



School Improvement Unit Report

Western Cape College Executive Summary



1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Western Cape College from 15 to 19 June 2015. It provides an evaluation of the college's performance against the nine domains of the [National College Improvement Tool](#). It also recommends improvement strategies for the college to consider in consultation with its regional office and college community.

The review and report were completed by a review team from the College Improvement Unit (SIU). For more information about the SIU and the new reviews for Queensland state colleges please visit the Department of Education and Training (DET) [website](#).

1.2 College context

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| Location: | Central Avenue, Rocky Point |
| Education region: | Far North Queensland |
| The college opened in: | 2003 |
| Year levels: | Prep to Year 12 |
| Current college enrolment: | 1095 |
| Indigenous enrolments: | 55 per cent |
| Students with disability enrolments: | 4 per cent |
| Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value: | 871 |
| Year principal appointed: | 2011 |
| Number of teachers: | 89 |
| Nearby schools: | |
| Significant community partnerships: | Mapoon Community Partnership Agreement, Napranum Community Partnership Agreement, Western Cape College and Weipa Community Partnership Agreement, Rio Tinto Alcan (Weipa) Western Cape College and James Cook University, Napranum and Western Cape College Community Centre |



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| Unique college programs: | Accelerated learning program, Quickstart program, Mastery program |
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1.3 Review methodology

The review was conducted by a team of four reviewers.

The review consisted of:

- a pre-review audit of the college's performance data and other college information
- a college visit of three days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
 - College Principal, Associate Principal, Heads of College, Heads of Teaching and Learning, Head of Positive Behaviour
 - President of Parents and Citizens' (P&C) Association and 19 parents
 - Corporate Services Manager, two Business Service Managers (BSM) and four administration officers
 - Two Guidance Officers
 - Community Partnership Chair
 - General Manager, Rio Tinto Alcan Weipa
 - Student leaders and 29 other students
 - Residential Campus Transition Support Officer
 - Two positive behaviour officers and coach
 - Remote Area Teacher Education Program coordinator
 - Canteen convenor
 - 63 teachers and nine teacher aides
 - Indigenous Elder - Patty Mark
 - College Council Chair - Scott McCahon

1.4 Review team

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| Karyn Hart | Internal Reviewer, SIU (review chair) |
| Russell Pollock | Internal Reviewer, SIU |
| Scott Edmunds | Peer Reviewer |
| Trevor Gordon | External Reviewer |



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- There is a clear improvement agenda in the college that is articulated by the leadership team and supported by all staff.

The improvement agenda contains three areas identified for improvement. All staff were able to identify reading, connectedness and attendance as critical to the improvement agenda. Most of the improvement agenda items identified in the college's 2015 priorities have specific cohort targets but there is little evidence that these targets are influencing the learning of individual students.

- Western Cape College has developed a structured differentiated curriculum and pedagogical model to cater for the diverse learning needs of the students.

The college has developed processes (systemic testing and assessment) for identifying student learning needs and has implemented creative college-wide solutions to address these needs. Programs include - Accelerated Learning program, programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students with learning needs and students with disabilities. There was varying evidence of in-class differentiated strategies for mainstream classes.

- While many sectors of the college exhibit effective teaching practice, there is not yet a strong consistent culture of feedback to teachers regarding their classroom performance.

Reviewers observed some exemplary teaching practices and teachers expressed a strong desire to learn from each other. A peer coaching program exists whereby teachers visit their peers' classes to observe classroom practices. No formal processes to support a feedback culture were evident. Emerging practices of classroom observations are evident across the college.

- The college leadership team has responded to the challenges of student behaviours through the implementation of positive behaviour support in the college.

The college works to maintain a learning environment that is safe and respectful to meet the diverse needs of student well-being and cultural backgrounds. Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) has been in place five years. A number of staff, parents and students expressed a desire to have a stronger focus on behaviour management including a consistent reward system.



- Western Cape College is strongly connected to its community and highly regarded. A range of partnerships are in place to enhance learning and well-being in students.

Students benefit from the productive partnerships that are in place. Strong partnerships exist with the Mapoon Community Partnership Agreement, Napranum Community Partnership Agreement, Western Cape College and Weipa Community Partnership Agreement, Rio Tinto Alcan (Weipa) Western Cape College and James Cook University, Napranum and Western Cape College Community Centre.



Key improvement strategies

- Support the implementation of the explicit improvement agenda by developing measurable targets and timelines which influence the learning of individual students.
- Continue to build teachers capacity to differentiate learning within each class that they teach to cater for the diverse learners needs. Teachers should document how they have identified difference and the strategies used to cater to all students in their class.
- Build a formal feedback culture in the college with all staff and implement a structured coaching, mentoring and beginning teacher program. Review and evaluate the effectiveness to further develop continuous improvement.
- Continue to improve on the positive behaviour program through the enhancement of proactive strategies with a focus on consistent practices, a structured reward system and whole college programs.