Albany Senior High School

2018

Review Findings

Independent Public School Review

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School and Review Details

Principal:	Jenny Firth
Board Chair:	Greg Stocks
School Address:	1 Campbell Road, Albany WA 6330
Number of Students:	1020
ICSEA[1]	1012
Reviewers:	Gerry Chapman (Lead)
	Tom Campbell
Review Dates:	1 and 2 March 2018

Purpose of the Review

The purpose of this review is to provide assurance to the principal and school community, the board and the Director General of the Department of Education of the extent to which the school staff and board have met the commitments of the Delivery and Performance Agreement (DPA). The review verifies the degree to which there are effective processes in place bringing about improved student learning.

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[1] The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) is a scale of socio-educational advantage that is computed for each school. It allows for comparisons to be made between schools that are matched according to their socio-educational advantage, allowing fair comparisons of NAPLAN results between schools with students who have a similar ICSEA. The median ICSEA value is 1000.
http://docs.acara.edu.au/resources/About_icsea_2014.pdf

Review Methodology

Underpinning the review methodology is the understanding that the principal is required to ensure the roles and responsibilities of the DPA are met; school performance and student improvement targets and priorities, as detailed in the school's business plan, are assessed, reviewed annually and an annual report made publicly available. The review seeks to determine the extent to which these commitments have been met.

The principal provided the school self-review conclusions to the reviewers one month prior to the commencement of the review.

The reviewers supplemented the information provided by the principal with information on the school's achievements, its processes and its student performance data from a number of sources which included:

- the My School® website

- School Performance Monitoring

- Schools Online reports

Reviewers analysed the evidence presented in the school self-review documentation to verify achievement of the DPA and business plan commitments, and developed lines of inquiry where further in-school verification was required.

An agenda for the site visit was negotiated with the principal to enable the gathering of evidence to verify claims made in the school self-review statements. During the review visit the reviewers sourced evidence to support the claims through observation and discussion with leaders, teaching and support staff, board members, parents and students where required. Where the school belongs to an Independent Public School (IPS) cluster of schools the review considers whether the purpose of the cluster has been met and the benefits to the school.

The evidence provided by the principal, along with information gathered by the reviewers prior to and during the review visit, was used as the basis for judgements made in verifying how well the school staff and board have met the commitments of the DPA and business plan.

Business Plan

How effective was the business plan in responding to the school's context and improving student learning (progress, achievement and engagement)?

Albany Senior High School, having commenced in 1918 is now celebrating 100 years of educational achievement in the Great Southern region. The school has a proud record as a provider of quality educational outcomes and a long history of educational achievement for many generations of regional students. As part of the centenary celebrations the school is endeavouring to build and strengthen its alumni, engage with the local community and showcase its academic, cultural and sporting achievements.

The school's ICSEA is 1012 indicating above average socio-educational advantage and consistent with the central Albany demographic and the number of students from local small business families.

Enrolment patterns experienced a surge with the move of Year 7 to secondary school; however, since then there has been a slight downward trend in enrolment from 1061 in Semester 2 of 2017 to 1020 at census in Semester 1 of 2018. These fluctuations and the changing local demographic have made enrolment predictions challenging.

The student profile for 2017 includes 49 (4.6%) Aboriginal students, 50 (4.7%) students with a disability and three students with English as an additional language or dialect. These groups are appropriately resourced and supported by targeted system and school programs. Transiency is 13% and is less than the 16.6% in 2015.

There are 130 staff with a full-time equivalent of 116.6 indicating approximately 37% are part-time. The average age of staff is 48.9 years necessitating that workforce planning recognises the need for renewal and in response the school is actively seeking to employ graduates and Teach for Australia participants.

Findings

- The school's business plan outlines the school mission, motto and core values and clearly sets out a school charter for high expectations of staff and students with a strong focus on both academic achievement and values. The business plan clearly articulates the school's beliefs about how it intends to achieve optimal student learning outcomes. Staff and the community have had the opportunity for input as the business plan has been developed and updated, reinforcing its relevance and aligning the context to the school and local community.

