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**2012 Evaluation Report**

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# Section 1: School Information

The following is a report prepared as a result of an evaluation at The Bidgee School of strategies and targets from the 2012 School Plan.

School Code: 5758

Region: Riverina North

* **Annual school evaluation team members**

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| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Position** |
| Marianne Mitchell | Principal |
| Ben Angel | Assistant Principal |
| Ros Mattingly | Teacher |
| Michelle Faith-Lamotte | Teacher |
| Lyn Cobb | School Administrative Manager |
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* **Report authors**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Position** |
| Marianne Mitchell | Principal |
| Ben Angel | Assistant Principal |
| Lyn Cobb | School Administrative Manager |
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I endorse the contents of this report.

A copy of this report has been lodged with the School Education Director with responsibility for this school.

**Principal****:**  Marianne Mitchell

Schools participating in the Low SES School Communities National Partnership are required to undertake an annual evaluation and report on the effectiveness of the strategies undertaken by the school. Evaluation is the judgement of the merit, worth or value of an activity on evidence that has been systematically collected, analysed and interpreted. Evidence from evaluations can be used to plan activities, monitor and improve their implementation, make judgements about their impact and the allocation of resources. Evaluation supports evidence-based decision making, systems improvement, accountability and successful innovation.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The 2012 EvaluationReport template is provided to assist schools in reporting information, and will inform revisions to the school plan and inform ways in which schools will allocate National Partnership funds for the coming year.

**The focus of the annual evaluation**

The annual evaluation should focus on reporting progress and achievement on the key targets and strategies in the School Plan to inform decisions about future actions. This includes the revision of targets (where required), the continuation or cessation of current strategies, and whether new strategies need to be developed/implemented.

The annual evaluation should address the following questions:

* What did we say we would achieve?
* How well did we do it? How effective were our strategies? What changes have we made?
* Where to next? Future directions?

**Planning the annual evaluation**

The annual evaluation should be led by the school principal and involve participation of and consultation with key stakeholders. Key stakeholders would typically include school executive, teaching staff, students, parents, the P& C Association, the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) Inc and key community groups involved in the school (as appropriate). Regional and state officers are also available to provide support. Schools should allocate National Partnership resources to support the annual evaluation process and could include this as an accountability strategy (Reform 5) in their school plans.

**What is the scope of the 2012 Evaluation Report?**

The annual evaluation will build upon the extensive work already undertaken for the Situational Analysis, and focus on changes and progress over the last twelve months. It should contain information about:

* the school context
* a summary of the methodology used by the school to gather information
* evidence of progress towards targets and the effectiveness of Partnership strategies undertaken to achieve the targets
* revised targets (where appropriate) and future strategies
* changes in the school systems and practices as a result of participation in the Partnership.

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# Section 2: School context

The Bidgee School was established in 2006 to assist students with emotional difficulties and challenging behaviours who have not been able to maintain their place in the mainstream setting. The school provides a range of individualised programmes for up to 21 students from years 5-10. Students attend The Bidgee School for between 12 and 18 months. The Bidgee School is committed to developing and delivering quality educational programs which are engaging and stimulating in a supportive learning environment AND which prepare students for successful re-integration back to their mainstream school or other program. There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of Literacy, Numeracy and Personal Development/Social Skills. The Bidgee School aims to provide students with the opportunity to understand their behaviour accept responsibility for their actions and learn new skills in a smaller, highly structured environment whilst still maintaining contact with their home school. The Bidgee School joins the Low SES School Communities National Partnership in 2012.

