



School Improvement Unit Report

Dimbulah State School Executive Summary



1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at **Dimbulah State School** from **16 to 18 August 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:	Kennedy Street, Dimbulah
Education region:	Far North Queensland Region
The school opened in:	1914
Year levels:	Prep to Year 10
Current school enrolment:	159
Indigenous enrolments:	23 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	14.3 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	928
Year principal appointed:	2013
Number of teachers:	14 (full-time equivalent)
Nearby schools:	Mutchilba State School, Mareeba State High School, St Anthony's Primary Dimbulah
Significant community partnerships:	Work Experience — Wider Tablelands Community, Tablelands Counselling and Support Services (TCASS)
Significant school programs:	Student Learning Audit, Wellbeing (Years 7–10)



1.3 Review methodology

The review was conducted by a team of three 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 (ARD)
- a school visit of three days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
 - Principal, Head of Department (HOD) and Head of Curriculum (HOC)
 - Guidance officer, Administration officer and 11 teachers
 - Five teacher aides
 - Chaplain
 - School-based nurse
 - 40 students
 - Two Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) members
 - 10 parents
 - Local councillor
 - Three local schools
 - Three community members

1.4 Review team

Alison Welch	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Brian O'Neill	Peer reviewer
David Aisbett	External reviewer



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- All staff members express the belief that while students may be at different stages and rates of learning, all students are capable of learning successfully.

A high level of importance in meeting the needs of the full range of learners is prioritised by staff members. Staff members work to ensure all students are appropriately engaged, challenged and extended by designing classroom activities to meet students' learning needs, levels of readiness and interests.

- Student achievement data, systemic and school data are utilised to guide differentiated curriculum planning and implementation for differentiated student provision.

The school utilises the whole-school differentiated intervention and support “*diamond*” model. This model is being used to create individual learning plans for students.

- The leadership team and school staff members express a strong commitment to improvement for all students.

This commitment is demonstrated by the extensive collection and analysis of data and the learning needs audit process which occurs each semester for every student. The school has a documented Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) which states that there are five priorities for 2016. Specific targets, benchmarks and timelines for all areas of the EIA are yet to be developed.

- A Prep–Year 10 school curriculum plan is developed.

The school has a range of well-documented curriculum programs including reading, mathematics and science. A systematic approach to the evaluation of the enactment of these school programs is yet to be developed.

- Monitoring processes for all aspects of curriculum including implementation, reporting and assessment are evolving across the school.

Teachers report that independent curriculum planning occurs and they would value the opportunity to collaboratively plan with colleagues.

- Staff members identify student attendance as a predominant impediment to student learning.

Significant time is committed by the leadership team in collecting, interpreting and correlating data to present to staff members. Attendance data is a focus for the school and there is some evidence that processes are in place to follow-up absenteeism and reward high attendance.



- Staff members are committed to the development of effective teaching and learning practices across the school.

There is evidence of observation and feedback processes that exist within the school for all staff members to monitor the implementation of the key improvement agenda. A formal process for observation, coaching and feedback is recognised as the next stage in building staff member capacity.

- The school leadership team recognises the importance of professional learning in developing quality teaching across the school.

There is a documented professional learning plan in place. There is limited evidence of a priority being placed on targeted Professional Development (PD) activities aligned to the school improvement agenda.

- The school is regarded highly by the local community and parents of the school.

This is demonstrated by the range of positive and encouraging comments from parents, the local government representative, and other community members. Community members wish to be involved in the school and many are eager to volunteer their time to support student learning activities in classrooms and school-based projects.

- A deep care and concern for the wellbeing of students is apparent in the school. Effort is made to provide equitable opportunity for students to engage in learning and to be successful learners.

There is a strong commitment by staff members to the belief that every student is capable of successful learning. The small school environment and personal approach are recognised as strengths and the tone of the school is positive and welcoming. A positive, calm and business-like tone is apparent across the school.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Collaboratively develop a sharp and narrow improvement agenda which identifies priorities with associated strategies, achievable and measurable targets, monitoring and appropriate budget.
- Develop a rigorous process to monitor the whole-school curriculum plan, assessment and lesson delivery.
- Develop a systematic approach to the evaluation of the enactment of school programs.
- Realign the school focus on student attendance to regularly and routinely monitor student attendance and address non-attendance in a timely manner.
- Build a coaching and feedback culture within the school to align to the school's improvement agenda.
- Develop a PD plan aligned to the school's EIA and informed by staff members' annual performance development plans.