

Strategic Improvement Plan 2022-2026

Illawarra Environmental Education Centre 5743



School vision and context

School vision statement

Illawarra EEC leads schools in environmental education through modelling exemplary teaching practice for students and innovative collaborative practices with teachers in our school community. We strive for students to understand human impacts on the environment and to develop a deep connection with the natural world that inspires the custodianship needed to protect it.

Environmental and Zoo Education Centres (EZEC): Leading environmental education for a sustainable future

School context

Illawarra EEC is one of 25 NSW DoE Environmental and Zoo Education Centres (EZECs) in NSW - leaders in environmental and sustainability education.

Our excursion **sites** are located on the Illawarra coastline - amongst marine, estuarine, rainforest and forest environments. The natural beauty and environmental vulnerability of our excursion sites play an integral role in instilling in students a sense of custodianship for the environment which is crucial in order to ensure a sustainable future.

Our **students** are K-12 NSW Public School children from a diverse range of backgrounds and cultures. IEEC values and seeks feedback from all students we interact with, demonstrating our commitment to students and the need for continuous improvement.

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Strategic Direction 1: High performance teaching

Purpose

To ensure students experience best practice teaching which is explicit, authentic and applied, building their knowledge and empowerment towards environmental custodianship.

Improvement measures

Achieve by year: 2026

Self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework in the element of Effective Classroom Practice will improve from Sustaining and Growing to Excelling.

Achieve by year: 2026

Self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework in the element of Educational Leadership will improve from Sustaining and Growing to Excelling.

Achieve by year: 2026

Self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework in the element of Learning and Development will improve from Sustaining and Growing to Excelling.

Initiatives

High performance teaching

Establish a professional learning community amongst IEEC teachers and peers to achieve teaching excellence in an outdoor learning context.

- Embed a high performance culture of continuous improvement that focuses on professional learning, collaborative inquiry, observation and reflection for effective teaching in our context.
- Implementation of evidence-based teaching practice and high impact teaching strategies, including explicit teaching, with a focus on outdoor learning.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

A high expectations culture, with a clear focus on high quality teaching delivery for student success.

An integrated approach to support effective classroom practice, applying evidence based pedagogical strategies, embedded literacy and assessment for learning.

Embedded and explicit systems that facilitate collaboration and feedback to sustain quality teaching practice.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Q - To what extent has the implementation of a culture of high expectations and performance, high quality evidence based teaching strategies and the identification of teacher improvement led to effective strategies and practices being embedded into IEEC's teaching and learning programs?

D - School Excellence Framework and Contributing Factors Tool self-assessment, Professional Development Plans, teaching programs and teaching observations.

A - Analysis will be embedded within the initiatives through progress and implementation monitoring. The IEEC will review the extent to which collaborative inquiry and targeted professional development leads to best practice in evidence based teaching strategies and pedagogies.

I - Practices and progress will be reviewed and refined continually. This will guide and drive ongoing initiative implementation and future school planning to ensure that a supportive and collaborative professional environment where ongoing self-development and feedback is valued.

Strategic Direction 2: Communities of practice

Purpose

To build strong relationships with teachers that collaborate on common goals and projects towards enhanced student learning, engagement and wellbeing.

Improvement measures

Achieve by year: 2026

Self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework in the theme of Community Engagement will improve from Delivering to Excelling..

Achieve by year: 2026

Self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework in the element of Data Skills and Use will improve from Delivering to Sustaining and Growing

Achieve by year: 2026

Self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework in the element of Curriculum will improve from Sustaining and Growing to Excelling.

Initiatives

Environmental outdoor learning communities of practice

Collaborate with **primary school** teachers to support student wellbeing and engagement through outdoor learning.

- Establish and implement a longitudinal action research project using targeted evidence-based teaching and learning programs with authentic application of outdoor learning and environmental themes.
- Identify and develop needs based environmental outdoor learning support offerings, responsive to the trialed and evaluated teaching strategies and needs of teachers and students identified in the action research project.

Curriculum Communities of Practice

Collaborate with **high school** teachers to ensure the continuity of learning beyond the IEEC excursion experience.

- Research and employ effective communication and feedback channels between IEEC and classroom teachers.
- Establish teacher collaboration hubs with a common purpose towards improving student outcomes using IEEC's resources, programs and summative assessment support.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

IEEC employs instructional leadership to promote collaboration and facilitate relational trust within our school communities.

A range of monitored data indicators demonstrate a cultural shift towards valuing, accepting and delivering authentic applications of outdoor learning that promote school based learning, engagement and wellbeing.

Programs are enhanced by learning alliances with other schools that promote learning excellence and responsiveness in meeting the needs of all students.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Q - To what extent have communities of practice for outdoor learning and curriculum led to improved relational trust that provides effective support for school based learning, engagement and wellbeing of students?

D - School Excellence Framework, Contributing Factors Tool self-assessment, Communities of Practice assessment tool, action research project feedback and recommendations, summative assessment comparison, student voice data, uptake of new programs/resources.

A - Analysis will be embedded within the initiatives through progress and implementation monitoring. The IEEC will review the extent to which communities of practice for outdoor learning and curriculum have led to improved leadership and relational trust for IEEC and improved support for learning, engagement and wellbeing for students.

I - Practices and progress will be reviewed and refined continually. This will guide and drive ongoing initiative implementation and future school planning to ensure that the support IEEC provides for schools is the result of strong collaborative relationships with teachers and is responsive to the emerging needs of teachers and students.