EXTERNAL VALIDATION REPORT 2015

for

DICKSON COLLEGE

Introduction: Overview of the Validation 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 Validation process every four years. This document captures the findings of the panel during this cycle of validation.

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.

External Validation 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

Dickson College is a senior secondary college situated in the inner north of Canberra close to Canberra's civic centre and the Australian National University (ANU). It was established as one of the first year 11 and 12 colleges when the ACT moved to a college system in 1976.

Dickson College's vision and values states that the college is committed to 'providing a supportive, innovative and educationally enriched environment. Together we work to develop informed, caring, creative and confident global citizens.'

The college is a diverse community that provides education for a range of students, both in terms of age and need. Year 11 and 12 students can choose a tertiary or accredited package or Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualification or a combination of these. In addition, the college has a Refugee Bridging Program for refugees (RBP), a unit for year 10 students (DC High) that have had difficulty engaging in high school for various reasons, a secondary introductory English centre (SIEC) for overseas students and a program for students with disabilities (Foundations).

Enrolments have increased over the past four years, from 754 in 2011 to 923 in 2015. Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value has declined steadily since 2009 from 1119 to 1060 in 2014. The college had 282 English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) students in 2014, and presently has 31 refugees, 16 indigenous students and 53 international private students. The college draws most of its student cohort from both Campbell and Lyneham High Schools The significant number of students enrolled from NSW has highlighted to the college the need to develop a clear enrolment procedures to ensure equity of access to ACT students.

The college's leadership team has had significant changes over the past four years. At principal level, the college has had two permanent principals and one long term period (12+ months) of acting principal during this period. In addition, there has been a 50 percent change over of School Leader C (SLC) staff due to retirements, promotions and transfers.

The increase in enrolments has led to an increase in the number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) teaching staff and also a move to increase the number of administrative staff in order to reduce the administrative load of teaching staff. Teaching staff are appropriately qualified and 16 have postgraduate degrees. All teachers meet the professional requirements for teaching in an ACT public school.

During this time of significant leadership changes over the past four years, the management team have been engaged in a new master planning process, using community engagement to consider the impact of the school environment on student learning and well-being.

Section B: School performance

The panel was able to validate the student learning data which shows a number of positive trends.

- The percentage of Year 12 students gaining certification has risen from 80.7% in 2011 to 92% in 2014.

- The number of Year 12 students with Tertiary Entrance Score (TES)/ Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) has risen from 60.7% in 2011 to 67.9% in 2014.

- The median ATAR score has been steady in the range 77.20 - 80.90 over the past four years.

The panel notes that the college collects data on the number of accredited students completing courses. This data shows increasing course completion numbers which correlates with the increase in school enrolment. Further analysis of this data would assist to identify future areas for improvement.

In 2014 the number of students gaining an ATAR above 99.00 rose to eight from two in 2013. There were no students attaining this score in the first two years of the plan. The college has halved the number of V grades awarded to students over the life of the plan.

The data shows an increase in the number of students attaining Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications. The panel noted a significant rise (from 316 in 2013 to 673 in 2014) in students gaining statements of attainment for partial completion of VET certificates and encourages the college to explore this significant increase further.

Staff satisfaction data is collected annually. Across the four years staff satisfaction has been generally higher than that of other colleges in the majority of items in the areas of Student Environment, Leadership and Management and Community Involvement. Across this time period there has been a decline in staff satisfaction within the area of Learning and Teaching, particularly in relation to 'the use of learning technologies is an integral part of learning and teaching' and 'I use results from system testing and system processes to inform my planning'. Within the domain of leadership and management nine of the 14 items were below that of other ACT colleges. This was the case for measures such as, 'I get constructive feedback about my practice', 'I have opportunities to practise leadership' and 'I have opportunities to participate in decision-making'. In 2014 96 percent of staff agree with the statement that students are getting a good education at this college.

Since the introduction of national items for the parent survey in 2013 the data shows a slightly lower satisfaction when compared to other ACT colleges. When compared to other ACT colleges more parents at the college agree 'their child is making good progress at the school', 'the college looks for ways to improve and "their child's learning needs are being met'. Parent satisfaction data highlighted some areas for the college to consider. There has been a decrease in satisfaction with regards to community partnerships being valued and maintained, and the college working with parents to support their child's learning. Parent satisfaction has been maintained with regard to students making good progress and their learning needs being met.

