

Finigan School of Distance Education 2019 Annual Report





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Introduction

The Annual Report for 2019 is provided to the community of Finigan School of Distance Education as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the school plan. It outlines the findings from self–assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.

School contact details

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School background

School vision statement

Connected through Learning

At Finigan School of Distance Education we provide quality, personalised learning experiences for each of our students. We recognise the significance of the relationship between the teacher and the student and actively work to establish and maintain a learning relationship so that every student is engaged, supported and achieving success. Our teachers embody a dynamic culture of innovative shared reflective practice, collegiality and pride. We actively build strong learning partnerships with local and distance education communities.

School context

Our school continues the legacy of Walter Finigan, the first Principal of a distance education school in NSW (The Correspondence School). Finigan School of Distance Education is a purpose built K–12 distance education school committed to innovation and ensuring each and every student achieves their personal best.

Based in Queanbeyan, we acknowledge the Ngunnawal people who are the traditional custodians of this land on which we teach and learn, and pay respect to the Elders of the Ngunnawal Nation, past, present and emerging.

We cater for a diverse student population over a broad geographical area. Student learning is supported through self–paced online lessons, real–time web lessons, satellite lessons, collaborative online tasks, phone lessons and email discussion. Our school has state of the art facilities including 20 web lesson studios and 3 satellite lesson studios. The satellite lesson studios are larger spaces which are equipped with video production facilities for the development of quality video resources for our students. Teachers are also able to conduct lessons from their desks.

As a new school, we commenced operation on 29 January 2019 with an enrolment of over 1000 individual students. Our staff includes over 110 (full–time equivalent) teachers and 16 support staff.

Students can access face—to—face support as needed. The school has a number of dynamic and flexible learning spaces. Teachers may visit students at their home or at one of the 9 learning hubs distributed across south eastern NSW. Learning hubs are run by the school and staffed by qualified teachers.

Self-assessment and school achievement

This section of the annual report outlines the findings from self–assessment using the School Excellence Framework, school achievements and the next steps to be pursued.

This year, our school undertook self–assessment using the School Excellence Framework. The Framework is a statement of what is valued as excellence for NSW public schools, both now and into the future. The Framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading.

Each year, we assess our practice against the Framework to inform our school plan and annual report.

Our self–assessment process will assist the school to refine our school plan, leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

For more information about the School Excellence Framework: https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/school-excellence-and-accountability/school-excellence

Strategic Direction 1

Personalised Learning

Purpose

To create a whole school teaching and learning environment which allows for all learning to be personalised for the individual student, supporting student engagement and progression.

Improvement Measures

Increased staff confidence and capacity in the design and delivery of personalised learning experiences.

Increased provision and engagement with quality real-time teaching opportunities.

Improved student return rates.

Improved student achievement of learning outcomes.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Technology Support

Develop the Connected Teaching & Learning Team to strategically build the confidence and capacity of all staff to develop and deliver quality live online lessons.

Establish a Learning Design Team to research and establish best practice in the development of quality online learning experiences and resources.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Quality teaching rounds have provided staff with opportunities for teacher observation, substantive communication and feedback from colleagues with a focus on improving quality lesson delivery. This ongoing professional learning program will be extended into 2020 and include a larger team of teachers.	Head Teacher Teaching & Learning (Instructional Leadership) (commence 2020) appointed to lead the Connected Teaching & Learning Team.
Established an Connected Teaching and Learning Team to support staff with the transition to live online lessons commencing in Term 4 for Year 12.	Professional Learning Funds: \$106 716
	Operational Funds: Connected Teaching & Learning Team: 1.0 FTE

Process 2: Learning & Support

Head Teacher Learning & Support leads the upskilling of staff in the design and application of learning adjustments.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
The focus on quality teaching and learning experiences for all students has seen the school tap into Department and Microsoft expertise to ensure this is reflected in all online resources. This has been supported with a Head Teacher & Learning position, professional learning and an allocation of additional time for each faculty to develop these resources.	Head Teacher Teaching & Learning (Learning Design) supports the development of quality online resources and learning experiences. Staffing allocation of 0.4 per week to each faculty, Terms 2 and 3 to plan for live online lesson delivery.

