Strategic Improvement Plan 2021-2025

Gordon West Public School 3943

School vision and context

School vision statement

Gordon West Public School is a future-focused school committed to nurturing confident and motivated students who are actively engaged in their lifelong learning.

We support the development of students with a focus on high-quality teaching, student academic growth, student wellbeing and social success.

Teachers, parents and students work in partnership to maintain high expectations, engagement and a positive environment where every student is known, valued and cared for.

School context

Gordon West Public School is a metropolitan school on Sydney's North Shore in the Department of Education region of Macquarie Park. GWPS has 509 students enrolled in 2022 from Kindergarten to Year 6 with 65% of students from a language background other than English. The school has strong community support and engagement which is integral to our success.

Fine school traditions, a strong feeling of school pride and high standards are promoted with students encouraged to achieve their personal best.

The school's robust community partnerships are reflected in many initiatives and learning opportunities. While the school is committed to maintaining high expectations for student engagement and strives to improve student academic outcomes, the school remains involved in innovative projects across a broad spectrum of the curriculum. These include an extensive creative and performing arts program involving dance groups, bands and choirs, a strong sporting focus and a keen interest in promoting student wellbeing. Our student welfare endeavours include the Student Representative Council, You Can Do It Education and the Peer Support program.

The whole school community, involving students, staff, parents were consulted in a thorough situational analysis followed by the development of a strategic improvement plan. The situational analysis identified three areas of focus. This plan builds upon the work undertaken in the previous school planning cycle and for external validation.

1. Student growth and attainment

Reading and numeracy achievement and growth results at Gordon West are consistently above state and local schools. We have established a need to maintain student achievement in the top 2 bands of NAPLAN, move our middle achieving students into higher bands and create consistency in the teaching and learning strategies in reading and mathematics. The High Potential Gifted Education policy and related professional learning will be used as a tool to build teacher capacity and allow for consistent differentiation strategies to be implemented across the school. The number of students identified as English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) has risen significantly over the last 4 years. Increased emphasis will be placed on these programs to support student achievement. Further emphasis is being placed on our writing program to increase student outcomes.

2. Evidenced informed teaching

Gordon West is a high performing school that is committed to evaluating our practices to enhance the learning outcomes of our students. Situational analysis and external validation highlighted the need to include consistent best practice teaching and learning practices to enhance teacher capacities and increase student achievement. This will be achieved through the implementation of current educational research such as the What Works Best framework and the Department of Education initiatives.

School vision statement

School context

3. Empowering Leadership across the school

The situational analysis and external validation highlighted a need to develop the leadership capacity amongst students and staff at Gordon West. The inclusion of explicit and systematic mentoring and leadership programs will allow for improved systems, distributive leadership and enhancing capabilities across the school. Student voice, leadership application processes and authentic leadership opportunities will be improved and explored further.

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Purpose

To improve student achievement, growth and performance in literacy and numeracy through establishing a culture of high expectations, engagement and consistent high quality teaching practices.

Improvement measures

Reading growth
Achieve by year: 2023

All students can demonstrate reading growth and achievement from Term 1 to Term 4, using Essential Assessment as a key data point.

Numeracy growth
Achieve by year: 2023

All students can demonstrate numeracy growth and achievement from Term 1 to Term 4, using Essential Assessment as a key data point.

Achieve by year: 2025

Increase percentages to be above replica schools in the areas of Skills Challenge in the TTFM student survey.

Explicit Teaching
Achieve by year: 2025

100% of teachers are using explicit teaching strategies in all key learning areas.

Initiatives

Reading

In reading, we will embed sustainable evidence informed whole school teaching and learning practices. This will include the following components of reading: phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.

The implementation of these components will include:

- high quality explicit teaching practices
- high quality instructional leadership practices
- teacher professional learning and school resourcing
- EAL/D will be strengthened to target students in reading and improve whole school processes and practices
- consistent approaches to high quality differentiation teaching practices.