Student satisfaction is higher than other colleges in relation to 'teachers expect them to do their best', 'at this school they have access to equipment such as computers, internet and digital cameras, ' teachers at the school treats students fairly' and' teachers provide them with useful feedback about their work'. Satisfaction has decreased in students' perception of the college celebrating their achievements.

The panel was able to visit the Foundations program and the Refugee Bridging Program and noted the collaborative work in both programs.

The panel noted the positive comments students from all programs made about the college in conversations during the Validation visit. Students commended Student Services for their support, useful information and increased clarity in communication.

Evidence cited and its validation

V grade data - collected by DC

Education and Training Directorate college performance data

BSSS Year 12 Performance data

College VET attainment data

Stakeholder satisfaction data.

Section C: School improvement planning and implementation

Priority Areas

The school community of Dickson College developed the three core values of Excellence, Opportunity and Community and these have formed the springboard for all strategic priorities outlined in school plans since 2010. The priorities for the College Plan (2012 – 15) were:

Strategic Priority 1: Improve student engagement and achievement

Strategic Priority 2: Maximise our community well-being through positive practices within DC and our network.

In the original College Plan and the subsequent Annual Operating Plans (AOPs) of 2012 and 2013, no specific targets were identified and success was based on the achievement of the planned activities. A retrospective approach to identifying targets was introduced late in 2013. Targets are reported in the 2013 Annual School Board Report (ASBR) and 2014 ASBR. Further targets were identified for the 2014 and 2015 AOPs.

Achievements

Strategic Priority 1: Improve student engagement and achievement

The performance measures used by Dickson College to identify improvements for Priority 1 were student stakeholder data, attendance, enrolment, ATAR, rates of year 12 Certification, and VET qualifications. The panel noted the use of the same performance measures and targets to evaluate the effectiveness of different priorities and strategies. The panel noted that future Improvements will be more easily evaluated if performance measures are sustained in the longer term.

The RBP commenced during the previous planning cycle and has enrolled 103 students since 2009. The panel considered this to be a significant program worthy of highlighting throughout the Canberra community. The RBP has built significant partnerships within the community

(including Companion House, Multicultural Youth Services, Migrant and refugee support services, Red Cross and Catholic Care) in order to provide a safe, supporting and restorative environment for refugees who have arrived in Australia often unaccompanied and some of whom are in community detention. The panel noted that this program has been funded in most part by Dickson College - infrastructure, staff (including a social worker) and other resources.

The panel noted that developing the 'hubs' of creative excellence and opportunity was a key strategy for the college over the life of the plan to build student engagement and achievement. The success of the hubs was communicated through a narrative for each and these anecdotal accounts provide a dynamic and at times inspiring story behind the work of the Dickson College community.

The panel agreed that some of the quality work of the 'hubs' identified by the college included the development of special programs, such as the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) and Masterclasses. The panel noted the introduction of new units of study - Indonesian Language and Culture, Engineering Physics, and Engineering IT - and the college facilitated a Writers' Camp, mock trails and a sister school partnership was established as further examples of hubs of excellence and opportunity. Visual and Performing Arts presented Design Gate, a fashion parade and Art Exhibition as a showcase of excellence at Dickson College with local artists selecting a number of student works for commercial production. The panel noted that thirty-three works were selected for College Express Exhibition.

Despite planning, some actions such as Class Act and 'Honour' style program were not evident to the panel and seemed not to have progressed beyond an 'ideas' stage. The panel found the work of the mathematics and science faculties commendable in instituting a number of innovative programs to support student engagement in mathematics, science and engineering, to enhance meaning, application and relevance in these subjects and to engage students from feeder schools with extension activities. Over the life of the plan the panel noted close to a doubling of students in the top five percent ATAR, and an increase in science classes from 15 to 25.

The panel agrees that the significant increases in student enrolments that have occurred over the life of the plan, largely from local feeder high schools, may be attributed to increased collaboration between schools and related community messaging. This was evidenced through professional learning communities between the high schools and the college, initiating programs for students and clear articulation of pathways for students from high school to the college. Students report positively (88 percent in 2014) that 'the school gives them opportunities to do interesting things' (compared with 84 percent in 2013).

Over the life of the plan strategies for collaboration on teaching practice shifted from the Quality Teaching model (QTm) introduced in 2012, to an emerging Communities of Practice (CoP) in 2014. The panel suggests that the evidence for the impact of either strategy on teaching practice is not available, and that a consistent strategy be implemented and evaluated over the life of the next plan.

