ACT Government
Education

EXTERNAL REVIEW
REPORT for
LANYON HIGH SCHOOL

2016

This page left intentionally blank.

Contents

Introduction: Overview of the School Review Process

As part of the Territory's school improvement approach, public schools and colleges in the Australian Capital Territory are required to participate in an external review process every five years. This document captures the findings of the panel during this cycle of school review.

In broad terms, the panel sought to determine, through evaluation and validation, the extent to which the school is meeting its agreements, achieving its priorities, and addressing its challenges: in the context of a continuously improving educational environment.

The external review was conducted over three days and involved a wide variety of data gathering approaches including observations, interviews and documentation. This approach provided evidence for the panel to consider against the nine inter-related domains in the National School Improvement Tool that informed our commendations and recommendations.

Section A: School Context

Lanyon High School was established in 1996 and is located in the southern end of the Tuggeranong Valley and is part of the Tuggeranong Network of schools. The school is a member of the Lanyon Cluster of Schools.

In 2014 the school collaboratively developed a new school vision 'A community fostering excellence in learning, inclusivity and active citizenship'. Underpinning this vision are four values: student empowerment; respectful relationships; pride in our community and resilience. The school motto is 'Learning as a community, striving for excellence'.

The school predominantly draws students from within its Priority Enrolment Area (PEA). The school has experienced declining enrolments over the past four years. This has been a trend in the Lanyon Cluster of Schools due to demographic changes in local suburbs with no growth through new housing, and an ageing population profile.

Over the life of the Lanyon High Strategic Plan 2013-2016 (the plan), the school's Index of Community Socio-economic Advantage (ICSEA) score has remained relatively constant (between 984 and 1005). The percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students has also remained relatively constant, as has the number of students with a disability. The percentage of students for whom English is an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) has fallen over the life of the plan from 16.8 percent in 2012 to 3.8 percent in 2016.

The current principal took up the position in 2008. The leadership staffing profile has remained stable throughout the four years of the plan. Because of falling enrolments, staffing numbers have decreased, with some loss in specialist teachers. There are currently one School Leader B and six School Leader C positions, nine administration staff, one Building Services Officer and twenty-four classroom teachers. The teaching profile has also remained stable over the four years.

The school has prioritised the refurbishment of the facilities with extensive upgrades to the canteen area, hospitality and industrial arts areas, as well as improvements to a number of classrooms and staffrooms to provide more flexible and comfortable learning and working spaces.

Section B: School Performance

A: Student learning data

The academic achievements of students at Lanyon High School as measured by the National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) have consistently fallen short of the ACT means. The school results have mirrored the movement patterns of the ACT data in each of the domains although the gap between the school and ACT means has not closed. The panel noted:

- significant growth, above ACT means, in the longitudinal cohorts of 2012 (Y7) and 2014 (Y9) in writing and grammar and punctuation while reflecting negative growth in reading and numeracy

- growth, above ACT means, in the longitudinal cohorts of 2013 (Y7) and 2015 (Y9) in spelling, grammar and punctuation and numeracy while reading and writing reflected negative growth

- performance in NAPLAN across all five areas of testing remained below the ACT mean.

The panel found evidence of a systematic move to assessing based on the achievement standards of the Australian Curriculum. The A to E grades for the common cohort from semester 1 year 7 2013 to semester 2 year 9 2015 reflected a steady improvement in the number of students achieving the standard (C). E grades remained consistent for that period of time.

The panel found evidence of a consistent and systematic approach by all teachers to address the literacy and numeracy demands of each cohort. This was strongly supported by the Executive and Senior Executive to ensure a focused approach. Teachers worked effectively in teams to plan and deliver targeted approaches to addressing the literacy and numeracy needs of their students.

The panel confirmed that action research projects undertaken by all teaching staff were being used to support the development of teaching strategies to address identified literacy and numeracy goals.

B: Perception data

The panel found a consistent trend of improvement in most elements of the three stakeholder satisfaction surveys for the review period.

In the 2015 Parent and Carer School Satisfaction Survey, 11 of the 14 satisfaction survey question responses were well above system means and showed growth over time. This was also reflected in the degree of confidence, with satisfaction rates improving from an overall average of all elements reported from 68 percent in 2013 to 83 percent in 2015. An area where confidence was not as high was related to the way student behaviour was managed. This has been variable over the review period but still remains a focus for attention in the parent and student survey data.

