Tropical North Learning Academy – Smithfield State High School

Executive Summary
Acknowledgment of Country

The Department of Education acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands from across Queensland. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.

A better understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures develops an enriched appreciation of Australia’s cultural heritage and can lead to reconciliation. This is essential to the maturity of Australia as a nation and fundamental to the development of an Australian identity.
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1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU) at Smithfield State High School from 9 to 12 September 2019.

The report presents 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 implement in consultation with its regional office and school community.

The report’s executive summary outlines key findings from the review and key improvement strategies that prioritise future directions for improvement.

Schools will publish the executive summary on the school website within two weeks of receiving the report.

The principal will meet with their Assistant Regional Director (ARD) to discuss the review findings and improvement strategies.

For more information regarding the SIU and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SIU website.

1.1 Review team

Lee Goossens  Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Chris Kern  Peer reviewer
Cameron Hodges  Peer reviewer
Christine Tom  External reviewer
1.2 School context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location:</th>
<th>O’Brien Road, Smithfield</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education region:</td>
<td>Far North Queensland Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year opened:</td>
<td>1983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year levels:</td>
<td>Year 7 to Year 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolment:</td>
<td>1193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous enrolment percentage:</td>
<td>11 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students with disability enrolment percentage:</td>
<td>3.7 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</td>
<td>987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year principal appointed:</td>
<td>Term 2, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day 8 staffing teacher full-time equivalent (FTE):</td>
<td>97</td>
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<tr>
<td>Significant partner schools:</td>
<td>Tropical North Learning Academy (TNLA) – Trinity Beach State School, Caravonica State School, Yorkeys Knob State School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Significant community partnerships:</td>
<td>TNLA – Trinity Beach State School and James Cook University (JCU)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Significant school programs:</td>
<td>JCU Learning Academies – high achieving students in all year levels, Jazz Academy, Sports Academies – Soccer Academy and Netball Academy, Young Scholars Program – in affiliate primary schools, French Immersion Program, Global Tropics Future (GTF) Project, International Student Program – Education Queensland International (EQI)</td>
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1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, three deputy principals, Business Manager (BM), 15 Heads of Department (HOD), three deans of students, guidance officer, 58 teachers, 12 administration officers, nine teacher aides, grounds and facilities officers, seven cleaners, two Information Technology (IT) technicians, Community Education Counsellor (CEC), homestay coordinator, canteen and uniform coordinator, canteen assistant, 25 student leaders, 23 students, three Parents and Citizens’ Association (P&C) executive members, school council chairperson and 14 parents.

Community and business groups:

- Smithfield Child Care Centre director, Cairns Institute JCU Campus director, Smithfield Rotary Club member, VELMAI industry partner, Business Liaison Association (BLA) representative and Australian Football League (AFL) Cape York House head of boarding.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principal of Trinity Bay State School, principal of Caravonica State School, principal of Yorkeys Knob State School and EQI regional representative.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Division 8 councillor for Cairns Regional Council, Division 9 councillor for Cairns Regional Council and ARD.
### 1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investing for Success 2019</td>
<td>Strategic Plan 2016-2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Headline Indicators (April 2019 release)</td>
<td>School Data Profile (Semester 1, 2019)</td>
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<tr>
<td>OneSchool</td>
<td>Annual Report 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Learning Plan 2019</td>
<td>Curriculum Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and Learning Placemat</td>
<td>2019 Specific Improvement Agenda (SIA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pedagogical framework</td>
<td>Professional Learning for Teachers Plan</td>
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<td>Smithfield SHS 2019 Student Diary</td>
<td>School newsletters and website</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Opinion Survey 2018</td>
<td>Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment and Reporting System</td>
<td>Learning &amp; Teaching Cycle @ TNLA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Data Profile – Report card and NAPLAN update Semester 1 2019</td>
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2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

School staff highlight the existence of an ‘open door’ philosophy and welcome colleagues to their rooms and feedback regarding their practice.

