



School Improvement Unit Report

Capella State High School Executive Summary



1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Capella State High School from 8 to 10 June 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:	35-45 Gordon Street, Capella
Education region:	Central Queensland Region
The school opened in:	1984
Year levels:	Year 7 to Year 12
Current school enrolment:	135
Indigenous enrolments:	5 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	6 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	974
Year principal appointed:	Acting Term 3, 2015. Permanent appointment 2016.
Number of teachers:	13
Nearby schools:	Capella State School, Tieri State School, Emerald State High School
Significant community partnerships:	Queensland Police Service (QPS) emergency management /skilling programs, Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) Capella State School, Tieri State School
Significant school programs:	Certificate II in Rural Operations (Cattle Club)



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
- a school visit of three days
- interviews with staff members, students, parents and community representatives, including:
 - Principal and two Heads of Department (HODs)
 - Teachers and teacher aides
 - Students
 - Business Services Manager (BSM), administration officers and ancillary staff
 - Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president, tuckshop convenor and parents
 - Principal of partner primary school
 - Community partner representatives

1.4 Review team

Anne McLauchlan	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Jenny Maier	Internal reviewer, SIU
Frank Schoonderbeek	External reviewer



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The school leadership team has articulated a clear, narrow, and explicit local school improvement agenda designed to improve outcomes for all students.

The school Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) outlines two key priorities, reading and writing, with a particular focus on improving the Upper Two Bands (U2B) in both areas.

- The school tone reflects a school-wide commitment to purposeful and successful learning.

A culture of caring and support across staff members and students pervades the school and many students state that the community feel of the school is one of its strengths.

- The school has undergone considerable change in the last 12 months.

Staff members are supportive of many of the new initiatives. The quality of communication in terms of purpose and delivery was not always optimal.

- Staff members are hardworking, collegial and committed to achieving improved learning outcomes for students.

The leadership team is providing the resources and support to further enhance the professionalism and capability of its staff members.

- The whole-school pedagogical framework document identifies Explicit Instruction (EI), Dimensions of Teaching and Learning (DoTL), and Art and Science of Teaching (ASoT)¹ as the models which inform pedagogy at the school.

EI is the school's preferred structure for lesson delivery. The quality of implementation of each of the phases is varied. The impact of DoTL and ASoT on pedagogy in the school is still to be developed.

- Teaching practices across the school reflect the strong belief that all students are capable of learning successfully even though they are at different stages in their learning.

An agreed school-wide approach to differentiation is documented. A deeper understanding of the full model for differentiation is emerging.

¹ Marzano, Robert J. *The art and science of teaching: A comprehensive framework for effective instruction*. Ascd, 2007.



- Student performance data is collated and comprehensively analysed using the Central Queensland Student Support System (CQ3S) data base.

The school leadership team uses the data extensively to analyse misconceptions and areas of weakness and plan corrective programs accordingly.

- Staff members are deployed in ways that make the best use of available expertise and address the current learning needs of students.

Many teaching staff teach outside their speciality. A workforce plan that will carry the school into the future is yet to be developed.

- Relationships with the two partner primary schools are developing and efforts are being made to strengthen these partnerships and promote the school as 'a great school down the road'.

Currently, approximately 50 per cent of students from these primary schools enrol at this high school.

- Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) is incorporated within the curriculum through the Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) resource, three level guides, top level structure strategies and warmup activities in mathematics classes.

Some students are enrolled in the Brisbane School of Distance Education (BSDE) IMPACT critical thinking program. Teachers' understanding and delivery of HOTS is variable.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Ensure a purposeful, precise approach to managing change, narrowing the number of models, collaborating with members of the school community and clearly communicating the rationale and processes behind proposed changes.
- Continue to develop teachers' skills related to Explicit Improvement (EI). Ensure this is embedded before progressing to a further pedagogical approach.
- Provide professional learning to deepen understanding of the differentiation model to better target learning experiences for all students and ensure all students are appropriately engaged, challenged and extended.
- Develop teachers' understanding of and capacity to deliver higher order and creative thinking strategies for all students.
- Develop a workforce plan that will carry the school into the future.
- Develop a marketing plan to support the promotion of the school and its achievements in the wider community.