Student satisfaction data has been steadily improving from scores well below system averages in 2013 to closer alignment to system averages in 2015. Students were particularly positive about their teachers. This included high expectations, capacity to motivate them and the usefulness of the feedback provided. All three of these areas were above ACT means. This was also a strong message that was provided to the panel by students in anecdotal conversation and class visits. The management of student behaviour, while showing improvement, remained the key issue of concern and the lowest rated response. During the school visit, the panel consistently heard

from students how much the climate of the school had changed. They were positive and proud and were frustrated with the past folklore. The panel found strong evidence that students had opportunities to engage in and influence improvements in their school. Key improvements achieved included improvements to their learning environments, canteen upgrades, and participation in community projects through their focus on 'giving'.

Staff satisfaction has also continued to grow over the review period. Staff satisfaction has been consistently above system means in all questions. Staff reflected a strong confidence in the school, its expectations, practices and communication. The panel found evidence of systemic capacity building from within the school which was closely aligned to the work of the cluster schools. The team based approach to planning, delivering and evaluating learning was a strength of the school. The effectiveness of this process was evident in improvements in:

- Mental computations data showing growth in numeracy across the review period.

- Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT), while relatively new, are showing positive growth signs

- A significant reduction of suspensions from 189 in 2013 to 51 in 2015.

C: Demographic data

The panel noted the school's reflections upon demographic data over the life of the strategic school plan.

Lanyon High School is impacted by a declining student enrolment, reflected in the declining number of school age students in the region. During the review period the enrolment has declined from 518 in 2012 to 340 in 2016. The diversity of the schools composition has also changed with 16.8 percent of the cohort being L/BOTE in 2013. This has reduced to 3.8 percent in 2016. There were slight increases in numbers of students with a disability of 2 percent.

Lanyon High School attendance rates have remained largely in the 84 – 91 percent range. There is some variability between cohorts and across time with no significant identifiable trends. The strongest cohort trend reflects an attendance pattern of 91 percent for year 7, 2013, and trending to 89 percent as year 10, in 2015.

The school captures and monitors attendance by students through regular roll marking. SMS notifications go out to parents if students are absent from class. Each year level has a teacher responsible for following up of absences and the referral of chronic absenteeism to a member of the student services team.

D: Process data

The school pays attention to locally-driven improvement through a range of processes. The panel was able to gain insight into how the school draws upon its stakeholder groups to inform practices and the range of data sets being used to inform that practice. The following examples were provided to the panel as part of the review process.

- Building teacher capacity through a team based approach focused on analysing data. This included the use of NAPLAN, PAT testing and Mental Computations. Data was used to determine groupings and strategies required to support learning. This included teachers working in teams in flexible learning spaces with combined classes. Scope and sequence of learning with structured learning activities were planned and delivered collaboratively.

-
  - Teacher action research projects to further inform teaching practice and explore more effective ways of learning were shared systematically across the learning teams. A strong focus on literacy and numeracy improvements has resulted in meeting some growth and school targets. Pre and post test data, particularly around the use of Mental Computations was evident over the review period.
  - The development of a school culture which values diversity and reinforces a connectedness to the school and wider community was observed. A diversity of specialty programs such as Trust, Respect, Empathy and Knowledge (TREK), TIER, enrichment and rewards programs, leadership groups and a whole school focus on 'giving' supported this.

The panel noted the variety of sources of data curated by the school in measuring progress against the improvement priorities. From the data, school leaders were able to fine tune and adapt professional learning planning and closely attend to suggested changes gleaned from the data.

Evidence cited

- Demographic data
- NAPLAN data and analysis documentation
- School Climate data – analysis and documentation
- Student academic performance data sets (PAT, Mental Computations)
- Stakeholder perception data (2013-2015)
- School data and the School data tool
- Pre and Post test data on Mental Computations
- Peer observations and feedback

Section C: School Improvement Planning and Implementation

In its School Plan, Lanyon High School identified three priorities for improvement.

These priorities were to:

- build teacher capacity and collaboration
- improve student learning outcomes
- strengthen the positive culture for all members of the school community.

These priorities have remained the same for the duration of the plan.

<u>**Priority Areas**</u>

Priority 1: Build teacher capacity and collaboration

This was supported by:

- a whole school approach to peer mentoring, coaching, action research and lesson observations

- differentiated and targeted professional learning for teachers.