Numeracy

In numeracy, we will embed sustainable evidence informed whole school teaching and learning practices.

This will include:

- developing and implementing whole school high quality explicit teaching practices
- providing evidence-based professional learning to support quality teaching of mathematics
- enriching expertise in mathematics teaching among staff with support from instructional leadership
- providing access and guidance to high-quality teaching resources for teachers
- consistent approaches to high quality differentiation teaching practices.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

A whole school system and integrated approach to quality teaching, curriculum planning, quality teaching practices and assessment promotes learning excellence and responsiveness in meeting the needs of all students in reading, numeracy and writing. (SEF - Curriculum, Assessment)

All students articulate, understand and achieve their personal literacy and numeracy learning goals.

Students are confident in their skills and find learning challenging and engaging.

Teachers can understand and implement the new literacy and numeracy syallbuses.

EAL/D and LST teams are collaborative, build the capabilities of all teachers and are an integral component of whole school approaches to language and literacy programs.

Professional learning is differentiated and its impact on the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes is evaluated. There are explicit systems for collaboration and feedback to sustain quality teaching practice. (SEF - Learning and Development)

All teachers use a range of consistent strategies to extend the knowledge and skills of every student in every class, regardless of their starting point.

The principal and school leadership team model instructional leadership and support a culture of high expectations, resulting in sustained and measurable whole school improvement. (SEF - Educational Leadership)

A whole school approach ensures the most effective evidence-based teaching methods optimise learning progress for all students, across the full range of abilities. Teachers employ evidence-based effective teaching strategies. Effective explicit teaching methods are identified, promoted and modelled, and students' learning improvement is monitored, demonstrating growth.

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Success criteria for this strategic direction

Grade teams work together in a systematic cycle of planning, teaching, observing, refining and reviewing specific lessons in order to examine their practice and improve their impact on student learning.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Question

To what extent have we achieved our purpose and can demonstrate impact and improvement of student outcomes in reading, numeracy and writing?

Data

We will use a combination of data sources. These will include:

- Assessments: PAT, Check-in and NAPLAN
- Benchmarking
- DET Phonics Screener
- SENA
- Scout: Value Add, Student growth
- Student PLASPs
- Best Start Assessments
- Observations and learning walks
- Student focus groups
- Program analysis
- Teacher and student surveys including TTFM surveys
- student work samples
- phonological awareness diagnostic assessment

Analysis

The analysis will involve:

- Regular review of these data sources to provide clarity around whether we are on track for achieving

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

the intended improvement measures.

- Regular professional discussion around the School Excellence Framework elements and themes.

- Executive team and whole staff reflective sessions.

- Term by term review and triangulation of data sources including quantitative and qualitative, internal and external data to corroborate conclusions.

Implications

The findings of the analysis will inform:

- Future actions

- Annual reporting on school progress measures (published in the Annual Report each year and in the newsletter and on the School Website throughout the year).

Strategic Direction 2: Evidence informed teaching

Purpose

To support and inspire all teachers through quality professional development and evidence-informed strategies that will result in deep pedagogical knowledge and reflective, responsive practices in order to maximise student learning outcomes.

Improvement measures

Formative Assessment
Achieve by year: 2025

100% of teachers are using formative assessment in all key learning areas.

Use of data to inform teaching
Achieve by year: 2025

100% of teachers can use data to inform student progress and modify their teaching practice.

Feedback
Achieve by year: 2025

100% Teachers provide explicit, specific and timely formative feedback related to defined success criteria.

Writing
Achieve by year: 2025

All students can demonstrate reading growth and achievement using whole school writing assessment as a key data point.

Initiatives

Explicit Teaching

In reading, writing and numeracy we will ensure there is consistency across the school and increase teachers' capacity to implement high quality teaching and learning strategies.