The panel considers the work over the last two years by the Student Wellbeing team to proactively bring about change to more effectively support student learning and success as significant. This work has been informed by the Response to Intervention model (RTI) and incorporated case-management, a study skills program and a more comprehensive transitions program. Processes for better identifying students for special consideration and special needs were reviewed, as were attendance procedures. The panel also noted that the Pastoral Care

Program was redesigned to better meet the needs of students undertaking a Tertiary Package as well as providing increased opportunities for all students. The panel notes that V grades in any unit have significantly declined from 28 percent in 2011 to nine percent in 2014. The panel recommends these key initiatives be individually and regularly evaluated for their effectiveness in producing desired improvements in student engagement and performance.

Strategic Priority 2: Maximise our community wellbeing through positive practices within DC and our network.

The performance measures used by Dickson College to identify improvements for Strategic Priority 2 are perception data from the school satisfaction survey, internal staff survey results and year 12 completion data.

The panel noted that staff wellbeing was a focus in 2014 with staff variously participating in yoga, tai-chi, mediation and walking groups. Anecdotal evidence indicated a positive impact on health and internal staff survey results indicated 94 percent of staff 'always' or 'mostly' pleased to be at Dickson College.

The significant work of the Student Wellbeing team in bringing about change to support student wellbeing has been reported in Strategic Priority 1. The panel notes that the proportion of students receiving a Year 12 Certificate remains largely unchanged over the life of the plan (92%), and that students reporting in 2014 'I feel safe at school' or 'like being at school' are little changed from 2013 data. It may be that the changes have been too recent for the impact to register in the perception data.

The panel agrees with the college that their has been significant engagement with the wider community over the life of the plan. This is evident in the following:

- Refugee Bridging Program and associated partnerships with community service providers
- a myriad industry and community partnerships for structured workplace learning to support vocational education
- launch of the Master Plan Community consultation including consultation with families from all cluster primary and high schools and local community groups
- sponsorship and support by industry and community groups for the UAV
- several programs with cluster schools with students from Dickson College
- partnership with UC for the ACT Indigenous Success Program (ACTIS).

The panel suggests the college might look towards system survey data and the system Climate Survey to collate longitudinal data in time that will better inform progress across a range of indicators concerning community partnerships with parents and wellbeing of staff and students.

Reflections

At the end of each year the college reflected on its progress in their Board Reports. However, reflection on the overall journey of improvement across the life of the plan was not clearly articulated to the panel. The panel recognised that the Strategic Plan developed in 2011/12 evolved from a vision of the principal at the time. The improvement strategies set for the college were appropriate given the direction of the college and the recommendations from the 2011 Validation Report. The panel agreed that with the change in leadership during the four years a number of key actions evolved depending on the educational leadership approach.

This change in leadership brought new accountability to the school planning process, and targets were retrospectively established to assist in performance analysis. It is important that the college carefully document reflections and lessons learnt over the life of the plan, particularly in relation to any changes that occur in improvement strategies. Where there is a change in direction it is important to document why that change occurred. For example, some initiatives ceased with a departure of key staff, and the QTm evolved into CoP. While the college had valid reasons for changing its focus, the reasons for some of the changes was not clearly documented.

The panel agrees that to further build a culture of accountability, clear alignment of strategy and choosing appropriate performance measures must occur and be sustained over the life of the plan. The systematic collection and interrogation of available evidence from a wide range of sources will assist to guide future improvements.

Evidence cited and its validation

BSSS Data

ETD data

V grade data - collected by DC

System perception survey data

Internal Staff Survey Results

Environmental Narrative

Student Wellbeing Narrative

Mathematics Narrative

Student Leadership Program Narrative

Master Plan Action Research Report

CoPs Maths 2015 S1

CoPs Maths Full Response 2015 S1

Refugee Bridging Program Narrative

Humanities Narrative

English Narrative

Disability Education Narrative and CoPs Theory of Action

Science and IT Narrative.

Section D: National tools self-evaluation results

National School Improvement Tool

In 2015 the college undertook a process of self-evaluation against the National School Improvement Tool (NSIT) via a reflective approach involving staff, student and parents. The self-evaluation process was conducted in different formats with different stakeholder groups. All participants were challenged to identify data and/or evidence to support their findings.

Staff conducted the self-evaluation over three dedicated staff meetings. Individuals shared their assessments with colleagues in workshops that aimed to clarify and validate the judgments made and to identify the data and/or evidence to support the shading for each domain.

