



Government of Western Australia
Department of Education Services

Belridge Secondary College

2015

Independent Review Findings



**Independent Review of
Independent Public Schools**

Disclaimer

This document reports the findings of the Department of Education Services' review and 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 School Principal, the Board Chair, the Director General of Education and the Minister for Education.

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School and Review Details

Principal:	Mr Nick Jakowyna
Board Chair:	Ms Janine Espey
School Location:	17 Gwendoline Drive Beldon WA 6027
School Classification:	SHS Class 6C
Number of Students:	1000
Reviewers:	Mr Lindsay Usher (Lead) Mr Phil de Garis Ms Maureen Lorimer
Review Dates:	23 and 24 July 2015

Purpose of the Review

The purpose of the independent review is to provide assurance to the school and its community, the Director General of Education and the Minister for Education 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 implemented self-review
- how well the school has improved student learning (achievement, progress and engagement) for all students
- how well the school has created an environment that promotes learning and student well-being
- how well the school is placed to sustain and improve its performance.

Review Methodology

The school has been required, under the DPA, to undertake annual self-assessments of its performance. The outcome of these assessments formed the basis for the school's self-review. The school sent its self-review documentation to the IPS Review Team, Department of Education Services, one month prior to the commencement of the review.

The IPS reviewers supplemented the information provided by the school 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
- the Department of Education School Performance Monitoring System
- Schools Online reports
- School Curriculum and Standards Authority Year 12 Student Achievement data.

Reviewers analysed the evidence presented in the school's self-review documentation to verify achievement and developed lines of inquiry where further verification was required.

An agenda for the review visit was subsequently negotiated with the Principal to enable the gathering of evidence to verify claims made by the school. During the review visit the reviewers sourced evidence to support the school's self-review claims through observation and discussion with leaders, teaching and support staff, board members, parents and students.

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

This document reports on the findings of the independent review.

School Context

What are the important features of this school's context that have an impact on student learning?

Belridge Secondary College is located in the suburb of Beldon, 25km north-west of Perth. The college opened (as Belridge Senior High School) in 1991 and is collocated with Belridge Education Support Centre. The college provides a secondary public education to the local area from the suburbs of Currambine in the north, and Kallaroo and Craigie in the south. The local intake area consists of 10 contributory primary schools. The college prides itself on being a 'School of Opportunity' for students in the area and has developed distinctive specialist and elite programs in cricket, fashion and design, and netball that attract students from within and outside the local area.

The current student enrolment is 1000 with the capacity to build to 1150. After a period of low enrolments, the enrolment pattern is steadily increasing with senior secondary numbers trending upwards after the exit of the half cohort at the end of 2014 (226 students in 2013, 207 in 2014 and 277 in 2015). This relatively small senior school group reduces the number of Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) subjects on offer, particularly with 70% of students pursuing non-ATAR and Vocational Education and Training (VET) pathways. The college has supported small classes to ensure that students are able to pursue a range of ATAR subjects. Fourteen Certificate II and III VET courses are offered, ranging from trade training to sport, business and Information Technology. The college was placed 48th in the Top 50 ranking of Stage 3 courses for ATAR and 35th in the Top 50 VET for Western Australian schools in 2014.

Lower secondary school numbers are showing an upward trend, having increased from 389 in 2011 to 559 in 2014. Notwithstanding the addition of 180 Year 7 students in 2015, the lower school numbers are holding reasonably steady. Overall student numbers have increased from 742 in 2014 to 1000 in 2015. Staffing patterns also reflect the higher student numbers with 14 new teacher appointments in 2015.

Belridge Secondary College has architectural award-winning buildings that offer facilities well designed to meet educational delivery. Capital works and resource acquisition have been ongoing with a maintenance and minor works program supporting the changing requirements of the college.

With the commencement of Year 7 students in 2015, the college was allocated two additional general transportable classrooms and one specialist design and technology transportable.

The college's Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) is 1020. This has risen from 976 in 2010 and is demonstrated in changes to the *My School*® distribution with 20% of students now in the lower quartile of the profile, 63% in the middle and 17% in the top quartile. In 2010, only 5% of students were in the top quartile. Indigenous students make up 2% of enrolments and students with a disability 3% of enrolment. Reviewers were advised there is a small proportion of students from overseas and in the main these students originate from South Africa. Eleven per cent of students have English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D). Attendance is a concern for the college, with data showing attendance rates slightly below those for like schools; however, the college has a focus on improving the number of students who attend regularly (90% attendance and above). Transiency is at 16%.

