



School Improvement Unit Report

Ipswich State High School Executive Summary



1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Ipswich State High School from 3 to 6 May 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:	Hunter Street, Brassall
Education region:	Metropolitan Region
The school opened in:	1961
Year levels:	Year 7 to Year 12
Current school enrolment:	1532
Indigenous enrolments:	16.25 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	6.7 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	929
Year principal appointed:	2005
Number of teachers:	107 (full-time equivalent)
Nearby schools:	Bremer State High School, Bundamba State Secondary College, Brassall State School, Ipswich North State School, Blair State School, Tivoli State School, Karalee State School
Significant community partnerships:	PW Dance Sportswear, Mission Australia, Ipswich Police Citizens Youth Club (PCYC), University of Southern Queensland (USQ), Riverlink, Inala and Brisbane Youth Justice, View Fitness and King Fu Academy, Bekznailz, Brush and Blush, Naploeon Perdiss, Cronulla Sharks National Rugby League (NRL) Club
Unique school programs:	Department of Education (DET) Program of Excellence in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), Dance, Hair and Beauty, Rugby League, Young Families Connect, Ipswich Trade Training Centre and Queensland Pathways College



1.3 Review methodology

The review was conducted by a team of four 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
- a school visit of four days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
 - Principal and three deputy principals
 - Head of Special Education Services (HOSES) and 11 Heads of Department (HODs)
 - 47 teachers
 - Two guidance officers
 - Four teacher aides
 - Business Services Manager (BSM) and two administration officers
 - School facilities officer, grounds officer and one cleaning staff member
 - 101 students
 - President of Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) and 11 parents
 - Principals of Brassall State School, Ipswich North State School, Tivoli State School, Churchill State School
 - Federal Member for Ipswich, Mr Shayne Neumann
 - Four business and community representatives

1.4 Review team

Jenny Maier	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Barry Courtney	Internal reviewer, SIU
Tony Fuller	Internal reviewer, SIU
Tony McGruther	External Reviewer



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The school demonstrates a strong sense of social justice, which is espoused by school leaders and enacted by all staff members.

The school tone is calm and positive, and classes are purposeful. Staff members and students are proud of their school and happy to be there. Students acknowledge the array of opportunities and experiences offered by the school and that staff members are caring and supportive in the learning process. The school has a well-structured, highly functional student services team.

- The school leadership team is united in its commitment to improvement in student achievement, which is demonstrated in a range of innovative structures and programs serving the diversity of the student population.

The school is acknowledged by the educational community for its creative responses to historical low levels of student attainment and standards of learning engagement.

- The school has a focus on improving attendance.

A number of strategies are employed to promote attendance for all students. An intensive case management approach for students with low attendance is occurring.

- The school has articulated a narrow agenda for improvement in three priority areas: reading, quality teaching and community engagement.

Improvement targets are expressed in terms of teacher participation, with some related to student achievement levels. Staff members, in junior secondary, report a need to understand the process for the developmental teaching of reading and the tracking of progressive achievement in the full range of reading skills.

- The development of a shared vision for quality teaching across the school is articulated in the Annual Implementation Plan 2016.

A systematic approach to the implementation of a pedagogical framework is being developed. A staff handbook, including the Quality Teaching @IHS Framework, and supporting information is developed to assist this process. Staff members indicate a lack of clarity in the existing pedagogical framework document.

- The leadership team views data as essential to their effective leadership of the school and data-informed pedagogy is emerging.

Data is used predominantly to inform class composition and starting points for teachers, rather than diagnostically, to inform them of student progress over the shorter term, and relating to specific teaching strategies. Teachers report that their expertise in the purposeful use of data for measuring student success and informing teaching practice is an area for development.



- The school has developed and is implementing a professional learning program aligned with the school's improvement priorities.

A professional learning calendar outlines the programs offered at the school. These programs involve whole-of-school, faculty and other team groups working through a range of professional learning activities, supported by a coaching and peer mentoring model.

- The school leadership team makes strategic use of partnerships with local businesses and community organisations to support many innovative practices and programs within the school setting.

Effort is invested in understanding students' needs and identifying appropriate partners to address those needs. The systematic evaluation of the ongoing relevance and success of partnerships is not yet established.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Express improvement priorities, in terms of aspired student achievement, that are aggregated from student goals, faculty and school targets. Develop and implement an agreed whole-school plan to monitor student progress towards these targets.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy for the explicit teaching of reading that builds on students' prior experience. Align the explicit practice of key strategies, the routine monitoring of achievement and the celebration of milestones for staff members and students with the community.
- Review and revise the whole-school attendance strategy to ensure that it encompasses all students in all attendance ranges. Regularly communicate and celebrate attendance milestones with the school community.
- Collaboratively review the Quality Teaching @ISHS Framework to agree on and define expected teaching practices, ensuring understanding among teachers.
- Develop a strategic whole-school plan for professional learning, aligned with the school improvement agenda and individual Performance Development Plans (PDPs), which connects purpose, structure, monitoring and intended outcomes.
- Review the range of assessment practices, including the types and purpose, timeliness and analysis, and their effectiveness in the improvement of student engagement and achievement. Strengthen the capacity of teachers to use this data to inform teaching practice.