

# Strategic Improvement Plan 2021-2024

## Blacktown Girls High School 8224



# School vision and context

## School vision statement

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At Blacktown Girls High School we value strong academic achievement, students are empowered to learn to their fullest potential in an environment in which everyone is known, valued and respected. An environment where there is a commitment to continuous improvement and where our students have a strong foundation in literacy and numeracy, deep content knowledge and are empowered to meet current and future challenges. Our students are enabled to develop social awareness, civic responsibility and personal growth to become informed citizens in a rapidly changing global community. Our school community embraces the school motto, *The School That Makes a Difference*, we continue to celebrate cultural diversity and value our contribution to the broader world.

## School context

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Blacktown Girls High School is an inclusive school with an enrolment of both academically selective students and local comprehensive students totalling 860. The school is located in Sydney's Western Suburbs.

All pathways to university, TAFE and work are encouraged and studied. Our HSC program includes traditional academic subjects along with vocational education, work placement and traineeships that lead to industry accreditation and certification. The school celebrates a vibrant culture where students experience a sense of achievement, opportunity and success across a variety of academic and co-curricular domains, including public speaking, robotics, the creative and performing arts and sport.

The School has 2.6% Aboriginal students and 86% of students from a language background other than English. Equity programs to support students from a Language Background Other Than English and Aboriginal students are also delivered by staff and outside agencies. We have also fostered strong partnerships with universities, businesses and community groups and have established strong industry partnerships.

The school's staffing entitlement in 2020 was 58 teaching staff and 12 non-teaching staff. The school also employs a Business Manager and Technology Support Officer from school funds. The executive staff has limited turn-over with an average tenure of 12 years. 8% of the teaching staff are in the early stages of their career. Staff turnover is very low with less than 2% turnover of staff each year. The school enjoys the support of its culturally and linguistically diverse community.

The majority of the school's equity funding will be used to support initiatives developed in the 2021-2024 Strategic Improvement Plan. Some funds will be used to support other activities not embedded in this plan but reflective of the school and community context and vision. The staff at Blacktown Girls High School is committed to continually improving effective classroom practice with robust professional dialogue and professional learning being the key to ensuring continued upward shifts in student attainment. Professional learning will ensure that student literacy and numeracy levels can be enhanced through improved data collection, analysis and use which underpins our belief in individualised and differentiated learning.

The school will refine and further embed literacy and numeracy development, point in time assessments and critical and creative thinking programs in order to maintain student engagement in Stage 4 and 5. These programs are used to further develop effective classroom practice identified through research to enhance learning outcomes for students. There will also be continued focus on Higher School Certificate performance including staff professional learning around deeper pedagogical content knowledge and data analysis to develop targeted student groups and whole cohort support programs.

The school prepares students to be resilient and take responsibility for their learning, It has high expectations for students and staff and the school consistently achieves outstanding academic results.

# Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

## Purpose

Our purpose is to analyse summative assessment data to identify the learning progress of individual students and student cohorts. The school's curriculum provision and evidence-based teaching practices will provide a high expectations framework, within which all students effectively develop their knowledge, understanding and skills.

## Improvement measures

### Target year: 2022

- Improvement in the percentage of students achieving in Top 2 NAPLAN Bands to be above the lower bound system negotiated target in Reading by 5%
- Improvement in the percentage of students achieving in Top 2 NAPLAN Bands to be above the lower bound system negotiated target in Numeracy by 4%

### Target year: 2023

- Improvement in the percentage of students achieving Expected Growth in Year 9 NAPLAN Reading to be above the lower bound system negotiated target by 5%
- Improvement in the percentage of students achieving Expected Growth in Year 9 NAPLAN Numeracy to be above the lower bound system negotiated target by 5%

### Target year: 2024

- Targeted student cohorts are tracked to meet grade expectations on the NSW Learning Progressions sub-elements *Creating Texts* and *Number Sense and Algebra*.
- Teachers demonstrate explicit use of summative data to identify student learning and validate formative assessment practices.
- SEF assessment of the elements "Curriculum Provision" and "Assessment" indicate improvement from Sustaining and Growing to Excelling.

## Initiatives

### Develop, review and share best practice - Literacy

Improve high expectations by focusing on a school-wide literacy approach, providing explicit learning goals and success criteria.

- Utilise knowledgeable others within the Department of Education to develop literacy specific professional learning informed by research from *What Works Best* and *High Impact Professional Learning Practices (HIPL)*
- Use *Quality Teaching Rounds* to examine and share best practice in NSW Learning Progressions, *Literacy -Reading Comprehension - Inference and Crafting Ideas* utilising the *Quality Teaching Model* as the framework for deep engagement in analysis and review of classroom practice.
- Foster and promote authentic leadership opportunities for aspiring staff leaders and student leadership by utilising research in *What Works Best* and *Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (AITSL)* to connect teachers and leaders to their colleagues in BGHS, in Stage 3 feeder schools and to external experts.
- Teachers routinely review learning with students ensuring students have a clear understanding of how to improve. Student feedback is obtained and informs teaching.

### Develop, review and share best practice - Numeracy

Improve high expectations by focusing on a school-wide numeracy approach, providing explicit learning goals and success criteria.

- Utilise knowledgeable others within the Department of Education to develop numeracy specific professional learning informed by research from *What Works Best* and *High Impact Professional Learning practices*.
- Use *Quality Teaching Rounds* to examine and share best practices in *NSW Learning Progressions*,

## Success criteria for this strategic direction

The school leadership team will structure professional learning to foster collegial collaboration. (SEF- Effective Classroom practice)

The school leadership team will provides specialist input through online and face-to-face professional learning. Collaborative professional learning is enhanced through internal and external expertise. (HIPL)

Teachers use evidence-based materials and teaching resources and will be provided with support for student data analysis and specialist advice across a range of teaching areas. (SEF Data Skills and Use)

Teachers use internal and formative assessment to inform teaching and learning programs.

Teachers are knowledgeable of and use established Literacy and Numeracy frameworks.

Teachers are demonstrating and sharing their expertise within the faculty and the school through *Quality Teaching Rounds*.

Student progress and achievement is greater than students at statistically similar schools in NAPLAN and HSC.

Student progress in internal assessment measures reflects value added in all KLAs.

The Learning Support Team and English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) Team collaborate with all staff and build capacity so that teaching and learning programs show evidence of adjustment to address individual student needs. (EAL/D Learning Progressions)

Parents and students are involved in planning to support learning, and share expected outcomes.

## Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

**Question:** What has been the impact of using school-

# Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

## Initiatives

*Numeracy -Number Sense and Algebra* utilising Quality Teaching Model as the framework for deep engagement in analysis and review of classroom practice

- Foster and promote authentic leadership opportunities for aspiring staff leaders and student leadership by utilising research in *What Works Best* and *Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (AITSL)* to connect teachers and leaders to their colleagues in BGHS, in Stage 3 feeder schools and to external experts.
- Teachers routinely review learning with students ensuring students have a clear understanding of how to improve. Student feedback is obtained and informs teaching.

### Develop, review and share best practice - data analysis

Develop deep understanding of systems and staff capacity to analyse NAPLAN, HSC, Check-In and school assessment data to identify improvement measures and target areas of need.

- Embed the ongoing analysis of internal data sources to evaluate and modify practice in response to formative data collection.
- Whole school adoption of NSW Learning Progressions in Literacy and Numeracy.
- Develop responsive high impact professional learning.
- Teachers clearly understand, develop and apply a full range of assessment strategies in determining teaching directions, monitoring and assessing student progress and achievement, and reflecting on teaching effectiveness. (SEF: Data Skills and Use)

## Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

wide targeted and systematic approaches to Literacy and Numeracy? Do teachers collaborate to evaluate, reflect on and adapt practice? Do students understand and apply feedback? (*Review twice a year*)

**Data:** External student performance measures (NAPLAN, Check-In, HSC), internal student performance measures (*NSW Learning Progressions*) teaching programs, classroom observations, student work samples and QTR records are collected, analysed and shared with teachers and community by relevant teachers, leaders and teams. (*End Semester 1, End Semester 2*)

**Analysis:** HSC, NAPLAN, Check-In and formative data is analysed to measure progress and capture different dimensions of student progress. (*End Semester 2*)

**Implications:** The results from the summative and formative data sets are analysed and compared to each other to provide insight on how student learning has been impacted. (*End Semester 1, End Semester 2*)

# Strategic Direction 2: Connect, Succeed and Thrive

## Purpose

To develop and expand structures and processes that identify, support and monitor the needs, performance and wellbeing of each individual student. To ensure all students can access and participate fully in the school's learning programs and promote the involvement of students in the life of the school.

## Improvement measures

### Target year: 2022

- Uplift the proportion of students attending >90% of the time by 5%.
- Decrease the proportion of students attending <80% of the time by 5%.

### Target year: 2022

- Uplift Student Tell Them From Me (TTFM) Data in the area of *advocacy* at school; expectations of success; sense of belonging by 4%.

### Target year: 2024

- Staff demonstrate confidence in delivering lessons according to the scope and sequence developed from the Wellbeing Framework.
- The school is organised so that all students have regular opportunities to meet with an identified staff member who can provide advice, support and assistance to help students fulfill their potential. (SEF: Learning, Wellbeing)
- Students have positive and respectful relationships with each other, their teachers and the community.
- Teachers are demonstrating and sharing their expertise within the faculty and the school.

## Initiatives

### Collective responsibility for student wellbeing and success

Implement whole school student wellbeing program "CONNECT" to assist students in connecting with themselves, each other, the school and post school pathways.

- Develop individualised approaches to wellbeing, sense of belonging and student learning pathways measured by the School Excellence Framework and based on the *Wellbeing Framework* and the *What Works Best* Framework.
- Develop evidence-based approaches and programs that build cognitive, emotional, physical, social and spiritual wellbeing in students mapped across the school with consideration for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI), English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) and High Potential and Gifted students.
- Develop deep staff understanding of emotional wellbeing through teachers differentiating social and emotional learning.
- Learning and Support staff deliver targeted social and emotional learning to groups of students.

### Whole school and personalised attendance approaches

Student engagement in activities beyond the classroom can play a significant role in their development and identity, as well as leading to a greater sense of belonging and have a positive impact on attendance. Students develop positive connections.

- Develop and embed processes for ATSI Personalised Learning Plans that include strong collaborations between parents, students and the community to inform and support continuity of learning

## Success criteria for this strategic direction

Teachers collaborate to build individual and collective wellbeing through a climate of care and positivity.

Whole of school and personalised attendance approaches are improving attendance rates for all students, including those at risk.

Annotated teaching and learning programs (e.g. social and emotional learning, formative assessment, differentiation strategies) that meet the learning and wellbeing needs of students with additional learning needs, including ATSI, EAL/D and High Potential and Gifted students.

School data demonstrates an increase in student engagement, and advocacy as this promotes positive outcomes for student academic achievement and their wellbeing.

School data demonstrates an increase in student attendance.

Strong communication frameworks exist between the school and government and non-government partners.

## Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

**Questions:** Does the school community demonstrate aspirational expectations of learning progress and achievement for all students, and are they committed to the pursuit of excellence? What has been the impact of CONNECT on student advocacy at school and sense of belonging? Are students more knowledgeable about post school pathways? Have ILPs, and PLPs established and reinforced high expectations for every student. Do parents and the broader community support and enable the aspirations of students? Do staff and students have a strong sense of meaning and purpose?

**Data:** The following data sets will be collected and

### Initiatives

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- for all students at transition points.
- Strengthen collaborative partnerships with students, staff, families, communities and other organisations to support and develop students and school communities.
  - Develop guidelines and process for senior transition and year 6 into 7 orientation programs.
  - Attendance data is regularly analysed and is used to inform planning.
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### Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

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analysed annually: *TTFM survey, Sentral Wellbeing module (learning support sessions), exit pathways, stage 5 to 6 subject electives*. The following data sets will be collected and analysed each term : *Sentral Wellbeing module (attendance)*. The following data sets will be collected and analysed twice a term: *Sentral Wellbeing module (negative and positive incidents)*

**Analysis:** Analysis of data will be embedded to measure the success of initiatives and identify areas for improvement or modification.

**Implications:** Students strive toward and achieve meaningful goals. Teachers are knowledgeable of and using strategies underpinned by the Wellbeing Framework. Parents and the broader school community actively participate in supporting and reinforcing student learning.



# Strategic Direction 3: Collaboration and Practice

## Purpose

To develop a culture where every staff member is engaged in ongoing self assessment, evidence-informed practice and strategic planning.