The attention of the staff in recent years has been on developing a culture of high expectations among students with the core values of 'Respect Yourself, Respect Others, Respect the Space', underpinning the teacher, student and parent relationships. There is a respectful and supportive relationship with the on-site Education Support Centre with integration of students into mainstream programs and similarly some college students accessing aspects of the Education Support Centre program.

The college's workforce planning has been directed to address the increased growth in student enrolments, an ageing workforce and the gender imbalance in administration positions, Level 3 classroom teacher positions and classroom teachers. Teacher numbers have grown by eight full-time equivalent (FTE) in 2015. The age profile at the commencement of the DPA showed the median age of all staff to be 50, with 27% of the teaching staff over 55. The gender profile indicated a predominantly female workforce (66%). The IPS flexibilities have been utilised to address these issues through a merit selection process. Employment of quality graduate teachers, where appropriate, has helped address the ageing profile. A focus has been maintained on retaining a balance between experienced, stable and competent teachers with young, beginning and enthusiastic teachers to support the broad range of programs on offer.

The Belridge Secondary College Board consists of six elected members representing the parent body (three members) and staff (three members). In addition, there are four community members inclusive of two sitting members of Parliament, plus the Principal. The Board is in a period of transition with the inaugural Board Chair recently retiring and the Principal of the last 14 years also retiring.

The college has long-standing partnerships with the Northbridge Rotary Club and the Joondalup Business Association which provide support through work placements and recognition of high-achieving students. The Western Australian Cricket Association's partnership with the college's Cricket Academy provides excellent support through advertising, selection trials and ongoing coaching. A strong partnership with the on-site Belridge Education Support Centre promotes excellent relationships at all levels and productive use of shared facilities. All these partnerships add to the positive culture of a 'school of opportunity'.

The School's Self-Review Process

How effective was the school's self-review in accounting for its performance during the period of the DPA and Business Plan?

Belridge Secondary College developed a Business Plan that focuses strongly on what the staff considered were the strategies needed to improve student learning (achievement, progress, engagement). A framework based on priorities in the Department of Education Strategic Plan 2012–2015 was used as the basis for the Business Plan. The DPA requires schools to have 'an effective Business Plan that outlines the long-term strategic approach required to achieve the student improvement targets'. However, the reviewers noted milestones for implementation were commonly used as the means of identifying key outcomes required for success in the plan. Student improvement targets were used in a limited manner as markers to demonstrate a movement towards a desired level of achievement in literacy and numeracy and in senior school outcomes.

Self-review processes to determine achievement of targets set in the Business Plan featured procedural and operational evidence on how effectively the college staff has improved student learning. The Senior Management Group (SMG) regularly reviewed the operation of the Plan with the Principal reporting progress to the Board. The limited number of specific student performance targets and identified, measurable success indicators resulted in a more anecdotal approach to this process and did not facilitate regular reference to the Business Plan in the college annual reports during this period. The 2015 self-review provided a set of reflections on the operation of the college, levels of student achievement and student pathways with suggested directions for the next iteration of the Business Plan. The review of the focus area related to specialist programs relied on operational evidence of their success that also carried the strong support of teachers, parents and students. In reviewer discussion with leadership, the establishment of a less operational approach to business planning with more measurable success indicators, was raised for future consideration.

The SMG regularly undertakes a college-wide overview of student achievement based on data, including NAPLAN, Year 10 Online Literacy and Numeracy (OLNA), ATAR achievement, VET completions, Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) graduations, attendance data, behaviour management data, and parent, student and staff survey results. A 'Cycle of Self-Review' agenda is publicised to staff with the expectation that the sharing

of data, analysis and recommendations for future action is part of a two-way process between the Senior Management Group and learning area staff. Review information includes staff evaluations on achievement of milestones for strategy implementation and learning area reports that use a standard template with clear reference to Business Plan focus area outcomes.

