

The reviewers affirm the staff's conclusion that there is a need to dramatically improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for students in Years 7–10.

The reviewers affirm the need to improve outcomes for ATAR students.

These two areas need to remain a clear focus in the priorities of the next Business Plan 2016–2018.
School Performance—Student Learning

*How well has the school performed in improving learning (achievement, progress and engagement) for all students?*

The leadership has made transparent analysis of the extent to which it has achieved its student learning targets. This analysis was presented to the staff and involved a collaborative and cooperative review of data. The staff is aware of the weaknesses verified through data analysis which shows students underperform academically. They have identified the need to lift standards which are linked to comparisons with like schools and Australian standards. Apart from WACE graduation and VET outcomes, no evident academic strengths were identified.

The NAPLAN data shows there has been progress from Year 7 to Year 9 but achievement remains below the Australian mean in all cases. Intervention strategies are in place to assist identified students. The Senior School Engagement Program (SSEP) and special needs programs provide meaningful opportunities for some students while the Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, Society (STEMS) and Academic Extension programs provide opportunity for able students to be challenged and extended in their learning.

Special education needs staff provide for 22 special needs students and 101 (12.9%) students with learning needs identified by diagnosed learning disability such as dyslexia and reports (all students with E grades in literacy and numeracy). A framework to promote academic and behavioural outcomes is used to implement a whole-college approach for these students through three tiers of support and/or intervention: Prevention (positive engagement), Intervention (behaviour support) and Individualised Support which includes involvement of external agencies. Students are, generally, integrated into mainstream classes with an individual education plan (IEP)—in 2015, 187 students are supported through an IEP—which is developed cooperatively with the teachers and managed by a case conference approach. Inclusivity is a strength of the college.

Aboriginal students have opportunity to participate in *Follow the Dream*, *Closing the Gap* and *UniChoice* (provided though Edith Cowan University) programs and are supported by an education assistant to monitor progress and coordinate engagement in programs.
Special programs to engage students are provided through the Bushrangers Cadets, specialist cricket, extension music and drama and a partnership with Bunbury Community Radio to establish specialist media studies.

The college provides courses and support strategies to maximise student potential.

The College Business Plan defines a number of targets related to student outcomes which are linked to the key priority of providing ‘success for all students—provide all students with the opportunity to achieve success’ with the following goals:

i. provide senior school opportunities that meet student needs and attract and retain enrolments at Dalyellup College

Target 1: The college aspires to have an attainment rate of 75% (percentage of students who achieve an ATAR of 55+ and/or completion of Certificate II or higher).

The target was achieved. The attainment rate increased from 81% in 2013 to 92% in 2014. In both years, these rates exceeded the State attainment rate. Processes, such as close monitoring of Grade Point Average, Year 10 Career Mentoring program, Senior School Mentoring program, SSEP, attention to student achievement and identification of at risk students through the use of progressive reports and focus on attendance, were contributing strategies to meet this target. Other data which will be useful for the college to use, once it has a statistically viable Year 12 cohort, will be the tricile information which will enable another discrete target to measure success. In 2014, although the cohort was very small and therefore lacked statistical validity, 79% of students were in the bottom tricile (compared to a State average of 48%). Overall ATAR performance for 2014 was well below expectations with median ATAR significantly below like schools and State medians.

Target 2: Retention of 85% or more of students into Year 11.

The target was achieved for 2015. In 2013, the drift to Manea College was a major factor in the loss of 25% of the Year 10 cohort. This rate was reduced to 13% for 2015. The continued high achievers program, with a range of strategies such as expanded offerings for WACE Stage 2 and 3 courses and VET certificate courses, targeted communication with Year 10 students and parents, provision and extension of the STEMS program to Years 7, 8 and 9
and provision of scholarships, were applied to encourage retention of students into Years 11 and 12.

**Target 3:** All senior school students achieve their potential and by 2015:

- aspire to have over 40% of ATAR students achieve one or more ‘A’ grades;
- aspire to have a school median ATAR score 80 or above;
- 100% of VET students achieve their certificate courses.

