

# Wellers Hill State School

## Action Plan Final Report





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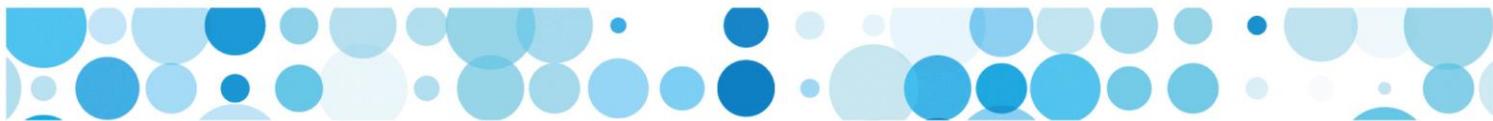
## 1. Introduction

This report is a product of a 12-month check-in review at **Wellers Hill State School on 5 December 2019**. It provides an evaluation of the school's performance against the 12-month action plan developed by the school in consultation with the Assistant Regional Director (ARD).

The 12-month check-in was completed by staff from the School Improvement Unit (SIU). For more information regarding the SIU and school reviews please visit the [website](#).

### 1.1 School context

<b>Location:</b>	Toohey Road, Tarragindi
<b>Education region:</b>	Metropolitan Region
<b>Year opened:</b>	1926
<b>Year levels:</b>	Prep to Year 6
<b>Enrolment:</b>	864
<b>Indigenous enrolment percentage:</b>	1 per cent
<b>Students with disability enrolment percentage:</b>	3 per cent
<b>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</b>	1136
<b>Year principal appointed:</b>	2019 – acting
<b>Full-time equivalent teachers:</b>	38
<b>Significant partner schools:</b>	Holland Park State High School, Marshall Road State School
<b>Significant community partnerships:</b>	Yeronga Returned and Services League of Australia (RSL)
<b>Significant school programs:</b>	Instrumental Music Program, Japanese Bilingual Pathways – Australian Curriculum Japanese (ACJ) and Australian Curriculum English (ACE)



## 1.2 Review team

The review was conducted by:

Racquel Gibbons	Assistant Director-General, SIU (case manager)
Stephen Bobby	Senior reviewer
Garry Lacey	Internal reviewer
Darren Marsh	Internal reviewer
Paul Pengelly	Internal reviewer
Rob Van den Heuvel	Internal reviewer
Lesley Vogan	Internal reviewer

## 1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following contributed to the 12-month review:

- a desktop review of the school's performance data and other school information
- consultation with the school's ARD
- a school visit of up to one day, and
- interviews with relevant staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
  - Principal
  - Four deputy principals
  - Two Heads of Curriculum (HOC)
  - Guidance officer
  - Head of Special Education Services (HOSES)
  - 11 teacher aides
  - 40 teachers
  - 12 parents
  - students



## 2. SIU monitoring

### 2.1 Action plan improvement strategies

The 12-month review looked at how the school implemented the improvement strategies from the action plan with the support of the region.

- Develop and implement a whole-school communication strategy.
- Conduct a review of the current provision of curriculum and the impact it is having on student learning, social emotional wellbeing, current choices and future pathways.
- Review the whole-school approach to curriculum provision to enhance the balance and interrelationship between the provision of the bilingual program and a robust mainstream program of choice across all year levels, with particular attention to the recommended time allocations for Australian Curriculum (AC) learning areas.
- Develop and implement a student learning and wellbeing framework, informed by feedback from staff, students and parents of both the bilingual program and the English Language Learners (ELL) program and relevant research, to ensure that social and emotional wellbeing of all students is fully supported.
- Review current resource practice and implement a more transparent, collaborative budgeting process that is aligned to systemic and school improvement priorities, and targeted to meet the learning and wellbeing needs of all students.

### 2.2 Action plan check-ins

The 12-month review was preceded by the following visits:

Three month	22 March 2019
Six month	5 June 2019
Nine month	11 September 2019



### 3. Findings

#### 3.1 School performance data

The enrolment at the time of the 12-month check-in is 864. This is a slight decrease in enrolment from 900 in 2017 and 885 in 2018.