## Improvement measures

### Target year: 2022

HSC attainment

- Increase the percentage of HSC course results in top two bands to surpass upper bound system negotiated targets.
- Increase the percentage of HSC course results in top three bands to surpass upper bound system negotiated targets.

### Target year: 2024

- Teachers demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding of ALARM.
- Teachers demonstrate expert pedagogical content knowledge of Stage 6, 5 and 4 courses.
- Teachers demonstrate high quality analytical skills of HSC data.
- Teachers demonstrate high quality formative assessment and feedback practice within their domain of course expertise.

## Initiatives

### Quality Collaborative Practice

Enhance effective teaching practice with a continued focus on building teacher expertise of *Pedagogical Content Knowledge* (PCK). PCK is the knowledge that teachers develop over time, and through experience, about how to teach particular content in particular ways in order to enhance student understanding. PCK is a particular expertise with individual idiosyncrasies and important differences that are influenced by various context, content, and experience. (Loughran, Berry & Mulhall, 2012).

- Monitor and reflect on HSC data to inform feedback, identify and monitor improvements and reflect on teaching effectiveness.
- Strengthen collaboration and embed HSC skills into Stage 4 and 5 teaching and learning programs in line with *What Works Best: Collaboration*.
- Progressive review of Stage 6 faculty programs.
- Teachers and school leaders evaluate how adjustments in their practice, following professional learning, have impacted on students.
- Develop systems and professional capacity to undertake faculty reviews and effective implementation of programs in relation to *What Works Best*.

### A Learning and Responding Matrix - ALARM

ALARM is a cognitive scaffold for deconstructing questions, response writing, feedback and reflection. ALARM is a powerful tool that assists students with composing written responses for assessment tasks and exams. This hierarchy uses NESA key verbs and is aligned with Blooms Taxonomy to enable students to produce more sophisticated extended responses in secondary school, the HSC and tertiary studies.

- Investigate ALARM and plan for whole school implementation where appropriate.
- Collaborative plan and design an agile ALARM

## Success criteria for this strategic direction

Teachers engage in professional discussion and collaborate to improve teaching and learning. Utilise negotiated observations of classroom teaching practice, with discussion, to improve professional knowledge and practice.

School data demonstrates that student progress and achievement is greater than students at statistically similar schools on external measures. This is consistent with strong student progress and achievement on internal measures.

Assessments are developed and used regularly to promote consistent and comparable judgement of student learning. Skill gaps and areas for extension are addressed.

Teachers provide explicit, timely formative feedback related to defined success criteria to support improved student learning via the use of pedagogies such as ALARM.

Teachers routinely use evidence of learning, including a range of formative assessments to inform their teaching, adapt their practice and meet learning needs of students.

## Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

**Questions:** Are teachers utilising RAP data to analyse HSC items and adapt teaching and learning programs? What has been the impact of using consistent, explicit in-depth item analysis, on student performance? How many teachers are demonstrating knowledge and use of ALARM? Do teaching programs and artefacts demonstrate high expectations and effective feedback? Are most teachers demonstrating and sharing their HSC expertise within the faculty and school? Do teachers and faculties collaborate to evaluate, reflect on and adapt practice?

**Data:** External student performance measures (annually), internal student performance measures (annually), HSC internal assessment (annually), teaching programs

# Strategic Direction 3: Collaboration and Practice

## Initiatives

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- model that meets the needs of selected courses.
  - Embed the use of ALARM into HSC courses and extend this implementation into Stage 4 & 5.
  - Monitor and evaluate the use of and implementation of ALARM.
  - High-quality collaborative practice focusing on review of ALARM.
  - Ongoing review of Teaching Programs *School Excellence Framework (SEF): Learning and Development*.
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## Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

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(biannually), classroom observations (biannually), student work and assessment samples (annually), artifact analysis (annually during review), TTFM student data (annual), staff surveys (biannually during PDP process).

**Analysis:** Qualitative: Analyse HSC data ascertain impact. Collect and reflect on survey data and Stage 6 teaching programs to quantify use of ALARM. Student and parent survey data reflects staff practice. Faculty reviews utilise artefact analysis and interview analysis to review faculty collaboration, assessment and feedback practices.

**Implications:** Students understand NESAs key verbs and can apply to unseen questions. Teachers use findings from RAP data to amend teaching and learning programs. Teachers collaborate and share findings with colleagues. Parents report collective efficacy and support a team approach to creating life-long learners.