The school set out to build the capacity of its teaching team from within its own ranks. Over the course of the review period there has been a reduction in the turnover of staff and an increase in the confidence of the teaching team. A whole school approach to peer observation and feedback, action research and instructional rounds was implemented. The school utilised a school developed survey to measure teacher confidence in their practice. The targets set for teachers were achieved early on in the validation period and more refined data collections were identified. 90% of teachers reached a 'Confident' level using the school developed survey. The aspirational level of 'Wisdom and Coaching' was achieved by at least 25% of teachers over the planning cycle. The highest growth was in "embedding literacy strategies into my teaching" which experienced growth of 25% to a total of 94% for all teachers, while "implementing formative assessment strategies in class" experienced growth of 32% to 91% of teachers. The use of data to inform teaching practice remained the main area of focus for teachers. While there was small growth in both the Wisdom/Coaching and Confident levels, this is still an area for further development.

Staff identified professional learning priorities as part of their Professional Pathways and this was actioned through Professional Learning Communities both in-house and within the Murrumbidgee Learning Academy. Formative assessment and feedback and literacy and numeracy using data were identified as key strategies for differentiating learning. The panel acknowledges staff have begun the process of building those skills.

The panel commends the school for the collaborative and systematic way in which professional learning is organised and aligned to the operational and learning priorities of the school. This is supported by a well-structured, team and research based approach to meetings.

Priority 2: Improve student learning outcomes

This was supported by:

- implementation of quality pedagogy which addresses high expectations, intellectual quality, student diversity, engagement and agency

- strengthening of assessment for learning, formative assessment and student accountability

- embedding of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum

- strengthening of the nexus between data interpretation, planning, teaching and learning.

Google Apps for Education has been extensively utilised to plan, share and embed curriculum, conduct subject audits and share formative assessment strategies. All staff have presented their work through team or staff meetings. The Learning by Design (LbD) process, utilised extensively in two of the three learning teams to plan teaching units, has improved the range of teaching strategies and supported opportunities for higher levels of differentiation. Encouragement to access extra-curricular activities forms the main strategy for supporting extension. 90 percent of

all students undertook an extension activity in the past year. Subject audits reveal the scope and sequence and learning elements in English are fully documented against the cross-curricular perspectives and general capabilities. Other learning areas are working toward completing these.

Specialist programs such as TIER 2 and TREK have effectively been utilised to differentiate curriculum for identified literacy and numeracy needs. Comprehension Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT) in 2015 reflected improvements of 10 points for the targeted groups. A whole school focus and use of common literacy and numeracy language and strategies such as PEC paragraphing, numeracy nuggets, and Newman's prompts have been extensively used in two of three learning teams. The third team still utilises these strategies but in a less formal manner. Additional time is still required to fully embed and make explicit literacy and numeracy within all learning areas of the curriculum.

The panel noted that the school had met targets set for improving mean scores for reading and mathematics in NAPLAN. Year 9 reading increased by 13, year 9 mathematics increased by 16 and year 7 mathematics increased by 2. The school also set out to improve the number of students achieving four or more A to C grades. The panel noted a steady growth from 68 percent in 2013 to 76 percent in semester 2, 2015. The panel recognises the overall improvements made in NAPLAN, and reinforced the need to continue to build on this accomplishment to further reduce the gap between the school and ACT mean.

The use of NAPLAN data, Mental Computations and the transition from First Steps to PAT assessment in English, mathematics and science has resulted in a more targeted and longitudinal use of data to better track individual performance and support individualised learning. The panel noted the strengthening of the process of data collection and analysis in framing the pedagogy undertaken to support teaching and learning. Further fine tuning should enable further growth in this area, particularly in the area of supporting teachers to use data to inform teaching.

The focus on action research, as part of every teachers professional practice requirements, has resulted in a greater use of data to plan and evaluate learning. Formal documentation of research, interventions and outcomes are shared at both cluster and local levels. Executive staff also collate student feedback along with peer feedback in formally documented teacher observations twice a term. Accelerus software is being used as the primary recording system for student performance data. Professional learning on the use of Accelerus and executive feedback at team meetings supports the up skilling of teachers to use data.

Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) PAT-R Comprehension, PAT-R Vocabulary, PAT Science and PAT Maths have recently been included in the suite of student performance data available to staff. PAT-R Comprehension and PAT Maths data after two terms has already shown mean growth in all four year levels.

Priority 3: Strengthen the positive culture for all members of the school community

This was supported by:

- developing student's agency, improving attendance and celebrating success
- developing parent agency and community links
- developing teacher agency.

