Annual Action Plan Report 2017

Context:

Calwell High School is committed to students thriving and succeeding in their education. Our students come from a diverse community with the majority of our enrolments coming from within our Priority Placement Area. We have had a long-term commitment as a school to continuous improvement based on evidence. At Calwell, we believe every student is entitled to the highest quality education available in the ACT and our priorities and subsequent actions are always informed by this belief.

In 2017 our school focused on three priorities drawn form the school's 2014-18 Strategic Plan. Our priorities were:

- Improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students
- Improve teaching and learning
- Strengthen and promote a positive school culture

Actions to address these priorities were based on a comprehensive performance review in December 2016 of our school plan using the National School Improvement Tool domains and data drawn from system and school based sources. After comprehensive consultation with our school community, the plan was finalised and enacted this year. We were confident our actions were well informed based on evidence, an understanding of our students' needs and capacity of staff to deliver.

In reviewing our progress this year, we are very proud of our achievements, but acknowledge in some areas, stronger outcomes were achieved than in others. For example, our work on Priority 3 - *strengthen and promote a positive school culture* has been recognised across the system as best practice.

Methodology:

Each year Executive teachers in charge of learning and program areas develop a Faculty Action Plan based on the priorities and actions described in the school's Annual Action Plan. This provides a specific context for actions at the faculty and program level of school operation and significantly enhances the actioning of our plan. In term 4, Executive teachers prepare a report for the Senior Executive on their progress against the priorities of the school's plan.

In term 4, the leadership team holds a 2-day conference to review our progress against the Annual Action Plan and develop our plan for the following year. The National School Improvement Tool informs our review and planning process. Prior to the conference each member of the school's leadership team uses the tool to review each domain from their learning area or program area context. Executive then gather evidence that supports their assessment of our performance 'ranking' for each domain of the tool. This is done in consultation with all staff through faculty and program area discussions.

The conference program focuses on the leadership team sharing their performance assessment against each domain. Executive table their evidence and engage in discussion to reach a consensus view about where we stand as a whole school against each domain. This is rich and informative work, accurately validating our progress and strongly informs the development of our plan for the coming year. Of particular interest is the consistent collective agreement about where we sit against each domain.

This year, we also introduced a mid-year review based on an abbreviated methodology. This has been very useful enabling us to make adjustments and refinements to targets and timelines.

Evaluation of Performance:

Priority 1: To improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students

Targets:

- Students in years 7 and 9 will meet or exceed Directorate literacy and numeracy school targets in NAPLAN.
- Individual student A-E achievement grades will show growth compared to 2016 results.

Progress:

Achieving substantial improvements in literacy and numeracy have continued to challenge us. Compared to the ACT average and Tuggeranong Network, our results continued to be below both data sets. However, we are pleased to report that in response to the interventions in 2016, we saw the gap narrowing closer to the Tuggeranong Network mean.

Throughout 2017 we refined our focus on literacy and numeracy to concentrate more explicitly on literacy, specifically writing. Consistent with previous years, all Faculty Action Plans have incorporated strategies to affect improvements in literacy. Professional learning delivered 'in house' through our weekly professional learning cycle has addressed capacity building of staff to be more effective in their approaches to addressing writing in their teaching. In addition we engaged the services of an external consultant who worked shoulder to shoulder with faculty staff to embed literacy practices in their pedagogy.
This involved supporting faculty Executive to develop literacy strategies within faculty areas:

- **Science/Tech**: End of Term 4 Focus – for implementation in 2018.
- **Arts**: Mid Term 3 to focus on support to further development of strategies.
- **Humanities**: Teacher Coaching Model Term 3/4
- **Maths/PE**: Catch up in mid Term 3 – individual coaching Term 4.

As a result, staff identified they felt more confident in their capacity to address literacy within their classroom practice.

Our Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) also had a focus on literacy as an action research model facilitated by our external consultant, specifically targeting these dimensions as 'problems of practice' in Semester 1. In Semester 2, PLC groups and faculties worked on redeveloping our curriculum. All faculty programs and courses now incorporate literacy strategies.

