



Department of
Education

GOVERNMENT OF
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Southern Cross District High School

Public School Review

April 2019



PUBLIC SCHOOL REVIEW

Purpose

All Western Australian public schools are reviewed every three years 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 that a school is operating effectively and delivering high quality education to its students. The review acknowledges the achievements of the school and gives feedback to support the principal and staff with their improvement planning.

The principal provides the review team with a self-assessment of the school's performance based on evidence gathered by the principal and staff. Information validated by the review team is considered before and during the school visit. This forms the basis for the school review report. The report is provided to the principal, the chair of the school board/council and the Regional Executive Director.

Expectations of schools

For all Western Australian public schools, expectations are set out in either: the Delivery and Performance Agreement, which is an agreement between the Department (represented by the Director General), school (represented by the principal) and school board (represented by the school board chair); or, the Principals' Statement of Expectations and the Funding Agreement for Schools.

School performance rating

This performance rating is based on information gained from the self-assessment submission and the validation process. It is focussed on a review of the following areas of school performance: relationships and partnerships; learning environment; leadership; use of resources; teaching quality; and student achievement and progress.

The school's performance rating is:

	Effective
	The school demonstrates effective practice in creating the conditions required for student success.

✓	Needs Improvement
	The school has aspects of its practice below expectations and needs supported action to improve student success.

Context

Southern Cross District High School is located approximately 368 kilometres east of Perth and 227 kilometres west of Kalgoorlie in the Wheatbelt Education Region.

The school, with an Index of Community and Socio-Educational Advantage rating of 907, currently caters for 62 students from Kindergarten to Year 10.

Learning technologies play a part in the teaching and learning programs with students having access to high quality wireless technology, interactive white boards and banks of laptops and iPads throughout the school.

The community of Southern Cross is highly supportive of the school and there is an active Parent & Citizens' Association (P&C) and School Board. The school has developed close links with local businesses, the Shire of Yilgarn, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School and Moorine Rock Primary School.

Southern Cross District High School achieved Independent Public School status in 2017.

School self-assessment validation

The Principal submitted a succinct school self-assessment.

The following aspects are confirmed:

- The clear, informative contextual summary submitted was valuable in determining chronological factors that have recently impacted on the school.
- The leaders acknowledged the need to ensure clear links between areas identified for improvement and the school's plans (strategic and operational) for raising the standards for student achievement.
- A number of key staff and parents engaged actively during the school validation visit phase.
- During the validation process, the Principal clarified the school's future intentions for using the Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) to advance the opportunity for establishing a school-wide self-assessment culture.

The following recommendations are made:

- Consider a broad scope of data that most effectively and efficiently represents the school's current performance to inform planning intentions.
- Continue to develop a school culture of evidence-based planning.
- Establish mechanisms to monitor school-wide commitment to, and accountability for, agreed direction.
- Ensure the evidence presented reflects the three questions; How are you going? How do you know? What are you doing to improve?

Public School Review

Relationships and partnerships	
<p>The community praised the capacity of the school leaders and staff to meet the needs of all students through authentic engagement with local agencies and community partners. Community and parent representatives stated that for a number of students the school was regarded as a 'safe and caring place'.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The School Board is clear about its role, with induction and training processes embedded. • The School Board and P&C support the school through fundraising events. They engaged actively in school improvement planning and are strong advocates for the school. • Robust and effective partnerships have been established with external agencies. Particularly strong partnerships have been forged with CPFS¹, mental health agencies, St John Ambulance, the 'Wheatbelt Youth Council' and WAPOL². • A range of communication tools keep parents abreast of relevant academic and non-academic student information. • The EWEN³ network provides professional learning and opportunities for extensive regional collaboration and is valued highly.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on health and wellbeing to foster continued development of a collegial staff culture.

Learning environment	
<p>Whole-school approaches to attendance and behaviour management are focused on creating a calm, safe environment. Students acknowledged the school is a 'friendly and happy space'.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The highly attractive physical environment is inviting and well maintained. • PBS⁴ has had a significant positive impact on the culture of the school. Student behaviour reflects the values that are taught explicitly. • The 'You Can Do It' program has complemented the impact of PBS. • Within the whole-school community, genuine care for students is apparent. • Behaviour processes are well understood, consistent and supportive of both staff and students. • Tracking and monitoring of students at educational risk is evident with a rigorous case management approach employed.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop the use of special educational need planning to ensure a consistent approach to IEPs⁵. • Develop a whole-school strategy and approach to the implementation of the CMS⁶ initiative.