Process 3: Systems

Ensure learning needs are visible with details easily accessed, interpreted and applied by all teachers.

Evaluation	Funds Expended
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Progress towards achieving improvement measures	
Evaluation	(Resources)
A template for IEP's was developed for all staff to use for identified students. A Learning Support Team was established and referral procedures developed.	Head Teacher Learning & Support (commence 2020) and Head Teacher Student Wellbeing (commence Term 4 2019) above establishment to commence review of current enrolments and develop Independent Education Plans and procedures. Funding Sources: • Socio–economic background (\$34440.00)

Next Steps

- To further increase the number of staff engaged in Quality Teaching Rounds.
- · Refine the onboarding procedures on enrolment to better inform individual curriculum design.
- K-11 students receiving live online lessons.
- Connect with external institutions including; University of Canberra, Capricornia School of Distance Education QLD and Open Access College Adelaide, to collaborate and inform best practice in live online lesson delivery.
- All staff to be developed in the interpretation and application of IEP strategies.

Strategic Direction 2

Connectedness

Purpose

To embed a positive school culture with a culture of high expectations where every student has a sense of belonging, is known, supported and valued, enabling every student to achieve and progress.

Improvement Measures

Students express a sense of belonging to Finigan SDE and an awareness of the support available to them.

Establish and increase community engagement through digital channels

Monitor and improve school to work outcomes.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Student Wellbeing

The Head Teacher Student Wellbeing leads the Learning & Wellbeing Coaches to coordinate wellbeing training for teachers and support for students.

The Transition Team establishes processes to support student distance education orientation.

Appoint and embed processes for an Aboriginal Support Teacher.

Establish Middle School for Stage 4 students at Stage 3 or below.

Appoint a careers teacher to support student transitions beyond school.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Established a Middle School and commenced writing online curriculum. Literacy and Numeracy strategies embedded across all KLA's to provide scaffolds to support students reaching Stage level outcomes.	Head Teacher Student Wellbeing appointed.
Head Teacher Student Wellbeing appointed and roles and responsibilities defined. Support provided to students with low levels of engagement with regular parent contact an important part of this process.	Operational funds: Mini Schools: \$6 139 Operational funds: Field visits: \$24 502
Conducted Mini Schools at Finigan SDE and at Learning Hubs throughout the year to provide students with face—to—face opportunities to connect with their teacher and peers.	002
Conducted field visits to support student learning and connection with Finigan SDE.	

Process 2: Connected Teaching

Equip and support staff in the effective use of technology to design and deliver quality, real-time web lessons.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Professional Learning provided including: • 20 hours for all staff focused on quality teaching and learning in distance education context. • 13 hours for all staff on the effective use of technology for teaching and learning. • Access to Microsoft training for support with use of collaborative tools. • Star Time company provided support and training using green screen	Professional Learning funds.
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Progress towards achieving improvement measures	
technology and video.	

Process 3: Digital Presence

Develop and maintain a dynamic digital presence for communication within the school community and beyond.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Established the school website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.	0.2 staffing allocation for newsletter digital production.
Digital student and parent newsletter produced weekly.	digital production.

Next Steps

• Student Wellbeing Team to attend Berry Street Trauma Informed Practice training.

Strategic Direction 3

Leaders of Learning

Purpose

To establish a culture of collegiality, where all teachers are learning leaders, with the core goal of providing the best possible learning experience for every student to support their success.

Improvement Measures

Establish and build a positive staff perception of school leadership and direction.

Increased number of real-time lessons.

Increased number of school developed video resources.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Building Leadership Capacity

Leadership training to provide the executive team with a common language and strategies for leading their teams. Leadership roles are distributed beyond the executive team to build the leadership capacity of staff across the school.