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# Section 3: Methodology

The school evaluation team used the following to conduct the annual evaluation:

* *Interviews were conducted with members of the school community, including the following:* 
  + *Four members of staff*
  + *Eighteen students*
  + *Seventeen parents and family members*
  + *Three TAFE staff*
* *Analysis of policies and programs, plans, budgets, school based assessment information, communications, program evaluations and anecdotal evidence seen by the school as informing the evaluation.*
* *Classroom observation*
* *Surveys*
* *Analysis of student achievement data ,including Pre-apprenticeship workbook/CD materials*

# Section 4: Progress towards targets and strategies from the 2012 School Plan

**For assistance in completing this table please refer to the example provided in Appendix one on page 14. *Use as many rows as required.***

|  | **Progress towards target**  **Select:** | **Evidence of progress towards target** | **Effectiveness of key strategies to achieve the target** | **Reason for maintaining or revising target for next year** | **Target for next year**  **(for School Plan)** | **Strategies for next year**  **Select:** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Improve student achievement in the middle and higher bands for grammar and punctuation as recorded on the NAPLAN data from 50% in 2011 to 60% in 2012, through to 70% in 2014. | Limited (little or no progress) | Small cohort does not provide credible data to report on this target. | Limited student tenure limits students participating in NAPLAN. On average students attend for 6-12 months. | Students are now involved in a TAFE program.  Literacy and Numeracy continuums are a more constructive method of measuring progress for our students and allows for more purposeful tracking from school to school. | As of 2013 the school will report against pre-apprenticeship accreditation/materials/  Certificate ll for Work and Training.  Increase every student’s literacy performance along the DEC Literacy learning continuum for reading texts by an average of 2 clusters from individual entry to exit date. **The number of clusters for improvement will also depend on where the student’s starting point is, for example if they are performing at a stage one level, then there are two clusters per year expected; if they are performing at a stage two level then one cluster improvement per year is expected.** | Implement new strategy & describe  Evaluate success of new learning pre-apprenticeship material across all KLA areas.  Teacher professional learning in the interactive Literacy continuum K-10 and associated teaching and learning strategies. |
| Improve student achievement on stage based outcomes from 70% achieving “sound” or higher, in yearly reports in Spelling in 2011 to 75% in 2012, and 80% by 2014 for all students Year 5 - 9. | Basic (progress made) | As at mid Term 4 2012  68% of students had achieved sound or higher in yearly reports in spelling. | Over 50% of our students are new this year. Some have arrived in Semester 2. Of these new students 70% have shown marked improvement. All students that have attended previous to this year have achieved this target. | The same target has been chosen as appropriate for the needs of the current/next cohort of students. Comprehension has been added in recognition of its importance in reading.  Anecdotal comments from teachers indicate that further professional learning around the Literacy Continuum would be beneficial. | Improve student achievement on stage based outcomes from 70% achieving “sound” or higher, in yearly reports in Spelling from 70% in 2012 to 75% in 2013 and 80% by 2014 for students in Years 5-10. | Revise strategy & describe  Teacher professional learning in the interactive Literacy continuum K-10 and associated teaching and learning strategies. |
| Improve student achievement as recorded in weekly tests for place value as indicated on IEPs from 80% correct in 2011 to 85% in 2012, and 90% by 2014. | Basic (progress made) | As at mid Term 4 2012  75% of students had achieved sound or higher in yearly reports in place value. | Over 50% of our students are new this year. Some have arrived in Semester 2. Of these new students 70% have shown marked improvement. All students that have attended previous to this year have achieved this target. | Students are now involved in a TAFE program.  Literacy and Numeracy continuums are a more constructive method of measuring progress for our students and allows for more purposeful tracking from school to school. | As of 2013 the school will report against pre-apprenticeship accreditation/materials/  Certificate ll for Work and Training.  Increase every student’s numeracy performance along the DEC numeracy learning continuum for place value by an average of 1 level from individual entry to exit date.  **The number of clusters for improvement will also depend on where the student’s starting point is for example If they are performing at a stage one level, then there are two clusters per year expected; if they are performing at a stage two level then one cluster improvement per year is expected.** | Choose an item.  Evaluate success of new learning pre-apprenticeship material across all KLA areas.  Teacher professional learning in the interactive numeracy continuum K-10 and associated teaching and learning strategies. |
| Improve student achievement on stage based outcomes from 60% achieving “sound” or higher, in yearly reports in Space and Measurement in 2011 to 65% in 2012, and 70% by 2014 for all students Year 5 - 9. | Basic (progress made) | As at mid Term 4 2012  60% of students had achieved sound or higher in yearly reports in Space and Measurement. | Over 50% of our students are new this year. Some have arrived in Semester 2. Of these new students 70% have shown marked improvement. All students that have attended previous to this year have achieved this target. | The same target has been chosen as appropriate for the needs of the current/next cohort of students.  Anecdotal comments from teachers indicate that further professional learning around the numeracy continuum would be beneficial. | Improve student achievement on stage based outcomes from 60% achieving “sound” or higher, in yearly reports in Space and Measurement from 65% in 2012, and 70% by 2014 for all students Year 5 - 10. | Choose an item.  Teacher professional learning in the interactive Numeracy continuum K-10 and associated teaching and learning strategies. |
| Reduce the total number of suspensions, short and long term, from 102 in 2011 to 90 in 2012, 80 in 2013 and 70 in 2014 for all students, including Aboriginal Students, through increased engagement in school programs. | High (target exceeded) | Analysis of suspension data demonstrated that total suspensions to end Oct 2012 were 54. This is well below our target of 90. Analysis of individual students indicates that suspensions for students attending TAFE were markedly lower in comparison to those students that remained at school and did not access TAFE at all. | Both staff and student surveys indicated that the TAFE program was highly engaging and students were very motivated to attend and participate. Students used the skills/strategies acquired during the social skills program to avoid suspensions. Also the employment of a Paraprofessional with ICT skills assisted staff to engage students through the use of emerging technology. | TAFE program developed in Term 2 as we weren’t able to secure a teacher to manage the planned innovative program as originally anticipated. Due to the late start the TAFE program did not get to run across the whole year and not all students were able to access it.  Varied student cohort affects continuity of data. The average suspensions over the last 3 year period were 11 long suspensions and 43 short suspensions to give a total of 54 suspensions. | Decrease or maintain the total number of suspensions, short and long term, 54 in 2012, 50 in 2013 and 45 in 2014 for all students, including Aboriginal Students. | Revise strategy & describe  Partnership was developed between TAFE and The Bidgee Term 2 2012. Students are now able to access various courses at TAFE for 1-2 days per week. Pre-Apprenticeship content has been sourced/developed to ensure the program is meaningful and relevant in the school context as well as at TAFE. |