The college leadership indicated these were aspirational targets. The VET target was achieved; however, the ATAR targets were not achieved. The ‘loss’ of students to Manea College was significant insofar as more than half the Dalyellup College students who transferred for Year 11, 2014 were from the top cohort of the Academic High Achievers Programs and/or had achieved at Band 8 level in the NAPLAN in Year 9. Additional strategies to retain students and assist them achieve their potential included the appointment of Year 11 and 12 coordinators, additional tutoring (study skills, study camps, mentoring), regular engagement of ATAR students to monitor academic achievement and progress, provisional ATAR enrolment, setting course targets and making effective use of ATAR predictor scores, identifying students at risk of not achieving their potential, ongoing analysis through SAIS, Student Information Record System (SIRS), reporting to parents, ATAR predictor and monitoring attendance.

**Target 4:** To achieve 100% WACE graduation (Operational Plan 2014).

The target was achieved for 2014.

**ii. improve students’ achievement in literacy and numeracy**

The target was not achieved. Until 2013, the college was a Kindergarten to Year 12 school which enabled access to Year 5 and 7 NAPLAN data. From this, assessment indicated NAPLAN performance from Year 5 to 7 was below expected achievement in almost all areas, particularly writing and spelling. Improvement was evident from Year 7 to Year 9 where progress results are at or above expected achievement in most areas although overall achievement level remains below the Australian mean in all cases. Progress and achievement compared to like schools and WA public schools was low for both years, especially Year 7.
The decrease in performance from Year 5 to Year 7 provided focus for the college and highlighted a need to share performance information with primary schools from which students are drawn to address areas of weakness in Years 5, 6 and 7. ‘Best Performance’ software is used to facilitate data analysis and provide in-depth learning area analysis and identify priorities for literacy and numeracy for consistent cross-college application by all teachers. In 2015, a staff member has been trained in Best Performance data analysis.

In response to the NAPLAN data, the college’s focus is on reducing the gap between the college mean scores and the Australian mean scores. The college plans to establish a data analysis committee to provide advice for the direction of priorities and strategies for improvement. A NAPLAN improvement plan was formulated using evidence-based accountability measures to demonstrate the identified priorities and strategies are implemented with teachers required to provide work samples, assessment items and other evidence as part of their implementation of the plan. Learning area operational plans are required to include these priorities as an accountability measure. All staff are provided with NAPLAN data analysis at professional development days on a whole-staff and learning area basis.

Target 5: Raise the school mean for NAPLAN (literacy) Year 9 in 2014 to be equal to or above the Australian mean.

Comprehensive analysis shows the college has been consistently and significantly below both State and Australian means from 2011 to 2014. The widest gap (in mean scores) has been in spelling, reading and writing. While there has been improvement in spelling from Year 7 to Year 9, the gap between college mean and other means remains and needs to be reduced.

The College Literacy Committee has identified specific areas of literacy weakness, starting with paragraphing and spelling, which are targeted through a college-wide literacy plan to improve outcomes. Various strategies were implemented to help improve these outcomes and included a specific cross-college approach to spelling in Years 7 to 10 and use of the Diana Rigg and Most Common Words programs, the South Australian Spelling Tests A and B to provide additional benchmark data, longitudinal analysis on a term-by-term basis and monitoring through common assessment. These strategies were supplemented by staff training to develop skills in literacy assessment.
Annual operational plans for each learning area incorporate these targets. Financial constraints for 2015 precluded the ongoing appointment of a literacy specialist teacher to work with identified students and assist teachers focus on key elements of each element of the NAPLAN test. There was staff consensus this appointment had been beneficial.

**Target 6:** Reduce the number of students receiving a D Grade in English on semester Report (Operational Plan 2014)

The target was achieved.