OneSchool indicates at the time of the review, the attendance rate for students is 95.2 per cent with 4.1 per cent of students attending less than 85 per cent of school days. This compares to the 2018 attendance rate of 94.5 per cent with 4.8 per cent attending less than 85 per cent, as indicated by the Semester 1 2019 School Data Profile.

2019 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) data indicates Year 3 Mean Scale Score (MSS) achievement is below Similar Queensland State Schools (SQSS) in reading, spelling and grammar and punctuation, and similar to SQSS in writing and numeracy. Year 5 MSS achievement is similar to SQSS across all strands.

The school's Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) percentile is 94. The Year 3 MSS percentile ranges from 44 to 58 and the Year 5 MSS percentile ranges from 59 to 72.

Year 3 Upper Two Bands (U2B) achievement is below SQSS across all strands. Year 5 U2B achievement is similar to SQSS in reading, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy, and below SQSS in the other strands.

Year 3 and Year 5 achievement at or above the National Minimum Standard (NMS) is above Queensland State Schools (QSS) across all strands.

Relative gain 2017-2019 Year 3 to Year 5 is above SQSS in spelling and similar to SQSS in the other strands.

NAPLAN participation rates remain high. In 2019, the Year 3 participation rate ranges from 98.3 per cent to 99.1 per cent. The Year 5 participation rate ranges from 97.0 per cent to 98.0 per cent.

School Opinion Survey (SOS) data for 2019 indicates parents think highly of the school with 93.1 per cent of parents agreeing 'This is a good school'. This compares to 86.9 per cent agreement in 2018. 94.9 per cent of parents agree that 'Teachers at this school are interested in my child's wellbeing' compared to 92.5 per cent in 2019. 88.0 per cent of parents agree that 'This school provides useful information online' compared to 77.7 per cent in 2019. The greatest positive change in parent responses is an 18.2 per cent increase in parent agreement with the statement 'The school asks for my input'. The agreement rate increased from 70.9 per cent in 2018 to 89.1 per cent in 2019.

2019 SOS data indicates teaching staff agreement with the statement 'I feel confident in my knowledge of the Australian and Queensland curriculums' is 100.0 per cent. Teacher agreement with the statement 'I feel that students with disability receive the same educational opportunities as all other students at my school' is 90.9 per cent, compared to 88.6 per cent in 2018.



Staff agreement with the statement 'There is good communication between all staff at my school' is 76.1 per cent compared to 77.6 per cent in 2018. The greatest positive change in staff agreement is in relation to the statement 'My school encourages coaching and mentoring activities', increasing from 70.8 per cent agreement in 2018 to 80.0 per cent in 2019.

## 3.2 Regional support

### **ARD support:**

The school's ARD has provided ongoing support to the school and the principal. This support has focused on the key improvement actions as identified in the school's action plan and included:

- regular contact including visits to the school, phone conversations and emails
- discussion on the implementation of the four-year strategic plan and action plan
- establishment and monitoring of targets
- provision of support in data analysis including analysis of headline indicators and the data profile
- strengthening moderation procedures and best practice networks
- provision of observation and feedback for the leadership team and staff members
- coaching of the leadership team
- building community engagement
- provision of further resource allocation including staffing and financial resources

### **Regional support:**

- Principal Education Advisor – Australian Curriculum (PEA-AC) provided support that included:
  - Professional Development (PD) for staff members regarding the AC
  - feedback on the development of whole-school curriculum plans
- Additional Staffing support including:
  - 0.5 Full-time equivalent (FTE) guidance officer
  - Over-allocation – HOSES
  - 0.4 FTE A08 Business Manager (BM) support



### 3.3 Observations and general findings

#### **Key Improvement Strategy 1**

- *Develop and implement a whole-school communication strategy.*

The school has utilised ongoing feedback to develop and implement a whole-school communication plan for staff and community.

Parents report that communication is improving with multiple strategies including newsletters, emails and newflashes being utilised. These parents additionally appreciate the use of curriculum expo events as a means to be involved and understand the work that students are undertaking.