HT Admin School Improvement & Reporting to establish processes for school Self–Assessment and data mapping to inform strategies and actions.

	Funds Expended Resources)
training further professional development in establishing frameworks for conducting challenging conversations.	Appointment of 3 x Head Teachers. Operational funds: Appointment of Deputy Principal 2.

Process 2: Professional Learning

All staff are actively engaged in reflective practice and professional learning to build their confidence and capacity as a well–rounded distance education teacher.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Based on the Finigan Model a lesson plan template was developed by staff. An essential part of this template is a section on reflective practice where teacher note successful strategies and ones requiring modification. Staff worked in pairs to develop these lesson templates using driving questions, enquiry based learning and then faculty members provided feedback. A group of staff participated in Quality Teaching Rounds training and implemented the initiative in Terms 3 & 4.	Head Teacher Teaching & Learning (Instructional Leadership) appointed to lead the Connected Teaching & Learning Team.

Process 3: Networks

Establish collaborative networks with schools in the local community, universities, the NSW distance education schools and Australasian distance education schools

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Established connections with and developing effective working relationships with the following groups including; Queanbeyan Community of Schools,	Professional learning funds.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Newcastle University (QTR Project), NSW Distance Education Schools network and the Australasian Association of Distance Education Schools (AADES).

Some staff attended the AADES national conference with 3 staff presenting workshops. The connections made at this conference resulted in principals representing each state visiting Finigan Distance Education School to view the new facility.

Next Steps

- All executive to attend a 2 day training course on a Growth Coaching approach to support 'Challenging Conversations and Fearless Feedback'.
- Use the grant provided by AADES to visit the Open Access College, Adelaide to establish best practice regarding live online delivery of lessons.

Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
Aboriginal background loading	Funding used to support a proportion of the employment of 6 staff to support programs. Funding Sources: • Aboriginal background	Additional staff continue to ensure the Finigan Learning Hubs in Bega, Batemans Bay, Tumut, Ulladulla, Temora, Wagga, Cootamundra, Kanahooka and Eden are supporting students (including Aboriginal students) unable to access their education at their local school.
	loading (\$19 784.00)	Online lessons have culturally appropriate and relevant content embedded to engage students in their learning.
		Refined practices and procedures to ensure consistency of access across all Learning Hubs.
		Developed clear student expectations regarding live lesson attendance.
		Field visits to conduct student assessment and the development of effective PLP's.
		Engaged an Aboriginal Support Teacher.
Low level adjustment for disability	Funding used to support a proportion of the employment of 6 staff to support programs. Funding Sources: • Low level adjustment for disability (\$108 696.00)	Additional staff continue to ensure the Finigan Learning Hubs in Bega, Batemans Bay, Tumut, Ulladulla, Temora, Wagga, Cootamundra, Kanahooka and Eden are supporting students unable to access their education at their local school.
		Refined practices and procedures to ensure consistency of access across all Learning Hubs.
		Developed clear student expectations regarding attendance.
		Ensured all Learning Hub staff receive professional learning and have opportunities to connect with other staff in professional learning contexts.
		Field visits to conduct student assessment and the development of effective Independent Education Plans (IEPs).
		Engaged a Head Teacher Learning & Support.
		Established Learning & Support Referral Procedures and testing on enrolment.
		Engaged a Head Teacher Middle School.
		Commenced establishment of a Middle School for Year 7–10 students performing at below Stage level.
Socio-economic background	Funding used to support a proportion of the employment of 6 staff to support programs. Funding Sources:	Additional staff continue to ensure the Finigan Learning Hubs in Bega, Batemans Bay, Tumut, Ulladulla, Temora, Wagga, Cootamundra, Kanahooka and Eden are supporting students unable to access their education at their local school.
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• Socio–economic background sackground (\$63 261.00)	Refined practices and procedures to ensure consistency of access across all Learning Hubs. Developed clear student expectations regarding attendance. Ensured all Learning Hub staff receive professional learning and have opportunities to connect with other staff in professional learning contexts. Engaged a Head Teacher Student Wellbeing. Established Learning & Wellbeing Coaches. Commenced establishment of Student Wellbeing Procedures.