- The business plan is comprehensive, initially identifying key school priorities and articulating the desired outcomes intended for each. These are specific to achieving improvement in academic performance, a safe and inclusive learning environment and improved school culture. Strategies for the implementation of the priorities are underpinned by targets specific to each.

- The business plan has been progressively reviewed and updated during the period of its implementation to become more target focused and to include the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework. Targets have been adjusted as they have been achieved and to improve their alignment to National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) performance.

- Detailed annual operational and resources planning further supports the implementation of the business plan by outlining more specific operational strategies and detailing the resources that will be provided to achieve implementation. This operational planning provides learning areas with clear direction and positively supports the learning areas in the development and implementation of their specific plans.

- Learning area planning is also thorough and comprehensive and closely aligned to the business plan through the use of a common template and implementation of whole-school and learning area specific strategies to achieve improved student learning and performance.

- There is a developing focus on Aboriginal education through the implementation of the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework which has been incorporated into the school's planning and operation. Initial data available on the Follow the Dream program is indicating some progressive improvement in achievement, attendance and behaviour. The school also intends to closely monitor Aboriginal student data for those who are not in the Follow the Dream program. The performance of these students and other sub-cohorts needs to be disaggregated, analysed and reported.

- The heads of learning area have provided an additional summary of the 2016 and 2017 learning area plans outlining what follow up is occurring and how areas of concern will be addressed. Recent reporting of data by learning area appears to be mainly focused on grade related target achievement. The learning area reporting could be more comprehensive by the inclusion of analysis of learning area data related to the other business plan targets.

- The principal meets twice per year, at the end of each semester, with each of the heads of learning area to discuss data and oversee progress.

- The board receives intermittent input from learning area leaders at its meetings on student achievement, with the principal providing most of the information.

- The overall levels of planning across the school are well understood, aligned and progressively being embedded. This supports a cohesive and strategic planning and review process.

- The relevant documents, including the business plan and annual reports, are available to the community via the school's website.

- The 2018–20 Business Plan has subsequently been formulated in late 2017 based on input from performance data, school self-assessment feedback, survey feedback and board and community input. This process was inclusive and thorough with staff and board members clearly conversant with the process and outcome.

Areas of strength

- Planning and self-review processes that are becoming well embedded across all levels of the school with staff having a sound understanding of the school's improvement agenda.

- The close alignment of planning, self-assessment and review processes for all aspects of the school's operation.

- The comprehensive operational and resourcing planning that supports the implementation of the business plan and learning area plans.

Area for improvement

- Broaden learning area reporting by including analysis of learning area data related to the other business plan targets.

Teaching and Learning

How has the quality of teaching improved and sustained student learning (progress, achievement and engagement)?

Findings

- Staff are highly committed to delivering a breadth of curriculum tailored to meet the needs of local students with an aim to provide them with pathways to local and wider further education and employment. The school provides an appropriate range of subjects and courses with opportunities for students to follow pathways to university, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) and employment. This is evident by the judicial selection of Australian tertiary admissions rank (ATAR), general, certificate and structured workplace learning pathways and course offerings.

- Learning area planning for the implementation of the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline and the new Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) requirements is progressively being embedded and is well supported with appropriate professional learning and resourcing. The school is on schedule with the relevant timelines and has made sound preliminary preparation for the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline. Technologies and the arts were trialled in Year 7 ahead of full implementation in 2018, ensuring complete coverage of all required aspects of each. Performance and student feedback in conjunction with judging standards was used to refine those courses implemented earlier and to build teacher confidence.

- Whole-school pedagogies are progressively being implemented; however, at this point uptake is variable across learning areas. The school is in a transition phase as it clarifies and determines the extent to which the ongoing classroom management and instructional strategies approach is achieving the desired outcomes. A focus on the implementation of effective instructional strategies, while evolving slowly, has strong support from the school executive. Most staff have completed the Classroom Management Strategies professional learning and it is the intention of leadership to ensure that newly appointed staff will be provided with effective induction. This initiative has been challenging for the staff; however, should these practices become embedded, a positive impact on curriculum delivery is expected.

- There has been a common skills approach in use across most of the learning areas which has been adapted to more closely suit the specific requirements of each learning area. Additionally, learning intentions (or explicit lesson objectives) was a focus for 2017; however, as yet data is not available to determine the

degree of improvement occurring or the extent to which it is embedding. The effectiveness in improving student learning of these strategies was not evident to reviewers.

- The staff use a variety of strategies to differentiate curriculum delivery including streaming in mathematics, English, humanities and science; ability grouping in some classes; and the provision of individual education plans (IEPs) and group education plans (GEPs) where required. The effective incorporation of IEP's into planning for teaching and learning and for assessment and the implementation of Special Education Needs (SEN) reporting is monitored by a deputy principal. IEPs and GEPs have been developed for a significant number of 'at risk' students. This has been facilitated by the learning support coordinator who has provided professional learning for staff which has included the use of SEN software. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the IEP process. Transition plans are also in place for at risk students.

- Year 10 students are grouped according to ATAR or general/certificate ability in preparation for upper school courses. These processes, course selection processes and the high standard of instruction have resulted in commendable WACE results with many subjects achieving above expected ratings.

- The school has a well-developed committee structure with appropriate cross-learning area and stakeholder representation. Collaborative processes are well established across the school with regular committee, staff and learning area meetings many of which are focused on provision of resources and professional support for improvements to the quality of teaching and learning. A recent focus of learning area meetings has been to resolve issues related to moderation and the alignment and consistency of teacher judgements. This should rectify the identified issue of some misalignment between NAPLAN performance and teacher judgements. The writing focus across school and the use of common assessment tasks should assist in improving moderation within learning areas.

- Staff capacity building through engagement in professional learning and performance management is progressively occurring. Access to external professional learning is challenging due to the expense of travel and accommodation; however, the school provides significant resources to ensure that all staff can participate in relevant professional learning. The school also uses the 'train the trainer' model to improve cost effectiveness and enable individual and groups of staff to be upskilled by colleagues. This process has proved to be very successful. Professional learning is linked to performance management and there is a developing process of observation and feedback being built in. Both professional learning and performance management are aligned to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and the priorities and targets in the business plan.

- The business plan priority of excellence in school wide pedagogy and student engagement sets targets specific to improving attainment rates, Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (OLNA), NAPLAN, grade achievement, ATAR and student destinations.

- NAPLAN comparative performance in 2015, 2016 and 2017 was as expected for all categories for both Year 7 and Year 9 with the exception of Year 9 writing which was above expected in 2017.

- The target that "all areas of NAPLAN will be in the higher achievement section/quadrant of the school progress map when compared with like-schools", generally aspiring to have all NAPLAN areas in both higher achievement and higher progress section was partially achieved. Year 9 achievement was better than like-schools across all areas of NAPLAN assessments. Progress was also better for writing and grammar and slightly lower for spelling, numeracy and reading.

- Year 7 longitudinal performance in 2016 NAPLAN was better than 2015 in all dimensions and was slightly better than expected when compared with like-schools. Performance in 2017 was also an improvement on the previous years in all dimensions except for spelling.

- The school NAPLAN target to maintain or improve the percentage of students (stable cohort) in the top and middle bands and decrease the percentage in the bottom bands from Year 7 to Year 9 as assessed in 2017 indicates that the percentage in Band 5 and below decreases annually.

- The OLNA target for 2015–17 for 80% of Year 10 students to satisfy requirements is an aspirational target with an annual success rate range of 64–70% being achieved. Targeted intervention is provided to assist students at risk and by Year 12 a total of 96% of students have met the OLNA requirements for a WACE. The school has identified a need to maintain a focus on numeracy as some relative weaknesses were identified. Students performed better than like-schools with the OLNA in Years 9–11 in 2016.

- The target to increase the percentage of students achieving A to C grades in subjects in Years 7–12 and maintain the upwards trend of the number of students achieving an A grade in all subjects by 2017 was achieved for most learning areas in Year 7; however, this was less so in Year 8 and Year 9 and is being partially achieved in Year 10. For Years 11–12 the percentage of A to C grades improved for ATAR courses; however, to a lesser extent in general courses. Some concerns have been flagged for the number of students in 2016 not achieving a C grade or better in some courses and hence the possibility of

not achieving a WACE. The school is addressing this issue with tutoring and reducing the number of days students miss classes by attending TAFE offsite.

- By 2017 the achievement of Aboriginal students improved for the stable cohort, in comparison to the previous year's achievement in Years 7–10. This target was added to the business plan in November 2016 and the school is progressively building a relevant data base. Disaggregation of data to track all Aboriginal students will enable closer tracking.

- Senior school targets to increase the attainment rate (55 or above ATAR/Certificate II completion) from 74% to 85% was slightly below in 2015 at 73%, easily achieved in 2016 at 95% and in 2017 attainment is comparable to all public schools.

- The target to have the 2017 Median ATAR at or above 75% and the per cent in the lower tricile to be decreased has been achieved in 2015, 2016 and is currently 7% higher than like-schools.

- WACE performance is analysed closely on a subject, class and course basis with the assistance of the Maximising Feedback data and the use of externally set tasks and curriculum audits. Data from these sources is used to revise teaching programs to improve delivery in the following year. Data is discussed at learning area, committee and whole of staff meetings and by the board.

- The target to increase the percentage of students who proceed to education, training or employment (as indicated by School Leaver's Intentions/Destinations Survey data) indicates that for 2016 students 28.4% entered university,19.9% entered TAFE, 18.4% entered employment and 18.4% deferred study or training. The trend was for fewer students to go directly on to further study as indicated by the 18.4 % who deferred. Accordingly, there was an increase in the percentage entering TAFE and employment as the number intending to enter university decreased from 51.7% intending to 28.4% entering. The school may need to review this target as the continuity of data available is inconsistent.

- In summary the school has achieved an overall improvement in student performance in NAPLAN, OLNA and attainment in Year 12 during the period of the business plan with many aspects of performance being above like-schools. The challenge for the staff is to build on this performance by embedding appropriate whole-school pedagogies and determining the degree of value adding that is occurring with each intake cohort and sub-cohorts.

- The leadership team and staff stability, consistent approaches to literacy and numeracy, targeted curriculum differentiation and strong governance support the sustainability of effective teaching and learning practices across the school.

- Leadership is well distributed with the executive team and members of the board of management demonstrating instructional leadership through the focus on improving curriculum delivery, data analysis and the implementation of whole-school programs to support improvements in student achievement. The executive is also strongly supporting the Level 3 classroom teacher aspirant program with a view to significantly improving curriculum leadership and collegial professional support for staff. The principal, staff and the school board are rigorously pursuing an improvement agenda, a theme evident in most documentation and discussion with all groups during the IPS Review.

Areas of strength

- The course selection processes and the high standard of instruction that have resulted in commendable WACE course results with many subjects achieving above expected ratings and higher attainment rates.

- Significant and ongoing improvement in NAPLAN, performing consistently above like-schools.

- Well-developed processes for the building of teacher capacity and the encouragement of aspirants.

- The emerging instructional leadership by the executive team and board of management that is focusing staff on data analysis and improvements to student achievement.

- The strong distributed leadership and support for staff wanting to achieve Level 3 classroom teacher status.

Areas for improvement

- Embed a consistent school-wide approach to the implementation of whole-school learning strategies across learning areas.

- Persist with the intention to implement effective instructional strategies school wide.

- Address issues related to moderation and the alignment and consistency of teacher judgements and the issue of some misalignment between NAPLAN performance and teacher judgements.

- Continue to disaggregate data on sub-group performance to monitor and analyse specific support that is required.

Student Performance Monitoring

How well established are the school's self-assessment practices in accounting for school improvement?

Findings

- The school leadership team, the board of management and the school board have a strong focus on the school self-assessment and self-review processes. Staff at the learning area level are similarly involved in the process through analysis of appropriate data at the classroom and learning area levels.

- The school self-review process is cyclic and summative on an annual and three yearly basis with relevant data collected in a semester, annual and three yearly process. The business plan for the next cycle for 2018–20 has been informed by the evaluation of the outcomes achieved by the previous plan and endeavours to progress improvement incrementally.

- The school has a well-documented self-assessment schedule which clearly sets out what data is to be sourced and analysed, in what timeframe and details who is responsible at which point in the process. This process is closely monitored by the executive team and the board of management who identify issues or trends. A summary is presented to the school board. These self-assessment and review outcomes are also presented in the annual report, supported by a comprehensive summary of the extent to which the business plan targets have been achieved.

- The annual self-assessment process systematically analyses student achievement at the classroom, course, year cohort level and then on the basis of learning area performance. Collated data from each learning area enables executive and the board of management to monitor performance regularly on a semester basis and quickly identify areas of concern and success.

- In addition to NAPLAN, WACE, Student Achievement Information System data and School Curriculum and Standards Authority maximising feedback, teachers use a variety of assessment and monitoring tools to track student progress and achievement. Common assessment tasks and classroom testing are used to support teacher judgements. Data is recorded on the School Information System and staff can access student profiles to inform their teaching. It was challenging for reviewers to determine the veracity of these processes and the quality of the monitoring of student learning; however, it was evident that the processes outlined above supported closer monitoring at the classroom level.

- Diagnostic tools are used in lower literacy classes to determine ability levels and the specific nature of support needed. This process is complemented using IEPs and the grouping of students into 'pods' with specific learning needs. Additional education assistant support is provided to specific students and pods. Early indications from student achievement data analysis is indicating improvement.

- The annual reports provide a comprehensive summary of the review of school priorities and the extent to which the business plan targets have been achieved. The analysis of target achievement is thorough and is supported by a 'traffic light' summary, rating target achievement and recommendations for the next self-assessment phase. School survey data is included with areas of focus identified and a summary of follow up actions. Additional questions added to the surveys by the school board provided specific feedback on a range of key areas related to parking and canteen accessibility enabling the school and board to plan future improvement strategies.

- Reviewers were provided with a summary of the extent to which the school has addressed each of the roles and responsibilities of the DPA indicating that all aspects had been achieved. This monitoring needs to be built into the school's ongoing review processes.

- The staff and board have developed a comprehensive and embedded self-review process that is consistent and sustainable with continuous monitoring of relevant data and appropriate analysis at all levels to inform strategic decision-making.

Areas of strength

- A well-documented self-assessment schedule which clearly sets out what data is to be sourced and analysed, in what timeframe and details who is responsible at which point in the process.

- Annual reports that provide a comprehensive summary of the review of school priorities and the extent to which the business plan targets have been achieved with thorough and comprehensive analysis of target achievement.

- The comprehensive and embedded self-review process that is consistent and sustainable.

Area for improvement

- Include DPA monitoring in the school's ongoing review processes.

Program Delivery

How well has the school performed in providing education programs that promote learning and wellbeing for all students?

Findings

- Education programs delivered by the school are in accordance with the *School Education Act 1999, School Education Regulations 2000* and the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Act 1997.* The leadership team has been proactive in trialling, reviewing and refining programs and resources to align with changes and additions to the curriculum. This includes enhanced provision of certificate programs and vocational education and training programs.

- A school-wide literacy program caters for students in Years 7–9 who are achieving below expected levels. Once identified, students receive focused attention from teachers and educational assistants using explicit teaching strategies. Parental support is strong and, as confirmed during student interviews, appreciated by those involved. A whole-school emphasis on common skills in literacy, which has also been implemented, is gaining commitment from staff. The implementation of the literacy program is being supported through the provision of smaller classes for high needs students in Year 7 (expanding in 2018 into Years 8–9) and the allocation of specialist literacy teachers. The deployment of a learning support coordinator facilitates the improvement of teacher literacy instructional skills. The successful implementation of this program with the up-skilling of teaching and education assistant staff to support student learning is contributing to progressive improvements in student achievement and NAPLAN performance.

- Gifted and Talented Education programs in the core subjects are provided for students in Years 7–10 and have been deemed by the school to be very successful. Other opportunities including the marine science program, visual arts, media, design studies, drama and music are highly regarded. Students commented that the delivery of these, and the core subjects, was done well by the staff who also give their time willingly for out of class tutoring.

- A wide range of extracurricular activities, including the annual Country Week, are also offered to the students. The reviewers agreed that these programs have had a very positive impact on school culture.

- A commitment to a whole of school Aboriginal Education Plan has resulted in a number of key initiatives. A cultural committee has been established, Aboriginal content and contexts have been included in lessons and a range of

extracurricular activities have been organised. The very successful Follow the Dream program is designed to provide support for Aboriginal students aspiring to further their education. Observations confirmed that the students were highly motivated and well-catered for with effective after-school tuition and other activities. Although not continued in 2017 due to students moving away from the school, a program entitled Our Tomorrow provided Aboriginal boys at risk with a one day a week offsite engagement mentoring program. It is presumed that this program will be offered again should a need arise.

- Effective professional learning focusing on a wide variety of key initiatives and school programs has been provided for staff. This has had a positive impact on program delivery and remains an important initiative for encouraging all staff to become committed to effective and efficient change.

- In accordance with the business plan priority to achieve effective use of information and communications technology (ICT) in teaching and learning, a recent upgrade of the infrastructure has been timely. With greater reliability and access staff are now more likely to include the available resources in their lessons. Adequate student access to hardware remains a challenge for the school with a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program not being as successful as hoped. The use of CONNECT for communication is becoming more widely used in the school community with quality interactions between staff, students and parents increasing.

- Within the school's charter of values is embodied an emphasis which has positive implications for the culture of the school. The reviewers agreed that the school was well led, calm and orderly with students in class productively engaged. Parents, staff and students in the annual 2017 survey were generally agreed that the school provided a safe and inclusive environment.

- A challenge has been to ensure all staff are committed to the behaviour management policy. It was noted that there had been inconsistency in implementation which resulted in a review. Although the focus is now on positive behaviours, including an emphasis on 'good standing', it was revealed in discussion with staff that there are still some concerns related to those students who present ongoing challenges. Student and staff surveys in 2017 confirm that there is more to be done in this area with low percentages of participants strongly agreeing that behaviour was managed well. The school engagement program coordinator, with the support of other members of student services, has implemented a variety of strategies to deal with this issue with limited degrees of success. It was agreed that more information for staff on these processes is desirable. There is also an expectation that to ensure consistency in the management of behaviour, all staff will implement the agreed policy.

- Following a review, a student leadership program for Years 7–12 has been implemented. These students have been involved in a variety of school activities including fundraising initiatives.

- The safety and welfare of students on out-of-school activities is a priority with the essential excursion policy and procedures in place and risk management planning completed. Within the campus an emergency response policy has been developed with an annual practice undertaken.

- The school priority to refine formal transition processes has been successful. A transition coordinator has worked effectively with local primary schools to ensure the move from Year 6 to Year 7 is a smooth one for students. Student profiling of incoming Year 7 students is comprehensive and enables staff to effectively plan for appropriate differentiated curriculum. It is intended that transition processes will be reviewed in 2018 with a view to implementing strategies in Term 2. Parents and students expressed satisfaction with the transition program.

- The reviewers agreed that the structures in place with shared leadership and an ongoing review cycle of programs ensures that effective delivery of the curriculum is sustainable. Staff are aware of the obligations to provide students with every opportunity to reach their potential and the leadership group is regularly employing strategies to facilitate this.

Areas of strength

- The depth of programs offered which provide a variety of opportunities for students to reach their potential.

- The successful implementation of literacy focus classes in Years 7–9 and the up-skilling of teaching and education assistant staff to support student learning that is contributing to progressive improvements in student achievement.

- The ongoing review of program effectiveness.