The recent introduction of 'Newsflashes' allows the school to communicate in a timely manner regarding important events, and teaching and learning information important to the community. Parents highly value these Newsflashes as a timely and effective form of communication that is precise and visually appealing.

The school is collecting and sharing extensive data regarding engagement with the newsletters and websites through an online tool. This is providing the leadership team with valuable feedback regarding what information is of high priority to staff, parents and the community. At the 12-month check-in the leadership team reports the growth in readership of recent newsletters from 1100 in Term 3 to 1300 in Term 4, with 26.6 per cent of parents accessing communication via the QParents app. The leadership team acknowledges the need to further strengthen support for this form of communication.

Prior to the 12-month review the leadership team conducted a survey of staff and parents to seek feedback on communication over the previous 12 months. Parents and staff members report satisfaction in regards to the clarity and variety of communication channels available to them, in addition to the effectiveness of the communication plan in setting high expectations.

Staff are able to articulate the clear expectation from the leadership team that a personal approach – phone and face-to-face communication with parents – is expected. They are enjoying the strong relationships that they have built with parents over the course of the year. Staff express feeling well supported by the leadership team in the implementation of the school's new communication strategy. Many staff are able to articulate their appreciation for the clear direction and expectations in relation to communication with parents. Some teachers still report concerns regarding the timeliness of notification of key events.

The leadership team has created an understanding of the need for, and role of, collaboration in building capacity and shared ownership of the work. Staff value the introduction of committees as a way to become involved in key decision-making processes.

Classroom visitor books are used in each classroom to seek feedback and commentary from visitors. These provide a valued place to share and celebrate the work in classrooms. The comments provided reflect a variety of ways in which parents and the broader community are involved in classroom learning experiences.



The school has implemented some highly innovative techniques to engage parents, staff and students in the strategic planning processes through 'pop-up' stalls. These strategies have helped to create the school vision and expectations with input from the entire school community. Parents talk positively of their involvement in this process.

### **Key Improvement Strategies 2 and 3**

- *Conduct a review of the current provision of curriculum and the impact it is having on student learning, social emotional wellbeing, current choices and future pathways.*
- *Review the whole-school approach to curriculum provision to enhance the balance and interrelationship between the provision of the bilingual program and a robust mainstream program of choice across all year levels, with particular attention to the recommended time allocations for AC learning areas.*

The school has developed two distinct and unique learning pathways for students at the school: Australian Curriculum English (ACE) and Australian Curriculum Japanese (ACJ). Teachers work collaboratively in planning days with the school's Heads of Curriculum (HOC) to develop and implement rigorous units aligned to the AC to be delivered in English and Japanese.

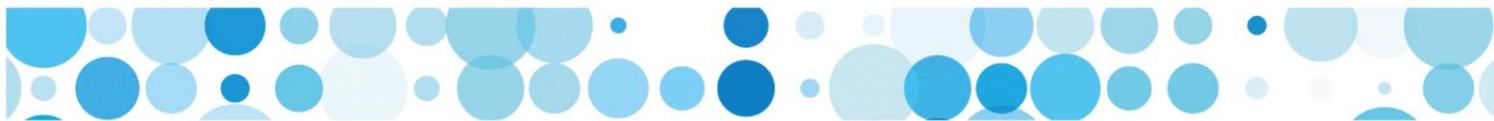
Teachers speak highly of the time and value given to the planning days. They appreciate the opportunity to work collaboratively with experts and their colleagues to unpack the AC. All teachers speak about their increased engagement and confidence with the AC. Most staff interviewed identify that they have grown professionally this year in their curriculum knowledge and speak with anticipation for further learning to occur in 2020.

All teachers interviewed are able to articulate the enhanced planning practices. They are able to speak confidently about the year level curriculum planning process. Teachers discuss using the achievement standards, content descriptors, assessment tasks and marking guides as the basis for beginning unit plans. They identify that during curriculum planning the understanding of what students need to know and do to achieve the assessment task is discussed in detail.