Student information

Student enrolment profile

	Enrolments
Students	2019
Boys	164
Girls	193

Management of non-attendance

Attendance at school has a big impact on longer term outcomes for children and young people. When a child is not at school they miss important opportunities to learn, build friendships and develop their skills through play. Regular attendance at school is a shared responsibility between schools and parents. By working together we can have a positive effect on supporting our children and young people to regularly attend school.

Our teachers promote and monitor regular attendance at school and all our schools have effective measures in place to record attendance and follow up student absences promptly. They are guided by the School Attendance policy which details the management of non–attendance.

Post school destinations

Proportion of students moving into post- school education, training or employment	Year 10 %	Year 11 %	Year 12 %
Seeking Employment	0	0	40
Employment	5	2	20
TAFE entry	7	11	20
University Entry	0	0	20
Other	50	15	0
Unknown	3	4	0

Other refers to students returning to face-to-face schooling.

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

17.74% of Year 12 students at Finigan School of Distance Education undertook vocational education and training in 2019.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational education qualification

25.6% of all Year 12 students at Finigan School of Distance Education expected to complete Year 12 in 2019 received a Higher School Certificate or equivalent vocational education and training qualification.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Deputy Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	2
Head Teacher(s)	13
Classroom Teacher(s)	84.47
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	0.5
Teacher Librarian	0.2
School Counsellor	2
School Administration and Support Staff	17.97

^{*}Full Time Equivalent

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce composition

The Department actively supports the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees through the use of identified positions, scholarship opportunities to become a teacher and by providing a culturally safe workplace. As of 2019, 3.9% of the Department's workforce identify as Aboriginal people.

Workforce ATSI

Staff type	Benchmark ¹	2019 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation ²
School Support	3.30%	7.20%
Teachers	3.30%	2.90%

Note 1 – The NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2014–17 introduced an aspirational target of 1.8% by 2021 for each of the sector's salary bands. If the aspirational target of 1.8% is achieved in salary bands not currently at or above 1.8%, the cumulative representation of Aboriginal employees in the sector is expected to reach 3.3%.

Note 2 – Representation of diversity groups are calculated as the estimated number of staff in each group divided by the total number of staff. These statistics have been weighted to estimate the representation of diversity groups in the workforce, where diversity survey response rates were less than 100 per cent. The total number of staff is based on a headcount of permanent and temporary employees.

Teacher qualifications

All casual, temporary and permanent teachers in NSW public schools must hold a NSW Department of Education approval to teach. Teachers with approval to teach must be accredited with the NSW Education Standards Authority, and hold a recognised teaching degree. All NSW teachers must hold a valid NSW Working With Children Check clearance.

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Professional learning is core to enabling staff to improve their practice.

Professional learning includes five student–free School Development Days and induction programs for staff new to our school and/or system. These days are used to improve the capacity of teaching and non–teaching staff in line with school and departmental priorities.

Financial information

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019. The Principal is responsible for the financial management of the school and ensuring all school funds are managed in line with Department policy requirements.

	2019 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	358,882
Revenue	15,572,932
Appropriation	14,523,206
Sale of Goods and Services	69,257
Grants and contributions	976,684
Investment income	1,985
Other revenue	1,800
Expenses	-12,505,802
Employee related	-11,448,125
Operating expenses	-1,057,676
Surplus / deficit for the year	3,067,130

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

Financial summary - Equity loadings

The equity loading data is the main component of the 'Appropriation' line item of the financial summary above.

