

Cairns State High School

School-led review executive summary

Schools are identified to participate in a school-led review following extensive data and context conversations. As part of the school-led review process, schools undertake activities to evaluate the current state of their students' learning and wellbeing. This evaluation is then validated by School and Region Reviews through community consultation.







Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the shared lands, seas and skies of the Gimuy Walubara Yidinji and Yirrganydji (Irukandji) nations.

About the school

Education region	Far North Queensland Region
Year levels	Years 7 to 12
Enrolment	1612
Indigenous enrolments	13.6%
Students with disability	10.1%
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value	1023

About the review

 5 reviewers from 4 to 5 September 2024	 6 community members	 116 school staff
 108 students	 9 parents	 62 individual conversations

Key improvement strategies

Key improvement strategies are listed in order of priority. This is informed by the school-led evaluation and School and Region Review validation.

Domain 6 – Leading systematic curriculum delivery

Formalise 3 levels of planning across Years 7 to 10 to build a foundation for systematic curriculum planning, documentation implementation and enactment of the Australian Curriculum.

Domain 8– Implementing effective pedagogical practices

Develop opportunities for staff to participate in professional conversations to foster a shared language and understanding about pedagogy to inform next steps.

Domain 2 – Analysing and discussing data

Expand the Professional Development (PD) program to enhance teachers' data literacy and their ability to effectively interpret and use data to inform teaching strategies and interventions.

Domain 3 – Promoting a culture of learning

Review and refine the Years 7 to 12 CONNECT program, informed by staff and student voice, to develop ownership, cohesion and progression, and emphasise accountability.

Key affirmations



Celebrating and valuing diversity is an embedded way of working.

Staff, students and families convey a strong sense of belonging and connection to the school. The leadership team is committed to creating an inclusive environment where all members of the school community are respected and appreciated. Staff emphasise the importance of developing supportive, caring relationships with students, and actively contribute to the positive learning environment that supports each student's unique background and individual needs. Students clearly articulate they have voice in the school and describe their relationships with teachers and support staff as encouraging and supportive. Parents are appreciative of the care staff show students. They affirm that the learning needs of all students are catered for and that students are challenged to achieve their best.



A united, cohesive leadership team is committed to improving outcomes for students and supporting staff.

The leadership team works collectively and collaboratively to implement an Explicit Improvement Agenda focused on improving students' academic, wellbeing and engagement outcomes. Staff describe leaders as supportive, responsive and caring, and express appreciation for the stability in leadership and the consistent messaging that leaders provide. The school council and Parents and Citizens' Association work in partnership with the leadership team to develop the improvement agenda and strategic plans. Implementation and the impact of the improvement agenda is regularly monitored through a range of established targets. School community members appreciate the commitment of leaders to supporting students and their families to achieve their best and transition to their chosen pathway.



Staff strive for students to be the best they can be through support, mentoring, challenge and opportunity.

Many students describe the range of programs available in academic, cultural, sporting and service spheres they can engage in as part of school life. They praise the breadth of opportunities and the efforts of school staff in developing, maintaining and delivering experiences for them to build new skills, strive for excellence and engage with the community. Parents and community members express that the variety of programs helped make this their school of choice. Leaders acknowledge the support of alumni and the wider Cairns community in removing obstacles to students accessing programs to ensure every student has the opportunity to be their best.



Leaders place a strong emphasis on fostering meaningful partnerships that support student wellbeing, academic achievement, and engagement.

The leadership team actively engages a broad range of organisations that support students' academic achievement and cultural inclusivity within the school. Strategic connections with local universities, primary schools, First Nations academies, and philanthropic organisations provide strong support for students across all phases of high school learning. External partners express feeling accepted by the leadership team and teaching staff, sharing a common purpose with the school. The breadth of these partnerships, combined with the school's targeted approach to enhancing student outcomes, is reflected in positive feedback from staff, students, and stakeholders.



Leaders and teachers are committed to engaging in PD and improving teaching practice.

Leaders prioritise time for staff to access PD and plan collaboratively. School-wide processes including Annual Performance Development Plans, Professional Learning Circles (PLC) and Professional Planning Thursday provide opportunities for teachers to engage professionally and focus on improving their teaching practice. Teachers indicate they value the time within PLCs to focus on an inquiry question with colleagues from different faculties. Teachers acknowledge the benefits of engaging in peer observations and feedback which leads to improved practice.



Collegial connectiveness is displayed in strong collegial relationships across entire faculties.

Many staff express that they feel that the school has developed a culture of strong collegial relationships that make them feel valued and supported. This is reflected in the way staff talk about how they work together in their faculty and cross-faculty teams to plan and address common problems of practice. Many staff express they appreciate this culture and value the strong commitment to collegiality. Staff express they enjoy their workplace and the team approach.