The college has also established an effective process for interaction with primary schools in the local intake area to ensure that a valued baseline set of data is available to all staff as new students commence studies at the college. This detailed analysis results in clear directions to address any identified area of weakness through the school management structure. The learning area reports follow a standard format where sections highlight the required Business Plan outcomes and subsequent processes for ensuring monitoring and follow up of student performance, consistency of staff assessments and alignment to the study culture of the school.

The learning area foci for student achievement are derived from the available data and like-school analysis and are the key drivers for learning area operational plans, meetings, performance management and classroom pedagogy. The resulting success of the college is well demonstrated by the 2014 ATAR and VET achievements and gives confidence that the self-review processes at the learning area and pastoral care level effectively identify areas of strength and weakness and provide suitable strategies for improvement.

At the learning-area level, the evidence of continuous review and monitoring of student achievement is very strong. Consideration should also be given to reviewing the performance of the specialist and academic extension programs to the same level as that undertaken in learning area reports, to determine if they are meeting their intended educational goals.

School Performance—Student Learning

How well has the school performed in improving learning (achievement, progress and engagement) for all students?

The Business Plan was developed by the Senior Management Group with input from all learning areas and was subsequently endorsed by the College Board.

The four focus areas of the Business Plan relate to the staffing and operations of the college with student achievement targets embedded within the associated strategies. Each focus area consists of an overarching goal and a range of sub-goals (milestones) to be achieved. Another list of strategies to be implemented supports the achievement of the milestone. Achievement and progress in student learning is contained within one focus area and is therefore not recognisable as the main purpose of the plan. There is an underlying assumption in the plan that putting in place operational strategies leads directly to improved learning. The structure of the Business Plan and its operational focus makes it difficult for the college to demonstrate achievement of goals using evidence. The school self-review has also questioned whether some of the milestones are relevant to business planning.

Focus Area 1 ‘Teaching and Leadership’ aims to develop school-wide pedagogy incorporating technology to enhance student learning. The milestones focus on: attracting high-quality teachers; online learning development; teacher use of data; staff leadership; school financial management; and clear operational planning. The evidence collected to reflect on the achievement of the milestones included: staff evaluations; external NAPLAN and OLNA analysis; a reflection on the inputs by the staff in terms of training; program implementation; and achievement of operational requirements. In each of the areas covered by a milestone, staff engaged in a survey style response as to the success of the outcome to be achieved. A consensus view of this information was used to judge progress on the achievement of the sub-goal and provide directions for future action. Using this evaluation strategy for reporting on the focus area, staff considered that good progress had been made in achieving the required outcomes.

Teacher analysis of student performance in assessments used progress and achievement in NAPLAN against like schools as the benchmark. The school staff reported a disappointing set of NAPLAN results in 2014, particularly in Year 9 writing.

Scores in 2014 generally fell below like schools having been above in 2012 and 2013. The downward trend in performance in 2014 was attributed by leadership and staff to a number of causes, including poor choices made in the teaching of writing genres and inadequate staff supervision. However, the reviewers found it difficult to verify the rationale in the absence of information on consistency and quality of pedagogical practice. The reviewers verified the poorer performance and noted that the move to a whole-school literacy approach was one direction recommended in self-review. The 2014 performance also had an impact on 2015 OLN results, with the number of students achieving Category 3 being lower than in 2014, when generally schools are reporting higher percentages owing to student awareness of the assessments impacting on choice of subjects. The staff reported that considerable ground had been made with the cohort between the 2014 NAPLAN and the OLN assessment in 2015. The results were verified in discussion with staff and through data examination.

Reviewers noted the limited progress being made in implementing the *Connect* online learning and communications tool in supporting student learning. Leadership indicated that greater take up of the tool was hindered by bandwidth problems and low levels of staff acceptance.

Focus Area 2 ‘Successful Students’ aims to provide a differentiated and stimulating curriculum for academic excellence. Milestones to be achieved related to: Australian Curriculum; effective search methods; transition for Year 7; attendance; engagement and behaviour; online behaviour; differentiating the curriculum; academic extension; senior schooling outcomes; and leadership and employability. In most of the milestones, the school has used a mix of data collected on attendance, behaviour and student performance along with staff evaluations and recognition of inputs that have met operational requirements. The staff consider met the intended outcomes in the milestones where inputs are the measure of success. The reviewers can verify that senior schooling outcomes in VET and ATAR performance have demonstrated considerable improvement over time with the school performing well against the State in comparisons of ATAR attainment rates, median ATAR improvement, VET achievement rates for Certificate II and WACE achievement. Not only are the attainment and achievement rates at or above expected levels, but the progress since 2012 has been strong.