	2019 Approved SBA (\$)
Targeted Total	0
Equity Total	192,701
Equity - Aboriginal	19,784
Equity - Socio-economic	63,261
Equity - Language	960
Equity - Disability	108,696
Base Total	838,133
Base - Per Capita	90,805
Base - Location	0
Base - Other	747,328
Other Total	12,989,172
Grand Total	14,020,006

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

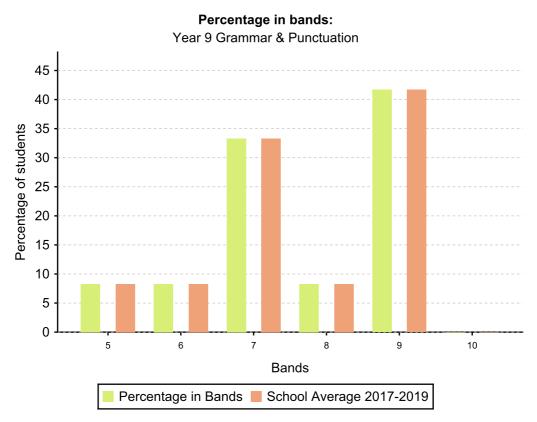
School performance - NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10. The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

From 2018 to 2021 NAPLAN is moving from a paper test to an online test. Individual schools are transitioning to the online test, with some schools participating in NAPLAN on paper and others online. Results for both online and paper formats are reported on the same NAPLAN assessment scale. Any comparison of NAPLAN results – such as comparisons to previous NAPLAN results or to results for students who did the assessment in a different format – should be treated with care.

Literacy and Numeracy Graphs

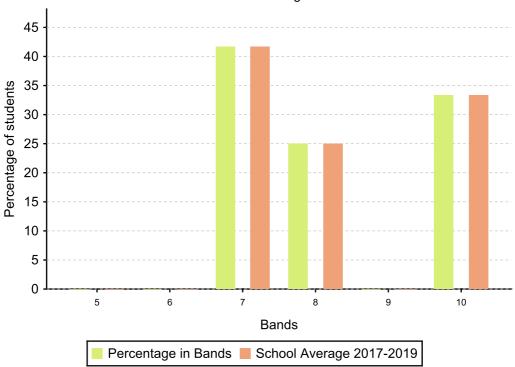
Literacy data – The information in this report must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies. Where there are fewer than 10 students in a cohort, summary statistics or graphical representation of student performance is not available.



Band	5	6	7	8	9	10
Percentage of students	8.3	8.3	33.3	8.3	41.7	0.0
School avg 2017-2019	8.3	8.3	33.3	8.3	41.7	0

Percentage in bands:

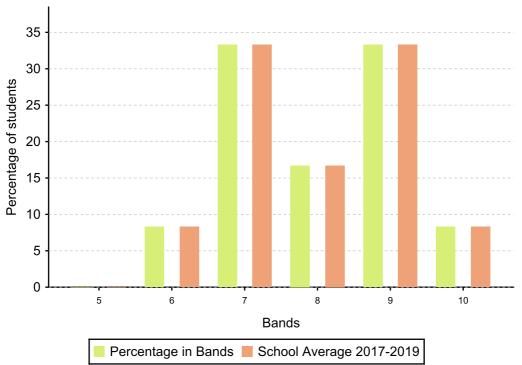
Year 9 Reading



Band	5	6	7	8	9	10
Percentage of students	0.0	0.0	41.7	25.0	0.0	33.3
School avg 2017-2019	0	0	41.7	25	0	33.3

Percentage in bands:

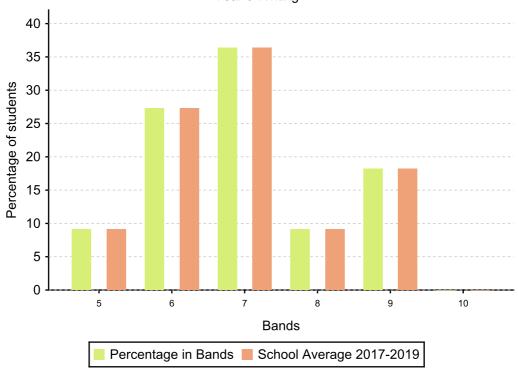
Year 9 Spelling



Band	5	6	7	8	9	10
Percentage of students	0.0	8.3	33.3	16.7	33.3	8.3
School avg 2017-2019	0	8.3	33.3	16.7	33.3	8.3