Parents/Carers were invited to contribute to the NSIT self-evaluation through participation at an evening Forum or by providing comment in person or by email. Students in the Student Leadership Program were asked to consider the NSIT and provide input to the self-evaluation process. Students discussed a number of domains at their meetings but were unable to provide their feedback on all domains within the time constraints.

The input from all stakeholders was then collated to create a 'heat map' of responses to the NSIT. In many of the domains the various responses showed a level of agreement that could provide an indication of the college's performance against the descriptors. It was also the case that some of the other domains elicited a wide interpretation amongst the stakeholders indicating a varied understanding of the college's current practices or the NSIT.

In validating the college's self-evaluation the panel considered those areas where there was a generally high degree of correlation within the judgements of the stakeholders.

In relation to the **Explicit improvement agenda** domain the panel was able to verify:

- *The school has developed an agenda for improvement.*

- *The school leadership team is clearly committed to finding ways to improve on current student outcomes.*

- *Plans for improvement do not appear to have been widely implemented.*

- *Targets for improvement are not specific, and the communication of performance data to the school community tends to be sporadic.*

Over the course of the plan significant changes within the leadership team resulted in changes in the Key Improvement Strategies with the initial implementation of targets beginning mid-way through the plan. Throughout the plan the commitment of the leadership team has been strong and consistent, however the changes in Key Improvement Strategies and subsequent initiatives have impeded the school-wide breadth of implementation of some of the strategies.

The values of the college underpin the improvement agenda. These values are codified within formal narratives, which in turn guide the activities of faculties and the CoP. The college's use of Theory of Action Narratives to outline the improvement agenda has established a strong improvement agenda for both the faculties and the school.

Within the **Analysis and discussion of data** domain, the panel was able to verify:

- *The principal and other school leaders clearly articulate their belief that reliable data on student outcomes are crucial to the school's improvement agenda.*

- *School data are presented to staff in meetings, but presentations tend to be 'for information' rather than trigger in-depth discussions of teaching practices and school processes.*

- *School leaders pay close attention to data provided to them about the performance of the college (Year 12 results) and identify areas in which the school is performing relatively poorly or well.*

- *Information about the school's performance is communicated to the school community.*

The importance of reliable and measurable data to the college leadership team is evidenced through the setting of explicit targets for the 2013 and 2014 Annual Operation Plan (AOP). Interviews with staff have highlighted a number of instances where gaps have existed in the interrogation of data. The development of a structured data gathering process to enable the RTI

model by the Student Wellbeing team is an example of how these gaps have resulted in improved data gathering and analysis processes within the school. Some of the CoPs collect data and implement action research methodologies to discuss and analyse the data within the school.

With respect to the domain, **A culture that promotes learning**, the panel was able to verify:

- *The school ethos is built around high expectations and a commitment to excellence.*

- *There is an expectation that every student will learn and achieve positive outcomes.*

- *Respectful and caring relationships are reflected in the ways in which staff and students interact.*

- *Non-attendance is an issue for a small minority of students.*

- *Staff morale is generally high.*

Excellence, opportunity and community - the guiding values of the college - are clearly evident. These values have provided a high level of cultural resilience to the school community that has enabled the school to maintain successful programs and directions throughout a context of regular change within the school leadership.

A student led series of initiatives around equity and gender issues is evidence of the respectful and caring relationships and positive interactions that exist within the college. Over the course of the plan staff morale has been generally high, and interviews with staff were consistently positive and revealed highly motivated individuals working at the college.

In relation to the **Targeted use of school resources** domain the panel was able to verify:

- *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.*

- *Programs to meet individual learning needs (eg. refugees, students for whom English is a second language, indigenous students and students with learning difficulties) are prioritised in the school budget.*

- *The school has developed processes for identifying student learning needs in Maths.*

- *The school deploys staff in ways that make best use of their expertise.*

- *School learning spaces tend to be used traditionally with limited flexibility to support different kinds of learners and learning.*

The innovative manner in which the college utilises its resources and makes adjustments for refugee arrivals has a profound impact on the ability of these students to successfully complete senior secondary studies and is a strength of the college. The college implements systematic assessment of student's mathematics skills and uses this information to inform course selection and to respond to the needs of individual learners on entry to year 11.

