



Department of
Education

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Public education
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Mount Lawley Senior High School

Public School Review

October 2020



PUBLIC SCHOOL REVIEW

Purpose

All Western Australian public schools are reviewed by the Department of Education's Public School Accountability directorate. A review gives assurance to the local community, the Minister for Education and Training and the Director General about the performance of public schools in delivering high quality education to its students. The review acknowledges the achievements of the school and gives feedback to support the principal and staff with their improvement planning.

Initially conducted on a three-year cycle, subsequent reviews are determined to occur on a one, three or five-year timeframe.

The principal provides the review team with a self-assessment of the school's performance based on evidence from the school. Information to be validated by the review team is considered before and during the school visit. This forms the basis for the school review report and determines when the next review will occur. The report is provided to the principal, the chair of the school council/board and the regional executive director.

Expectations of schools

For all Western Australian public schools, expectations are set out in either:

- the Delivery and Performance Agreement, which is an agreement between the Department (represented by the Director General), school (represented by the principal) and school board (represented by the school board chair); or
- the Principals' Statement of Expectations

together with the Funding Agreement for Schools.

Public School Review – The Standard

A Standard has been developed across the domains of the School Improvement and Accountability Framework to describe essential indicators of performance. The selection of the indicators is based on literature research and historical reviews of school performance in Western Australian public schools.

The purpose is to better ensure that judgements about student performance are standardised and objective. Indicators describe what is evident in schools functioning 'as expected' within each domain.

The Standard defines the expected level of school performance. Judgements are made in relation to the Standard. External validation is also based on evidence presented relating to the Standard.



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Context

Mount Lawley Senior High School was established in 1955. It is located three kilometres from the Perth central business district in the North Metropolitan Education Region.

Student numbers have been increasing steadily in recent years and there are currently 1896 students enrolled from Year 7 to Year 12. The school's Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage is 1101 (decile 1).

Students are able to undertake studies in many languages with the school offering a Gifted and Talented language program in Italian, French, Chinese, Korean and Japanese. The Arts is also a focus of the school with visual arts, drama, media and music available in the broad-based Specialist Visual and Performing Arts program.

The school has a commitment to Aboriginal Education and on behalf of the Department, hosts the Follow the Dream Outreach program. The school also offers the Aboriginal Excellence Program for aspirational Aboriginal students.

In 2012, the school gained Independent Public School status. The School Board is involved in establishing and reviewing the school's priorities and the promotion of the school in the wider community.

The Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) includes parent support groups for specialist programs and contributes to school facilities through fundraising activities.

The school plays an integral role in the Mount Lawley Hub Network with surrounding schools, through hosting opportunities to share policies, best practice in teaching and learning and to present a collective voice in regard to educational matters for member schools.

School self-assessment validation

The Principal submitted a comprehensive and rigorous school self-assessment.

The following aspects of the school's self-assessment process are commended:

- The process of preparing for the Public School Review was in keeping with the comprehensive, ongoing and embedded procedures for school self-assessment and improvement at the school and individual levels.
- The Electronic School Assessment Tool submission provided a detailed account of the current school context, performance and the planning of priorities in the school business plan.
- A broad range of inter-related and credible evidence was selected for analysis.
- A wide cross section of school leaders, teachers, support staff, students, parents and community representatives elaborated on the evidence and planning intentions described in the submission, during the validation visit.
- Staff reported a high level of understanding of the value of their involvement with the self-assessment process and endorsed the school operations.
- Staff demonstrate individual and collective ownership for student success with professional and personal responsibilities and expectations understood.
- There is strong alignment between performance evidence, judgements about priorities and planning for improvement.

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Relationships and partnerships	
<p>High levels of trust in the school and its leadership have been developed, founded on engaging and productive relationships. Processes to engage parents, community members and external agencies in partnerships are considered, strategic and effective.</p>	
Commendations	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The School Board, comprised of several prominent professional leaders, is cognisant of its responsibilities and plays an active role in strategic school governance. • Sustainable partnerships within and beyond the school are focused on student support. Valued and mutually beneficial educational partnerships exist with Edith Cowan University (ECU). • Parent support groups, as sub-committees of the P&C, provide a pivotal voice in decision making. They advocate strongly for their specialist areas and provide significant financial support. • Effective use of a range of communication platforms has resulted in operations being articulated clearly to the school community. • The highly respected 'Lawley Legends' Alumni program honours past students who have made significant contributions to society.
Recommendation	<p>The review team support the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to seek productive partnerships with agencies that can enhance the quality of support for students.