**Target 7:** Raise the school mean for NAPLAN (numeracy) Year 9 in 2014 to be equal to or above the Australian mean.

Numeracy results show achievement is well below the State and Australian means with a college mean score 21 points below the national mean. Grade analysis highlighted a wide spread for numeracy with 54% of students below the expected standard for Year 9 (2013 data). Best Performance 2014 NAPLAN analysis identified Dalyellup College students performed below expectation with common areas of weakness particularly in decimals. While there is improvement from Year 7 to Year 9, with results at or above expected achievement levels in most areas, the overall achievement level is below the Australian mean in all cases. Whole-college strategies focus on development of staff skills, incorporating decimal applications in lessons and assisting students to perform calculations without the use of a calculator (in preparation for Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment [OLNA]).

**iii. establish a culture of excellence and success**

**Target 8:** Establish a commitment to excellence and a culture of success.

The target is ongoing with sound progress. Strategies have been implemented to promote achievement of this goal. A High Academic Achievers Program across Years 7 to 10 emphasises the college’s commitment to best possible achievement for students. Curriculum development and pedagogy are designed to maximise student engagement to reach their full potential.

Grade Point Average informs course selection in Years 11 and 12 and other assessment data are utilised to monitor student progress and achievement. The STEMS program, with an emphasis on investigation, problem solving and informational literacy, further promotes the development of a culture of excellence and success. Learning area plans set clear staff expectations and
standards for teaching and learning. Trialling of the Connect software program will provide opportunity for teachers, parents and students to communicate directly via the internet and allow accurate and timely access for parents and students to monitor progress and outcomes. Student survey data confirms staff have high expectations for achievement and standards and provides insights (such as perceptions of the management of student behaviour) for teachers regarding expectations, standards, engagement and effectiveness of pedagogy.

**Target 9: Identify students at risk and provide a differentiated curriculum to meet their needs.**

The target is ongoing. Various data sources (NAPLAN, SAIS, intellectual diagnosis and reports) provide information to identify students for whom individual education plans are developed. Lists of students at educational risk are maintained and IEPs modified by the Learning Support Coordinator. Provision of four structured pathways, plus the SSEP, for senior years reflects a commitment to meeting diverse interests and abilities.
School Performance—Quality of the Learning Environment

How well has the school performed in creating an environment that promotes learning and well-being for all students and the attainment of the school vision?

The college vision challenges students to 'Dream Believe Achieve' and to 'be your best' which is encompassed in a commitment to excellence, achievement and success for all students. Decision making is informed by data which includes academic benchmarking and surveys. Use of Best Performance analysis enables focused planning and development of strategies to address components of learning at cohort and individual student levels.

A whole-college commitment to improving literacy and numeracy outcomes supports efforts to achieve these targets. The Positive Behaviours Support (PBS) approach promotes attainment of the college vision. Operational and learning area plans include reference to standards and expectations. Students are supported to develop their potential through IEPs and the academic extension classes (Year 10) and the STEMS classes (Years 7 to 9). In the senior years, four academic pathways are offered to maximise the possibility of success for each student. Information provided by the college and confirmed by parents shows course counselling is thorough and indicates a commitment to high standards.

Throughout the college, there are structures to support all students. A highly committed and effective student services team works to ensure the holistic needs of students are met in a safe and supportive environment. Student mental health has been identified as a significant area of risk. Staff training in dealing with mental health issues has been provided for 32 staff who are now equipped to apply effective mental health strategies in the college. Specific programs include a social growth program conducted by the Dreambuilders Church, Drumbeat (Year 7), Brain Ambulance (for which the college was a pilot school) and a Royal Perth Hospital program for the prevention of risk-related trauma for youth. Agencies which are engaged to provide additional support include Youth Focus, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Headspace, Relationships Australia and Waratah Support Centre. A full-time chaplain and a part-time psychologist are available to support students. Partnership with Foodbank supports a daily breakfast club conducted through the canteen. A Year 6 to 7 transition program helps students make the move to secondary education.
An in-school mentoring program is provided by community volunteers to assist individual senior students with motivation, learning and career advice. The work of the Student Services Team is supplemented through year heads who provide individual support, recognition and advocacy for students. The year heads identify students at risk of failing and establish contact with parents. The Student Services Team is proactive and constantly refines its processes in order to improve its provision for students.