School leaders recognise the impact that high quality teaching and learning has on student achievement. Teaching staff are highly committed to supporting their students’ wellbeing and learning outcomes. Staff describe a strong culture of collegial collaboration and support for each other that includes sharing of resources and a collaborative approach to curriculum planning.

Data to inform decision making is embedded in practice and accepted across the school.

School leaders place a high priority on using data to inform the school priorities, planning, resourcing, interventions and initiatives. An established program of student performance review is based on attendance, behaviour and achievement to identify students requiring additional support.

A strong collegial culture of mutual trust and support is apparent within teaching teams in the school.

Interactions between staff members, students, parents and families are predominantly respectful, polite and inclusive. Students report that teachers care about them and are approachable in times of need. They recognise that teachers have an expectation that all learners will do their best every day and in every subject.

School leaders give priority to understanding and addressing the needs of students.

School leaders source and deploy available resources to meet these needs. The school aims to allocate human, financial and physical resources to meet the identified teaching, learning and wellbeing needs of all students. Staff and students express the view that this allocation is yet to be fully effective, efficient and equitable across the school and for all students. The school grounds and gardens are well maintained and presented. The school presents itself to the community as a clean and tidy work environment for students and staff to learn and work in.

There is a strong commitment by school leaders to drive an innovative and ambitious Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) to improve the learning outcomes for all students.

The leadership team indicates their willingness to engage all stakeholders in collaborative decision-making processes to advance the school’s improvement agenda over the next four years. Teachers express satisfaction with the collegial nature of their work with colleagues, and articulate clear ideas regarding the future directions of the school. Staff express their desire to have a greater voice in contributing their expertise to develop, evaluate and sustain initiatives and programs to improve student learning outcomes into the future. An organisational structure outlining roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for key drivers of the school EIA is yet to be fully defined.
The school has a comprehensive and well-researched teaching and learning placemat aligned to the pedagogical framework that identifies effective teaching practices.

The pedagogical framework identifies effective teaching practices that enhance learning opportunities for all students. Teachers have a repertoire of ways for acknowledging students’ efforts and celebrating their success. Most teachers are participating in a range of strategies to gain feedback from their peers and leaders. Some teachers would like to see this process become more frequent and formalised.

The school encourages teachers to tailor their teaching to the needs and readiness of students.

The school places a high priority on meeting the learning needs of all students. An inquiry cycle approach to collaborative planning allows groups of teachers to identify key learning outcomes and requisite student skills on a regular cycle. Individual Support Plans (ISP) are established for students with disability. Support includes in-class teacher aide provision and small functional classes. Teachers indicate that their ability to cater for students with a disability in some classes varies.

The school has a collaboratively developed whole-school curriculum plan.

The plan clearly documents an explicit, coherent and sequenced overview for curriculum delivery to provide consistent teaching and learning expectations across the school.

The school has an extensive range of long-standing partnerships with local schools, community organisations and tertiary education providers.

The Tropical North Learning Academy (TNLA) is a long-standing partnership between the school, James Cook University (JCU) and Trinity Beach State School that provides a range of extension activities and cooperative programs for students and staff. The school has an extensive range of Vocational Education and Training (VET) programs available for senior students. These partnerships are well respected by all members of the school community.
2.2 Key improvement strategies.

Systematically and rigorously monitor and evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of human, physical and financial resource allocations in priority areas to ensure they are producing desired learning outcomes for all students.

Collaboratively review the vision, culture and directions of the school to inform the EIA and the next steps to further advance school improvement and learning outcomes for all students.

Collaboratively develop a sustainable organisational structure with roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for individuals and teams to quality assurance the implementation of the EIA to improve learning outcomes for all students.

Develop a systematic approach and routine processes for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching to inform professional growth through collaboratively agreed processes.

Develop and implement an approach to build staff capacity to differentiate in all classes, for all students that is aligned with the Department of Education (DoE) inclusive education policy.