# Section 5: Changes in schools’ systems and practices as a result of participation in the Low SES School Communities National Partnership

Section 5 provides an opportunity to identify more broadly the changes occurring as a result of your school’s participation in the Partnership. What overall changes are occurring in school functioning – in learning and teaching practices, relationships, student engagement and/or networks? For example, you might be seeing changes in:

* provision of leadership development opportunities appropriate to staff at differing career points *(Reform 1)*
* teacher capacity to mentor and lead innovation or action research in classroom practice *(Reform 1)*
* the quality and quantity of teacher professional learning plans *(Reform 2)*
* differentiated mentoring programs for early career teachers and/or developing teacher leaders
* *(Reform 2)*
* partnerships with other schools, universities or community organisations around student learning *(Reform 3)*
* improved student learning outcomes as a result of targeted interventions *(Reform 4)*
* levels of student engagement in learning as a consequence of tailored mentoring programs *(Reform 3)*
* staff confidence in use of student data to inform planning *(Reform 4)*
* support for target groups including Aboriginal, ESL and refugee students, and students with disabilities *(Reform 4)*
* school accountability processes including through the use of the evaluation and planning *(Reform 5)*
* processes to strengthen parent/family engagement in school life *(Reform 6)*
* building pathways/transition points for students, including transition from preschool to school, or from alternative to mainstream schooling *(Reform 6)*.

**Please identify and briefly explain below the key changes occurring as a consequence of the Partnership to date, and the Partnership reforms that the changes align with.**

* It is expected that the level of change will relate to length of time on the Partnership.
* Schools should identify **three to four** changes.
* Please be specific and where possible draw on evidence to substantiate the identified change.

