


BLACKWATER NORTH STATE SCHOOL

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Principal's foreword

Introduction

At Blackwater North State School we are extremely proud of the achievements we have attained in 2008. Our students live up to the motto of "Friendship and Learning" by developing and encouraging other students to reach their full potential in a safe and supportive environment. This was led by our staff implementing a very progressive and pro-active curriculum, founded on the Essential Learnings. Over the past 12 months significant improvements have been made in all Key Learning areas through timely and continuous reviews of our teaching practices and pedagogy. These practices continue to be inclusive of all levels of student ability and will continue to focus on enhancing the attainment of our students' literacy, numeracy, technological and interpersonal skills. Over the course of the past year several improvements stand out. Some of these are:

Whole day planning meetings assisted teachers to cater for the diverse needs in each class whilst gaining a better understanding of The Essential Learnings, Scope and Sequence and Assessable Elements. These meetings have also assisted teachers to reflect on their pedagogy and make recommendations to further improve the learning environment for all students;

- A strong emphasis was placed upon ensuring the Early Years Curriculum philosophy underpinned the teaching, learning and pedagogy of our early year classrooms and teachers.
- In addition to the enhancements in classroom pedagogy and assessment several key initiatives were implemented. These include:
- Social Justice Referral process was reviewed;
- The Inclusive Education Statement was reviewed and recommendations implemented;
- Educational Support Plans were drafted for any student who is in the care of the State;
- The needs of all students (in particular those with an Education Adjustment Program) formed the foundation of each child's learning programs;
- A proactive approach to the identification and support of students who are at risk of disengaging was established. This approach must be founded upon open and honest communication with all stakeholders.

Future outlook

During 2009 a strong emphasis will be placed on the following aspects of our Strategic Plan:

- Literacy and Numeracy Enrichment;
- Emphasis will be placed upon working with all staff to ensure credible data is used when making

all curriculum decisions;

- Utilise LDC, District Advisers and HOCS for support and modelling of best practice;
- Development of the Early Years Curriculum Philosophy (EYCP) throughout all classes in the P-3 year levels;
- With the inclusion of five new teachers it will be critical that this group meet regularly to re-establish networks and community links;
- An Early Years Curriculum statement will be formally developed and adopted by the end of the 2009 school year;
- Extension of the Middle Phases of Learning;
- With the inclusion of three new teachers it will be critical that all teachers in this phase meet regularly to re-establish networks and community links. In particular, links need to be developed between our school and the Blackwater High School;
- The development of a extensive whole school Intervention Support Strategy (students at risk and students who require extension);
- A great focus will be placed upon ensuring that students who demonstrate particular strengths in any curriculum area are well catered for. To achieve this each year level committee will have one fully trained GEM (Gifted Educational Mentor) assigned to support them. BNSS will have 6 staff members trained in the six GEM modules;
- Intervention support will be provided to teachers and students to help analyse and coordinate support in light of our NAPLAN data.

Our school at a glance

School Profile

Blackwater North State School was originally opened in 1979 with 147 students. Since then the school has enjoyed a steady enrolment growth with 487 students being enrolled on the eighth day of the 2007 school year. Blackwater North State School is a co-educational school catering for the needs of students from Prep (approximately 5 years of age) to Year 7 (approximately 12 years of age). The school's enrolment trend has remained steady for a period of time.

As our local industry is predominantly mining, a large percentage of our school population is fairly mobile. Although the mobility of our community is high, our level of unexplained student absences is very low. Our parent community are hard working and so too are their children.

Blackwater North State School has an on-site Special Education Unit that caters for the needs of a very diverse group of students. Currently the school has 24 students who have been identified as requiring an Education Adjustment Program. These students spend most of their school day with their class / year level and are only withdrawn for more specialist attention.

We are proud of our linkages with our indigenous community. Although Blackwater North State School has an approximate indigenous enrolment of approximately 6%, our administration staff members play major roles in encouraging and celebrating indigenous culture in our community. These students are supported by an indigenous teacher aide and all classroom planning and implementation is aligned to the "Crossing Cultures" modules. We are proud of our linkages with our indigenous community.

Curriculum offerings

Blackwater North State School places a large emphasis on developing each student's interpersonal and leadership skills. These skills are often explicitly taught throughout each curriculum area and also through our outdoor education program, school camps and excursions. In addition to these initiatives students are actively encouraged to participate in the Recess Rescue Program, Rock and Water Program, Social Skills Programs and the Girls / Boys Life Programs. All of these initiatives have assisted students to develop leadership qualities and enhance their self esteem.