The school has made significant inroads in building a positive culture where students feel valued and connected to their community. An investment in a strong student services model with multiple layers of specialised support, recognition and celebration of achievement and a focus on a 'giving' culture has had a positive impact. Data and evidence to support this includes:

- a reduction in student suspensions from 189 in 2013 to 51 in 2015. This significantly surpasses the of 5% or 10% reduction targets set in the annual plans. A reduction of nearly 70% was achieved over the 2013 to 2015 period.

- multiple opportunities for awards such as year assemblies, Principal Breakfasts and the Junior Engagement Tally (JET) points system reinforce and valued positive behaviours. Incentive excursions for qualifying students in year 7 and 8 2015 improved from 53% in 2014 to 80% in 2015.

- all year 9 students undertake a community service project as part of their curriculum. 97% of students successfully completed their project in 2015.

- effective engagement in student leadership and student forums each semester. The year 10 Leadership group also create and build links with the local community, run school assemblies and speak at special commemorative events.

- the TREK program connecting disengaged students with a focus on building literacy and numeracy skills in a socially secure environment. Alternative pathways including vocational programs has resulted in a widely acclaimed model and has supported building a positive school culture. The panel regularly observed and heard from the students how proud they were of the school.

Engagement of parents outside the traditional Parent Teacher Night and Graduation continues to be a challenge. The school continues to offer regular opportunities for parents to gain greater insight into operational changes, events and educational supports.

The school has been very proactive in building partnerships within the Murrumbidgee Learning Academy which consists of school leaders from across the four school networks in the ACT. This has supported professional learning for teachers and transitions for students across the system. Additional partnerships such as Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) literacy project, Uniting Amala aged care facility publication and activity groups, Australian National University (ANU) Music Program, Deakin University 'It's your Move' Project, National and Portrait Galleries for visual literacy and dance groups have enhanced the diversity of programs offered by the school.

Teacher agency has been improved through Professional Responsibility Teams (PRT). This has ensured a high level of engagement in school corporate life. Teachers have also been a driving force in establishing the renewed school values, vision and motto.

The confidence and satisfaction reflected in the system satisfaction survey data continue to show a steady improvement. In the question posed about their children getting a good education at Lanyon High School, parent and carer satisfaction has surpassed the ACT mean for the past two years. Staff satisfaction has improved from 80 percent to 100 percent over the past three years in the same question. Student satisfaction in the comparable question has also shown a steady improvement and now matches the ACT average.

Section D: National Tools Self-Evaluation Results

The National School Improvement Tool (NSIT) was discussed by a number of teams in the school. The executive leadership team, each of the Curriculum Bank teams and the Parents and Citizens Association (P&C) reviewed each of the domains and determined a 'rating' for each. The three Curriculum Bank teams made a determination for their group, whereas the executive and P&C reflected on whole of school progress.

National School Improvement Tool

The combined time reviewers spent in conversations with the principal, leaders, teachers, students, parents and board members was approximately thirty one hours. Another twenty hours was spent on review, moderation, writing and preparation for school leadership team feedback. A combination of individual and small group interviews with staff members, students and parents/carers were held.

The panel noted the following in relation to the **Explicit Improvement Agenda** domain.

- *The school has developed an agenda for improvement and school leaders can describe the improvements they wish to see in student behaviours and outcomes. This agenda is communicated in staff meetings, and on the school website.*

- *The leadership team has analysed school performance data over a number of years. Targets for improvement are clear and accompanied by timelines.*

- *The school leadership team is clearly committed to finding ways to improve on current student outcomes. This is reflected in an eagerness to learn from research evidence, international experience and from other schools that have achieved significant improvements.*

- *There is evidence of a school-wide commitment to every student's success.*

- *The communication of performance data to the school community tends to be sporadic and/or is limited only to information that the school is required to report.*

Comments and Findings

- The school has developed a strategic school plan and subsequent annual action plans. The three identified priorities of: build teacher capacity and collaboration; improve student learning outcomes; and strengthen a positive culture for all members of the school community have remained the focus throughout this current planning cycle.

- Teachers can identify a broad number of strategies for improvement expected in the school.

- Clear targets and timelines accompany these priorities for improvement although these targets are not widely recognised by parents, staff and the wider community.

- The school has analysed NAPLAN data throughout this planning cycle.

- School leaders have visited schools to learn from their practice and engaged in professional learning internationally to source best practice.

- The parent community is not clearly aware of school performance data or the strategic priorities of the school.

Within the **Analysis and Discussion of Data** domain, the panel verified the following.