The Student Services Team and the programs to support the holistic well-being of students are commended.

Communication with parents is comprehensive through the website, Facebook, college app and newsletter. Parent survey responses were minimal and insufficient to draw any conclusions. Discussion with a group of parents identified strengths of the college from their perspective as the approachability of staff, their prompt response to parent queries and regular reporting. Parents believe the college accommodates the needs of their children in a safe and supportive environment which promotes high expectations for all. A particular observation was made of the outstanding support provided for one student who enrolled in the SSEP with the result his experience as a student has been positively transformed and illustrates the college’s commitment to addressing the needs of every student. There is a Parent and Citizens’ Association which is ‘gradually developing’ as a point of reference for engagement and communication with parents. Parent satisfaction with the college is sound.

Student survey data from 2014 highlights areas of satisfaction, including, that the college has high expectations for students and areas for discernment such as management of student behaviour, reinforcement of high expectations and provision of academic support. Student leaders reported satisfaction with the provision of pathways, choices and the support and guidance of teachers and year heads when required. Relationships between students and teachers are positive. Their perspective is: ‘our school is our community’ and have a strong desire for Dalyellup College to be highly regarded. They are eager to be involved, to lead and to support the college with its improvement agenda.

Partnerships have been established with a range of community and external agencies which enhance student outcomes. In addition to those detailed earlier in this report, the college has links with the South West Institute of Technology, Edith Cowan University and providers of work placement for students in VET and SSEP programs.
The college provides diverse opportunities for differentiated student learning in a supportive, safe and inclusive environment.

The Business Plan established targets under the key priority of a ‘Safe and supportive learning environment’ with the goal to “Provide an environment that meets the needs of staff and student’s physical, social and emotional well-being”.

**Target 10: Implement the Positive Behaviour Support Approach during 2013.**

This is a strategy intended to promote a consistent approach to establishing a positive culture based on mutual respect and a sense of belonging within a safe and supportive learning environment to promote academic and behavioural success. The target was achieved.

Implementation of the PBS approach has been a primary focus of the college since 2013. A PBS committee was formed to lead and monitor a consultative implementation process. All teaching staff were to complete some or all stages of Classroom Management Strategies (CMS) and non-teaching staff were to be provided with opportunity to develop understanding and skills of CMS. Clearly defined behaviour expectations were defined which would apply to staff and students alike. Student workshops were held prior to the introduction of PBS in March 2014. A school evaluation tool is used to audit the progress of PBS. The PBS initiative was supported by over 80% of staff and the three PBS expectations and matrix have been completed and implemented. Current review of the PBS implementation indicates support has waned and the application may be adjusted to better suit the needs of staff and the age and maturity of students.

Other programs have been introduced to supplement the PBS and CMS processes including *Youth Focus, Strength and Shine* (which supports and empowers boys with life skills), Police visits, “Bullying No Way” Campaign, Restorative Practice, Year 7 Orientation Day, Mental Health and PBS training.

Ongoing discernment and training remain important aspects of embedding PBS in the college.

**Target 11: Increase the percentage of students whose attendance levels are 90% or better.**

Analysis for Semester 2, 2014 shows the attendance rate was 87% with a range from 91% (Year 7) to 84% (Years 9 and 10).
Regular attendance was 51% (and below the WA Public Schools rate) with indicated and moderate risk rates of 28% and 13%. The severe risk rate was 6%. The regular rate declined from 62% in 2013. Numerically, there were a large number of students in the moderate (85) and severe (47) categories for whom attendance plans and parent conferences are required. The attendance rate for Aboriginal students was 87% which is the same as like schools and comparable to the WA public schools average.