Extra curricula activities

- Instrumental Music Program
- Interschool sport (including Central Highlands Representation)
- School Musical
- Tournament of Minds
- Y-Lead (Leadership Project)
- Blackwater Idol / Lip Sync
- Student Council
- Girls Life and Boys Life Programs

How computers are used to assist learning

At Blackwater North State School we believe to be leaders of our future society all students must develop effective Information, Communication and Technological (ICT) skills. These skills are integrated through all of the school's curriculum offerings. All classes access the schools well resourced computer lab each week and also have the option to use ICT in their individual classrooms.

Our school at a glance

In 2007 four interactive whiteboards were installed into classes of teachers that expressed a desire to use this technology. These officers quickly developed their skills and in a very short time became proficient at integrating this type of technology across all areas of the curriculum. In addition it was a fantastic achievement to successfully accredit four teachers with the converted ICT Pedagogical License. It was also pleasing to report that all other classroom teachers achieved their ICT Certificate in 2008.

Social climate

The students who attend Blackwater North State School are very respectful and tolerant. Having regular contact with students with disabilities helps to foster a sense of compassion and respect for individual difference. Our commitment to being inclusive of all students has been reflected by the large percentage (82%) of parents who feel that Blackwater North State School is a safe school.

Senior students contribute each day to the effective management of our students. Each day during the school lunchtime breaks several year 6 and 7 students lead small group games and activities. These games and activities could include dance sessions, skipping competitions, small ball and bean bags activities. This initiative once again outlines our school's commitment to creating a safe and supportive school environment where students who may find this unstructured play time difficult.

Involving parents in their child's education.

All members of our staff strive to foster positive relationships between all parents and most importantly students.

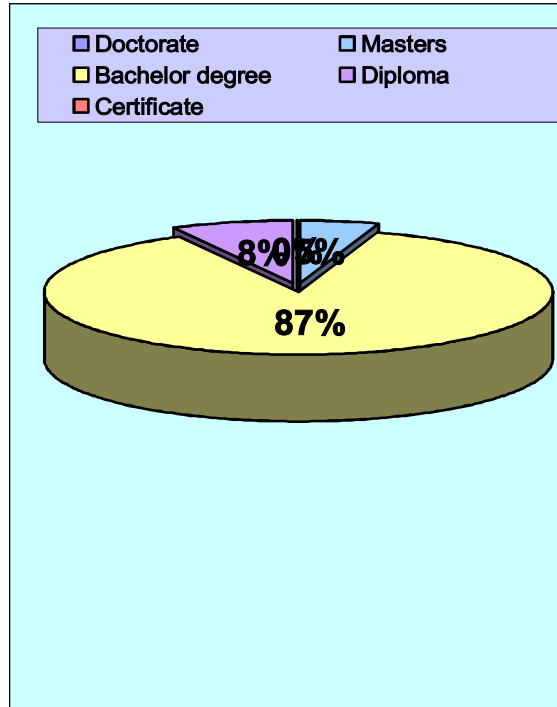
Each term parents are invited to attend a curriculum information afternoon where teachers outline each term's assessment items and how they as parents can help their child to succeed. These sessions have proved extremely valuable and appreciated by all parents who attend. This process also continues to effectively foster better relationships. The success of this initiative was celebrated by in excess of 80% of parents indicating that our school staff members are approachable when you want to talk about their child.

Blackwater North State School is extremely fortunate to have a very proactive and committed Parents' and Citizens' Association. This Association's commitment to our school goes far beyond a fundraising group. This was evident by the large number of parents who gave of their time to actively participate in our school's Triennial School Review. This review process provided our school with a very clear direction into the future.

Our staff profile

Qualifications of all teachers.

Highest level of attainment	Number of classroom teachers and school leaders at the school
Doctorate	0
Masters	2
Bachelor degree	34
Diploma	3
Certificate	0



Expenditure on and teacher participation in professional development.

The total funds expended on teacher professional development in 2008 was \$22,745.63.

The major professional development initiatives are as follows:

- The administration Team was skilled in the use of William Glasser's Choice Theory, Reality Therapy and Lead Management. In addition to the initial professional development the Principal and Deputy Principal completed the Basic Week Practicum.
- All teachers were released from their classes each term to commence planning the next term's curriculum and assessment items. This process was regularly supported by Educational Advisers and staff from the Queensland Studies Authority.
- All staff who had not been trained in THRASS participated in a workshop in semester 1 2008. This significantly assisted Blackwater North State School staff to implement a consistent approach to the teaching of reading and spelling.
- The involvement of the teaching staff in professional development activities during 2008 was 86 %.

Average staff attendance

For permanent and temporary staff and school leaders the staff attendance rate was 96% in 2008.

Proportion of staff retained from the previous school year.

From the end of the 2007 school year, 84 % of staff members were retained by the school for the entire 2008 school year.