- *There is evidence that the principal and other school leaders view reliable and timely student data as essential to their effective leadership of the school.*

- *One or more members of staff have been assigned responsibility for analysing the full range of school data, and summarising, displaying and communicating student outcome data for the school. The school has ensured that appropriate software is available and that at least these assigned staff have been trained to undertake data analyses.*

- *Time is set aside (in staff meetings) for the discussion of data and the implications of data for school policies and classroom practices. These discussions occur at whole-school and team levels. The school can illustrate through case studies, meeting minutes and project plans how data have been used to identify priorities, take action and monitor progress.*

- *Information about the school's performance is communicated to the school community, but may lack explanation or analysis. There is limited engagement with parents and families around school data.*

Comments and Findings

- In the 2016 Annual Action Plan the school has prioritised whole of school professional learning for teachers in using data to inform practice and in 2015 focussed professional learning in using data to inform teaching occurred in staff meetings.

- The school leadership team discuss a range of whole-of-school data sets at staff meetings, and in Curriculum Bank teams, teachers are sharing and discussing data sets. Data sets include: NAPLAN, A to E, PAT, Attendance, Mental Computation, satisfaction surveys and MAZE behaviour.

- Through action research projects teachers are collecting and analysing data associated with these projects.

- Data is being collected, by the leadership team, to reflect on progress towards meeting the articulated targets in key strategic planning documents.

With respect to **A Culture that Promotes Learning** domain, the panel noted the following.

- *There is a strong sense of belonging and pride in the school.*

- *A strong collegial culture has been established.*

- *Class 'busy work' is kept to a minimum, and an attempt is made to ensure that all students are engaged in challenging, meaningful learning.*

- *Caring relationships are reflected in the ways in which staff, students and parents interact and in the language they use in both formal and informal settings.*

- *There are agreed guidelines on such matters as greeting visitors, taking messages, and responding to queries promptly and respectfully.*

- *Staff morale is generally high.*

- *Classrooms are generally orderly, although some are more so than others. Non-attendance is an issue for a small minority of students.*

- *The school effectively implements its policies, for example, by ensuring that disruptive behaviour, bullying and harassment are dealt with promptly. The school has clear expectations for how students should behave and interact with one another, and in the main, relationships are caring and respectful. Some staff time is taken up dealing with behaviour problems.*

- *Most parents take an obvious interest in their children's learning. Engagement is primarily through regularly scheduled parent-teacher interviews.*

Comments and Findings

- Students and staff alike articulated a strong sense of connectedness and pride in their school. This has been an identified area of priority in this planning cycle.

- Parents speak highly of the school and the care provided for their children.

- Supporting the social and emotional wellbeing of students has been a high priority. Through year advisers who follow their students from year 7 to 10; an extensive support team; pastoral care programs and processes; and valuing student improvement and performance through targeted awards/rewards, students are nurtured in a caring and supportive learning environment.

- The introduction of a school wide uniform has supported a focus on school connectedness and identity.

- Through the building of a very strong professional learning culture, teachers are working together collegially and learning from and supporting each other. Teacher morale is high and staff turnover is low.

- There has been an emphasis on improving student voice in the school through student forums and the senior leadership structure.

- The school leadership team has prioritised and focussed their attention on improving behaviour in the school and in this planning cycle there is evidence of significant improvement, although challenging behaviour and disengagement in learning is still evident in some classrooms.

- Through the JET program, students are encouraged to participate in a range of school activities and programs beyond the classroom.

- The school executive place a very high priority on the well-being of staff.

The panel noted the following in relation to the **Targeted Use of Resources** domain.

- *The principal and other school leaders have introduced programs and strategies to identify and address the needs of students in the school and are sourcing and applying available resources to meet those needs.*

- *The school has developed processes (e.g. systematic testing and assessment) for identifying student learning needs, although there may not always be good school records of student achievement and progress.*

- *Programs to meet individual learning needs (e.g. students with learning difficulties, students for whom English is a second language, Indigenous students, refugees) are prioritised, where possible, in the school budget.*

- *Physical spaces and technology are used effectively to maximise student learning. Learning spaces are organised for whole group, small group and individual work.*

Comments and Findings

- Through participation in the TREK program, students with high levels of disengagement and/or learning needs are supported in a small group program with a focus on wellbeing, literacy and numeracy.

- Students with learning difficulties are supported in the TIER intervention program with targeted human resources and programs.

- Tutorial support is provided for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who require it. Similarly students, for whom EAL/D, are identified and provided with targeted support.