The attendance milestone is linked to regular attendance. The staff sought to achieve 65% regular attendance and has achieved that level, although overall attendance has shown elements of a downward trend for some years. The

staff has indicated that attendance will remain a priority in future planning. It is also clear to the reviewers that milestones regarding differentiating the curriculum and strategies to support academic extension are in place and are commented on positively by staff. However, there is little in the way of evidence to support these strategies making a difference to student learning.

Focus Area 3 ‘Distinctive School—Specialist and Elite Programs’: sets out the initiatives to support creating a distinctive school and meeting student needs and aspirations. The milestones relate to creating strong and sustainable cricket, fashion and design and netball programs. The major measurement tool for success is demand and the strategies focus on marketing the programs to primary schools and developing elite performance. The success of the focus area has been met through enrolment, success in sporting endeavours and transition to certificate courses.

Focus Area 4 ‘Physical and Sustainable Environmental Practices’: aims to enhance environmental practice, student learning and the physical appearance of the college. Milestones are developed for creating a safe, welcoming and engaging learning environment to support learning. The strategies implemented include expanding enrolment, fully utilising available teaching areas, making the external environment attractive and safe and welcoming parents through a range of events and functions. It is clear from the evidence used in the review that there have been significant improvements in Year 11 and 12 student performance. A number of strategies have been implemented with the stated intention of improving student learning, such as the development of the Academic Extension Program, the streaming of year groups in lower secondary, and the work done in supporting students experiencing difficulty with learning. However, none of these initiatives are supported by a clear target or goal to enable measurement and verification of improved student learning.

The reviewers discussed with members of the SMG the separation of strategic and operational planning and affirmed their intention to reconsider the Business Plan structure for 2016–2018.

School Performance—Quality of the Learning Environment

How well has the school performed in creating an environment that promotes learning and well-being for all students and the attainment of the school vision?

The review team verified a shared vision and values with staff, students and parents through classroom visits, extensive staff interactions and discussions with Board members, students and parents. The Business Plan's vision of providing a caring and supportive environment that challenges students to achieve personal excellence and encourages personal, social and environmental responsibilities is evidenced in the teaching and learning programs.

The core values of Respect Yourself, Respect Others and Respect the Space underpin all areas of operations within the college, with high expectations of student behavior and academic performance widely accepted by students and teachers. The School Climate Survey conducted by the college staff in 2014, confirmed the feedback from students, parents and teachers that the college strives for high academic standards and that staff have high expectations of students to achieve their best.

Students, parents and classroom teachers were unanimous that the college had an inclusive learning environment that catered for individual differences. The wide range of curriculum programs provides for a diverse range of students, all of whom are well catered for by the college. Coordinators support the various programs (specialist, elite, academic extension) with a focus on promoting school pride, a sense of belonging and personal achievement.

The Academic Extension Program Coordinator position was reinstated in 2015 to monitor and assist students as they transition to the pursuit of ATAR subjects in senior school. This role includes liaison with teachers and parents, plus interviews with students as required. The Academic Extension Program offers a differentiated curriculum to engage students through the provision of challenging extension tasks. A range of unique opportunities is offered to participating students such as competitions, excursions, tours and a mentoring program. Students affirmed that they feel motivated and encouraged by their teachers. Within the MESH (Mathematics, English, Science and History) learning areas a shadow Academic Extension Program class is allocated in each lower school year group with the same curriculum being delivered as to academic extension students.

This assists in lifting academic standards and provides greater options for students in their senior school program. Streamed classes, including a remedial class, make up the remaining classes.

The Learning Support Coordinator is supported by seven education assistants to address the individual learning needs of students and ensure that students with learning difficulties are provided with opportunities to make progress and achieve. Individual strengths and weaknesses of students are assessed and education assistants allocated accordingly. The focus is on all students being engaged and achieving successfully.