School Disciplinary Absences

Student attendance

The average attendance rate as a percentage in 2008 was 91%.

Key outcomes

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results - our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

Domain	Measures	Yr 3	Yr 5	Yr 7
Reading	Average score for the school	344	482	483
	Average score for Queensland	371.1	466.1	528.1
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard. 2008	79%	91%	85%
Writing	Average score for the school	370	466	500
	Average score for Queensland	391.8	468.9	522.7
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard. 2008	85%	95%	74%
Spelling	Average score for the school	342	470	490
	Average score for Queensland	366.7	462.0	528.0
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard. 2008	78%	91%	75%
Grammar and Punctuation	Average score for the school	323	484	487
	Average score for Queensland	370.4	476.6	518.0
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard. 2008	77%	94%	80%
Numeracy	Average score for the school	352	462	505
	Average score for Queensland	367.9	458.2	539.0
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard. 2008	88%	91%	89%

School Disciplinary Absences

Results in the Year 2 Diagnostic Net	
Aspect	Percentage of students not requiring additional support
Reading	68%
Writing	84%
Number	83%

Value added

During 2008 many initiatives were reviewed and modified to suit the needs of our individual learners. In addition several new initiatives were born. All of these initiatives added considerable value to our school culture. Some of these initiatives included:

- The Information Communication Technology (ICT) Program supported students in developing the skills necessary to succeed in our modern day society;
- Further partnerships were forged between our parents and wider community. This significantly improved the way in which our school operates and how we value our staff and students;
- Under the Middle Schooling Reform initiative, all schools within the Blackwater Cluster further enhanced our positive partnerships and assisted students transition into the Blackwater State High School;
- Students developed a sense of “the best ME that I can be,” through participating in The ‘Girl’s Life’ and “Boys Life” Program. The continuation of the year 7 students in their personal development ensured all students transitioned into High School with a great sense of self awareness and self esteem;
- Blackwater North State School continued to implement a well respected Recess Rescue Program. This program helped students during lunch time periods. Staff and students with specific leadership qualities helped co-ordinate activities for students to participate in during their lunch break;
- Staff satisfaction in 2007 was again extremely positive with the vast majority of our school staff identifying satisfaction in all of the seven areas surveyed.

Parent, student and teacher satisfaction with the school

Blackwater North is proud of its achievements. We are equally proud of the way in which we communicate with all of our stakeholders. Parents are very satisfied that their child is getting a good education (79%). Similar to that of the parents, our students believe that they are receiving a quality education (85%). Our students have also appreciated the dedication to their pedagogy our teachers are displaying when implementing their lessons. Approximately 70% of students surveyed indicated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the activities they do in their classrooms.

80% of our parents surveyed in the 2008 School Opinion Survey indicated that they were satisfied that the school is a good school. This is a wonderful achievement for our school. In addition, over 82% of our students who were surveyed indicated that they too were satisfied that Blackwater North State School was a good school.

The 2008 Staff Opinion Survey provided our school with vital information that assisted us to make our school a better place for all. It is extremely pleasing to report that our dedicated team were satisfied with all areas of the school opinion survey. The Staff Morale aspect was particularly pleasing with in excess of 85% of staff members being satisfied or very satisfied that their colleagues “put a lot of energy into their work”.

School Disciplinary Absences

Blackwater North State School is well on track to achieve and exceed Education Queensland's Destination 2010 Targets.

School Disciplinary Absences

July 2009

Many strategies are used by our school to provide appropriate consequences for unacceptable student behaviour. The use of School Disciplinary Absences - suspensions, exclusions and cancellations of enrolment - are consequences used after consideration has been given to all other responses.

The Principal must be reasonably satisfied that grounds exist under the [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006](#) outlined in sections 284, 289 and 316 prior to making the decision to suspend, recommend exclusion or cancel the enrolment of a student.

For further information on suspensions, exclusions and cancellations of enrolment, refer to the policy [SMS-PR-021: Safe, Supportive and Disciplined School Environment](#).

The data are provided in terms of aggregate counts of incidents recorded by the school. The data do not represent the outcomes of any related appeal decisions.

Student Counts	2006	2007	2008	2009
Full-time Enrolment*	374	426	487	490

Disciplinary Absences	Reporting Period			
	2006 Full Year	2007 Full Year	2008 Full Year	2009 Semester 1
Short Suspensions - 1 to 5 days	<5	<5	6	<5
Long Suspensions - 6 to 20 days	0	0	<5	0
Exclusions	0	0	0	0
Cancellations of Enrolment	0	0	0	0

* The enrolment figures are counts of full-time students. 2006 - 2008 enrolment data are sourced from August (Census) Corporate Data Downloads, and 2009 enrolment data are sourced from the February Corporate Data Download.