Learning environment	
<p>The learning environment is characterised as supportive and inclusive leading to high levels of effectiveness in meeting the needs of students both collectively and individually. A high priority is given to supporting social and emotional wellbeing.</p>	
Commendations	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An array of support programs including Youth Focus, Teen Mental Health and Community Time enhance student resilience and wellbeing. • Student voice is encouraged through commitment to leadership opportunities including the Student Council, House leaders, Bush Ranger Cadets and representation on the School Board. • Improvements to the physical environment have enhanced the student learning experience through more active and engaging opportunities. • A culture of care and support has student need and engagement as central to its focus. The proactive student services team is complemented by the strategic sub-school structure, support personnel and case management processes.
Recommendation	<p>The review team support the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to ensure the provision of optimal conditions for learning, including access to expert staff and differentiated support.

Leadership

The strategic intent of the school is founded on the belief that a unified purpose in a culture of continuous improvement will enhance the school's progression from 'good to great'. Strategic planning incorporates both a Planning and Accountability Model and Pedagogical Framework.

Commendations	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The partnership with Kurongkurl Katitjin (ECU) has resulted in a proactive approach to building the cultural competence and responsiveness of students and staff. • An effective distributed leadership structure is valued highly and well-resourced. Talent identification precedes active mentoring and succession planning for aspirants. • Sophisticated alignment and purpose underpin all levels of planning within the school. This is complemented by a genuine commitment to the school Planning and Accountability Model. • Regular, comprehensive academic reviews ensure staff ownership of course delivery and achievement data, to inform operational planning. • Change has been managed at a pace that builds acceptance and commitment with consideration of the need to balance whole-school, student and staff needs.
Recommendation	<p>The review team support the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote a culture where every member of staff is a leader, empowered to develop themselves and those they serve.

Use of resources

Processes for resource deployment and workforce management are strategic and robust. The alignment of resources to both long-term and short-term planning and reflective of identified need, ensures effectiveness. Timetabling structures maximise student opportunities.

Commendations	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence-based decision making underpins high quality resource management and deployment. Clear and defensible links exist between school budgeting and business plan targets. • Student characteristics and targeted initiatives funding are used to implement a range of evidence-based programs successfully, to support improved student outcomes. • Human resource management is strategic, providing a high quality, passionate workforce committed to sustainable programs and practice. • Resourcing is targeted to support essential personnel and programs that are aligned to school priorities. • The management of buildings and assets onsite are given high priority. Shared facilities with ECU are subject to a formal MOU¹.
Recommendation	<p>The review team support the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to enhance online financial processing to limit cash handling, save resources and offer more convenience for parents.

Teaching quality

A focus on quality teaching has resulted in effective, evidence-based, whole-school practices and valued support to teachers in the implementation of them. Students are successfully prepared with the skills and understandings to become effective learners.

Commendations	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school-wide pedagogical framework – ASPIRE² – has ensured that evidence-based review informs teaching and learning practices. • Performance management processes have incorporated a meaningful and intentional engagement with ASPIRE. • A comprehensive review of learning support processes resulted in high quality planning for, and case management of, students with SEN³. • Comprehensive student tracking mechanisms underpin highly effective individual student pathway planning. • A range of long-standing, well-respected and effective specialist programs provide targeted opportunities to enhance student capacity. • The Teaching and Learning Committee, with school-wide representation, has been instrumental in supporting colleagues in the implementation of whole-school initiatives such as visible learning walkthroughs.
Recommendation	<p>The review team support the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to embed evidence-based teaching strategies, differentiation of curriculum and effective classroom management.

Student achievement and progress

Student achievement across the range of academic opportunities is of a high level. There is an appreciation that data and their analyses will inform curriculum initiatives and practice. Curriculum offerings and support structures optimise the prospects for student success.

Commendations	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive trend lines are evident in most NAPLAN⁴ tests 2015-19. Means were similar to the like school means in all tests in 2019. • In 2019, student progress, Year 7 to Year 9, was higher than like schools in all assessments except numeracy. • School performance is owned by all staff who share responsibility for making performance improvements. • Average scaled scores for senior school courses are consistently similar to the like school mean. • While below like schools, median Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) performance has trended upwards annually since 2016. • The ATAR participation rate (70 per cent) in 2019 was significantly higher than like schools.
Recommendation	<p>The review team support the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to focus on ensuring all students are in the best possible pathway to achieve their potential.

Reviewers

Brett Hunt
Director, Public School Review

Keith Svendsen
Principal, Baldivis Secondary College
Peer Reviewer

Endorsement

Based on this report, I endorse the commendations and recommendations made by the review team regarding your school's performance.

Your next school review is scheduled for Term 4, 2023.



Stephen Baxter
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 Memorandum of Understanding
- 2 Assess, Self-reflection, Plan, Implement, Review, Embed
- 3 Special Educational Need
- 4 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy