Hedland Senior High School

2013
Independent Review Findings
Contents

School and Review Details ................................................................. 1

1. About the Independent Review ..................................................... 1

2. Summary ....................................................................................... 3

3. School Context ............................................................................ 6

4a. School Performance—Student Learning ....................................... 9

4b. School Performance—Quality of the Learning Environment ........ 13

4c. School Performance—Sustainability ............................................ 16

Declaration ....................................................................................... 19

Disclaimer

This document has been based on the findings of the independent reviewers’ verification of the school’s self-review. The school’s self-review has been complemented by information provided by the Department of Education, the School Curriculum and Standards Authority and the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority.

The findings of the independent review are forwarded to the Minister for Education, the Director General of Education, the Principal and the Board Chair.

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Hedland Senior High School

School and Review Details

Principal: Mr John Burke
Board Chair: Mr Robert Fry
School Location: 45 Roberts Street, South Hedland  WA  6722
School Classification: SHS Class 6C
Number of Students: 588 (second semester 2013)
Reviewers: Mr Rees Barrett and Mr Greg Clune
Review Dates: Self-review presentation: 16 October 2013
Review visits: 31 October and 1 November 2013

1. About the Independent Review

The purpose of the independent review of Hedland Senior High School is to provide an assurance to the Minister for Education, the Director General of Education and the school community on the extent to which the school has met its commitments as outlined in its Delivery and Performance Agreement (DPA) and associated Business Plan. The focus of the review is on:

- how well the school has improved the standards of student learning (achievement, progress and engagement) for all students
- how well the school has created an environment that promotes student learning
- how well the school is placed to sustain and improve its performance.

The school has been required, under the DPA, to undertake regular self-assessment. The outcomes of these assessments formed the basis for the school's self-review which was presented to the reviewers for verification at the commencement of the independent review.
Prior to the presentation of the school's self-review, reviewers were provided with information on the school's educational achievements, its processes and its student performance data from a number of sources which include, but are not limited to:

- the My School™ website
- the Department of Education School Performance Monitoring System
- Schools Online reports
- School Curriculum and Standards Authority Year 12 Student Achievement data.

Reviewers visited the school for a half-day presentation of the school's self-review by the Principal, the Board Chair and other key stakeholders chosen by the school. Subsequently the reviewers analysed the evidence presented in the school's self-review documentation and developed lines of enquiry where further verification was required.

An agenda for a two-day review visit was then negotiated with the school to enable the gathering of further evidence to clarify or confirm the claims made in the school's self-review. During these two days the reviewers sourced information and evidence to support the school's self-review claims through observation and discussion with teaching and non-teaching staff, board members, parents, students and the school leadership team.

The evidence provided by the school, along with information gathered by the reviewers prior to and during their review visits, was used by the reviewers as the evidence base for their verification of how well the school has met its commitments as outlined in its DPA and Business Plan.

This document reports on the findings of the independent review.
2. Summary

Hedland Senior High School is responding positively to its remote location and the wide spectrum of students and families it serves. Student needs are met through a comprehensive range of programs, additional resourcing and outcomes-focused partnerships with BHP and community agencies. Innovative strategies are used to build the expertise and leadership capacity of the relatively inexperienced staff. Community drive and vision are well represented in the composition and functioning of the Board.

Improvement in student learning was achieved during the DPA period. Business Plan targets were used to monitor and review effectiveness of strategies designed to achieve improvement. Targeted use of resources to reduce the proportion of educationally at-risk students will continue to be a priority in the next DPA period.

Creating an environment that promotes student learning is a priority for the school. A culture of high expectations of learning for all students is developing. The new Health and Wellbeing Centre provides a comprehensive approach to pastoral care. Opportunities for students to achieve and progress are provided through a comprehensive array of programs seeking to meet the needs of all. Building relationships and effective partnerships with parents, other schools, industry and community groups is a clear strength of the school. Priority for further developing cross-cultural understandings and the use of ICT offers potential for further school improvement.

The systematic implementation of inclusive planning and review processes, focused on student learning, augurs well for continuous improvement at the school. Through the self-review of its performance in the first DPA cycle, the school has demonstrated it has successfully embedded evidence-based reflection on the effectiveness of programs and teaching practice. Development of leadership capability, sharpening focus on effectiveness of pedagogy, an effective School Board and community engagement collectively provide a sound foundation for the future.

The following commendations support the school’s claims of significant strengths and areas of improvement:

- student learning improvements - particularly in the Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR), Vocational Education and Training (VET),
attendance and the literacy domains of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

- improvement of Aboriginal student outcomes through closing the gap strategies targeting attendance, engagement, achievement and progress
- undertaking a complex process of building a ‘culture of success’ involving the Board, parents, staff, students and community
- successful implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Centre and related school-wide behaviour management and attendance strategy
- implementation of a wide range of teaching and learning programs and strategies focused on improving student learning for the whole range of student needs
- building effective partnerships with community and industry groups and other schools (in the town, Pilbara region and Perth) with each sharply focused on improving student learning
- regular and meaningful involvement of staff and community in planning and review processes as part of the school’s accountability for its performance
- focusing on development of its relatively young and inexperienced staff, with emphasis on building leadership capacity
- developing the School Board’s structure and processes to provide breadth of expertise and experience and develop community partnerships to facilitate school improvement.

The following affirmations support continued implementation of strategies and initiatives or areas for improvement identified by the school:

- the school’s plans to give ongoing priority for reducing the proportion of students at or below the National Minimum Standard (NMS), improving writing, numeracy and attendance
- the school’s continuing priority for building school-family partnerships through development of relationships with all students, particularly those educationally at risk, and their parents/carers
- the planned priority for increasing emphasis on structured pedagogical discussions and the use of the strategic planning groups to facilitate further improvement
- the identified priority for differentiating achievable and stretch targets in the next Business Plan.
The following recommendations are made to add value to the school’s improvement and review processes:

- that the school gathers destinations data directly from its Year 12 school leavers as currently happens for *Follow the Dream* students
- that the school identify its English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) students in order to plan, implement and review the effectiveness of strategies for this significant sub-group of its population
- that, as part of the implementation of the Australian Curriculum, the next Business Plan gives strategic priority to implementation of a whole-school program focused on Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cross-cultural understanding (generic capabilities) and on Aboriginal histories and cultures (cross-curriculum perspectives)
- that the school reviews resource needs for effective utilisation of ICT and library infrastructure to support improved student learning
- that sustainability of improvement be enhanced through ongoing refinement of strategies to build links between classroom practice, teacher reflection and performance management.
3. **School Context**

Hedland Senior High School commenced in 1971. In 2011, it became the first Independent Public School in the Northwest. Located 1700 kilometres from Perth, it is a remote school in the Pilbara region of Western Australia. It is the only provider of secondary education in Port Hedland and South Hedland. Port Hedland is a port town with a population of 20,000 serving the iron ore mining industry. The major company in Port Hedland is BHP Billiton with other businesses in the service and tourism industries.

The school’s vision is to be a provider of excellent education in a welcoming and exciting environment. It strives to provide a modern, safe and inclusive educational facility which promotes excellence in learning and academic achievement. Cultural difference and diversity are valued though the school’s values of ‘care, courtesy, respect and responsibility’. The school has undertaken major capital works (Stages 1 and 2 opened in 2013), with further works (Stage 3) and a Trade Training Centre to be completed in 2014.

The school engages with a diverse community that represents extremes of need and high levels of transiency. The school’s Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value of 861 and transiency of 36.3% places it in the 9th decile of schools for each measure. Seventeen per cent of students are in the bottom quartile and 6% are in the top quartile of the ICSEA distribution.

Student enrolment is 588 (Semester 2, 2013) with 156 (26%) in Years 11 and 12. The largest cohort is Year 8 (159). Enrolment data shows a diverse school community that includes 209 (35%) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and represents some 50 nationalities. In addition, the school identified that 15% of students have a Muslim background. Five per cent of students have a diagnosed disability. The entry of Year 7 students into secondary school and higher retention in Years 11 and 12 is predicted to increase student numbers to 846 in 2015.

A comprehensive Workforce Development Plan 2013–2015 has been developed using 2011 staff data as the benchmark. Teachers are relatively young (average age 35 in 2012), inexperienced and predominantly female (66%). Many school leaders are in their first appointment to their positions. Staff turnover is high (31% in 2011, 27% in 2012). Environmental factors, such as the cost of living, affect staff retention. Of the 94 staff employed at the
school, five are Aboriginal. The Workforce Development Plan includes key performance indicators with specific targets and strategies for permanent teaching staff, professional development, retention and staff satisfaction. The increase in staff required to accommodate the additional enrolments will make 2015 a milestone year. The school plans innovative advertising and recruitment processes to address its staffing needs. It is vigorously engaging in pre-service partnerships with all five universities with a result that 11% of current staff are recruited via the ATP pathway: the target is to have a minimum of six practicum students per year. Flexible staffing models are essential to enable the school to target staffing at the point of greatest need. Other strategies of the plan include distributed leadership and support for Level 3 teachers, support for staff to undertake Masters level study fully funded by the school and structural change in the leadership and staffing profile (for example, appointment of a Level 5 associate principal, restructure of deputy principal roles, rationalisation of school officer positions and establishment of youth worker, vocational training and business support officer positions).

The school has comprehensive facilities for all its programs. In particular, the arts theatre is a state-of-the-art resource which has been sponsored by BHP Billiton and is shared with the local community. Recent capital works have included construction of new classrooms, an administration building and a refit of the previous student accommodation facility (Hardie House). The school is supported to conduct a Secondary Selective Placement Program through which the school’s Specialist Performing Arts program is conducted. The arts program is embedded in the curriculum and offers students a hands-on learning experience in dance, music, drama and visual arts. Entry to this course is by application and is delivered by six experienced staff. Other supported programs are Follow The Dream: Partnership For Success (for which there has been a 100% graduation rate), Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme and the Senior Secondary Engagement Program.

There is significant support for the school through the Pilbara Education Partnership (PEP), involving the Department of Education and BHP Billiton, which provides funding for innovative programs, facilities and some staffing. The school is the coordinating member of the Pilbara Alliance of government schools (Karratha, Newman and Tom Price senior high schools) which provides opportunity for professional dialogue and support.
The Board is actively engaged in decision-making and is well informed of issues affecting the school. The 15 members comprise parents (three), staff (two) and community members (10). Two students attend most board meetings as observers. Community members (executives of three leading local companies), the Mayor and community leaders (including the Aboriginal community) provide the Board with a broad array of skills and wide community representation. A comprehensive community information document outlines the role and functions of the Board. The Board is not an incorporated body and operates under detailed terms of reference with links to the School Education Act and Regulations and unambiguous delineation of operational and policy formulation matters. As part of its duties, the Board contributes to the development of the DPA and Business Plan. The Board has established three subcommittees (Finance, Sponsorship, Facilities) each with clearly defined functions. A code of conduct provides guidance for members.

The school is responding positively to its remote location and the wide spectrum of students and families it serves. Student needs are met through a comprehensive range of programs, additional resourcing and outcomes-focused partnerships with BHP and community agencies. Innovative strategies are used to build the expertise and leadership capacity of the relatively inexperienced staff. Community drive and vision are well represented in the composition and functioning of the Board.
4a. School Performance—Student Learning

The Hedland Senior High School Business Plan 2011–2013 includes 19 improvement targets, 16 of which relate to student learning (achievement, progress and engagement). At the time of the review, 10 of these targets have been achieved (seven wholly and three partially). The table below provides an overview of the school’s progress against its improvement targets.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TARGET</th>
<th>ACHIEVED?</th>
<th>EXPLANATORY NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Mean ATAR comparable with or above Like Schools</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Based on available data – Median ATAR score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Students achieving WACE above 90%</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Based on those students eligible for WACE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. NAPLAN Year 9 Reading - reduce % at or below NMS to equivalent or lower than Like Schools</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Based on % at or below NMS (National Minimum Standard) lower than Like Schools and reduced % below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. NAPLAN Year 7 – 9 Progress - maintain level of progress for Stable Cohort</td>
<td>PARTIALLY</td>
<td>Based on moderate to very high progress in NAPLAN Reading and Numeracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. NAPLAN Year 9 – increase proportion in Bands 7, 8 and 9 by 10% from 2010</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Based on Reading domain – proportion in Bands 7, 8 and 9 maintained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. NAPLAN Year 7 – 9 Numeracy – decrease students making low/very low progress by 10% from 2010</td>
<td>PARTIALLY</td>
<td>Decrease from 2010 to 2012 was 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. NAPLAN Year 7 – 9 Reading Progress – decrease students making low/very low progress by 10% from 2010</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Increase by 4% from 2010 to 2012 despite improvement compared with Like Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Attendance – arrest decline in attendance rate of Aboriginal students</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Rates improved by 1.8% from semester one 2012 compared with semester one 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Attendance – rates for all students equal to or better than Like Schools</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Although rates improved from 2011 to 2012, they are below the State average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Suspensions – decline in number of suspensions</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Based on SIS Behaviour Data Categories 1 to 4, comparing 2012 with 2010 (there is a significant reduction if 2009 is used as baseline)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Increased student involvement in school decision making by end of 2013</td>
<td>TO BE ADVISED</td>
<td>2012 survey data to be used as baseline for fourth term, 2013 survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Improved student Attitude, Behaviour and Engagement (ABE)</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Based on teacher ABE data comparing ratings for Year 9 English students in 2013 with 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Retention – improvement in Year 11 to Year 12 rate</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Based on comparison of apparent retention rates 2010 to 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Local work placements – increase in number of students involved</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Reduced number of students in local work placements due to policy change (selection based on work readiness)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. VET – increase in number of students achieving Certificate II or higher</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Increase from 12 (2010) to 30 (2012); students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Destinations – 90% of Year 12 leavers move to preferred TAFE, university or work</td>
<td>PARTIALLY</td>
<td>Based on comparison of intention versus destination in 10 categories, achieved for 2011 but not 2012 school leavers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Several notable improvements were achieved in other areas of student learning. These include the higher achievement and higher progress, compared with like schools (2010–2012), in NAPLAN spelling and conventions (grammar and punctuation) domains; society and environment achievement on the 2012 Western Australian Monitoring Standards in Education (WAMSE) was well above expectations; an exponential increase in the Attainment Rate (32% in 2010 and 74% in 2012); the relatively high rate of participation in traineeships (13% in 2012 compared with 2.9% across the State) and apprenticeships (13% in 2012 compared with 5.4% across the State), and improving the ATAR participation rate (31% in 2010, 24% in 2011 and 42% in 2012). The school is commended on the improvements achieved, particularly in the ATAR, VET, attendance and some domains of the NAPLAN.

The following analysis of the targets not achieved was verified:

- **Target 5 NAPLAN Year 9**: although the target was not achieved, a major improvement has been moving approximately 8% of students from the ‘below NMS’ category (bands 5 and less) to the ‘at NMS’ category (band 6) in reading, whilst the proportion in bands 7 to 9 has remained relatively stable.
- **Target 6 NAPLAN Reading Progress**: an increase in the proportion of students making low to very low progress is explained by commencement of the Learning Extension Academic Program (LEAP) with some Year 7 high achievers making less than expected progress.
- **Target 9 Attendance**: overall attendance rates were 80.5% (State 87.6%) in 2010, 76.5% (State 87.5%) in 2011, 80.3% (State 87.7%) in 2012; consequently, this remains a high priority for future improvement.
- **Target 10 Behaviour**: the Health and Wellbeing Centre and whole-school strategy are positively impacting by reducing the suspensions for the most serious behaviour issues (e.g., physical assault or intimidation of staff or students; however, overall suspension numbers have stabilised at around 100 after a high number in 2009 (164) and a low number in 2010 (62).
- **Target 14 Workplace Learning**: the shift in policy to require students to demonstrate work readiness before being awarded a local work placement has reduced numbers but improved the success of work placements.
Hedland Senior High School

- **Target 16 Post-school Destinations**: the usefulness of destinations data is reduced by the relatively low student response rates to the Department of Education survey (43.6% for 2012 leavers). It is recommended the school gather destinations data directly from its Year 12 school leavers as currently happens for *Follow the Dream* students.

The school’s plans to give ongoing priority for reducing the proportion of students at or below the NMS (particularly for the NAPLAN domains of writing, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy) and in at-risk attendance categories are affirmed.

The tables below illustrate the relatively high proportion of students below the NMS and in the at-risk categories for attendance. The data presented highlight the challenges faced by the school and statistically similar schools. They underline the importance of targeted use of resources to meet the needs of these students. Significant improvement has been achieved in the consistent reduction since 2010 of the proportion of students below the NMS in the reading domain. On the other hand, the significant increase in the writing and grammar and punctuation (conventions) domains and the high proportion in the numeracy domain, need to be addressed.

**Table 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAPLAN DOMAINS</th>
<th>2010 HSHS</th>
<th>2010 Similar Schools</th>
<th>2012 HSHS</th>
<th>2012 Like Schools</th>
<th>2013 HSHS</th>
<th>2013 Like Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventions</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant improvement in attendance has also been achieved since 2010 with the increase in the proportion of students in the ‘Regular Attender’ category and the related decline in the ‘Moderate’ and ‘Severe’ At Risk categories.

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Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance Categories²</th>
<th>Regular Attenders (90%+)</th>
<th>At Risk Indicated (80-89%)</th>
<th>At Risk Moderate (60-79%)</th>
<th>At Risk Severe (0-59%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010 HSHS</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 HSHS</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 HSHS FTD³</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 HSHS</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 State</td>
<td>59.9%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several programs targeting Aboriginal students demonstrate long-term success. For example, the Follow the Dream program had 80 Aboriginal students enrolled in 2012 and recorded the following outcomes in closing the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students: the reading gap in 2006 was 121 points and in 2012 was 68 points, the numeracy gap in 2006 was 130 points and in 2012 was 82 points. Similarly, WACE achievement for eligible Aboriginal students has improved from 54% in 2007 to 89% in 2012. The improvement of Aboriginal student outcomes through closing the gap strategies targeting attendance, engagement, achievement and progress is commendable.

Similar sub-group analysis was not possible for EAL/D students as no data is currently collected. Such information could prove invaluable in developing and implementing strategies to achieve future improvements in literacy and numeracy. It is recommended the school identify its EAL/D students in order to plan, implement and review the effectiveness of strategies for this significant sub-group of its population.

Improvement in student learning was achieved at Hedland Senior High School during the DPA period. Business Plan targets were used to monitor and review effectiveness of strategies designed to achieve improvement. In particular, significant improvement has been achieved in attendance rates and some areas of academic learning. Targeted use of resources to reduce the proportion of educationally at-risk students will continue to be a priority in the next DPA period.

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² Data Source: WA Department of Education Schools Online (2012).
³ Data Source: Follow the Dream (FTD) Strategic Plan 2012-2014, data for Years 10, 11 and 12 students.
4b. School Performance—Quality of the Learning Environment

There is a widely-held belief that the culture and image of Hedland Senior High School has been transformed since 2007. In the school’s own terms, it has come from “a low base of community and student expectation” over the past six years so that, in 2013, the school is now recognised as “a welcoming and exciting school community that achieves academic excellence”. The school is commended for undertaking a complex process of building a ‘culture of success’ involving the Board, parents, staff, students and community.

High priority is given to the creation of an inclusive environment in which all students are valued and supported. Research findings underpin new approaches such as the ‘School Reward System’, a renewed whole-school approach to behaviour management and recent implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Centre. Nearly all teachers have completed the Classroom Management Strategies (CMS) professional development course.

‘Wraparound student services’ are provided by a collocated team including school psychologist, chaplain, nurse and youth workers. The team is led by a deputy principal and coordinated by a centre manager. It works closely with education assistants, Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers (AIEO), year coordinators and the recently appointed network attendance officer. Case studies demonstrate the success of specific interventions reflecting holistic, community-based strategies involving personal learning plans negotiated for each at-risk student and brokering with relevant community agencies. Recent implementation of the attendance flow chart enables a more systematic case management approach based on an eight-stage intervention strategy. The school is commended on its successful implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Centre, related school-wide behaviour management strategy and the Hedland Network of Schools attendance strategy. The reviewers also affirm the school’s continuing priority for building school-family partnerships through development of relationships with all students and their parents/carers, particularly those educationally at-risk.

The process of cultural change also involves consolidation of successful programs and policies and implementation of new ones to meet the learning needs of all students and create an environment promoting high expectations for achievement, progress and engagement. The comprehensive range of specialist and target programs flourishing in the school include:
programs for high academic achievers, for example: LEAP; specialist arts programs (performing and visual arts, including the Arts Away program); heightened focus on university pathways through offering more stage II and III WACE courses; after-school and weekend tutorials for ATAR students, the Aspire Program designed to overcome isolation by providing students with first-hand experience of tertiary education in Perth

- programs for educationally at-risk students, for example: provision of education support programs for students with mild-to-severe disabilities through the Welcome Centre; Lower School Engagement Program (LSEP) based on generalist teachers targeting literacy and numeracy skills, Senior School Engagement Program (SSEP) targeting Year 12 completion, and after-school tutorials

- sports-based programs, for example: Kicking Goals (football) and Shooting Goals (netball) programs designed to enhance attitudes and values, engagement, attendance, behaviour and to develop transferable skills and citizenship qualities

- VET programs, for example: courses offered through Pilbara TAFE with block release and relationships focus leading to 100% completion rate in 2012; auspicing of sports programs; opening of the Trades Training Centre early in 2014 (metals and engineering courses) future diversification of VET pathways by offering courses in dance, science (sampling and measurement) and digital media

- programs for Aboriginal Students, for example: Follow the Dream program including structured after-school tutoring and support for high achieving students resulting in improved learning outcomes such as 100% graduation rate in 2012

- whole school strategies, for example: implementation of the Hedland Literacy Strategy and Numeracy Strategy facilitates more consistent approaches in all learning areas.

The school's implementation of a wide range of teaching and learning programs and strategies, focused on improving student learning for the whole range of student needs, is commended.

Ongoing refinement of curriculum provision is focused on implementation of the Australian Curriculum. The sister-school relationship with Mt Lawley Senior High School provides opportunities for curriculum and moderation support for teachers as well as videoconferencing, revision seminars and small group partnerships in WACE courses. Increased use of Information and
Communication Technologies (ICT) in course delivery (for example, increasing use of interactive whiteboards; rollout of take-home laptops and e-access via the school Moodle site) is also driving pedagogical change. Some resourcing difficulties limiting wider application of ICT and use of the library to advance student learning were identified. It is recommended the school reviews resource needs for effective utilisation of ICT and library infrastructure to support improved student learning.

Cross-cultural understanding underpins relationship building in the school. In 2011, the school undertook a reflective strategic review through the Dare to Lead process. The report highlighted the need to implement a coherent cultural awareness program and address attendance and attainment issues for Aboriginal students. Although significant progress has been made in these areas, ongoing high priority is critical to maintaining an inclusive environment. It is recommended that, as part of the implementation of the Australian Curriculum, the next Business Plan gives strategic priority to implementation of a whole-school program focused on Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cross-cultural understanding (generic capabilities) and on Aboriginal histories and cultures (cross-curriculum perspectives).

Partnerships with parents, community and industry are critical to the school’s performance. An active Parents and Citizens’ Association provides invaluable support. Reporting and communication strategies are used to nurture the home-school partnership. For example, AIEOs play a key role in creating strong family and community connections. Targeted programs rely on collaboration with community agencies such Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Youth Involvement Council, Bloodwood Tree, Hedland Youth Leadership Coalition and Youth Pathways. The school plays a pivotal role in the Hedland Network of Schools. For example, it has initiated a transition to high school program for Year 7 students, which takes place over two weeks in Term 4 and further strengthens the collaborative relationship with local primary schools and the community. Finally, the school maintains respectful and responsive partnerships with business and industry. For example, an exemplary governance process has been developed for the new Trade Training Centre involving BHP Billiton, Fortescue Mining Group, Roy Hill and Apprenticeships Australia. The school is commended for its effective partnerships with community and industry groups and other schools (in the town, Pilbara region and Perth) with each sharply focused on improving student learning.
A culture of high expectations of learning for all students is developing at the school. The Health and Wellbeing Centre provides an effective approach to pastoral care. Opportunities for the learning of all students are provided through a comprehensive array of programs. Building relationships and effective partnerships with parents, other schools, industry and community groups is a clear strength of the school. Priority for Further development of cross-cultural understandings and the use of ICT offer potential for enhanced school improvement.

4c. School Performance—Sustainability

The school demonstrates a proactive commitment to planning and improvement. The school’s leadership, supported by staff and Board, fosters a developing culture of analysis and review. Regular review of progress takes place through staff professional development days and reviews of the various specialist program initiatives such as FTD, LEAP and LSEP. Reviews occur across the school and include the Board. The school systematically monitors, evaluates and reports its progress towards achievement of targets and strategies. The regular and meaningful involvement of staff and community in planning and review processes, as part of the school’s accountability for its performance, is commended.

Leadership is directly linked to continuous improvement, self-review and improved outcomes for students. Committed leadership is demonstrated through the Principal, the leadership team and the structures which enable significant collaborative engagement at all levels. The school promotes accelerated leadership strategies, which are reflected in six teachers being supported to undertake Master of Educational Leadership programs through The University of Western Australia and one-third of the heads of learning areas have completed training as Regional Australia Curriculum Transition Leaders. Aspirant leaders are encouraged and supported to achieve Level 3 status. The focus on staff development, with emphasis on building leadership capacity, is commended.

The school’s self-review processes are based on the School Improvement and Accountability Framework (SIAF) which provides a conceptual framework for the Business Plan. Learning area teams focus their performance reviews on the five SIAF elements using a set of common questions to guide assessment. While the reviews show what is occurring in each learning area,
they do not identify conclusions which may give direction and strategies for improvement. As well as detailing what is occurring in each learning area, it will be important for improvement strategies to be developed from these observations both for each area and across the school.

Specific areas for future improvement are identified by the school and provide focus on academic performance, evidence-based individual student planning, attendance, community partnerships and pedagogy. The identified priority for differentiating achievable and stretch targets in the next Business Plan is affirmed.

High quality teaching is a key component of the school's improvement agenda. A performance management framework has been developed and is linked to the school's values and SIAF elements. Based on teacher reflection and the development of individual professional learning goals, the framework provides for ongoing feedback and the preparation of a performance review report by the assigned performance manager. This process will be strengthened through explicit reference to the school's improvement priorities and review of individual student progress. It is recommended that sustainability of improvement be enhanced through ongoing refinement of strategies to build links between classroom practice and teacher reflection and performance management.

Consistent and effective pedagogy is seen to be a key factor in the improvement process and the maintenance of gains made. Use is made of professional development days, classroom observation and peer mentoring to guide effective teaching practice. The structure and function of four strategic planning groups (literacy, numeracy, ICT and health and wellbeing) facilitates whole-school approaches. Application across the school of CMS, instructional strategies, cooperative learning, the Hedland Literacy Strategy and explicit instruction all provide evidence of a focus on effective teaching. All strategies applied are linked to the school's improvement targets. The planned priority for increasing emphasis on structured pedagogical discussions and the use of the strategic planning groups to facilitate further improvement is affirmed.

The school has well-developed governance processes. The Board, while large, assembles a wealth of parent and community expertise which is able to critically reflect on school performance and engage in effective self-review. The scope of the community membership provides the school with rich access to a wide range of community resources. The Board is able to provide significant input into the school's directions and is engaged in all aspects of
the DPA expectations for a school board. Inclusion of these responsibilities in the Board’s Terms of Reference will enhance sustainability. Similarly, inclusion of a formal statement of the Board’s endorsement of the Annual Report will enhance its community profile. The relationship between the Board and the Principal and school leadership is very effective with a sense of mutual shared purpose that the school will be highly successful and well regarded in the community. The reviewers commend the way in which the Board has developed its structure and processes to provide breadth of expertise and experience and to develop community partnerships to facilitate school improvement.

There is a consensus the school’s community profile has been significantly raised over the past six years. The school has gained considerable positive reputational capital in the Hedland community. Through its relationship building and use of partnerships, the school has positioned itself as a centre of excellence in the community so there is a positive attitude of “the best is not necessarily elsewhere”. The school is actively engaged in presenting itself to the community through, for example, presentations to community groups such as the Port Hedland Town Council and through profiling in the local newspaper. The first annual Board Community Forum will be held during November 2013. The Board also plans to become more actively engaged in shaping future surveys of community and parent views of the school’s performance for inclusion in the annual report.

Systematic implementation of inclusive planning and review processes, focused on student learning, augurs well for continuous improvement at Hedland Senior High School. The school has demonstrated it has successfully embedded evidence-based reflection on the effectiveness of programs and teaching practice. Development of leadership capability, sharpening focus on effectiveness of pedagogy, an effective School Board and community engagement collectively provide a sound foundation for the future.
Declaration

We the undersigned hereby confirm that the information provided in this findings document is to the best of our knowledge true and correct and is based on our verification of the evidence provided by Hedland Senior High School as part of the Department of Education Services' independent review process. The Principal and Board Chair have had an opportunity to comment on any matters of fact contained within this document.

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Rees Barrett, Lead Reviewer

4 December 2013

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Greg Clune, Reviewer

4 December 2013

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Richard Strickland, CEO, Department of Education Services

10/12/13

Date

Date

Date