

Strategic Improvement Plan 2022-2026

Wambangalang Environmental Education Centre 5681



School vision and context

School vision statement

We support students, teachers and the wider community in enjoying, understanding and respectfully sustaining human and natural environments. Our innovative programs provide students with opportunities to reflect on and understand their role within healthy ecosystems. We support the development of culturally inclusive young leaders and we provide students with opportunities to develop their literacy, numeracy and technology skills, enhancing and transforming environmental studies. Our centre is a hub through which community groups can engage with students and staff from local schools.

School context

Wambangalang Environmental Education Centre (WEEC) is a Department of Education school located on the outskirts of Dubbo, within the broader natural and cultural landscape of Central Western NSW. The land is under the traditional custodianship of the Wiradjuri people. WEEC is set on 12.5ha and is a small dynamic school, within a travelling stock route reserve consisting of a regenerating endangered ecological community of box gum grassy woodland.

Through school bookings, students in K-12 from both government and non-government schools can access the school's programs which aim to inspire young people to experience and connect with the environment at an appropriate level:

1. We support students to live within, appreciate and enjoy the environment.
2. We help students understand how the environment works.
3. We guide students through the process of making a difference at home, at school, or in the community to help sustain our natural environments.

Our school achieves this through the provision of high quality experiential field work and environmental and sustainability education programs for K-12 school students at excursion locations including our school, Macquarie River, Macquarie Marshes, Turtle Rock or through incursion and outreach programs. The capacity of our teachers and those within our local schools as leaders in environmental education are developed through the provision of high expectations and high quality professional learning programs.

Our community includes our partner school students, parents and staff, our local AECG representatives and local Aboriginal Elders, local community groups and professionals who collaborate on specific initiatives and local citizens, some of whom allow us to utilise their land for fieldwork projects.

Our school has undergone a rigorous situational analysis to identify areas of improvement, which has guided the development of the 2022-2026 Strategic Improvement Plan. Our two high-impact strategic directions focus on lifting our ability to support our educational community, specifically by:

- Enriching curriculum delivery and refining administration processes through technology integration.
- Developing innovative teaching and learning programs, focussing on environmental science and sustainability.
- Embedding strong evaluative practices that allow our staff to responsively support student growth and development.

Wambangalang EEC lies within a network of 25 NSW Department of Education Environmental and Zoo Education Centres (EZECs) who collaborate as leaders in environmental and sustainability education. The network has a shared vision of "Leading Environmental education for a sustainable future". Our Centres work collaboratively to

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provide authentic, curriculum-based learning experiences that enable students to explore, investigate and understand our natural and made environments. Our programs provide opportunities to empower learners to become environmentally responsible citizens.

Strategic Direction 1: Innovative Practice

Purpose

In order to ensure our students authentically engage with their environment and plan for its future, we will develop innovative teaching and learning programs that are rich in opportunities for students to utilise modern technologies.

Improvement measures

Curriculum

Achieve by year: 2026

School self assessment of the element Curriculum indicates improvement from delivering to sustaining and growing.

Technology

Achieve by year: 2026

School self assessment of the theme technology in the element of school resources indicates improvement from delivering to excelling.

Initiatives

Innovative Teaching and Learning Programs

Refine, develop and organise our teaching and learning programs to strengthen our impact on students, their families and their schools. This will include the following key projects:

- Kitchen Garden programs
- Waste Management programs (in collaboration with School Infrastructure NSW and the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA)
- The Water Efficiency program (in collaboration with the Department of Planning and Environment, DPE)

Innovative Technology Integration

Expertly utilise technology to support and enhance administrative processes, and authentic teaching and learning programs through:

- The refinement and development of new administrative processes, including an online booking system and feedback collection that supports school improvement.
- Effective use of technology to enhance and transform teaching and learning programs.
- Effective use of technology to support students with pre and post workshop resources

Success criteria for this strategic direction

- The school identifies expertise within its staff and draws on this to further develop its professional learning community. Teachers are supported to trial innovative future-focused practices.
- Technology that supports learning is available and expertly integrated into lessons by teachers.
- Administrative staff are expert users of available technology and systems.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Evaluation will be based on the following evidence:

- Pre and post workshop surveys/feedback
- Booking records
- Teaching and Learning programs
- Pre and post workshop task completion
- Feedback from staff utilising booking forms and structures

The evaluation plan will include the analysis of booking records and school feedback in staff meetings to guide future planning that supports high-quality educational opportunities for students.

Strategic Direction 2: Evaluative Practice

Purpose

In order to support the continuous cycle of teaching and learning improvement, we will embed rigorous evaluative practices that promote evidence-based decision making.

Improvement measures

Assessment

Achieve by year: 2026

School self assessment of the element assessment indicates improvement from working towards delivering to delivering.

Learning and Development

Achieve by year: 2026

School self assessment of the element learning and development indicates improvement from sustaining and growing to excelling.

Initiatives

Embedding Evaluative Practice

Develop and sustain collaborative processes for the evaluation of administrative and teaching and learning programs including:

- Engaging students in the feedback cycle, including assessment.
- Supporting visiting teachers with "next steps" for student growth.
- Utilising visiting teacher expertise in reviewing procedures, content delivery and resources.
- Developing collaborative relationships with other members of the EZEC network through specific programs and professional learning events.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

- Assessment is used as a tool to support learning across the school. Teachers use reliable assessments to capture information about student learning to support partner school staff.
- Programs are dynamic, showing evidence of revisions based on feedback on teaching practices and consistent and reliable student assessment.
- Teachers access and engage in professional learning that builds skills in the analysis, interpretation and use of student progress and achievement data.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Evaluation will be based on the following evidence:

- Student assessment data
- Teaching and learning programs, including pre and post workshop support materials
- Partner school staff survey results
- Staff meeting minutes

The evaluation plan will include:

- Analysing student assessment data and task completion rates in teaching and learning program evaluation meetings (teaching team) to ensure value is being added.
- Reviewing partner school staff surveys in staff meetings to ensure practice is being refined and improved.

The analysis of assessment data, student engagement and the impact of evaluative processes will support our staff in successfully engaging in the continuous improvement cycle.