- There has been a significant investment in improving the facilities of the school including creating flexible learning spaces.

- A range of technology devices have been resourced in the school including Chromebooks and iPads which are readily accessible.

- An increasing focus on the use of diagnostic test data to identify the needs of students, particularly for numeracy and literacy, is evident with school-wide PAT commencing in semester 2 2015.

Within the **An Expert Teaching Team** domain, the panel verified the following.

- *School leaders participate in professional learning activities, learning alongside teachers, and the school supports teachers to continue formal study and celebrates professional success.*

- *There is evidence that the principal and other school leaders see the development of staff into an expert and coherent school-wide teaching team as central to improving outcomes for all students.*

- *There is a documented professional learning plan. Teachers visit each other's classrooms and welcome opportunities to have principals and other school leaders observe and discuss their work with them.*

- *Attention is paid to strengths and weaknesses in the school-wide team, with strategies in place to recruit staff with particular expertise, to train staff to address particular needs, and to support staff who find it difficult to commit to the school's improvement agenda.*

- *The school provides opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles outside the classroom.*

- *The school is implementing a formal process for conducting professional discussions with staff.*

Comments and Findings

- Teachers are participating in a broad range of professional learning experiences including learning that is a whole-of school-focus as well as tailored professional learning to meet individual need.

- Teachers in teams are engaged in action research projects and present these projects to colleagues.

- Teachers reflect on their teaching and planning and provide feedback to the leadership team on their level of confidence in implementing expected school wide practices. Survey data indicates that in the seven identified expected practices, the level of confidence has grown over the planning cycle, with some teachers identifying that they are at a 'Wisdom/Coaching level' and are able to support others.

- Teachers are observing each other and providing written and verbal feedback in response to discussions with students in three key questions.

- Through the Lanyon Cluster of Schools and Murrumbidgee Learning Academy teachers are presenting and/or participating in professional learning.

- The school provides multiple opportunities for staff to take on leadership roles, for example, year advisers and executive positions.

- The school has encouraged and supported teachers to continue their formal study with eight teachers gaining masters qualifications and supporting each other in this tertiary study.

- Recruiting enough teachers with expertise in particular subject areas continues to be a challenge.

- Beginning teachers are well supported in the school through professional learning, mentoring and induction.

In the domain **Systematic Curriculum Delivery**, the panel noted the following.

- *The school places a priority on making the curriculum locally relevant and accessible to all students.*

- *The school's curriculum delivery plan identifies curriculum, teaching and learning priorities and requirements. The curriculum delivery plan reflects a shared vision by the principal, school leadership team, and teachers for the school, and provides a context for delivering the curriculum as detailed in the Australian or other approved curriculum and, where relevant, system curriculum documents.*

- *The school curriculum plan and curriculum delivery (including the time allocated to particular learning) balance requirements to address all learning areas, to give priority to English, mathematics, and to embed the fundamental skills of literacy, numeracy and higher order thinking in all school subjects.*

- *The school leadership team ensures that the enacted curriculum remains a focus for discussion among, and collaboration between, teachers and that the curriculum plan is the reference against which flexible delivery is designed, assessment tasks are developed and student learning is reported. Curriculum delivery is designed to meet the needs of the range of students within each year level as well as those with disabilities and other particular needs.*

Comments and Findings

- Teachers are planning in teams and meet on a regular basis. Through these teams the curriculum is a basis for ongoing discussion and refinement.

- In partnership with the Lanyon Cluster of Schools the school has implemented the Learning by Design (LbD) framework for planning and learning.

- The embedding of literacy and numeracy strategies across the curriculum has been a priority and through the LbD framework there is a strong focus on the embedding of higher order thinking skills. Staff professional learning in quality questioning is supporting teacher capacity.

- Planning documents show evidence of alignment to the requirements of the Australian Curriculum.

- Attention has been paid to embedding the cross-curriculum priorities in planning.

- Attention is also being paid to the alignment of planning, assessment and reporting.

In consideration of the domain **Differentiated Teaching and Learning**, the panel found the following.

- *School leaders explicitly encourage teachers to tailor their teaching to student needs and readiness. Teachers also are encouraged to respond to differences in cultural knowledge and experiences and to cater for individual differences by offering multiple means of representation, engagement and expression.*

- *Reports to parents show progress over time and include suggestions for ways in which parents can support their children's learning.*

- *Some use is made of assessment instruments to identify individual strengths and weaknesses and starting points for teaching.*

- *Some use is made of differentiated teaching. Regular assessments of student learning are undertaken, but these often are summative rather than exploring long-term progress in students' knowledge, skills and understandings over time.*

Comments and Findings

- Personalised learning is a priority area for the school.