Discussions with student services staff and leadership of the school highlighted the need for an online system that maintains the records of students. The reviewers affirm the need to establish a student management system that will provide greater access for staff to student progress in a manner that does not compromise the confidential nature of this information.

Other strategies that support a quality learning environment include a whole-school literacy plan being implemented this year. Informal feedback at this early stage indicates that the strategy of subject-specific 'word walls' in each classroom has been successful in ensuring consistency of expectations from staff and engagement of students in the process.

Longer-term success indicators will establish more clearly whether the strategy is contributing to improved student achievement. Similarly, the use of various computer software programs to assist student learning such as *Cogmed*, *Multi-Lit* and *WordQ* are considered useful resources in engaging students.

The student services team has well-resourced management processes in place to support students at risk, both emotionally and educationally. A comprehensive 'students at risk' table encompassing academic, social and emotional concerns is provided to all teachers at the commencement of the school year and is regularly updated. Teachers make adjustments to their programs as required. The pastoral care focus is enhanced by involvement of the College Chaplain in providing programs for students who require additional support and the School Psychologist who plays a key role in assisting students manage their social and emotional concerns.

A case management approach has been adopted by the student services team which also includes two head of student services positions (lower school and senior school) and six, year coordinators.

The recent addition of the second head of student services' position has allowed for a more targeted approach to pastoral care with a real focus on transition, orientation and student attendance and participation. The team works in partnership with a wide variety of external agencies to provide a wrap-around model of support and intervention. The college also has excellent processes in place for the smooth transition of Year 6 students (and in 2014, Year 7 students) to the college. The appointment in advance of a coordinator with allocated time to manage transition processes at the primary school level before entry to the College then becomes the Year Coordinator when the cohort of students commences Year 7. The process was trialed in 2014 with both Year 6 and 7 transitioning for 2015 and reviewers were able to verify the success of the process with parents, students and staff.

The VET program has been extended over the last two years with 14 Certificate II and III courses on offer. Of the 2014 Year 12 cohort, 75% completed a Certificate II program with 96% VET achievement. With up to 70% of senior school students pursuing a non-ATAR pathway, the school has made a significant investment in staff development to ensure that teachers have the necessary qualifications to deliver the courses.

An emphasis has been placed on an improved culture of academic study across the college. A variety of whole-school strategies have been employed to achieve this goal, including the compulsory use of a student planner and 'fact sheets' in lower school MESH subjects and most senior school courses. To assist Year 11 and 12 students, the Senior School Vice-Principal runs a rigorous 25th period study program for students who are closely monitored via the teacher information provided in the Reporting to Parents marks book and the WACE tracker. Senior school students affirmed the usefulness of the program in keeping them on task and ensuring that all assessment items are completed. Significantly, the Year 12 Attainment Rate has increased from 30% in 2011 to 95% in 2014.

Despite issues with bandwidth/connectivity, both teachers and students were enthusiastic about the use of ICT in the classroom to optimise student engagement in learning. The college relies on class sets of laptops to support programs and teachers affirmed this model as a successful strategy. A small number of students make use of the current program *bring your own device* but it is recognised that a more targeted approach to this strategy must be employed to be successful. Similarly, familiarisation with the *Connect* community is ongoing, with professional development sessions being provided to staff in 2014 and 2015.

Eighteen staff are currently using *Connect* for online curriculum delivery. Both teacher and student use continues to increase at a steady pace.

Effective and regular emailing of newsletter and updates provides parents with timely information on school events and pastoral issues. Use of the *Connect* program to provide online access for parents has been implemented to engage parents in supporting their children's learning in partnership with the college. As more teachers use this tool, it is envisaged that parents will see the relevance of using *Connect* as an alternative communication strategy and a means of monitoring their child's attendance and academic performance. The implementation of an online booking system for parent reporting evenings has enhanced the process and improved public relations.

The School Climate Survey indicated strong parent satisfaction with staff expectations of students and the college facilities. A meeting with parent representatives reinforced this level of satisfaction and their positive views on the commitment and approachability of teachers and the safe college environment. They appreciated the opportunities available to discuss matters of concern with college staff and commended the teaching staff on the level of support given to students. They recognised that becoming an independent public school had afforded Belridge Secondary College a fresh start and this had resulted in a positive attitude toward the college within the local community.