The college has implemented a number of strategies to address attendance including the appointment of a deputy principal—attendance (0.2FTE), more stringent follow up by Connect (Home Room) teachers and year coordinators, positive reinforcement, regular monitoring and behaviour management of students in the 80–90% range while those in the 60–80% range are contacted daily. Case management conferences are held with students who fall below 70% attendance and an attendance plan developed. Processes for monitoring and follow-up of student attendance are comprehensive. Student transiency is over 20% and suspensions are 13%. Data for 2015 indicates the attendance rate “hovers below 90%” but the downward trend has been arrested with substantial improvement in Semester 1, 2015 (from 51% in Semester 2, 2014 to 68.4%) and reduction in the 80–89% (down from 28% to 19%) and 60–79% (down from 13% to 8%) categories. Numbers of ‘at-risk severe’ remain significant and require targeted intervention; ‘at-risk indicated’ are high but this number is influenced by short-term holidays taken during term time.

Target 12: Provide a safe, positive and inclusive working environment.

The target was achieved and is ongoing. It is a qualitative target intended to ensure there is understanding of the principles of diversity, equity and equality and to maintain a positive response to the ethos and aesthetic environment of the college. The PBS is a key strategy contributing to the achievement of this target. Implementation of Occupational Safety and Health procedures is a strategy to assist meeting the target. The college has created a mission and ethos statement as part of its Business Plan while the PBS defines clear expectations for students and staff. Annual survey data provides some evidence indicating the extent to which the target is met. Student survey data rates ‘feeling safe’ as 3.6 (a five point scale) and students and staff rate ‘student behaviour is well managed’ as lower than expected. This is an evolving process through which school leaders believe a safe and positive environment is provided for students.
School Performance—Sustainability

*How well placed is the school to sustain and improve its performance into the next planning cycle?*

An annual cycle of review has been developed by the college that encourages rigorous analysis of data relating to student performance at an individual, group and cohort level. The use of ‘Best Performance’ data analysis for NAPLAN results (Years 7 and 9) enables very fine-grain analysis at the individual level. The skilling of all staff to access this information is a work in progress. Review of student performance is conducted continuously in each learning area with heads of learning areas providing detailed annual written analyses to the leadership team which forms the basis of review discussions. Planning a response to address identified areas of weakness may be at the learning area level or in the case of literacy and numeracy, whole-school approaches are being introduced. Senior school students are monitored very closely and intervention is available to support every underperforming student. Year coordinators and teaching staff keep a close watch, particularly on ATAR students, and work with the students and parents to get the best outcome.

The College Board receives quality information in the form of summarised student academic results and analysis and detailed financial information. The Board demonstrated a sound understanding of where the college is currently positioned in terms of student academic progress and where it aspires to be. Its skill in interpreting and interrogating the data presented to it is developing as it gains more exposure and practice. The Board has met the requirements of the DPA by being involved in the production and review of the Business Plan, annual reports, college finance oversight and the annual cycle of college self-review. The Board has recently conducted review of its own performance and has highlighted several areas that can be improved upon which include: formalising the process of induction of new members and providing a structure that ensures the new member is fully aware of the individual responsibilities and those of the Board; meeting twice per term rather than once in order to allow the Board to address more business in greater detail, and shorter meeting times.

The leadership model fostered in the college is one of distributed leadership with clear roles and responsibilities. Many aspirant young teachers have taken advantage of opportunities made available through year coordinator and program coordinator positions. The multi-layered structure of leadership ensures mentoring of new leaders and succession planning.
The college is relatively new in terms of establishing a culture of continuous improvement amongst staff and students. Reflection on ‘how good is good enough?’ in terms of personal and student achievement is a topic for leadership to consider. Responsibility and accountability for continued under-performance by students in academic outcomes has been accepted by staff only since the detailed analysis of data has been undertaken at a whole-school level and the adoption of whole-school solutions. Students are yet to adopt the philosophy of ‘be your best’ even though it is a college ethos embedded in PBS.

The college has been strategic in its recruitment of experienced mid-career teachers in partnership with enthusiastic, predominately young, early career teachers. Together, they are moulding the emerging culture of the college. The staff cite their cohesiveness and collaboration as one of the identified strengths of the college. Leadership of the college acknowledges the pathway to improving student learning is to improve teacher quality. With this as a focus, improved performance management practices and peer mentoring target building the capacity of all staff. The establishment of a common pedagogical approach across the college to address the issues identified in literacy are affirmed by the reviewers. The college has a well-constructed workforce plan which identifies future requirements and the skill sets required by its teaching personnel to best meet the needs of students.

