



SCHOOL BUSINESS PLAN 2015 - 2017 REPORT TO THE SCHOOL BOARD ON PROGRESS TO TARGETS, 2015

The following report against targets provides Board members with situational awareness regarding progress of the first year of the School Business Plan (SBP). As 2015 performance data has yet to be collected, collated and analysed, the report considers progress toward achievement of targets. Each priority area is considered.

Academic Achievement

The school's curriculum leadership group is again required to review 2014 data and operational plans and undertake the academic review process. This activity was conducted haphazardly during 2014 and lacked central or executive oversight. Consequently, in 2015 this process has been re-instated with overview by the principal. It is a significant piece of work across the school and as a formal process, far more than undertaken by many schools. However, it underpins the school's response to moving from "good to great" as per the SBP and provides an evidentiary base for the Independent Public School (IPS) independent review process.

Curriculum leaders are also required to prepare an operational plan that complements the SBP. This also considers how to deliver recommendations arising from the academic review process. They then lead their teams in delivering these plans that are framed to improve student learning outcomes.

As part of the response to enhance learning, leaders are expected to support students at-risk - across the learning spectrum. Whilst those struggling to achieve NAPLAN benchmarks are supported by tools such as individual or group learning plans, others may have targeted but less formally documented interventions. At the other end of the continuum, GAT students should be provided with meaningful enrichment and extension opportunities.

The approach of the MESS areas to academic extension and enrichment was an important determinant in conducting a curriculum review during Term 2. Work across this review will continue in 2015.

The lauded Follow the Dream (FTD) and Aboriginal Excellence Program (AEP) offerings continue in 2015. The FTD ceiling of 50 students has been reached and work to support the group is in place. The AEP selection process is now informed by Year 5 NAPLAN scores. Whilst it is schools and not students that are identified, this provides an entrée to seeking to recruit quality students through seeking the assistance of the relevant primary school principal.

Outside competitions continue to be supported. Across the learning areas, some students have achieved excellent results. These add value to the formal curriculum.

In 2015 the school's curriculum leaders are working with the National School Improvement Tool (NSIT) which is supported by ACER. Leaders have consensused the school's position on the nine factors and will consider ways to improve.

Classroom Practice

Professional learning communities (PLC) have been established in each learning area/discipline and are utilised by leaders to review student performance data, consider classroom practice and look to focus better teaching and learning. For the four meetings under the General Agreement

that are devoted to learning areas, a minimum of 20 minutes is allocated to professional conversations.

The senior staff meeting itself is constituted, in part, as a PLC and issues such as performance data, curriculum, pedagogy, learning methods and tools such as the NSIT are considered. Current educational practice, such as invitational learning postulated by Professor John Hattie and others, is also agendered. This provides leaders with discussion points for their own PLC.

Within the SBP, a School Pedagogical Framework (SPF), was signalled for development. This is underway and it has been socialised with a wide audience and is now being finalised. The mature SPF will assist in providing direction to teachers. The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) standards are also a key foundation of the school's drive to improve teaching as these describe teacher performance standards.

Now embedded within the school's performance management framework, all teachers are required to participate in peer observation. The intent is to improve pedagogical skills. Whilst the Department now pushes observation, this school has had this initiative in place since the last SBP and seeks to work within a peer construct rather than a supervisory sponsored observation paradigm. This decision has been made to place a clear professional development, rather than inspectorial tag, on classroom observation. This initiative is in place and a number of teachers have engaged. They also have the opportunity to link into other initiatives, such as the classroom climate environment sponsored by Curtin University.

The peer observation project is the main effort of the Level 3 Teaching and Learning Co-ordinator, a new position. Mr Steve Raphael has been appointed and it is likely that this position will remain until the peer observation program is embedded in operations.

Within teams and professional discourse, teachers have the opportunity to seek input and guidance into instructional methods and techniques. A number of strategies in the SBP that are associated with the work of teachers will be addressed through engaging in PLC, peer observation and the resulting conferencing rounds and with the Teaching and Learning Co-ordinator.

Teachers are also in a position to utilise the school's literacy, and writing and numeracy frameworks for lesson planning. Technology is also a factor that they should consider. Teachers also have opportunities to access relevant professional learning, both in-house and external to the school.

Student Engagement and Wellbeing

Working to improve attendance outcomes remains a priority. Whilst there remains much to do, Mount Lawley SHS is no longer the worst Band 4 in the state. For students with poor attendance, school staff work to support them and families. Not all wish to participate. School staff may resort to the formal Attendance Panel process, however, this needs to be assessed against the presenting circumstances.

Mount Lawley SHS continues to support community service across a number of domains and this is illustrated through the work of a 0.2FTE staff member. Community service includes support to outside groups, Interact and Cadets WA. A number of students participate.

Individual student achievement continues to be recognised through a variety of forums. This includes wall displays and the Update. The Colours program also acknowledges achievement.

The Student Services Team provides in-depth support to a number of students for many reasons. Usually utilising a case management approach, the most complex cases may mean assistance from specialist staff such as the School Psychologist or School Nurse.

In terms of curriculum options, especially with the senior years, the school has an extensive subject counselling approach that includes individual family interviews. Where students are completing a poor choice and struggling, efforts to work with families are undertaken, however, this does not always result in students moving to the best pathway. Some parents opt for their child's failure.

The school has a high standard of school uniform and compliance measures are in place. However, as it is implemented by human beings, attention to compliance is not consistent. The school also has high expectations about behaviour and these are also enforced. In particular, fighting and drug use are prescribed and offenders are suspended. Whilst the days may be negotiated, the suspension is not. The school's high standards with regard to uniform and behaviour are attractive to many parents and contribute to the generally positive learning environment.

Anti-bullying measures are also a feature of school practice. Within the Middle School, a bullying program is conducted with all communities and a clear message about bullies is socialised. Where bullying takes place staff should be advised so that remediation measures can be enacted.

It is a requirement that public schools participate in the National School Opinion Survey. This was done in late 2014 and the results analysed and adjustments made, where necessary, to school processes. Results were shared with the Board and generally were positive. The main issue that fell out of the analysis had to do with student feedback and teachers have been asked to consider how to provide better progress information to students and parents. In particular, students responded that they felt safe at school.

Partnerships

Mount Lawley SHS has solid partnerships in place and benefits from having links to an alumni that generally supports the school and initiatives. This includes the acclaimed Sea Explorers program, run by members of the Class of '69 (and some of '68). Few public schools enjoy such support.

The school's staff engage with a range of agencies, community groups and industry. Support from these groups informs many programs. In particular, the school is always able to generate sufficient employer support to place each student seeking to participate in a form of work experience.

The school operates one of the very few Interact clubs in a WA school. Again, this is supported by the Rotary Club of Mount Lawley and a staff member.

The parent group is a wonderful source of support for a number of key programs. This includes the Languages, Music and SVAPA parent support groups. Of course, the Lawley Art Auction is another outstanding benefit to the school delivered by a group of volunteer parents and the networks, partners and sponsors that they have developed.

Through the Languages program, the school has several sister school partners and several other international links. These partnerships are alive and bring benefits to participating students.

Milton Butcher
PRINCIPAL

17 August 2015