Teachers speak of using the 'before, after, after, end' moderation model. Teachers speak confidently of the calibration phase of this moderation model and are able to describe in detail how calibration is used. The leadership team and teachers identify the importance of ensuring consistency of Level of Achievement (LOA) allocation occurs across the year level during moderation meetings. They express the belief that moderation practices have become more structured and precise during the priority support review process. Teachers identify that year level team strength has strengthened and there is increased support for each other. Vertical and external moderation is yet to begin.

Some teachers are able to share how they have utilised this process to help create 'Bump it Up' walls. This is an emerging practice that supports students' ownership of their learning.

Differentiation surfboards are utilised during the planning process. This structure has ensured that data is driving the curriculum and pedagogy decisions in planning and teaching



in classrooms. Teachers find the strategies discussed in this process useful for implementing in their classrooms. Some teachers report that this process could have greater impact if strategies were to be discussed for the upcoming unit rather than in a reflection of the unit recently taught. This strategy is working towards building joint ownership of student achievement.

A strong self-reflection and learning culture is emerging within the school. Beginning teachers speak highly of the support including observation, modelling and feedback they are receiving from the beginning teacher mentor.

The leadership team undertakes structured learning walks across the school and provides whole-school feedback in the form of a newsletter. These learning walks are conducted across the school and involve the use of Lyn Sharratt's<sup>1</sup> 5 questions with students. Teachers are able to identify times where they have engaged in 'Learning Walks and Talks'. Teaching staff members articulate that the deputy principals have visited their classrooms on multiple occasions to observe practice. Some teachers comment they are unaware of the focus of these walkthroughs.

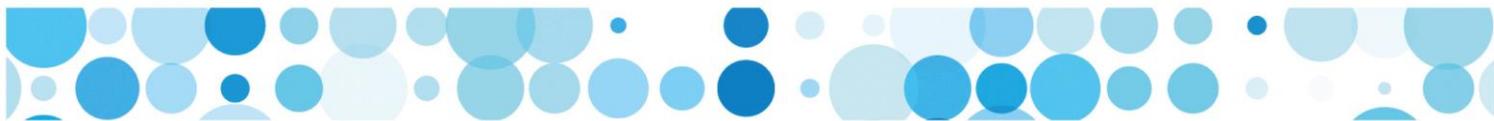
Some Japanese teachers are able to talk about the recent coaching cycle they have been involved in to support their teaching and learning practices. They highly value the observation and feedback provided by the HOC. Formal observation and feedback to individual teachers in a systematic way is yet to be established.

A comprehensive transition program has been implemented in 2019. The program consists of eight one-hour sessions for parents and children. Topics covered in the parent program include an introduction to the school, Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) information sharing, referral procedures, and messages from the leadership team. The student sessions have currently involved literacy, numeracy, and fine and gross motor activities. Parents interviewed speak positively about engagement in this program and report the confidence their child has in starting school in 2020. Of the 100 students enrolled, 97 attended the transition program. Teachers and school leaders have additionally attended local early childhood providers.

Most staff articulate they believe the work undertaken this year is the 'right' work and speak positively about 2020. They recognise that there have been many agendas to focus on in 2019 and this has prevented the work from being tightly embedded.

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<sup>1</sup> Sharratt, L. (2019). Sharratt Educational Services (SEG Inc.). Retrieved from <https://www.lynsharratt.com/>



#### **Key Improvement Strategy 4**

- *Develop and implement a student learning and wellbeing framework, informed by feedback from staff, students and parents of both the bilingual program and the English Language Learners (ELL) program and relevant research, to ensure that social and emotional wellbeing of all students is fully supported.*

The school has renamed and reviewed the ways of working of the Guided Learning Outcomes and Wellbeing (GLOW) team. There are now strong transparent referral processes and roles and responsibilities established that are shared with staff on OnePortal and with parents on the school website. There is an induction planned for all new staff in 2020. This process is comprehensive and ensures thorough case management of all students referred.

Staff are able to articulate the beginning work pertaining to differentiation and inclusion strategies. The HOSES identifies that the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) has increased from approximately 8.0 per cent to 19.0 per cent of the student population and the number of students identified in Adjustment Information Management System (AIMS) has increased from eight students in 2018 to 17 at the end of 2019. Stakeholders report a solid start has been made. They do identify further work is required in this area to support the use of adjustments to address a range of student learning needs. Parents of students with disability speak highly of the support they and their child have received in 2019.

