

The Busy School Ltd

School Improvement Processes

Overview and context

The BUSY School Ltd (TBS) was founded in 2019 as an independent Queensland Special Assistance School to support the social, educational and employment outcomes of young people with a specific focus on those students who are at risk and disengaged from the traditional education model. TBS represent an alternative to mainstream schooling and will often be a last chance for students to reengage in secondary education. Offering senior secondary schooling, TBS has a unique program combining academic studies, vocational education and training (VET) and personal development.

Aligned to the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration, TBS aim to provide for a diverse student population which allows individuals to develop confidence and realise their full potential. Students at TBS have been previously disengaged from schooling due to a number of reasons often arising from disadvantaged backgrounds, but many have suffered from trauma.

TBS provides a supportive and safe learning environment for young people by providing them with holistic support that increases their sense of well-being, self-esteem, self-worth, resilience, belonging, academic achievement and an employment pathway. TBS's culture of building trusting and respectful relationships with students allows them to flourish and fulfil their potential surrounded by all the support they need.

To guide the future direction of TBS, the following School Improvement Processes are undertaken:

Strategic Planning

Overseen by TBS Board of Directors (Governing Body), TBS undertake a strategic planning process, in consultation with employees and the school community, which considers the future direction and priorities of the school. TBS Board of Directors have approved and published a Strategic Plan (2021-2025). Although this represents a five-year plan, it will be reviewed annually in conjunction with annual reporting processes (see below). Progress towards the goals outlined within the Strategic Plan will be measured on a quarterly basis and reported at Board meetings as part of the CEO's report (encompassing Principal's report).

The Board will ensure the careful oversight of all aspects of the school's development through its committee structure, comprising of the:

- Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee,
- Governance, Compliance and Strategy Committee,
- Community, Engagement and Partnerships Committee, and
- Education and wellbeing Programs Committee.

These committees will provide opportunities for more detailed review and input from an appropriate selection of specialist stakeholders and independent advisors. Committee meetings are held quarterly and will provide endorsement to the Board for relevant areas relating to the strategy of the school.

Operational Planning

The Strategic Plan will also be supported by an annual Operational Plan for the school which will be reviewed and refined annually as necessary, taking consideration of the continuing direction of the school, specific goals, priorities, and previous performance. The Operational Plan outlines the actions/activities that will be undertaken to achieve strategic priorities. The Operational Plan informs the setting of the school's annual budget, as well as the development of specific business plans for any major projects.

In addition, The BUSY School has a defined infrastructure plan which provides a roadmap of major capital projects involving the campus. This plan also encapsulates a maintenance plan for the property.

Supporting Schools Improvement

In 2021 The BUSY Schools in Cairns and Shailer Park joined Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) Supporting Schools Improvement-New Schools (SSI) Program. It is the intention that The BUSY School Southport will also join this program in 2022.

The SSI program supports newly opened schools to assess current position, ensure a comprehensive establishment plan is enacted, to meet compliance expectations and to engage a cycle of improvement. ISQ support this by empowering schools to undertake self-reflection and establish priorities through a tailored one-on-one support for schools to conduct self-assessments and implement action plans. The program four critical areas of focus are; Leadership and Management, Teaching and Learning, Community and Quality Curriculum. SSI is a

three-year program of support for schools who aim for the improvement of school performance, student learning and teacher practice through a School Improvement Review and the Supporting School Improvement initiative.

The review helps establish what each school is doing well, provide recommendations to enhance student achievements, and encourage quality teaching and learning practices. Participation in the Supporting School Improvement (SSI) initiative will assist The BUSY School Southport team to identify priorities for change and implement clear action plans for improvement using evidence-based strategies.

Cyclical Reviews

The Board manages the school's development and conducts a review process to monitor progress on the strategic and operational improvement plans and the performance of the school in general, as described above. Aided by an internal compliance team (part of TBS corporate services), internal but arm's length audits are conducted regularly in areas relating to the school's compliance with the accreditation criterion. This process is coordinated with the six-month new school assessment or five-year compliance review by the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board. The Board will monitor continued compliance with the accreditation criteria, any changes to relevant legislation, and regulatory standards through its regular cycle of meetings.

Monitoring progress

The Board will meet regularly, with a total of six meetings per year. These meetings will monitor progress against governance, educational, financial, risk, ethos and facilities outcomes set out in the strategic and operational improvement plans and modify directions and activities accordingly.

School leadership (CEO, Principal, Head of Curriculum and Assessment) will meet monthly and the school staff will meet regularly to ensure that operations are under constant monitoring and review.

Comprehensive and confidential annual surveys will be conducted using print and electronic media to gauge the opinion of a range of clients and stakeholders on the direction of the school's development and on progress against declared goals. Groups represented in these surveys will include students and their parents, teachers and other staff and key external stakeholders. Focus groups will be established as necessary to form a deeper understanding of the school community's inputs and observations.

Reporting and engagement

TBS Southport will produce a range of reports on the progress of the school which are also incorporated in the CEO report to the Board, reviewed at each Board meeting. In particular, the CEO provides a dashboard report to the Board which includes information on key school metrics, including:

- enrolments
- student demographics
- student attendance, including disciplinary absences (suspensions, cancellations)
- community engagement
- Vocational Education and Training enrolments
- student employment pathways
- school staffing profile

Additionally, TBS Southport will publish an annual report charting the progress against the goals and key progress markers set out in the strategic and operational plans. These will be made available on the school's website and through media distributed to key stakeholders.

Parents and the wider community will be apprised of the school's activities, events, achievements and celebrations through weekly newsletters, the website, the annual calendar and community directory, other media publications, direct SMS, social media and email alerts and through articles in local media.

Parents, business entities and community organisations will have opportunities for engagement with the school through a Community Forum and a range of information evenings, events and interviews. Close links will be maintained with other welfare organisations that serve similar communities to TBS.

TBS has also established a Community Engagement Plan which identifies key stakeholders of the school who we believe will be important contributors to its success. It outlines a plan on how we aim to engage with these stakeholders, how often and who is responsible.

TBS Community Engagement Plan also captures how frequently we're wanting to attend events as representatives of the Busy Schools and also how frequently we plan to host our own events to engage our stakeholders.