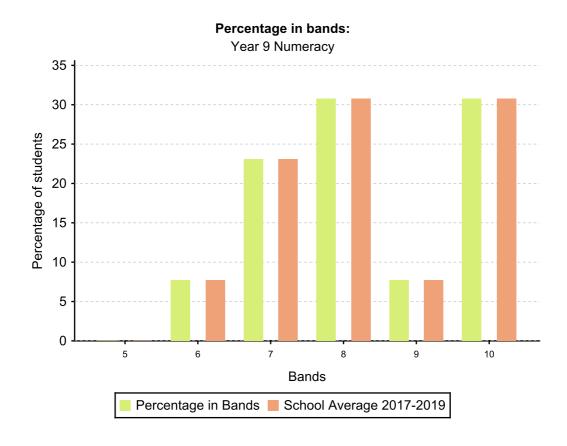
Percentage in bands:

Year 9 Writing



Band	5	6	7	8	9	10
Percentage of students	9.1	27.3	36.4	9.1	18.2	0.0
School avg 2017-2019	9.1	27.3	36.4	9.1	18.2	0

Numeracy data – The information in this report must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies. Where there are fewer than 10 students in a cohort, summary statistics or graphical representation of student performance is not available.

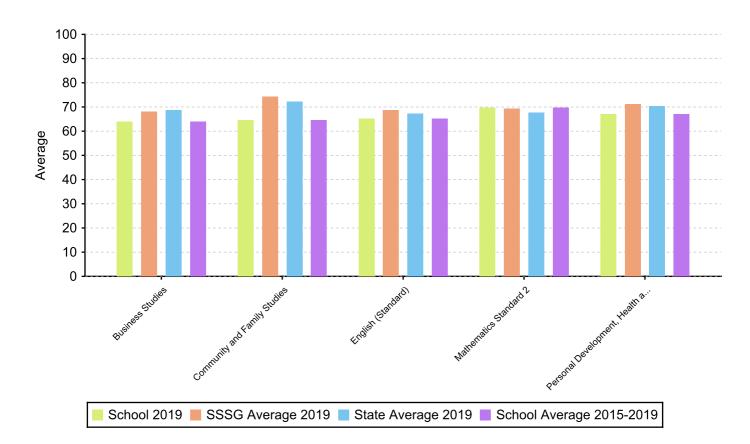


Band	5	6	7	8	9	10
Percentage of students	0.0	7.7	23.1	30.8	7.7	30.8
School avg 2017-2019	0	7.7	23.1	30.8	7.7	30.8

School performance - HSC

The performance of students in the HSC is reported in bands ranging from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest).

The information in this report must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies. Where there are fewer than 10 students in a course or subject, summary statistics or graphical representation of student performance is not available.



Subject	School 2019	SSSG	State	School Average 2015-2019
Business Studies	63.9	68.0	68.6	63.9
Community and Family Studies	64.6	74.4	72.2	64.6
English (Standard)	65.2	68.7	67.3	65.2
Mathematics Standard 2	69.7	69.3	67.7	69.7
Personal Development, Health and Physical Education	67.0	71.1	70.5	67.0

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Each year schools are required to seek the opinions of students, staff and parents. This year our school sought the opinions of students and parents regarding quality lessons, feedback and student engagement. Both students and parents participated in online surveys. The opinions of all stakeholder are outlined below.

