

Palmerston District Primary School

Network: North Canberra/ Gungahlin

Impact Report 2020

The purpose of this document

This document flows directly from our Action Plan for 2020 which translated our school priorities into actions for the current year of our five-year improvement cycle. These actions were responsive to identified challenges, changes or risks to delivery of improvement for student learning.

Note: In term 3 2019 (1 ½ years in to the 2018-2022 school improvement cycle), a new senior leadership team commenced at the school. The leadership team reviewed multiple sources of data available and, in consultation with community stakeholders, developed a new 2020-2022 School Improvement Plan. The new School Improvement Plan focuses on two sharp and narrow priorities for student learning and wellbeing.

Our school's contribution to whole-of-system Strategic Indicators

Education Directorate Strategic Indicator 2018-2021

To promote greater equity in learning outcomes in and across ACT public schools

In 2020 our school supported this Strategic Indicator through priorities 1 and 2:

- Priority 1 Improve students' writing and spelling capabilities
- Priority 2: Improve students' ability to connect with learning.

Education Directorate Strategic Indicator 2018-2021

To facilitate high quality teaching in ACT public schools and strengthen educational outcomes.

In 2020 our school supported this Strategic Indicator through priorities 1 and 2:

- Establishment of a Literacy team to ensure all students benefit from current best literacy practices. A major shift from photocopied worksheets across the school to using authentic rich texts and explicit English lessons.
- Developed whole school pedagogy strategies to use 'fit for purpose' learning environments and co-constructed resources.
- Establish a Positive Behaviours for Learning (PBL) team to continue PBL across the school (and at home) for 'all purpose' areas.

Education Directorate Strategic Indicator 2018-2021

To centre teaching and learning around students as individuals

In 2020 our school supported this Strategic Indicator through priorities 1 and 2:

- Learning programs were designed to drive differentiation of teaching methods, assessment, and resources used, particularly focussing on literacy activities (across English and integrated unit lessons)
- A focus on wellbeing (including our response to COVID) online learning, transfer back to in-class learning, using technology/online systems and increased PBL/Social & Emotional Learning (SEL) explicit lessons.

Reporting against our priorities

Priority 1: Improve students' writing and spelling capabilities

Targets or measures

By the end of 2020 we will achieve:

- Increase the proportion of students who demonstrate growth in writing, using formative and summative strategies.
- Increase the proportion of students in every year level being exposed to authentic daily writing.
- NAPLAN results show higher growth than similar schools, from Year 3-5 in writing (NOTE** 2020 NAPLAN was cancelled due to COVID 19)
- Essential Practice 1 - Deliberate efforts to foster motivation and engagement within and across writing activities in 75% of classes.
- At least 60% of students in years 1-6 achieving at Australian Curriculum achievement standard or above in writing

In 2020 we implemented this priority through the following strategies:

- Whole school professional learning with new writing and spelling initiatives.
- Teams to regularly analyse and reflect on student data to inform next steps.
- Schedule of professional learning, assessment and moderation tasks will be undertaken.
- Learning environments – internal and external will be print rich.

Below is our progress towards our five-year targets with an emphasis on the accumulation and analysis of evidence over the term of our plan.

Student learning data

Targets or Measures	Base	Year 1 2020	Year 2 2021	Year 3 2022
To increase the Year 3 to Year 5 growth in mean scale scores in Writing to 65 mean scale scores or more	54.5 mean scale scores	N/A		
65% of our students will be achieving at or above expected growth from year 3 to year 5 in writing.	56.8%	N/A		
To increase the percentage of year 5 students in the top two bands of writing to 35% or more.	22.3%	N/A		
Growth in the Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) (Vocabulary) median scaled score for each year level is at or above the growth in the national median scaled score for the corresponding time period.	TBC	Growth level to be set with 2020 and 2021 data		

Perception Data

Targets or Measures	Base	Year 1 2020	Year 2 2021	Year 3 2022
80% or more of our Yr 4,5,6 students agree or strongly agree that <i>'Teachers give useful feedback'</i> .	72.2%	66.7%		

What this evidence tells us

What does this evidence indicate about your school's progress towards your five-year targets?

- Despite the changes that occurred during the year due to COVID19, our staff chose to continue with our writing priority. There is consensus that all staff have gained more clarity of the writing process, exposed their students to more authentic writing opportunities and saw confidence in their students identifying themselves as writers. Walls in every classroom, workbooks in every class and along corridors showcase quality writing and publishing. Holiday activities were arranged to promote authentic writing opportunities.

