



School Improvement Unit Report

Ironside State School **Executive Summary**





1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Ironside State School from 29 February to 2 March 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:	2 Hawken Drive, St. Lucia
Education region:	Metropolitan Region
The school opened in:	1870
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Current school enrolment:	1034
Indigenous enrolments:	0.2 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	1.6 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	1199
Year principal appointed:	2016 (acting)
Number of teachers:	59 (full-time equivalent)
Nearby schools:	Indooroopilly State High School, Toowong State School, St. Peters Lutheran College.
Significant community partnerships:	University of Queensland Kids Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) program, International breakfast, Overseas and Family Network.
Unique school programs:	Long-term Japanese exchange program



1.3 Review methodology

The review was conducted by a team of four 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, students, parents and community representatives, including:
 - Principal and deputy principal
 - Head of Curriculum (HOC) and pedagogy coach
 - Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN), English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EAL/D) teachers, and staff and student wellbeing teachers
 - 41 classroom teachers, five specialist teachers (physical education, music, Languages other than English (LOTE), teacher librarian), Art and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) teachers and three relieving teachers
 - Business Services Manager (BSM), two administration officers and eight teacher aides
 - Five school council members
 - Three Parent and Citizens' Association (P&C) executive members, *Overseas and Family Network* member and 25 parents
 - Student leaders and 50 students
 - Community representatives, including representatives of feeder secondary and 'transition to Prep' provider

1.4 Review team

Bert Barbe	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Liam Smith	Internal reviewer, SIU
John Wessel	External reviewer
Toni Robinson	Peer reviewer



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The school enjoys an optimistic and positive school climate and there is an obvious sense of pride in the school.

The school's reputation for strong academic outcomes and diverse curriculum offerings has led to continuing enrolment growth. The cultural diversity of the students is seen as an asset and is valued by parents, staff members and students.

- The school improvement agenda is focusing the whole school's attention on core learning priorities of inquiry focused teaching, consistency of practice and wellbeing.

Plans for improvement are yet to have a tangible impact upon teaching practice. Teaching staff express a desire to access quality professional development with regards to the implementation of various aspects of the improvement agenda and for greater clarity regarding the specifics of the agenda.

- School leaders articulate the belief that the development of staff into an expert, coherent school-wide team is central to improved student outcomes.

The school is yet to implement a systematic approach to the development of staff members' capability linked to the improvement agenda. A model of coaching has recently been developed. This model has not yet been shared widely with staff members and coaching is yet to commence.

- Elements of the school's pedagogical framework are evident in many classrooms although they are not consistently implemented across the school.

There is limited evidence of the documentation of school-wide expectations regarding the use of core programs or monitoring by the leadership team. Many staff members identify the need for professional development in the core programs and increased clarity and communication regarding school implementation expectations. Teaching staff express interest in observing the coach and their colleagues' best practices in core programs and associated teaching strategies.

- The school curriculum draws on the Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) resource and the Australian Curriculum (AC).

Staff members' awareness and application of the contents of the curriculum documents to guide teacher planning varies considerably across the school. Most staff members express a desire for greater clarity, certainty and consistency in curriculum.



- School leaders utilise human and physical resources to address student needs and provide resources to meet these needs.

There is a range of financial and human resources available to target school improvement priorities. The potential of these resources to contribute to the school's improvement agenda is yet to be fully realised.

- The school values parents as partners in their child's education and as integral members of the school community.

Parents speak highly of the commitment of the teaching staff and leadership team and of the quality of the teaching. They are appreciative of the regular communication from teaching staff which provides detailed information regarding the learning and teaching in classrooms. The *Overseas and Australian Family Network* provides parents with a sense of welcome and belonging to the Ironside school community.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Refine the current improvement agenda to identify a sharp, narrow and deep focus with achievable targets and timelines supported by appropriate resources.
- Collaboratively develop and implement coaching and feedback protocols regarding identified priority areas.
- Collaboratively develop more detailed documentation and systematic monitoring of agreed school practices including the expectations for implementation of core programs and associated teaching strategies to provide greater clarity for staff members.
- Collaboratively develop and implement a whole-school curriculum plan based on the AC.
- Systematically enact, monitor and evaluate the published school plans.