- There is evidence of differentiated assessment in some subjects and year levels to meet student needs.

- Through team teaching arrangements, teachers are working together in and exploring ways in which they can better differentiate the learning for groups of students.

- Teachers are being encouraged to use a range of data sets to inform their teaching.

- Teachers have been supported, through professional learning, to use a range of formative assessment strategies to inform their practice.

- In some Curriculum Bank teams, capacity matrices have been developed and are being completed by students to monitor their understanding of key concepts and tasks.

- Through 'subject audits' the senior leadership team has engaged in rich conversations with teachers about how they use data to inform their planning and teaching and differentiate to meet the learning needs of individual students.

- There are differentiated groupings (eg. Advanced classes, TREK, TIER) to support the needs of students.

- In mathematics, year 7 and 8 growth charts using Mental Computation testing are shared with parents to show growth in learning and to identify gaps.

The panel noted the following regarding the domain **Effective Pedagogical Practices**.

- *School leaders are committed to continuous improvement in teaching practices throughout the school and expect team leaders and teachers to identify ways of doing this.*

- *There is a particular focus on improved teaching methods in reading, writing, mathematics, and professional learning activities are focused on building teachers' understandings of highly effective teaching strategies in these areas.*

- *Clarity about what students are expected to learn and be able to do, explicit teaching of skills and content, individualised attention as required, and timely feedback to guide student action are key elements of the school's push for improved teaching and learning.*

Comments and Findings

- School leaders have identified seven school wide practices expected in classrooms. These include some expected teaching strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.

- Common language and strategies in classrooms are expected of teachers in the teaching of literacy and numeracy and these include: PEC, numeracy nuggets, reader strategies and Newman's strategies.

- Through the Google Classroom platform, some teachers are providing opportunities for peer feedback between students and use the technology effectively to also provide timely explicit feedback to students.

- Through an emphasis on the explicit discussion of learning intentions, and the measuring of this in classroom observations, teachers in classrooms are providing clarity about what students are expected to learn each lesson.

- A very wide range of professional learning at staff meetings is focussed on the improvement of teaching strategies.

In the final domain **School-Community Partnerships**, the panel found the following.

- *The school has established one or more partnerships with local businesses and/or community organisations with the express purpose of improving outcomes for students. Partnerships have generally been initiated by the senior leadership team and have their support.*

- *Each partnership brings staff and students of the school together with external partners such as other education or training institutions, local businesses and/or community*

organisations. All partners have a high level of understanding of, and commitment to, the purposes of the partnership and clear objectives have been set, expressed in terms of improved outcomes for students.

- *Attention has been given to communication and to the sharing of experiences within the partnership; however, there may be no formal plan for reviewing the partnership's outcomes and effectiveness.*

- *There is evidence that the school's partnerships are being implemented as intended. However, there may be limited evidence of improved student outcomes as a result of partnership activities – possibly because there has been insufficient time for them to demonstrate an effect.*

Comments and Findings

- The school is an integral partner in the Lanyon Cluster of Schools and the Murrumbidgee Learning Academy. Through this partnership, a number of staff engage in, and some lead, professional learning activities. The cluster works closely together, sharing the same strategic priorities and supporting each other.

- A number of transition activities between the cluster primary schools and Lanyon High School have been established over time and support a seamless transition from year 6 to 7.

- The school has formed key connections with local senior colleges to support students in making the transition to senior college. Opportunities exist for students to participate in apprenticeship opportunities offered by local colleges whilst in their final year at Lanyon High School.

- Through the 'giving' project, students in groups are reaching out to the community in a volunteer capacity.

- The school has established a number of links with local community organisations to support the well-being of students.

- The school has prioritised improving parent agency in the school and is exploring ways to increase the number of parents involved in the school, particularly in formalised partnerships, for example, the school board and P&C.

- A formalised partnership (including a documented agreement) has been established between the school and the YWCA to support improved literacy for targeted students. Tutors from the centre and staff of the school support the learning and share funding costs.

- A close relationship has been built between the school and the United Amala aged care facility, with students visiting residents regularly and in 2013 developing and publishing a book about the residents. Other links with the nursing home have continued in recent years.

- Students with talent in music are provided with the opportunity to attend extension programs through the ANU.