The college is well positioned to maintain current programs and initiatives. The new physical surrounds are state-of-the-art and no part of the college is older than six years providing enviable facilities and resources for staff and students. Staff are aware that financial constraints mean the effectiveness of all programs must be continually monitored to ensure the best value is being gained for each dollar spent. The withdrawal of a literacy support teacher role in 2015 was cited as an example of a regrettable but unavoidable outcome of budget cuts. They indicated that, as enrolment increases in future years, so will the amount of available resources.

The leadership and Board of the college have learnt from the experience of measuring progress against the 2013–2015 Business Plan that targets need to be clear, measurable, benchmarked, timed and challenging but achievable. In planning for the construction of the 2016–2018 Business Plan, the college leadership has embarked on refining the priorities to three priority areas and associated targets with a sharper focus on specific, measurable outcomes that will reflect student progress. The reviewers affirm the planning and process proposed for the construction of the 2016–2018 Business Plan.
School and Cluster Performance

Has the cluster met its intended purpose and supported improved student learning?

The Dalyellup Cluster, consisting of Dalyellup College, Dalyellup Primary School and Tuart Forest Primary School, was formed, according to the principals and board chairs, with the intent of heightening the chances of all three schools becoming independent public schools in 2013. To that end, the cluster was successful and achieved its key purpose. Stated intents of the cluster were to share resources, professional development of staff, establish a seamless K–12 curriculum and provide strong pastoral care through structured transition from primary to secondary school.

The cluster does not have in place any formal structures that give oversight to the achievement of the intents. There is no formal structure, no Cluster Business Plan and little documentation relating to the operations of the cluster over the period of the DPA. Evidence provided to the reviewers of cluster operations consisted of the minutes of two meetings held over a year apart.

The cluster representatives were able to give examples of cooperation and collaboration between the schools that are taking place at an informal level. Examples cited include transition programs, sharing of an ICT technician, cross-school band, common professional development days and sharing of a languages teacher. Anecdotally, the cluster was stronger in the early days of becoming an IPS but, as the schools have grown and become more complex, less effort has gone into maintaining cluster connections. The schools currently network together in a manner reflective of the informal structures in place between most secondary schools and their contributing primary schools.
Conclusion

Dalyellup College has experienced rapid growth and associated complexity in its first three years as an IPS. The college has been diligent in meeting its requirements under the DPA as it establishes itself as a new secondary school in a highly competitive market place. It has rapidly developed a strength in vocational education and established strategic partnerships with surrounding tertiary education organisations and the community.

Targets of the current Business Plan relating to student learning in ATAR and NAPLAN largely are unmet but the college has acknowledged this through its self-review and future planning focuses on these areas. A refined Business Plan for 2016–2018 will give sharper attention to student achievement and within the college strategic programs and processes, will support the achievement of these outcomes. The building of the capacity of staff is recognised by the college as the key to improving teaching and learning. This requires adequate resource allocation to support staff in their professional learning and acceptance of accountability by staff for student achievement.

The Dalyellup Cluster is inactive in a formal sense but the three schools continue to participate in a collaborative network.

Commendations

The following area is commended:

a highly committed and effective student services team which works to ensure the holistic needs of students are met in a safe and supportive environment.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas for improvement are identified:

- literacy and numeracy outcomes for students in Years 7-10
- outcomes for ATAR students.
Declaration

We, the undersigned, hereby confirm that the information provided in this findings document is to the best of our knowledge true and correct and is based on the verification of the evidence provided by Dalyellup College as part of the Department of Education Services' independent review process. The Principal and Board Chair have had an opportunity to comment on any matters of fact contained within this document.

19 August 2015

Date

Kevin Pilkington, Lead Reviewer

18 August 2015

Date

Greg Clune, Reviewer

2/9/15

Date

Mr Richard Strickland, Director General, Department of Education Services