We will use the What Works Best in Practice to embed the following activities:

- Professional learning for staff around quality learning intentions success criteria design and implementation.
- Teachers incorporate the gradual release of responsibility.
- Review prior learning before beginning new or more complex learning to identify and build on what students already know.
- Formative assessment practices to effectively monitor student progress.
- Unpack language from the syllabus and assessment explicitly.

Use of data to inform practice

We will use the What Works Best in Practice to embed the following activities:

- regularly dedicate time to using data effectively.
- collect meaningful and authentic data throughout the teaching and learning cycle.
- analyse data to monitor student learning and progress.
- make quality teaching decisions based on data analysis using the literacy and numeracy progressions.

Feedback

We will use the What Works Best in Practice to embed the following activities:

Success criteria for this strategic direction

Data

- All teachers have a sound understanding of student assessment and data concepts (e.g. causality, bias). They analyse, interpret and extrapolate data and they collaboratively use this to inform planning, identify interventions and modify teaching practices
- Teachers clearly understand, develop and apply a full range of assessment strategies - assessment for learning, assessment as learning and assessment of learning - in determining teaching directions, monitoring and assessing student progress and achievement, and reflecting on teaching effectiveness.
- The leadership team comprehensively analyses student progress and achievement data for insights into student learning and discusses results with the whole staff.

Feedback

- Teachers routinely review learning with each student both in class and on work submitted, ensuring all students have a clear understanding of how to improve. Student feedback is elicited by teachers and informs their teaching. Student errors and misunderstandings are explicitly addressed until teachers and students are confident that mastery is demonstrated.
- Teachers confidently provide feedback on tasks that challenge students to review, reflect on and refine their understandings at various points in a learning sequence
- Teachers ensure timely feedback, acknowledging areas well-handled and suggesting areas for improvement
- Teachers structure feedback to support further learning
- Teachers collaboratively use student assessment data as a source of feedback on the effectiveness of their teaching practice.

Gordon West Public School (3943) -2021-2025

Strategic Direction 2: Evidence informed teaching

Initiatives

- Reflect and communicate about the learning task with students.
- Provide students with detailed and specific feedback about what they need to do to achieve growth as a learner.
- Encourage students capacity to self-assess, reflect and monitor their work and the work of their peers.
- Ensure that students act on feedback that they receive.
- Recognising and celebrating student outcomes.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Question

To what extent have we achieved our purpose and can demonstrate impact and improvement of teacher effectiveness in the areas of feedback and using data to inform practice?

Data

We will use a combination of data sources. These will include:

- Assessments: PAT, Check-in and NAPLAN
- Benchmarking
- DET Phonics Screener
- SENA
- Scout: Value Add, Student growth
- Student PLPs
- Best Start
- Lesson studies
- Structured review meetings
- Observation and learning walks
- Student focus groups
- Whole school writing assessment
- Program analysis
- Teacher and student surveys including TTFM surveys
- Student work samples
- DET Phonological Awareness Assessment

Defined Strategy

- Students' progress will be tracked using consistent reflective questioning from teachers and executives staff. This will include the 'Gordon Five' style questions. The Gordon Five Questions: What am I Learning? How am I going with my learning? How do I know? How can I improve? Where do I go for help?
- Classroom work samples and classroom

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

observations will be obtained to provide evidence of impact.

- Lesson studies will be used to plan, model and implement high quality data and feedback learning practices.

- Regular review and discussions of teaching and learning programs to indicate evidence of quality differentiation..

Analysis

The analysis will involve:

- Regular review of these data sources to provide clarity around whether we are on track for achieving the intended improvement measures.

- Regular professional discussion around the School Excellence Framework elements and themes.

- Executive team and whole staff reflective sessions.

- Term by term review and triangulation of data sources including quantitative and qualitative, internal and external data to corroborate conclusions.

Implications

The findings of the analysis will inform:

- Future actions

- Annual reporting on school progress measures (published in the Annual Report each year and in the newsletter and on the School Website throughout the year).

Strategic Direction 3: Empowering leadership across the school

Purpose

The school maximises student and staff leadership and fosters a school-wide culture of high expectations, shared sense of belonging and responsibility.