**Changes in student outcomes**

**(Reform/s - 4,3)**

Students enrolled at The Bidgee School typically demonstrate low levels of engagement with school-based learning, and struggle to meet learning benchmarks across KLAs. While student engagement is central to learning in any school setting, it is crucial in our specialist environment. Igniting these essential sparks of engagement in our students requires innovation and creativity, and a commitment to utilising resources and strategies which give our students access to authentic, real world learning experiences. The partnership we have established with Wagga Wagga TAFE has been of enormous benefit to our students, opening new pathways for achievement in the here-and-now of school life, with the potential for this success to continue for our students long after they leave school.

The TAFE program has its focus on the development of students’ vocational skills, with units of study in automotive, building and carpentry, and hospitality on offer in terms 2, 3 and 4 in 2012. Students are taught by fully qualified staff at Wagga Wagga TAFE on a weekly basis, accessing a program which promotes new levels of engagement and achievement for students, and opens possibilities of future education and training. The practical skills acquired by our students at TAFE are valuable in their own right. However, in its careful balance of theory and practice, the program also embeds foundational skills of literacy and numeracy, with students being invited to apply their developing knowledge of English and mathematics to their practical TAFE lessons. This learning is consolidated by The Bidgee School teachers back at school, with Pre-apprenticeship materials from TAFE resourcing an integrated classroom learning program. The opportunities for deep learning connections are maximised as our students work through literacy and numeracy units of work which are anchored into the TAFE subject matter.

The response of our students to this TAFE program has been overwhelmingly positive. In a recent survey eighty per cent of our students reported that the TAFE program has been personally beneficial to them. Seventy per cent agreed that attending TAFE encourages them to consider their future career options, with the same proportion of students attributing their improvement in both literacy and numeracy to their involvement with TAFE program. In fact, student engagement in these cornerstone curriculum areas has been notably elevated since the commencement of the program. All of our students agreed in the survey that mathematics is an important subject to learn, and most of them reported that they use the skills from maths in other subjects. Most of our students agreed that English is an important subject to learn, and all of them believed that they are expected to do well in English at home and at school.

This positive feedback is not restricted only to students; teachers from Wagga Wagga TAFE have sung the praise of the program, commending the students on the way they manage their own behaviour, engage with learning tasks, and meet learning goals. Anecdotal evidence from The Bidgee School teachers also illustrates the positive effects of the TAFE program, with happy stories of greater levels of classroom engagement, higher levels of motivation and attendance, increased student productivity, and improved classroom behaviour all circulating throughout our school. The evidence from all sources points to one thing: students at the Bidgee School are learning more because of their involvement with the TAFE program.

**Changes in staff effectiveness through increased capacity**

**(Reform/s – 4,2***)*

Staff at The Bidgee School are experts in their field, coupling their confidence in managing the learning environment with their intimate knowledge of each student’s needs and preferences to achieve outstanding results. In any school environment, research consistently indicates that it is what teachers do in classrooms which affect the most change in student achievement. The role of teachers in this specialist setting is particularly significant because their abilities with enlivening the curriculum to motivate and inspire student learning can make the life-changing difference for our vulnerable students. This year’s partnership with the Wagga Wagga TAFE has significantly extended our staff’s professional capacities in planning for and managing learning. Our Teachers attend weekly TAFE lessons with students, assisting where they are needed and joining with students to celebrate their learning successes.

In accompanying their students to TAFE sessions, valuable opportunities for professional connections arise. Teachers’ weekly visits to TAFE provide them with unique chances to join with their students. The TAFE environment, with its focus on authentic learning and intrinsic motivation, lends itself to friendly connections which enhance student-teacher rapport. This positive relationship with students is valued by our teachers as central to the establishment of a warm classroom climate, fertilising the soil for quality learning. In addition, teachers have also reported that they have thoroughly enjoyed participating in new collegial circles. By rubbing shoulders with the staff at TAFE our teachers have been able to learn from an authentic form of professional development, where their conversations and observations have allowed them to add new skills and strategies to their repertoire of educational approaches. The development of these relationships with TAFE staff has in turn given our teachers new access to the TAFE Pre-apprenticeship program. This program has offered our teachers resources to launch them into the development of new, authentic student learning programs, integrating students’ TAFE learning with formal literacy and numeracy tasks back at school.