For our most 'at risk' learners, writing has been prioritised in their Individual Learning Plans (ILPs). Our Learning Support Centre (LSC) teacher worked collaboratively with families in the development of student ILPs and literacy targets were set based on data and parent consultation. As an integrated model, LSC students were provided intensive literacy and numeracy support in their LSC sessions to better equip them with mainstream learning in subject specific learning areas.

Our Executive Teacher Professional Practice (ETPP) provided staff weekly lesson observations and feedback on their practice. This model incorporated literacy as a key element of lesson observations and feedback. Teachers then worked collaboratively with the ETPP to develop strategies to enhance student writing within their subject disciplines.

Term 4 2016 we introduced PAT testing across the school, with a particular focus on the incoming 2017 Year 6 cohort. This provided a numeracy and reading benchmark for all students and informed our specific planning for 2017. As a result, we saw:

- Pedagogical emphasis on building an understanding of the metalanguage commonly used in Mathematics towards improving mathematical literacy components. Explicit teaching of the language of mathematics commenced in 2016 continued to be a feature in 2017.
- C grades or higher grades in Years 7-9 have increased by 13% compared with 2016.
- Y7 and Y9 NAPLAN numeracy results sitting on or just below the Australian mean in almost every category but still below the ACT and Tuggeranong means.

Following the success achieved in 2016, all of the incoming year 7 cohort was benchmarked in literacy and numeracy using the PAT tests as part of their Orientation/Transition program. Each primary school completed transition profiles for each student enrolling at Calwell, which included literacy and numeracy data.

In 2016 our review also identified the need for more explicit work in disciplinary literacy as a focus for 2017. This has been embedded in our Literacy and Numeracy Plan and specific professional learning was delivered to build staff capacity to achieve quality outcomes in writing.

Priority 2: Improve teaching and learning

Targets:

- A-E grades indicate growth in student achievement over 12 months
- Percentage of students meeting or exceeding Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards

Progress:

In 2017 we continued our focus on two dimensions of teaching and learning – pedagogy and curriculum design.
In 2013 we commenced our pedagogical journey to improve classroom practice and student engagement through the introduction of differentiated learning and formative assessment. Each year we have built our staff capacity explicitly to embed this across all learning areas. Differentiation enables all teachers to deliver learning that meets the needs of all students and is identified as a key domain in the National School Improvement Tool.

Continuing from 2016 we have had a strong and well-focused professional learning calendar that addresses various areas of teaching and learning and is explicitly aligned to the priorities in our Annual Action Plan and Strategic Plan. Through the ongoing leadership of our Executive Teacher Professional Practice and our Professional Learning Communities, as well as targeted professional learning in this area, we strengthened this approach across the school through targeted lesson observations and incorporating differentiation strategies into our work redeveloping our curriculum.

The success of this approach is also confirmed by the continued upward trend over the last 4 years in our A-E grades with significantly more students achieving C grades or higher than previous years. We have tracked this growth using Accelerus reporting data. In 2016, our review process identified this trend clearly but we also found a slight trend towards student grades 'plateauing' at C and B grade levels. This continued to challenge us in 2017. Our evaluations in 2016 identified a degree of staff conservatism about applying the full A-E grade range when assessing achievement against the Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards. As a result in 2017, in partnership with the Directorate's Curriculum Support Section, all staff participated in five workshops on the Australian Curriculum. A particular focus was on how to make a valid, balanced judgement on grades – particularly in discerning the difference in criteria in determining a B or A grade. This was an empowering workshop and subsequent 'shoulder to shoulder' support from the Curriculum Support team in faculties delivered increased understanding and confidence in how to determine a B and A grade. While we did not see a dramatic

increase in the percentage of B and A grades awarded at the end of 2017, staff reported they felt much more confident in their capacity to make these grade judgements.

Following the success of the Australian Curriculum workshops, we formed an ongoing partnership with the Curriculum Support Section to work with our staff to build capacity in curriculum design and delivery with the aim of fully rewriting our curriculum to ensure it is aligned to the Australian Curriculum and contextualised to the needs of our students. To date the team has been working explicitly with the HaSS and Science Faculties. In 2018 this will continue to other faculties.

Faculties have been highly engaged in redeveloping curriculum to ensure the content of the Australian Curriculum is being delivered in a way that better meets the needs of our students. We now have an agreed, consistent curriculum model for all learning areas which ensures all programs have a learning rationale, curriculum overview, clear assessment statements and a thoroughly scoped and sequenced program of learning for every course or subject.