Leadership

The recently appointed leadership team recognises their obligation to align all levels of planning to ensure commitment and connection to a common school direction.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategic distributed leadership model that reflects future direction and improvement planning is being developed. • A focus on collaboration and ownership for decision making is leading to a strong sense of optimism for the future. • The Student Council is effective and provides opportunities for student leadership across a number of domains.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a whole-school self-assessment schedule that is well understood by all staff and the school community. • Continue to embed the distributed leadership model. Use the skills, qualities, and experience of several key staff to lead school initiatives. • Continue to develop the plan for implementing the <i>Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework</i> to ensure cultural responsiveness across the school. • Develop a clear and considered change management process to support the implementation of key initiatives. • Ensure sound review practices inform the next improvement cycle. • Conduct an audit of current school programs to ascertain the level of effectiveness in improving outcomes for students.

Use of resources

The two MCS⁷ and Principal work effectively together to ensure fiscal matters are compliant and continue to make certain future budget planning is linked explicitly to student success.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EAs⁸ are highly valued and used strategically to address the needs of students through individual support and intervention programs (MultiLit). • Finance committee operations are transparent and compliant. • A comprehensive process for the PM⁹ of school support staff is evident. • The day-to-day management of resources is sound.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop a relevant and strategic workforce plan that reflects future strategic direction and the needs of the school. • Continue to develop a plan for reserves that targets school priorities. • Include human and physical resources in planning documentation to assist with future requirements and align to strategic direction. • Continue to monitor the use of resources to support the integration of digital technologies in the classroom.

Teaching quality

Establishing a culture of high expectations and embedding whole-school approaches are key focus areas for the school. Staff work hard and are genuinely committed to improving outcomes for their students. An ethos of collaboration and cross curricula opportunities will support individual teachers in their work.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff have accessed a range of professional learning opportunities related to school priorities and selected whole-school approaches. • Several whole-school initiatives have been identified and implemented with varying degrees of effectiveness.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop a formalised approach to the use of data to inform classroom teaching and learning. • Continue to implement the PM process ensuring it is linked to whole-school strategic direction and effective classroom practice. • Develop a whole-school understanding of what effective teaching looks like, and an agreed instructional framework that supports the peer observation and feedback model. • Link classroom planning to operational planning (literacy, numeracy, digital technologies) to ensure staff engagement in school improvement. • Provide leadership and direction through further development of the committee structure. • Provide formalised opportunities for staff to collaborate, monitor and plan as the basis for developing an evidence-based culture of high expectations.

Student achievement and progress

Staff acknowledge that longitudinal data for schools with small cohorts can be variable.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levels of differentiation for individuals and groups of students was evident. • OEAP¹⁰ data are used to assess and monitor student progress and plan appropriately for improvement. • A wide range of subjects provides an opportunity for students to pursue their interests. • The Homework Club is well attended, regarded highly and is contributing to improved student outcomes.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to consider progress and achievement of individual students when planning for learning areas and year groups. • Ensure a formalised approach to transition is implemented for students moving from class to class. • Continue to embed T4W¹¹ and Brightpath to support the development of student literacy and monitor assessment and moderation.

Reviewers

Joanne Harris
Director, Public School Review

Ashley Mottershead
Principal, Woodland Grove Primary School
Peer Reviewer

Endorsement

Based on this report, I endorse your school performance rating of 'needs improvement'.

Your next school review is scheduled for 2022.



Lindsay Hale
Executive Director, Public Schools

References

- 1 Department for Child Protection
- 2 Western Australia Police
- 3 Eastern Wheatbelt Education Network
- 4 Positive Behaviour Support
- 5 Individual Education Plan
- 6 Classroom management strategy
- 7 Manager corporate services
- 8 Education assistants
- 9 Performance management
- 10 On-entry Assessment Program
- 11 Talk 4 Writing