Area for improvement

- Ensure consistent implementation of the revised behaviour management policy by all staff, particularly in managing ongoing challenging behaviours

Resourcing and Support

How well has the school established systems to monitor and review the allocation of resources to meet strategic and operational priorities?

Findings

- The annual operational and resources plans linked to business plan priorities inform the leadership team and staff of required expenditure on human and material resources.

- These plans are supported by a buildings and facilities plan and a board subcommittee tasked with supporting the school's agenda to upgrade facilities and resources in those areas of greatest need.

- A finance committee, chaired by a staff member, meets monthly to monitor expenditure and make informed budgetary decisions. Accurate minutes of meetings are recorded. The committee liaises with the decision-making board of management.

- Evidence from budgetary documentation confirmed that more than 96% of the funds allocated annually are being expended in the current year.

- In discussions with key staff a concern was expressed that reduced numbers of student enrolments could ultimately affect the wide choice of programs and extracurricular activities offered. The administration is cognisant of this and is investigating efficiency strategies (eg eliminating timetable inefficiencies) to help mitigate the issue.

- Funding for students with special needs is being expended on appropriate initiatives. The literacy support classes for Years 7-9 have been successful and additional time has been provided for key staff including the chaplain, school psychologist, EAs and the Aboriginal and Islander education officer.

- With the establishment of a Facilities Strategic Management Plan and Building Fund the school board has an active role to play in the direction taken by the school. The intention is to facilitate the development of substantial future projects. These include additional teaching areas, a cover over existing basketball courts and the conversion of a nearby youth facility to a performing arts centre.

- The school has accessed maintenance funds to refurbish the buildings in preparation for the 2018 centenary celebrations. The Parents and Citizens' Association has also contributed additional funds for improvements.

- A grounds committee, established in 2016, further supports the school's endeavours to enhance the general environment and surrounds.

- The introduction of a BYOD program and upgrades to the ICT infrastructure, in line with business plan priorities, has helped to address concerns with adequacy of available ICT resources. While there is still scope for further improvements, this is work in progress and other strategies are also being investigated.

- The workforce plan identifies current and future staffing needs. In its endeavour to implement a school-wide pedagogy with a focus on instructional strategies, the leadership team is mindful of the need to take advantage of staffing vacancies that may occur. A staff intention survey is completed annually to ascertain likely changes in the forthcoming year. With support of a facilitator the school has been proactive in encouraging an increasing number of staff to seek Level 3 classroom teacher status.

- A challenge for the school has resulted from the requirement that staff clear accrued long service leave. Although this did result in a significant number of staff absences with an effect on programs, opportunities for new and graduate teachers were created.

- It was clear that the finance committee is monitoring expenditure closely and the leadership team is investigating efficiency strategies, providing reviewers with confidence that program delivery can be sustained should the number of enrolled students continue to decline.

Areas of strength

- The finance committee and board of management, which have significant staff representation, have been instrumental in ensuring sound resourcing and support decisions are being made.

- The establishment of a facilities management strategy is timely, facilitating an opportunity for the school to be proactive in its endeavour to provide for the future.

Area for improvement

- Identify and implement efficiency strategies to ensure program delivery is sustained.

School Board

How effective has the board been in carrying out its functions, roles and responsibilities?

Findings

- The school board comprises three parent representatives, two community members, three staff and the principal. It was noted that the board is a very collaborative group. The board chair who has diligently carried out his responsibilities has been a member since its inception. All members were cognisant of the importance of their role and aware of the functions of the board.

- The minutes taken at the monthly meetings are detailed, confirming the board's contribution to a wide range of relevant issues. The principal's reports to the board are comprehensive and provide an opportunity for members to be fully involved in the self-review process.

- The business plan is endorsed and discussed regularly by the board. The minutes confirmed that board members are involved in monitoring the implementation of the business plan and discuss and endorse the detailed operational and resources plans which include funding allocations. Over time members have become astute in analysing and interpreting student performance data. The board scrutinises the school's financials at each meeting and has reviewed significant key policies during its term. It has also contributed to the annual school survey in providing locally relevant questions and analysing results.

