



Department of  
Education

**Shaping the future**

# Southern Cross District High School

## Public School Review

# Public School Review

## Purpose

All Western Australian public schools are reviewed by the Department of Education's Public School Accountability directorate. A review gives assurance to the local community, the Minister for Education and Training and the Director General about the performance of public schools in delivering high quality education to students. The review acknowledges the achievements of the school and gives feedback to support the Principal and staff with their improvement planning.

Initially conducted on a 3 year cycle, subsequent reviews are determined to occur on a one, 3 or 5 year timeframe.

The Principal provides the review team with a self-assessment of the school's performance based on evidence from the school. Information to be validated by the review team is considered before and during the school visit. This forms the basis for the Public School Review report and determines when the next review will occur. The report is provided to the Principal and the regional Director of Education.

## Expectations of schools

The Statement of Expectation (the Statement) makes clear and public the expectations and responsibilities of schools and the Department of Education (the Department) in student achievement and progress.

The Statement is between; the Department, represented by the Director General; the school, represented by the Principal; and is noted by the school council/board, represented by the Chair.

The Statement sets out the expectations of Principals in relation to the delivery of the 2020-2024 strategic directions *Every student, every classroom, every day*, and *Building on Strength*.

The Statement will underpin each school's strategic planning and self-assessment and will form part of the school's Public School Review. It will also support the Principal Professional Review.

## Public School Review – The Standard

A Standard has been developed across the domains of the School Improvement and Accountability Framework to describe essential indicators of performance. The selection of the indicators is based on literature research and historical reviews of school performance in Western Australian public schools.

The purpose is to better ensure that judgements about student performance are standardised and objective. Indicators describe what is evident in schools functioning 'as expected' within each domain.

The Standard defines the expected level of school performance. Judgements are made in relation to the Standard. External validation is also based on evidence presented relating to the Standard.

For further information or resources in alternative formats for people with accessibility needs, please contact [PublicSchoolAccountability.PublicSchoolReview@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:PublicSchoolAccountability.PublicSchoolReview@education.wa.edu.au)

## Context

Southern Cross District High School is located approximately 370 kilometres east of Perth, within the Wheatbelt Education Region.

The school has an Index of Community and Socio-Educational Advantage rating of 925 (decile 8).

It currently enrolls 58 students from Kindergarten to Year 9.

Southern Cross District High School became an Independent Public School in 2017. The school has the support of a Parent & Citizens' Association (P&C) and a School Board.

The first Public School Review of Southern Cross District High School was conducted in Term 1, 2019. This 2023 Public School Review report provides a current point of reference for the next cycle of school improvement.

## School self-assessment validation

The Principal submitted a comprehensive and rigorous school self-assessment.

The following aspects of the school's self-assessment process are confirmed:

- A culture of reflective school self-assessment, as the foundation for effective planning and continuous improvement, was evident at strategic and operational levels.
- Collaborative processes have underpinned the school self-assessment in preparation for the Public School Review. Led by the administration team, all staff reflected on the school's performance and planned actions for improvement for each domain of the Standard.
- The Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission was constructed in alignment with the Standard. An overview document was submitted outlining the judgement, evidence and improvement plans for each domain and foci of the Standard.
- A significant representation of well-informed and enthusiastic staff, students, parents and community partners contributed to the validation day discussions, providing authentic reflections in support of the school's self-assessment.
- The school's leadership reported the Public School Review was a positive experience that has extended their understanding of the school's performance and enabled them to celebrate their progress and achievements and to identify areas for development.

The following recommendations are made:

- Continue to engage all staff and stakeholders in regular and collaborative school self-assessment processes aligned to planning.
- Consider a more succinct ESAT submission that distils the selection of analysed evidence, judgement and identification of future improvement actions that have the most impact on student achievement and progress.

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### Relationships and partnerships

The school is active in its commitment to developing community connections and partnerships for the benefit of all. Staff demonstrate a strong moral purpose and build positive relationships with students and families to support ongoing success.

#### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Collaboration between staff is highly valued and is building a culture of collective efficacy. Time is dedicated to whole-school collaborative meetings and professional learning communities (PLCs) that lead literacy and numeracy.
- Parents report communication is a strength. The school has an informative website, uses emails and text messaging, and has an open-door policy to encourage face to face meetings.
- Partnerships have been established with a variety of organisations and businesses including the Western Australian Police Force, Shire of Yilgarn and the local hardware store. Strong collaboration with Moorine Rock Primary School and Saint Joseph's Catholic Primary School extend educational opportunities for staff and students.
- The School Board and P&C are effective in connecting the school to its community. The Board provides good governance and valued feedback to drive the strategic direction of the school.
- A range of survey data from staff, students and the community, is used to inform school culture and monitor levels of engagement and satisfaction.

#### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue efforts to harness feedback from families and establish lines of enquiry in response to the information collected.
- Explore opportunities for new Board membership to reflect the diversity of the community and continue to build the capacity of members through induction and training.

### Learning environment

An ethos of care sits at the foundation of the school's safe, positive and supportive learning environment. Students have a voice in the classroom and playground and are provided opportunity to be agents in their own learning.

#### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Revitalisation of Positive Behaviour Support is providing consistent messaging and language in relation to behaviour and students are rewarded for following the school expectations.
- Processes are established to ensure that students at educational risk are identified and supported in their learning in consultation with parents. Staff have received training from the Schools of Special Educational Needs to enhance their ability to support all students at times of additional need.
- Reflections aligned to the Aboriginal Culture Standards Framework inform plans that drive and embed culturally responsive practices. With the engagement of families and local partnerships, totem poles have been painted reflecting Aboriginal culture and the schools' values.
- Staff consider colleagues as part of a school family. They support each other's wellbeing through social opportunities and regularly checking on each other in and outside of school.

#### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Establish and embed social and emotional wellbeing processes and programs to support students with a particular emphasis on mental health for secondary students.
- Investigate strategies to encourage attendance based on student voice and structuring the day to include high engagement activities.

## Leadership

Led by a committed leadership team, the school has clearly defined its vision, values and school direction. Strategic alignment drives an improvement agenda, focused on maximising the academic, social and emotional outcomes of students.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- There are frequent opportunities for staff to undertake leadership positions. Aspirant leaders are identified, supported and valued. Transparent processes build capacity through mentorship and planning for leadership development.
- Change is considered and implemented strategically, following a Change2 model. Staff are supported with professional learning, mentoring and coaching. Feedback is welcome throughout the implementation with support provided in a timely manner.
- The strategic leadership of literacy and numeracy is provided by leaders of PLCs who, with the support of the Principal and deputy principal, develop and monitor operational plans.
- Staff are engaged in the development of the new business plan and operational plans based on student data. With a clear focus on improvement, there is an increasing alignment between these plans, resourcing, planned units of work and classroom practice.
- There is a clear intent to develop instructional skills with alignment to Teaching for Impact and low variance practice. Teachers engage with professional learning, collaboration and planning in response to strategic targets and data analysis.

### Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Leaders provide instructional support for staff through observation and feedback to ensure programs are delivered with fidelity, with a focus on consistency and low variance teaching and adherence to the whole school instructional model.

## Use of resources

A trusting and productive relationship between the Principal and manager corporate services (MCS) ensures planning, management and monitoring processes for the use of resources are aligned to school operations. There is a clear intent to ensure resources are deployed in a targeted way to optimise learning outcomes for all students.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Sound processes and practices are established for managing financial and human resources. An effective Finance Committee assists with financial oversight. The Board is kept well informed of the school's financial management processes and spending priorities.
- Workforce planning is proactive and responsive to the priorities of the school, acknowledging student needs, the impacts of staffing and changes to enrolments.
- A strategic approach has been taken to the management of the school's ICT<sup>1</sup>, including the engagement of a visiting network support technician. A comparative assessment has been undertaken on purchasing versus leasing of equipment based on student needs and affordability.
- Reserve accounts and schedules for the timely replacement and purchase of assets and resources are being effectively managed.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Ensure resources and time are allocated to the Fogarty EDvance transformation program to enable all of the leadership team to participate.
- Continue the succession plan to develop the skills and knowledge of a school officer to support and relieve the MCS as required.

## Teaching quality

On an informed practice journey, the school is placing a high priority on teaching quality, with professional learning and collaborative practice as key drivers in engaging all staff in the learning culture.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Engagement with Fogarty EDvance for 2024 demonstrates a commitment to school improvement based on shared beliefs about teaching and learning and embedding school-wide practices.
- Time is dedicated to the interrogation of data where the leadership team support staff to understand, analyse and use a range of school based and systemic data to inform planning.
- The work of education assistants is highly valued in providing instructional support for students to achieve.
- The introduction of VET<sup>2</sup> certificate courses for Years 9 and 10 support students with pathways towards further training beyond the school.
- A professionally safe culture is established creating the environment for effective classroom observation and feedback through coaching.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Proceed with the intent to establish a simultaneous, uninterrupted literacy block for all years at the start of each day.
- Continue to embed the whole-school instructional model ensuring all teachers are committed and that classroom observations and feedback processes strengthen quality teaching. Prioritise consistency in the delivery of daily reviews.
- Establish and implement with fidelity, a Response to Intervention tiered model for support, based on student achievement data and utilising evidence based practice.

## Student achievement and progress

Systemic and some school-based data is used to monitor trends in student achievement and progress. Student achievement is an area the school is seeking to improve with all staff sharing responsibility for progress.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Individual tracking of student achievement is enabling the monitoring of progress, identification of students for additional support and provides a valuable tool for transition at the end of the year.
- In recognition of the need to improve achievement in literacy, a specialist teacher has been employed to support students and staff.
- Reading and Mathematics Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT) along with Australian Early Development Census, On-entry Assessment, and Student Achievement Information System data is reviewed and analysed to identify areas of achievement and planning for improvement.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Develop clear protocols of testing procedures for administering PAT. Support staff to implement the protocols ensuring students appreciate the value in receiving meaningful information about their achievement.
- Further moderation processes by providing cross-school opportunities to support teachers in ensuring comparability of student achievement and grade allocation. Consider using Brightpath to support writing moderation.
- Extend the function of the assessment schedule by including the purpose of assessments with clear and accountable processes for analysing the data collected and recommendations for improvement.

## Reviewers

Craig Skinner  
**Director, Public School Review**

Adrian Lister  
**Principal, Beverley District High School  
Peer Reviewer**

## Endorsement

Based on this report, I endorse the commendations and recommendations made by the review team regarding your school's performance.

You will receive formal notification in the 2 terms leading up to your school's next scheduled review. This notification will be provided in 2026.



Melesha Sands  
**Deputy Director General, Schools**

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## Reference

- 1 Information and communications technology
- 2 Vocational Education and Training