Not only can we quantify our progress in this priority area as demonstrated by increased grade achievement and improvement in the number of students meeting the achievement standards, we also have strong evidence across learning areas of how these actions have led to these improvements.

Providing feedback on student achievement and how to affect further improvement in learning has also been enhanced. Like many secondary schools, Progress Reports on student achievement were issued in terms 1 and 3. In 2017, we took the decision to increase this reporting by 100% and issue progress reports every term. We have also increased parent feedback opportunities by 100%, holding parent/teacher interviews every term. While this is an increase in our accountability and workload, staff are fully committed to this change because it enables staff to more regularly review student achievement as well as build stronger, more frequent communication with families about how we are supporting their child's learning. Feedback from parents and carers has been very positive.

Priority 3: Strengthen and promote a positive school culture

Targets:

- Increased student engagement as indicated by 80% student attendance
- Student behaviour incidents decreased by 50% by December
- Suspension rates decreased by 50% by December
- 100% of students receiving merits throughout the year

Progress:

Clearly we set ourselves ambitious targets in this area in 2017. Our goal in 2016 of *20% of students receiving Values Champion awards* was superseded this year with a new target of *100% of students receiving merits throughout the year.* This target more reliably reflects the refinements made to our merit award system to allow for more frequent recognition of positive behaviour as a method of changing behaviour. This work was done as part of our implementation of a PB@C framework. Since this refinement at the end of Term 1, as a school community we have given 2731 merit awards to 296 individual students (84% of students). We are particularly pleased that over one third of our current year 7 cohort has reached this milestone.

The move this year to recording behaviour data in our *behaviour app* has provided a more consistent indication of the frequency of behaviour issues across the school. These are classified as minor and major incidents. As a general observation, compared with the same time in 2016 we have a significantly more settled school with significantly less behaviour referrals and suspensions.

Since September 2015 all staff have been working consistently on the development of our Positive Behaviours @ Calwell (PB@C) framework. We launched the framework with a whole day school community event in the first week of term 4 of 2016. The framework focuses explicitly on:

- Teaching students the behaviours we want to see
- Engaging the whole school community in identifying these behaviours
- Promoting them with visual signage throughout the school
- Producing videos that reinforce the positive behaviours
- Writing and delivering lessons that teach these behaviours and
- Frequently rewarding students who demonstrate these positive behaviours.

In 2017 we have continued to embed these elements across the school. As a result, we are pleased to report that student attendance has exceeded our 80% target with an average attendance rate of 85%. In addition, since the implementation of the PB@C framework, we have achieved a downward trend in suspensions. The table below highlights this trend and our analysis of 2018 data to date indicates this trend is continuing.

Suspension data: The following table provides an overview of suspensions from 2014 -2017. Data is presented to show:

- The total number of suspensions
- The total number of students as a percentage of the school enrolment
- Percentage of students who received 3 or more suspensions as a percentage of the school enrolment and
- The percentage of suspensions these students represent of the total number of suspensions.

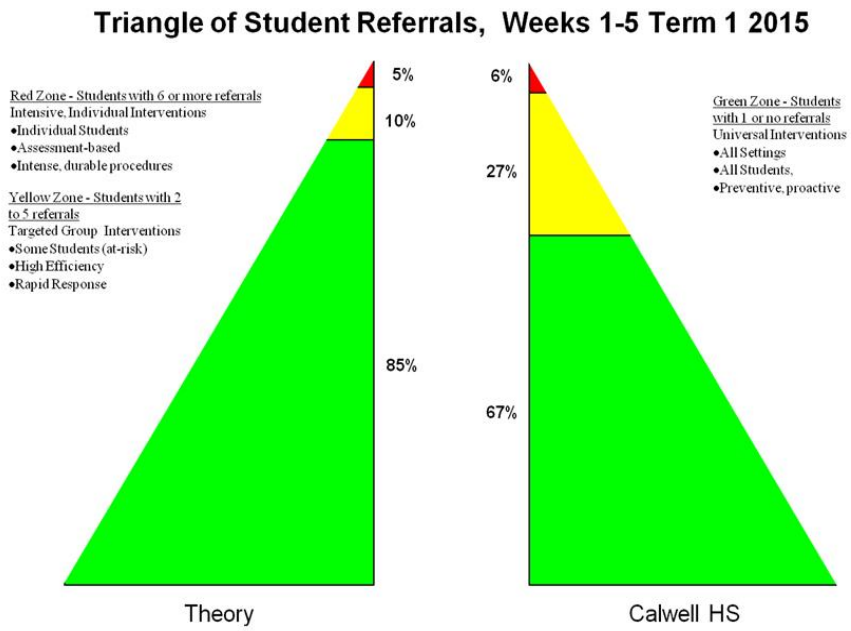
Year and	Total suspensions	Total students and as % of school cohort	Total students and as % who received	Total students with 3 or more suspensions as %