Improvement measures

Staff Leadership
Achieve by year: 2025

Performance and Development Plans (PDPs) report an **increase** in aspiring leadership (representatives from each stage).

Interest and motivation
Achieve by year: 2025

Increase percentages to be above replica schools in the areas of Interest and motivation in the TTFM student survey.

Increase rating response beyond the state norm in the areas of 'useful feedback about my teaching' and 'taken time to observe my teaching' in the TTFM teacher survey.

Attendance (>90%)
Achieve by year: 2023

The proportion of students attending more than 90% of the time, increases from 89.7% (baseline) to 93.9% (system-negotiated target).

Initiatives

Student Leadership

Student leadership will be improved with the following activities:

- Differentiated **classrooms** provide a balance between teacher directed and student led activities to support students to be partners in their own learning.

- The **School** provides a range of opportunities for students to participate in decision-making and understand their rights and responsibilities as active citizens such as student representative councils, band, house captains and school captains and prefects.

- The **Community** provides a range of opportunities for students to participate in social, environmental, cultural and sporting activities. Examples could include fundraising for a local charity or participating in cultural events such as NAIDOC week and Harmony Day.

Staff Leadership

- The school emphasises effective instructional leadership, management skills and leadership attributes to facilitate whole school improvement and build strong leaders.

- The leadership team develops processes to collaboratively review teaching and leadership practices to support teaching quality and effectiveness (Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, PDP, Accreditation processes, mentoring, Beginning Teacher Program).

- The leadership team develops meaningful opportunities to engage, inform and collaborate with the community on academic, social, environmental, cultural and sporting initiatives.

- Increase competencies in Aboriginal cultures for all staff and educate all students about Aboriginal Australia. We will ensure Aboriginal education is core business for all staff and plan for success for all

Success criteria for this strategic direction

Student Leadership

- Students will be engaged in leadership experiences and be provided with a voice in their school environment.

- Student choice in the **classroom** will be indicated by student decision-making about how they learn and are assessed (collaborative development of success criteria).

- Differenciated learning and effective partnerships mean students are motivated to deliver their best and continually improve.

- Students reflect on their learning in informal and formal capacities.

- Student leadership is visible and recognised through mentoring, participation in learning and other whole-school opportunities.

- Students represent GWPS at major community events.

- Strong student voice and student wellbeing across the school creating a learning culture where students connect, succeed and thrive.

Staff Leadership

The leadership team maintains a focus on distributed instructional leadership to sustain a culture of effective, evidence-based teaching and ongoing improvement so that every student makes measurable learning progress.

The school uses embedded and explicit systems including the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers to facilitate professional dialogue, collaboration, classroom observation, the modelling of effective practice and the provision of specific and timely feedback between teachers.

Whole school and/or inter-school relationships provide mentoring and coaching support to ensure the ongoing development and improvement of all teachers, by skilled teachers.

Strategic Direction 3: Empowering leadership across the school

Initiatives

Aboriginal students.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

All
students are taught by high performing
teachers, and the leadership team
supports the recognition of this through
the teacher accreditation process.

The school is recognised as excellent
and responsive by the community as it seeks to engage
parents in a range of
school-related initiatives which help build
the school as a cohesive educational
community.

The leadership team measures school
community (parent and student) satisfaction
and shares its analysis and actions in response
to the findings with its community.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Question: To what extent have we achieved our purpose
and can demonstrate impact and improvement on student
and staff leadership?

Data

- Student, staff and parent wellbeing surveys.
- Tell Them From Me (TTFM)
- PDPs
- Student data
- Focus groups
- Wellbeing analysis
- Work samples to reflect personal goals
- Observation and Learning Walks

Analysis

The analysis will involve:

- Regular review of these data sources to provide

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

clarity around whether we are on track for achieving the intended improvement measures.

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- Executive team and whole staff reflective sessions.

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Implications

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