The leadership team presents strong data to demonstrate the improved individual student performance regarding reducing anxiety. Parents speak highly of the positive changes they have seen in their child – at home and school. The school will continue to identify students requiring this support and provide opportunities for them and their parents. It is clear from the data presented – their voice and the parent voice, that the programs are well suited to the school and the students.

Staff are all able to speak about the increased focus on student wellbeing, citing 'You Can Do It!' and the wellbeing committee as driving this agenda.

The school has started the implementation of You Can Do It. The first professional learning opportunity has occurred and artefacts are in place across the school. Teachers speak positively regarding the first session and support the implementation. Some teachers report feeling somewhat overwhelmed by having another new item to add to their timetable.

Students and teachers interviewed identify that You Can Do It lessons undertaken each fortnight is an emerging practice. Teachers explain these are based on an agreed schedule and are predominantly completed in non-assembly weeks.

In Term 4 there has been a new focus on Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) through the focus areas of *'Be on time, Looking smart for learning and Be ready for learning'*. Staff and students are able to articulate these focus areas and support the emphasis on positive acknowledgment through the gold, silver and bronze award structure. Staff appreciate the focus on high expectations for learning.



Students and staff speak highly of the videos presented that model the preferred behaviour. There is initial excitement in relation to PBL processes in the school. The complete roll-out plan including regular School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) and Effective Behaviour Support (EBS) data collections is yet to be developed with staff.

Students report that a celebration day is planned for Term 4 and describe the use of bronze, silver and gold tickets for them to access positive acknowledgements. The tickets acknowledge students who have successfully achieved key focus areas for two weeks. Students articulate that recent focus areas include being ready to work on time and 'looking smart' in appropriate uniform expectations.

The leadership team and staff acknowledge the need to have a greater focus on staff wellbeing in 2020.

### **Key Improvement Strategy 5**

- *Review current resource practice and implement a more transparent, collaborative budgeting process that is aligned to systemic and school improvement priorities, and targeted to meet the learning and wellbeing needs of all students.*

The budget is clearly aligned to the first four improvement strategies of the action plan, with significant funds allocated for planning days. Staff highly value these planning days and express the process is increasing their knowledge and confidence in relation to the AC.

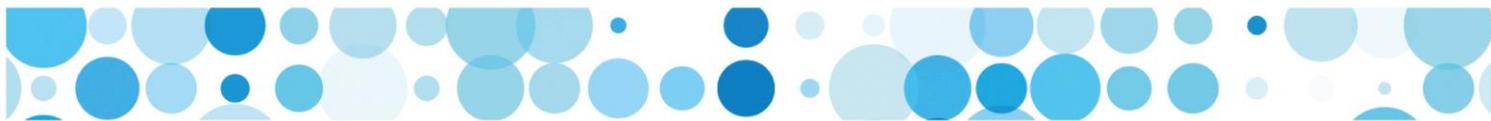
A new acting BM commenced in Term 3. The region is supporting the induction through an additional BM allocation of 0.4 FTE. The change in BM is impacting positively on the ability to build the collaborative planning and budgeting structures within the leadership team. The new BM speaks highly of the support provided by the region through an additional BM mentor.

The team has developed a clear roles and responsibilities document for the leadership team and now the office team. The new roles and responsibilities for office staff are in their infancy due to multiple changes in BMs over the course of the action plan.

The Budget Overview Report (BOR) is shared and discussed at weekly leadership team meetings. Leadership team members have accountabilities for cost centres and must report planned spending to the BM and the principal. Joint ownership and shared understanding are developing.

The leadership team regularly monitors the progress of this improvement strategy. Further support is still required to build leadership density in financial management to ensure long-term sustainability of this strategy.

There have been three new members of the leadership team since the nine-month check-in with further possible changes to start 2020. With the ongoing changes to the team it will be critical to continue to build the knowledge and understanding of budgeting, monitoring and general finance capability to build distributive leadership and Quality Assurance (QA) processes across the team.