Belridge Secondary College has a range of partnerships that contribute to both the academic performance and well-being of its students. Excellent relationships with the contributory primary schools facilitate a smooth transition for students from primary school to the college. The collaboration with a variety of external agencies (such as Mercy Reconnect and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services—CAMHS) by the student services team supports students at risk. Ongoing involvement with a range of registered training organisations (RTOs) such as the Central Institute of Technology and West Coast Institute, the YMCA, Trades North and South Metropolitan Youth Link (SMYL) will continue to enhance student opportunities through the VET pathways.

School Performance—Sustainability

How well placed is the school to sustain and improve its performance into the next planning cycle?

The leadership of the college is committed to the review and enhancement of student learning through well-established processes that have developed over 14 years. Leadership provides HOLAs with clear expectations on operational planning and reporting and has well-developed processes to measure progress and seek staff responses through regular survey. Consequently, the learning progress of all students is monitored and support for improvement is evident across the campus. The human, physical and financial resources are well managed and will sustain the current programs effectively. The self-review has identified the need to address ICT issues to enhance the learning programs, monitoring of student performance and reporting procedures across the college.

The college has well embedded self-review practices in relation to the analysis of student learning and planning for improvement through learning area operational plans and processes. These were clearly outlined to the reviewers in meetings with the leadership team and individual teachers and further demonstrated through detailed reports from learning areas and the VET and pastoral care programs. The development of a Business Plan providing clear targets and measurable achievement milestones will reinforce successful outcomes in student learning. The identification of targets and success indicators will improve the discussion of the Business Plan at Board level and enhance the reporting to parents through the Annual Report.

Leadership of the Pastoral Care Committee and the recently established literacy program are good examples of whole-school models that contribute improved student learning. The manner in which the literacy program has been able to establish a consistent approach with broad buy-in by staff to implementing strategies to improve literacy in all learning areas, is a strong example of the professionalism of staff and their capacity to implement processes effectively. The success of these programs provides confidence that the planned expansion of professional learning committees will have success in maintaining a focus on pedagogy across the college in the future.

The self-review process identified the need to make students at risk and individual education plan information accessible on an ongoing basis without compromising confidentiality. Sustaining student learning improvement,

especially for at-risk students, will be enhanced by the establishment of a comprehensive student management system to support all planning and to ensure consistency of approach in the learning programs for individual students.

The leadership of the college has been successful in creating a school that is highly regarded by its community; is well managed and with a structure that has promoted the opportunities for improved student learning. It was clear to the reviewers that the Principal and Senior Management Group have, over a substantial period of time, facilitated change and led the college in a positive direction. The change of Principal in August 2015 will present a challenge to the identified success of the college while enabling an opportunity to review planning and management for the future.

The College Board is appropriately established and is developing its understanding of roles and accountability. Parent and community members are coming to terms with their role specifically as representatives of the school community. This is due in part to the winding up of the school's Parents and Citizens' Association with some aspects of its role being taken up by the Board. The Board played a strong role in the re-badging process including the change of name to Belridge Secondary College to focus on the development of a more positive reputation and was also involved in the development of the initial business plan. Board members indicated that they received updates on student performance and college finances; however, while they felt free to interrogate the data provided, they recognised a need to have more effective inductions to enable them to develop a strategic focus in discussions on performance and directions for the future.

Board members were able to identify areas for improvement in their operations in discussion with the reviewers. This included raising the profile of the Board across the school community, the need for the Board to review its performance regularly, the importance of identifying a preferred skill set for members and the succession planning required to ensure the Board undertakes the strategic governance role required of an independent public school. The need to continue the development of the Board and its ability to undertake the role expected was discussed openly by the members and gives confidence that there will be continued growth in the capacity of the Board over the next three years.

The college staff has worked assiduously to address reputation issues that impacted on enrolments in the years following the opening of the school in

1991. The program focus on improved student achievement levels, the elite specialist programs and the provision of an attractive and safe learning environment have been successful in turning around a falling enrolment of less than 600 to a sustainable level of 1000. The staff recognise that the enrolments in senior school exist in a very competitive environment in the northern suburbs and have developed a strong and successful VET program with excellent relationships with public and private training providers alongside a smaller but well supported ATAR program. The current levels of achievement in ATAR and VET at a State level will need to be replicated to ensure the sustainability of the senior school enrolments into the future.