Recent survey results supported truths which are evident in daily Bidgee School life. All of our teachers agree that the TAFE program is beneficial to students, and that it supports their students’ learning in literacy. They all strongly agreed that attending this program encourages students to consider their future career options. All of our teachers strongly agree that they integrate the teaching of Literacy skills across KLAs, and eighty per cent agreed in the survey that they integrate mathematics instruction across KLAs also. The TAFE program, along with the provision of the TAFE Pre-apprenticeship resources, complements our teachers’ professional efforts towards an integrated, holistic approach to teaching and learning.

**Change: Changes in parent perception**

**(Reform/s – 6,4)**

The Bidgee School is committed to the development and maintenance of genuine, respectful relationships with their students’ families. In the pursuit of more collaborative approaches to education, our staff welcome the contribution of all stakeholders to work together to improve student outcomes. The students’ involvement in the TAFE program has brought with it a change of attitude in students which is evident to all members of our school community. This improvement in student behaviour and motivation is a point of pride for The Bidgee School teachers and staff who are keen to share the good news with parents and carers. The chance to connect with our students’ families in such a positive way is a valuable one for our teachers, because experience has shown them that strong home-school bonds enhance student learning.

Parents have responded warmly to this feedback from teachers, who report that their conversations with parents have taken a warmer, more optimistic tone since the commencement of the TAFE program. Indeed, parent comments paint a glowing picture of our progress towards the goal of increased home-school engagement. Recent survey results have been tremendously positive, indicating that all parents feel welcomed in our school, they all believe that our school takes their concerns seriously, and they are all confident in our school’s investment in home and community partnerships to support student learning. The survey signalled a massive vote of confidence in our teachers, with all parents and carers agreeing that regular school lessons are interesting and engaging for students, and helpful information about their child’s progress is consistently provided.

When asked about their views on the TAFE program, parents responded with zeal. All of the parents agreed that the TAFE program has benefited the students at The Bidgee School, and ninety per cent held the opinion that involvement with the TAFE program improves students’ skills in literacy and numeracy. Given the influence that parents can have on their child’s future aspirations, it was particularly pleasing to see that the survey results showed that ninety percent of parents strongly agreed that their child’s attendance at TAFE encourages their child to consider future career options. The success of the TAFE program has allowed us to make significant progress towards our aims in promoting positive perceptions of our school in parents and the wider community. Authentic, measurable success in the special school setting can help to alleviate the risk of students being negatively labelled, and help to avoid the potentially serious effects of low self-esteem and social stigma.

**Change: Changes in transition opportunities**

**(Reform/s – 6,3***)*

When students with special behaviour needs move between schools, the change is often accompanied by feelings of fear and anxiety as they confront unknown school sites, unfamiliar routines and procedures, changing curriculum, new peer groups, and different staff members. Students transitioning through specialist Learning Centres already struggle with responding appropriately to confronting or challenging social situations, so the impact of this vulnerability can be significantly magnified. The TAFE program is built on approaches which are recognised as central to successful and effective transition practices because it provides formal schooling experiences from a perspective of inclusion rather than deficit, it acknowledges that student needs are variable over time, and it maximises the support that is extended to students from the network of people who take responsibility for their care. When students are involved with the program at Wagga Wagga TAFE, they enjoy the benefits of smoother educational transitions.

Our students need strategic assistance in managing their movement between their home school and our specialist setting. By participating in the TAFE program, students share common experiences with their peers and their teachers, joining with them in a new celebration of success at school. This celebration spills over into home, also allowing students to enjoy increased levels of encouragement and praise from their parents and carers. The program provides a solid foundation of support for our students’ transition back to their mainstream home school, because it helps students meet their short term learning and behaviour goals through increased motivation, self-esteem and success in learning. Our students see themselves learning, and succeeding, and enjoying school, empowering them to pursue greater educational heights.

Given the statistically bleak post-school outcomes that our students are likely to face, it is also vital that they are offered strategic support in the transition from the secondary setting into future training and employment. The familiarity that students develop with TAFE staff, facilities and courses as a result of their involvement in the TAFE program holds them in good stead on this front. Parents, teachers and the students themselves have all declared in unison that this program encourages students to consider future career options. Their exposure to the TAFE environment on a weekly basis provides a unique authenticity to their current school experiences, whilst opening the possibility of continued vocational education and training in future. Their current studies at TAFE, and the integration of theoretical tasks back at school, bridges the gap between TAFE and school settings for our students, opening a vital pathway to alternative futures.