## 4. Outcomes

The SIU recognises the emerging school improvements that have been initiated over the past 12 months.

There is strong clarity and commitment to the five key improvement strategies from the school leadership team. They have built shared ownership through regular leadership team meetings, joint classrooms visits and a book study.

The school has developed an explicit communication plan that clearly outlines high expectations for staff and community. This document provides clarity and structure to the many and varied communication channels.

Parents report that communication with teachers and the leadership team is strong. They appreciate the multiple strategies including newsletters, emails and newflashes. Parents additionally appreciate the use of curriculum expo events as a means to be involved and understand the work that students are undertaking.

Conversations with staff members indicate that there have been a number of additional communication channels added to the school's suite of communication strategies and that the previously existing communication strategies have been enhanced.

Throughout 2020 there has been a deliberate focus on building collaboration across year level teams. This strategy is actively building the capability of staff and QA of curriculum and planning processes.

During the past 12 months, staff have engaged in rigorous planning processes to unpack the AC. Teachers speak confidently of their use of the alignment planner, achievement standards, content descriptors, assessment tasks and marking guides.

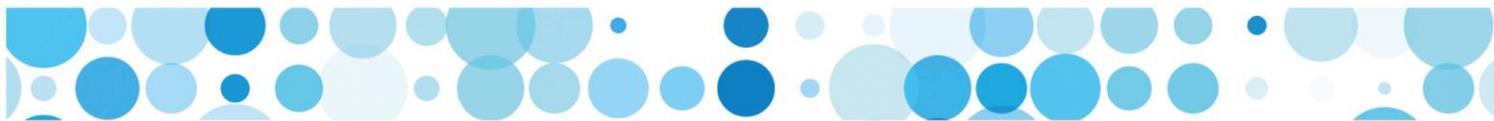
All teachers participate in year level 'before, after, after, end' moderation to build consistency of LOA allocation. Trust has been built across year level teams due to the strong collaboration processes encouraged at the school.

All staff express a strong appreciation for the way in which the leadership team has resourced planning and moderation processes through release time from class, support from experts, and professional learning opportunities. Staff recognise their personal growth in the depth of understanding of the AC.

The introduction of surfboards is viewed as a useful tool to support differentiation and targeted teaching within the classroom. The shared construction of surfboards has helped to build data literacy across teams.

There has been a clear focus on student wellbeing through the introduction of You Can Do It, PBL and small group intervention programs. Staff speak positively of the deliberate practice to enhance positive recognition of students across the school.

The Regional Director and ARD are committed to continuing their close support and guidance for the leadership team at the school.



## 5. Next steps

The next steps in the strategic planning processes of the school will include the examination of the 2018 school review report to identify which improvement strategies need to be scheduled for action over the next three years. This process needs to be conducted collaboratively by all members of the teaching team, in partnership with the ARD, to inform the school's next steps.

Reflections and things to consider moving forward:

- As you continue to develop your strategic plan, think about what will be the identity for Wellers Hill State School. What can everyone be proud of?
- As the leadership team and staff acknowledged, the next focus of planning days needs to be on the teaching and learning sequence.
- Consider how you moderate for mathematics across all teachers. Are you building a portfolio for the allocation of LOA?
- With greater stability in the BM role it will be important to build in regular teacher aide meetings and professional learning to value their contribution and strengthen their capability in the new work.
- Formalise the Collegial Engagement Framework to include walkthroughs, Watching Others Work (WOW), coaching and formal observations and feedback processes to support their ongoing learning.
- The school has implemented many changes and new processes in 2019. As you move into 2020 consider the rate and pace of change. Consider spending more time consolidating the work to ensure it is embedded in practice.
- Staff wellbeing needs to be a school focus in 2020. What is important for staff wellbeing at Wellers Hill State School? How do you continue to build trust and strong personal connections?
- Work with the region to build a school workforce plan that will ensure stability across the teaching and leadership team.

## 6. Conclusion

Based on the findings from the 12-month review, and information gathered at the previous three-month check-ins, the SIU concludes:

There is sufficient implementation of the key improvement strategies for the SIU to finalise its support and monitoring of **Wellers Hill State School**.