A further example of the sustainability of the college was provided through an examination of the management of the enrolment of Year 7 students into secondary education this year. The leadership, planning, professional debate and staff involvement in this substantial change was demonstrated through the documentation provided and confirmed by the staff and parents. This level of successful planning and management for a substantial change gave the reviewers confidence in the ongoing capacity of the college staff to provide effectively for the educational needs of all students.

Conclusion

Belridge Secondary College is a well-resourced and capably led school, which has developed a strong culture of achievement, progress and provision of a challenging curriculum that meets the needs of all students as evidenced by its strong Year 12 VET and ATAR results. The college is well regarded by its community with parents and students expressing high levels of satisfaction with staff, the varied programs, pathways and extra-curricula opportunities provided. Also evident is an effective learning environment with a broad variety of strategies to support the social and emotional well-being of students and support processes in place for students requiring differentiation in their learning.

Commendations

The following areas are commended:

- the development of a strong self-review culture at all levels that engages staff in the implementation and monitoring of practices for improved student learning
- the Principal and staff for the development of a study culture to promote student engagement and achievement in senior secondary years
- the inclusive environment developed by the staff, typified by the integration with the Education Support Centre; the relationship with contributory primary schools; the responsiveness to student needs both academically and socially; the range of programs to support student well-being; and the positive intervention and interaction with students and their families by a dedicated and professional student services team
- the Principal and staff on the manner in which they have addressed reputational issues and used the IPS flexibilities to create a learning environment that addresses community expectations and attracts students in a very competitive educational environment
- the Principal and staff on the establishment of an extensive WACE program with VET and ATAR studies that recognise and respond to student learning and training preferences in senior schooling and for improving Year 12 attainment
- the Principal for his leadership in the establishment and development of a quality leadership structure that promotes student learning at all levels.

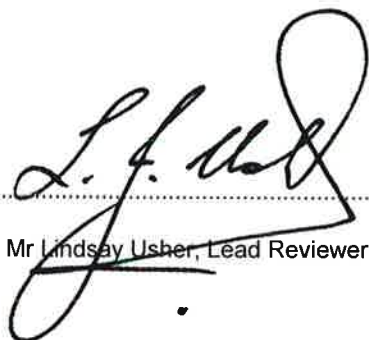
Areas for Improvement

The following areas for improvement are identified:

- review, by the leadership of the college, of the planning paradigm to ensure that the Business Plan provides strategic direction to the school in areas identified for improvement in student learning (achievement, progress, engagement)
- establishment, by the leadership of the college in collaboration with the Board, of clear and measurable targets for literacy and numeracy and other priority areas in the next version of the Business Plan
- planning and implementation by the Principal and staff for ICT strategies to develop further: the ability for all students to be able to investigate, communicate and create using technology; the capacity for all teachers to facilitate teaching and learning through ICT; and the engagement of all parents in their child's education through the online environment
- the College Board to establish a process of regular review of its own performance and development of an induction program for new members to ensure they can carry out the Board's strategic governance role.

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 the verification of the evidence provided by Belridge Secondary College 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.



Mr Lindsay Usher, Lead Reviewer

19 November 2015

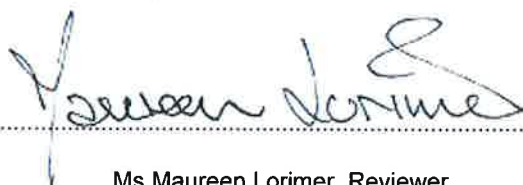
Date



Mr Phil de Garis, Reviewer

19 November 2015

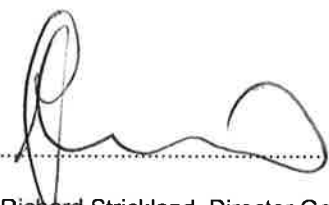
Date



Ms Maureen Lorimer, Reviewer

23 November 2015

Date



Mr Richard Strickland, Director General,
Department of Education Services

24/11/15

Date