Students

Student responses included that:

- 29% of students have completed and submitted all course work and 42% miss handing in some work each week...
- 75% of students agree that it is important for them to learn what they are taught.
- 57% believe they are learning skills for use in later life.
- 43% agree that what they learn in school is useful in everyday life.
- 57% agreed that course work and lessons are interesting an engaging.
- 55% of students said that they were provided with variety in course work and lessons.
- 46% also indicated that the lessons provided exploration of meaningful topics.
- 70% knew the purpose of what they were learning.
- 82% try hard to succeed in their schoolwork.
- 73% of students ask for help when they do not understand.
- 41% participate in all aspects of their courses.
- 14% of students indicated they get bored in lessons.
- 52% believe their lessons and course work are challenging.
- 68% indicated that feedback from teachers regarding my assessment and course work helps me to learn.
- 64% of teachers provide timely feedback.
- 77% of students agree that teachers outline expectations for course work and assessments.
- 57% said teachers set clear goals for our learning.
- 52% said that the teachers have high expectations.
- 64% said their teacher is good at explaining important ideas in lessons and course work.
- 64% indicated their teachers show an interest in how I'm doing at school.
- 80% of students plan to complete Year 12 and 42% plan to go onto university.

General comments:

- · So grateful to be part of this awesome learning.
- · Teachers are awesome.
- · Thankful for the work provided.
- All the teachers at Finigan are really amazing and have helped school to be fun and more engaging.
- All staff are extremely supportive and all take the time to listen and support us...

Parents

Parents responses indicated that:

- 78% feel welcomed when they visit or contact the school.
- 81% said they can easily speak with their child's teachers.
- 69% agree they are well informed about school activities.
- 67% said the teachers listen to concerns.
- 46% indicated they can easily speak to the principal and executive.
- 80% said the written communication is clear.
- 81% agree the school administration staff are helpful.
- 42% feel a sense e of connection to the school.
- 60% indicated that teachers regularly inform them of their child's progress.
- 47% of students spend 3–4 hours on school work each day
- 24% of students spend 1–2 hours on school work. each day
- 18% of students spend 5–6 hours on school work each day.
- 64% of parents said that teachers have high expectations for their child to succeed.
- 79% of parents agree that teachers show an interest in their child s learning.
- 75% said their child is encouraged to do his/her best work.
- 63% believe that the teachers take account of their child's needs, abilities and interests.

How often does someone in your family do each of the following?

• 39% said they discussed how well their child was doing in his/her class daily.

- · 89% take an interest in their school work daily.
- 50% praise their child daily.
- 57% encourage their child to do well at school each day.

General comments:

- · Some teachers are great.
- · We love Finigan School of Distance Education.
- · We have been blessed to tap into level of expertise and personalised teachers.
- · Teachers are lovely and accommodating.

Staff

Staff responses indicated:

- 78% indicated that their school executive encourage innovation from employees
- 92% said the school executive communicate the importance of students and parents in achieving our objectives.
- 90% agree that their manager encourages staff to keep improving the work we do.
- 90% said their work group strives to achieve customer/client satisfaction.
- 88% indicated that the executive listen to them.
- 85% of staff said they receive support and help from other colleagues.
- 80% believe the changes within the organisation will improve outcomes for the school community.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal Education Policy

The responsibility for enacting the Aboriginal Education Policy rests with all Departmental staff. The policy should underpin and inform planning, teaching practice and approaches to educational leadership in all educational settings.

Evidence of effective implementation of the policy included:

- Establishing, building and strengthening relationships with the Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Aboriginal people and communities.
- Providing, in partnership with Aboriginal people and communities, education which promotes quality teaching, is engaging, and is culturally appropriate and relevant.
- · Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will match or better the outcomes of the broader student population.
- Implementation of Personalised Learning Pathways for all Aboriginal students in a school culture of high expectations.

Anti-Racism Policy

All teachers are responsible for supporting students to develop an understanding of racism and discrimination and the impact these may have on individuals and the broader community. Principals are responsible for examining school practices and procedures to ensure they are consistent with the policy. All schools have an Anti–Racism Contact Officer who is trained to respond to concerns in relation to racism.

Multicultural Education Policy

Teachers address the specific learning and wellbeing needs of students from culturally diverse backgrounds through their teaching and learning programs. Principals are responsible for ensuring that school policies, programs and practices respond to the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of the school community, and provide opportunities that enable all students to achieve equitable education and social outcomes.