Over the course of the plan the panel was able to verify an increase in the provision of adjustments for students with identified disabilities, and for students for whom English is a Additional Dialect (EALD). Students reported that processes in place to support requests for special consideration are effective and well accepted amongst the student population. The school implements a flexible allocation of both its human resources and planned use of Learning

Support Assistants (LSAs). An RTI model is being implemented to provide students with the level of support they need to engage in the programs at the college.

Within the **Expert teaching team** domain, the panel was able to verify:

- *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 students.*

- *Teachers visit each other's classrooms and welcome the opportunities to have principals and other school leaders observe and discuss their work with them.*

- *Teachers are open to constructive feedback and provide feedback to colleagues, although there may not be formal mentoring or coaching arrangements in place.*

There are a number of strategies in place to guide the development of an Expert Teaching Team within the college. CoPs are used extensively through the college and have a strategic intent to enable the joint analysis of student work. Through the CoPs the college structures a process for classroom visits enabling teachers to work together and learn from each other. These CoPs apply Theory of Action and Action Research methodologies to inform and guide their activities.

The panel noted that teachers within the college actively participate in Professional Learning Communities with the cluster feeder schools around issues of alignment of curriculum and effectively managing the transition of students.

The panel was able to verify a high level of **Systematic curriculum delivery** across the college. The panel reviewed evidence to indicate that:

- *The school's curriculum delivery plan identifies curriculum, teaching and learning priorities and requirements.*

- *Considerable attention has been given to ensuring 'vertical' alignment of the curriculum so that there is continuity and progression of learning across the years 11 and 12, with teaching in year 12 building on and extending the learning from the previous year.*

- *The curriculum delivery plan is being implemented throughout the school and is shared with parents and the wider community through the course information guide and course handbooks.*

- *Curriculum delivery is designed to meet the needs of the range of students within each year level as well as those with disabilities and particular needs.*

The curriculum programs at the college are clearly documented and aligned to the standards of the Australian Curriculum and the requirements of the Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS). Through the Foundations program, SIEC and RBP there is a systematic approach to making reasonable adjustments to allow students with disabilities and other particular needs fully access and engage with the courses at the college.

In relation to the **Differentiated teaching and learning** domain the panel was able to verify:

- *It is recognised throughout the school that some students require significant adjustments to their learning programs.*

- *Teachers 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.*

- *Some use is made of differentiated pedagogical strategies, but in most classes teachers teach the same curriculum to all students with similar levels of individual support.*

- *Multiple opportunities to learn are provided, including multiple pathways for transition to external studies for students in year 11 - 12.*

The Foundation, RBP and SIEC programs within the college provide a structure to guide the provision of differentiated individual support to identified students. Through these programs students with special needs, or requiring further support, have their needs assessed and catered for so that they can access the curriculum or guided toward appropriate post school employment options. The VET programs at the school provide a solid pathway for students seeking transition to employment.

Through the Hubs of creative excellence and opportunity that exist at the college, students have been able to access a broad range of differentiated learning experiences that add to the college's capacity to cater for all students, particularly highly able students.

Within the **Effective pedagogical practices** domain, the panel was able to verify:

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

- *Within the school there is clarity about what students are expected to learning and be able to do, but a lack of balance in teaching methods with an over reliance on whole-group teaching*

- *Within the school there are professional learning activities that are focused on building teachers' understandings of highly effective teaching strategies (particularly in mathematics).*

Over the course of the plan the college has implemented both cross-faculty and within faculty Professional Learning Teams, many of which have an explicit focus on building teachers understanding of highly effective teaching strategies. Over the life the plan teachers have responded consistently above the all college average to the perception survey statement that the school focuses on improving teaching and learning.

Through the UAV program teaching practices at the college have been recognised as being innovative at a national and international level. Currently there is a focus in many areas to make the learning more relevant to the real world using project based learning, design thinking and authentic models and applications for student learning.

Within the **School - community partnerships** Domain the panel was able to verify:

- *The college has established one or more partnerships with local business and community organisations with the express purpose of improving outcomes for students.*

- *There is evidence that the school's partnerships are being implemented as intended.*

- *No plans exist to systematically review the effectiveness of partnerships.*

The community partnerships with Red Cross, Multicultural Youth Service, Marist Youth and Companion House amongst other organisations have been built to support students in the RBP. These partnerships are strong, purposeful and add clear value to students' education. In addition the panel saw evidence of partnerships with industry that have enabled structured

workplace learning opportunities for students; and partnerships with the UC to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their transition to post school options.