- The commitments of endorsing the DPA, annual reports and budgets have been met by the board.

- The board has been proactive in its support of the school and maintains a positive relationship with the leadership team.

- All but one of the board members have undergone training. Members commented that the local induction process is very effective.

- It is reported in the board meeting minutes that a self-evaluation has been completed by board members; however, reviewers were not provided with evidence of the result of this assessment.

- The board has played a key role in the implementation of the Facilities Strategic Plan and Building Fund. This has important implications for the future direction of the school in ensuring students have the best available resources to enhance their learning. The formation of subcommittees for a school alumni, centenary celebrations and grounds are further evidence of a willingness to support school initiatives.

- The board has endeavoured to lift its profile in the community with information in the newsletter, the school's website and attendance at school functions. It was agreed that it would be desirable to further enhance the community's knowledge of the board's functions. Additional information on the website (eg minutes of meetings, events) could assist with this.

- The reviewers agreed that the board was highly effective with a sound understanding of its role and a sophisticated approach to the way its tasks are carried out. The board has well-developed sustainable processes and practices. It is highly likely that it will continue to have a significant impact on the future direction of the school.

Area of strength

- The board is composed of a collaborative group of members who have a sound understanding of their obligations and the necessary analytical skills to make informed decisions in the interest of the school.

Area for improvement

- Continue to enhance the profile of the board.

Conclusion

At Albany Senior High School there is a changing culture that is placing greater emphasis on strategic planning and self-review processes with a focus on analysis and effective response to management information data. Planning and review is well aligned and comprehensive. Staff are being increasingly engaged in these processes which is supporting progressive improvement to student performance across all levels of the school. Strong leadership by the principal and leadership team is driving ongoing improvement.
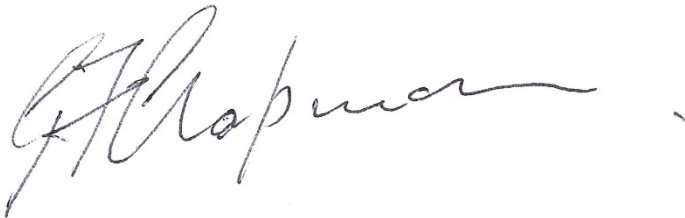
Student achievement in system wide testing is consistently demonstrating performance at or above like-schools. Students have access to a wide variety of engaging programs which are subject to ongoing review processes. The implementation of a school-wide approach to literacy has had a significant impact on the learning opportunities for students at risk. The school and board have been proactive in ensuring the current and future resourcing requirements of the students are met. Detailed operational and resources plans set clear directions for the school. The finance committee which liaises with the board has produced viable budgets and closely monitored school expenditure.

The board has been very effective in meeting its obligations. Members are proficient in interpreting and analysing the data, have a clear understanding of school finances and have been involved in the formulation and review of significant policies. Importantly the board is supportive of the school with a willingness to promote initiatives which are in the interests of the students and the broader school community. The board provides a high level of governance and strongly supports the executive team, staff and students in driving the improvement agenda.

Declaration

We confirm the information in this document is, to the best of our knowledge and based on the verification of the evidence provided by Albany Senior High School, true and correct.
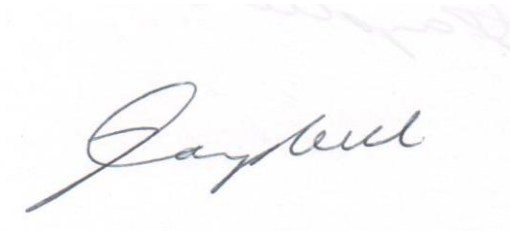
The principal and board chair have had an opportunity to comment on any matters of fact contained within this document.

....   28 March 2018
....

Mr Gerry Chapman, Lead Reviewer   Date

....   28 March 2018
....

Mr Tom Campbell, Reviewer   Date

....   4 April 2018
....

Mr Ken Perris, Director   Date
Independent Public School Review