The TAFE program has its focus on the development of students’ vocational skills, with units of study in automotive, building and carpentry, and hospitality on offer in terms 2, 3 and 4 in 2012. Students are taught by fully qualified staff at Wagga Wagga TAFE on a weekly basis, accessing a program which promotes new levels of engagement and achievement for students, and opens possibilities of future education and training. The practical skills acquired by our students at TAFE are valuable in their own right. However, in its careful balance of theory and practice, the program also embeds foundational skills of literacy and numeracy, with students being invited to apply their developing knowledge of English and mathematics to their practical TAFE lessons.

Section 6: Optional section

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| --- |
| **Sharing your school’s Partnership achievements**  A major element of the Low SES School Communities National Partnership is sharing schools’ achievements so that all NSW schools can benefit.  We warmly invite you to nominate below an effective strategy, program or initiative that is working well in your school that we can share with others.  We will follow up with you once your nomination has been received.  **Please provide a brief description of the strategy (two-three sentences) in the space below.**  *An example of a strategy is provided below.*  ***Example****: Our school has partnered with TAFE to provide a program which focuses on the development of students’ vocational skills through practical units of study across various TAFE areas. This program embeds foundational skills in literacy and numeracy which are supported with Pre-apprenticeship material back at school. School based assessments, parent and student feedback and informal teacher observations indicate that students are more engaged in class and there are higher rates of attendance. Student feedback and teacher observation also indicate that attendance at TAFE is broadening students’ thinking about future education and career options.* |
| **I would like to nominate the following strategy/program/initiative to share with other schools.**  Title:  Short description: |

# Appendix one

**Example to support completion of: *Progress towards targets and strategies from the School Plan***

| ***What did we say we would achieve?***  **Target** | ***How well did we do it? How effective were our strategies?*** | | | ***Where to next? Future directions?*** | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Progress towards target**  *Select:* | **Evidence of progress towards target** | **Effectiveness of key strategies to achieve the target** | **Reason for maintaining or revising target for next year** | **Target for next year** | **Strategies for next year**  *Select:* |
| To increase the percentage of Year 5 students in the NAPLAN Reading Proficient Bands (7 and 8) from 14% to 20%. | Sound | 2012 NAPLAN DATA demonstrated that  21% of Year 5 students were placed in the highest bands for reading in 2012, compared to 14% in 2010. | *Staff surveys indicate that creating the Literacy Leader (0.6) to lead Focus on Reading led to an increased understanding of how to explicitly teach comprehension strategies and supported teachers to examine the important role of rich talk in classrooms and its connection to comprehension.*  *Evaluations following PL on SMART2 demonstrated that staff were able identify, analyse and interpret NAPLAN data to inform teaching and learning for their student group.*  *Following parent workshops, parents indicated that they were more confident in their ability to support their child's reading at home.*  *Parents agreed that that the new home readers were age appropriate and facilitated their child's engagement in reading.* | The target was achieved; however, strategies need to continue to further improve achievement in 2013. The target is still below the region's average (27%) and the State's average (35%). | To increase the percentage of Year 5 students in the Proficient Bands 7 and 8 in NAPLAN reading from 21% to 27%. | Maintain implementation of the *Focus on Reading* 3-6 program.  Implement new strategy and describe  Create an additional full time executive position, at AP level, to coordinate Reading pedagogy across the school, including:   * identifying the reading demands of the Proficiency bands and explicitly teaching the skills in the context of authentic texts * organising effective reading groups within the classroom * timetabling Reading teaching and learning across the school utilising all support personnel in classrooms.   Provide ongoing information in the school newsletters and website about supporting reading at home. |

1. NSW Department of Education and Training, Evaluation Policy, https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/general\_man/accountability/eval\_pol/PD20100416\_i.shtml [↑](#footnote-ref-1)