The college also has a number of positive partnerships with the feeder high school to support student transitions and mutually develop teaching strategies in specific curriculum areas.

National Safe Schools Audit Tool

The National Safe Schools Framework Audit Tool was undertaken by the School Leadership

Group. A dedicated meeting was used to work through the audit tool, discussing the questions and identifying data, policies and procedures to support the judgements made against the nine elements.

Strengths identified included:

- Focus on student wellbeing and student ownership
- Early intervention and targeted support
- Partnerships with families and community.

One area for improvement identified by the college staff was in addressing and further refining strategies and processes across the college to maximise student engagement.

Section E: Commendations and recommendations

Commendations

Dickson College is commended for the following.

1. **Excellence, opportunity and community - the guiding values of the college - are clearly evident.** These values have provided a high level of cultural resilience to the school community that has enabled the school to maintain successful programs and directions throughout a context of regular change within the school leadership.

2. **The high level of acceptance and support for the diversity of the school community is commended.** The strength of the Refugee Bridging Program, the expansion of the Disability Education Program and the promotion of a range of subject choices and many learning opportunities to meet the needs of every student are evidence of this acceptance and support for students.

3. **The college has developed respectful and caring relationships and positive interactions among staff and students.** An example is the student led series of initiatives around equity and gender issues. Over the course of the plan staff morale has been generally high, and interviews with staff were consistently positive and revealed highly motivated individuals working at the college.

4. **The effective support for student learning and success, provided by the Student Wellbeing team and others, is significant.** This work has been informed by the Response to Intervention model (RTI) and incorporates case-management, a study skills program and a comprehensive transitions program. Processes for identifying students for special consideration and special needs have been reviewed, as have attendance procedures.

Recommendations

The panel recommends Dickson College pays attention to the following opportunities for improvement during the next planning cycle.

1. **Develop a detailed and explicit college improvement agenda.** In order to guide the ongoing success of the college it is recommended that the college develop a more explicit improvement agenda in partnership with all stakeholders. This agenda should express in specific and measurable terms the improvements sought in student performance and include clear targets with accompanying time-lines. Efforts should be made to ensure that parents, the community and school leaders can describe the improvements they wish to see in student outcomes.

2. **Develop a system of collecting and analysing data that provides greater understanding and visibility of student performance.** Establish a systematic plan for the collection, analysis and use of student achievement data, as well as ongoing professional learning for teachers and school leaders to develop data literacy skills. Data should be used throughout the college as an evidence base to inform student learner profiles, to identify skill gaps and misunderstandings in student learning, to monitor student performance, and the overall effectiveness of school programs.

3. **Develop systematic whole-school processes to identify, understand and implement highly effective evidence-based teaching strategies.** Encourage the culture of continuous professional improvement that includes structured observations, professional reflection, mentoring and coaching arrangements. Leverage this culture and the emerging ICT infrastructure of the college to improve student learning throughout the school. Ensure the use of evidence-based teaching practice in all classrooms so that every student is engaged, challenged and learning successfully.

4. **Develop and promote a systematic model of enabling student leadership and voice.** The college could explore systematic models of enabling student leadership. Identify process through which student leadership skills can be encouraged and developed. Enable opportunities to foster student voice both in terms of teaching and learning programs and in the operations of the college.

Record of Validation Process

The following people were members of the external validation panel for Dickson College conducted on 31 July and 3-4 August 2015.

Name: Belinda Bartlett   School: Alfred Deakin High School

Name: Peter Kent   School: Gordon Primary School

Name: Anne Coutts   School: Canberra Girls Grammar School
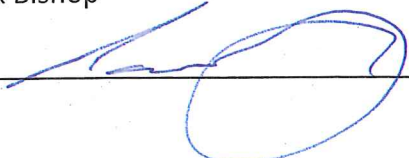
As chair of the panel I endorse that this is a true and accurate record of the findings from the external validation process.

Name: Belinda Bartlett

Signature: _____   Date: _____31/8/2015_____

As principal of **Dickson College** I accept the Validation Report on behalf of the school community.

Name: Mark Bishop

Signature: _____   Date: _____2 . 8 . 15_____

As co-director of Quality Learning Australasia, external lead validators for the conduct of validation process in ACT public schools, I concur that the panel acted within the guidelines set by the ACT Education and Training Directorate.

Name: Michael King

Signature: _____   Date: _____2. 9. '15_____