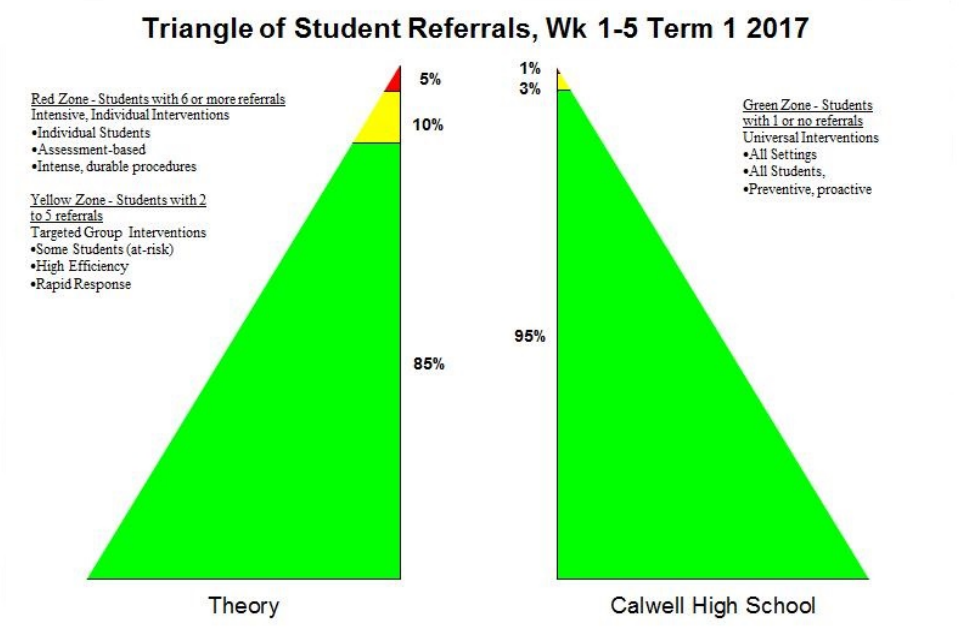
cohort size			3 or more suspensions	of overall suspensions
2014 (372)	60	32 students (8%)	7 students (1.4%)	48%
2015 (347)	128	53 students (15%)	17 students (4.8%)	66%
2016 (340)	77	35 students (10%)	11 students (3.2%)	64%
2017 (368)	62	33 students (9%)	7 students (1.9%)	47%

The implementation of the framework has directly impacted on the improved culture of the school.

Since the introduction of PBL, we have seen a significant reduction of behaviour issues across the school. The table below highlights this improvement showing a dramatic change over two years in the percentage of major behaviour issues occurring in the school:

- In 2015 we were over-represented in the Tier 3 (red section – students with more than 6 referrals) at 6% compared to the theory model of 5%.
- Our Tier 2 (yellow zone – students with 2-5 referrals) was also significantly greater than the theory model at 27%, compared to 10%.
- Since the implementation of PBL, this has improved dramatically for the same period with Tier 3 at 1%, Tier 2 at 3% and 95% of students in Tier 1.





Throughout the improvement cycle, whole school data has been monitored and analysed by the leadership team. This information has been shared with staff, who have been encouraged to use data to inform their planning and programming and meeting student needs. With the introduction of PBL in 2015, we improved our ability to collect and monitor student behaviour data. In late 2017 we implemented a whole school tracking system for positive acknowledgments and have moved into the second tier of the framework that explicitly focuses on classroom practice.