Have any of your data sources changed over time? If so, why?

- As this is our base year, there were two main elements of data missing. PAT Vocabulary and Reading tests arrived in Semester 1. This was administered later than ideal (due to COVID) but not the full period of time passed in order to retest. Additionally, NAPLAN did not occur this year due to COVID19. This should change for 2021 onwards back to regular practices.

What implications does this evidence have for your next AP?

- A need for teachers to moderate across the year level.
- With a large staff turnover coming into 2021, dedicated professional learning and coaching/mentoring will be scheduled in to bring everyone onto the same page ensuring a full understanding of all reporting protocols. Additionally, we have 15 new educators.
- Next stage: Moving from 'secretarial' writing goals to authorial goals, providing rigour, which will transform students into becoming autonomous writers, via the gradual release of responsibility model.

Our achievements for this priority

Students in the IEC benefit from a whole language approach to learning English.

- Expertise of teachers in the Introductory English Centre (IEC) build robust learning programs focussing on the acquisition of English, for students from a wide variety of backgrounds, including refugee status.

Students in the LSU benefit from a balanced literacy program with strengthened literacy practices.

- A concerted effort to move the Learning Support Unit (LSU) to whole school practices including Christine Topher's 10 Essential Practices and PAT tests.
- Multi modal literacies are employed to engage students and reduce barriers to achieving growth in literacy.

- All students benefit from highly individualised differentiated programs to meet individual needs using their strengths and interests to foster oral and written communication in real world authentic contexts.

Students in mainstream classes P – 6.

- All classes used: components of 10 Essential Skills, The Writing Book, and the Australian Curriculum Learning Continuum of Literacy as core resources to inform planning and pedagogy.
- Explicit teaching in areas of the writing process empowered, independent writing.
- Setting high expectations and as a result creating whole class shifts for persuasive writing e.g. C-B's, B-A's and D-C's. (Yr 2)
- Creating individual writing goals for students using 'Bump It Up' wall criteria that facilitated differentiation.
- Social and emotional support and the introduction to Growth Mindsets, (especially during COVID online learning) to maintain connection and belonging to Palmerston.
- Students have increased their 'writing fitness' - the ability to sustain effort when creating digital and handwritten texts.
- Learning Support Assistants (LSA's) support has been more targeted to support reluctant writers, increasing confidence and output of writing tasks.
- All specialist teachers have explicitly focussed on discussing the language of their subject area, providing 'real time' feedback to increase oral proficiency.
- Student choice for audiences has resulted in a wide variety of opportunities e.g. Letters to principal, letter to Frontline Workers, invitations to events and applications for leadership positions in Yr 6.
- Writing achievement is actively celebrated across the school by peers and all members of staff.

September feedback from School Improvement Instructional Mentors:

- "Thank you for inviting us to walk through your school and have a discussion today about your journey thus far in 2020. It is evident that your leadership team have persisted with the focus on writing. Below we have pulled together our 'noticing's':

Noticing's:

- - Children were excited about their writing and wanted to share their writing with us.
- - Children saw themselves as writers who were writing for a purpose.
- - Writing was celebrated in many ways across the school.
- - There is a clear message that writing is valued and is the focus for learning across the school.
- - Bump it up walls were evident across classrooms.
- There are authentic and real-world context opportunities for children to write.

Challenges we will address in our next Action Plan

- Moderation across the year level in order to reduce subjectivity.
- Continue to build consistent teacher practice with 10 Essential Practices in Literacy.
- Effectively trial Effective Spelling alongside the Directorates new Pedagogy Enabling Guide.
- Develop values and beliefs with staff about themselves as writers and as teachers of writing
- Continue to build teacher knowledge in the authorial aspects of writing
- Continue to build consistent teacher practice in differentiation.
- Implementation of an SLC Professional Practice to support new educators.

- English as Additional Language/Dialect (EALD) students' needs will be addressed through professional learning, mentoring, lesson modelling and coaching.

Priority 2: Improve students' ability to connect with learning.

Targets or measures

By the end of 2020 we will achieve:

- Refurbishment of classroom, sensory and outdoor spaces to meet the emotional and behavioural needs of our growing student population.
- 100% of classrooms host visible learning strategies to encourage student engagement and independent learning.
- Above 80% in PBL school wide evaluation tools, demonstrating current systems and practice is well embedded.