- Lanyon High School and other cluster schools partnered with Deakin University (2013-15) in a research project to improve the health and wellbeing of students, with a particular focus on the establishment of a canteen with healthy choices.

- A formalised partnership (including a documented agreement) has been established between the YWCA, National Gallery of Australia and the National Portrait Gallery to support students in visual literacy, engagement and critical thinking.

National Safe Schools Framework: School Audit Tool

The National Safe Schools Framework Audit Tool (NSSFAT) was discussed at both an executive leadership team and staff meeting. The associated surveys were then completed in teaching teams within the Curriculum Bank groups. Students also completed a survey. The school was rated as 'doing well' in eight out of the nine focus areas affirming the range of strategies that have been implemented in the last planning cycle to 'strengthen the positive culture for all members of the school'. The panel noted that 90 percent of students recorded that they have good relationships with their teachers. Through this reflection tool, the school has recognized that action is required in the area of 'a supportive and connected school culture', in particular, improving parent and carer connectedness to the school. The panel noted that this aligns with the findings of the NSIT and the subsequent recommendation that the school 'continues to find ways to engage parents as partners in their children's education'.

Section E: Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations

Lanyon High School is commended for the following.

1. There is a very strong commitment to a professional learning culture. There was evidence of a systematic and explicit approach to targeted professional learning to build teaching practice. A well-defined process for peer teacher observation and feedback supports this learning.

2. All staff undertake action research projects to further inform their practice and their results are systematically shared across the learning teams.

3. There has been a sustained and systematic approach to improving literacy and numeracy including building teacher capacity to embed these in all key learning areas; through action research projects, formative assessment, common language and strategies in all classrooms, and the use of multiple data sources to target students' needs.

4. There has been a steady and sustained improvement in building a positive culture that promotes high expectations of behaviour and learning. The school has a well-developed model to support both the learning and socio-emotional well-being needs of all students. Staff know student backgrounds and their social and emotional needs very well and there is a strong focus on continuity of relationships with teachers. The celebration of success has supported and reinforced the new school values and a stronger connection to the school. The diversity of success criteria and the focus on achievement and effort has resulted in an increase in sophistication and range of celebrations.

5. The school works collaboratively within the Murrumbidgee Learning Academy to support seamless transition and common learning and pedagogical practices within the Lanyon Cluster of Schools.

6. Targeted programs, flexible resource models and contemporary teaching spaces support the needs of learning.

7. The expanding use Google Apps for Education has provided improved access and delivery to curriculum and collaborative planning for teachers.

Recommendations

The panel recommends Lanyon High School pays attention to the following opportunities for improvement during the next planning cycle.

1. In the next planning cycle consider the development of an explicit improvement agenda that will narrow and sharpen the focus on core learning priorities. Ensure that this agenda is expressed in terms of specific improvements sought in measurable student learning outcomes.

2. Consider which data sets will be pertinent for Lanyon High School and then document a whole of school data collection plan and timetable for the annual collection, communication, analysis and use of individual student performance data. Continue to support teachers to interpret and use this data as a tool to differentiate the learning for students.

3. Develop more formalised coaching and mentoring models to support teachers in continuing to enhance their knowledge of, and skills in, the agreed evidence-based teaching strategies.

4. Continue to build a shared understanding in the school of differentiation and effective differentiated strategies to cater for individual differences. Support teachers in building their capacity to use data to determine starting points for teaching, and to identify and address gaps in learning. Ensure that teachers document their adjustments in their planning.

5. Develop a clearly defined process for the identification of gifted and talented students and ensure that there are targeted programs and strategies implemented to meet their needs. Continue to support teachers in widening their repertoire of practices to extend high achieving students.

6. Continue to build a culture in the school which reflects high expectations of purposeful and quality learning in classroom environments where interruptions are kept to a minimum and students are challenged.

7. Continue to explore ways to engage parents as partners in their children's education.

Section F: Record of School Review Process

The following people were members of the external School Review Panel for Lanyon High School conducted on 10-12 August 2016.

Name:	Christina Rogers	**ACER:**	Lead Reviewer
Name:	George Palavestra	**School:**	Principal, Canberra College

As chair of the Panel I endorse that this is a true and accurate record of the findings from the external School Review process.

Name:	Christina Rogers		
Signature:		**Date:**	7 / 9 / 16

As Principal of Lanyon High School I accept the School Review Report on behalf of the school community.

Name:	Bill Thompson		
Signature:		**Date:**	05 / 09 / 2016