In 2020 we implemented this priority through the following strategies:

- Analysis and audit of the organisational structure of physical learning spaces and changes implemented to maximise learning.
- PBL team formed to embed current 'non classroom' systems and practices.
- A priority for PBL team to attend intensive training sessions for future in school leadership.
- Triangulation of evidence sets from – Targeted Student Support Team (TSST), PBL data, Occupational Violence Risk Assessment (OVRA) and Network Student Engagement Team (NSET) referrals.

Below is our progress towards our five-year targets with an emphasis on the accumulation and analysis of evidence over the term of our plan.

Perception Data

Targets or Measures	Base	Year 1 2020	Year 2 2021	Year 3 2022
Increase percentage of student agreement with the item 'I feel safe at this school' to 80%.	63.4%	51.9%		
Increase percentage of student agreement with the item 'My teachers motivate me to learn' to 85%.	79.8%	72.1%		
Increase percentage of student agreement with the item 'I can talk to teachers about my concerns' to 80%.	73.1%	61.5%		
Increase percentage of student agreement with the item 'My school gives me opportunities to do interesting things' to 80%.	74.7%	69.4%		

School program and process data

Targets or Measures	Base	Year 1 2020	Year 2 2021	Year 3 2022
Increase number of positive incidents by (15%) each semester.	S1 2020 – 1309 positive incidents S2 2020b– 3562 positive incidents	63% increase from S1 2020 to S2 2020		

What this evidence tells us

What does this evidence indicate about your school's progress towards your three-year targets?

- 2020 perception data results for the targets are reflective of the journey of change in leadership and school-wide refocusing of systems and structures for learning and teaching. Student perceptions trends should be considered in triangulation with parent and staff perceptions that indicate positive trends. However, the drops are of significant note, and school leadership will be undertaking focused inquiry with students to understand the totality of their concerns about safety, learning, and connections within the school.
- The % of recordable incidents has increased due to the intensive focus of staff through explicit training by deputy principal with expertise, showcasing the need to report, how to report and the importance of reporting. Due to this change, teachers have articulated their increased knowledge and understanding the need to be active reporters.

Have any of your data sources changed over time? If so, why?

- We are collecting more data than in previous years. We encourage all staff to prioritise own health and wellbeing by reporting through Riskman and this has resulted in increased OVRA's to support teacher and student needs.
- In school Student Referral Forms are more comprehensive comprising of multiple sources of data and evidence.
- End of term staff meeting focus to tour all classroom and for all staff to provide feedback through Wow/Wow/Wonder – this was a very proactive step for teachers to affirm strong pedagogy and visual learning in every classroom.

What implications does this evidence have for your next AP?

- Maintaining consistent approach across teacher cohort, with 15 new teachers to the school, several being New Educators.
- Introduction of strategic co-teaching and the Directorate's new Pedagogy Framework will be introduced, supporting different learning expectations/environments.

Our achievements for this priority

- Implemented effective 'all settings' systems in line with PBL Framework.
- 90% of learning spaces have efficient systems and organisational structures.

- Visual learning is now evident in every classroom – including Acknowledgment of Country, word walls, bump it up walls, writing goals, learning intentions, and Code of Conduct.
- The PBL implementation team has defined and established school wide behavioural expectations and developed and delivered professional learning for staff.
- With change of leadership team – a resurgence of PBL occurred and a PBL Committee was formed, meeting several times across the year. Major achievements include undertaking system wide professional learning to create the 2021 Week 0 PBL focus and shift into ‘classroom settings’.
- Furniture audit was undertaken to select new ‘flexible learning’ style furniture for classrooms in 2021. A budget of approximately \$80 000 was created and spent.
- New ‘fit for purpose’ calming spaces designed and completed including: new courtyard for LSU, New Calming Courtyard at Library rear, and a new Kumburu Room – a sensory space for students to use to de-escalate and self-regulate.
- Student leadership opportunities for senior students to act as peer supports on playground and new canteen area.
- Working with the Parents & Citizens (P&C) , they funded new benchtops in the Canteen in order to initiate the first Canteen for students in over 10 years.
- Collaborated with students to design and build an additional sandpit to better meet safe play needs for younger students.

Challenges we will address in our next Action Plan

- Whole school PBL and SEL curriculum planning
- Whole school student management processes, using co-teaching to replace Exec on Deck.
- Whole school data collection and analysis
- Introduction of whole school SEL resources.