

Strategic Improvement Plan 2021-2024

Cowra High School 8148



School vision and context

School vision statement

Through quality teaching, Cowra High School seeks to prepare students to fulfil their potential and pursue excellence.

We value culture and positive self-worth to empower students to lead purposeful lives, contributing to local and global communities to success in a dynamic world.

We provide a holistic and inclusive education for all learners, fostering resilience and creating curious, confident, respectful and responsible life-long learners.

School context

Cowra High Schools has a current enrolment of 560 students, including 19% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. It is a comprehensive school located on the ancestral lands of the Wiradjuri people in the Central West of NSW . As a school, we recognise the unique ongoing spiritual connection of the Wiradjuri people to this land and their rich contribution to this region.

The school has a Support Unit of 4 classes, supporting students with mild and moderate intellectual difficulties, autism and challenging behaviours. The school prides itself on the scope of curriculum delivered to students.

The school embodies high expectations of respect and responsibility through encouraging each individual to reach their potential. Students pursue excellence through engagement in academic, sporting, cultural and creative and performing arts. Broad subject choice ensures students are able to reach their potential and achieve individual success. Staff encourage students to be confident and resilient by developing skills to become contributing members of society as life-long learners and critical and creative thinkers.

What makes us unique and proud is our schools rural location and community composition. We embrace a variety of cultures and celebrate this in all we do. We foster this inclusivity through our ties to our national history, Seikei and Camden exchange program and participation in community events. In addition, the sharing of culture of our First Australians is embedded in everyday life at Cowra High School. This ensures every student is known, valued and cared for.

High level areas for improvement and further development have been established in an authentic situational analysis in consultation with Cowra High School students, Student Leadership Council, Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Aboriginal families, Parents and Citizens, Parent Focus Groups, teaching and non teaching staff.

Through the completion of the situational analysis, the school identified the following areas for development:

- internal and external data highlights a need for further explicit and targeted teaching to extend and challenge all learners to meet their academic potential
- consistency in teaching practice, assessment and in providing feedback to students will ensure high quality teaching and assessment
- high expectations and increased personalised and differentiated learning to ensure students are engaged, motivated and connected to learning.

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Purpose

Analysis of internal and external data highlights a need for explicit and targeted teaching to extend and challenge all learners to meet their academic potential.

Improvement measures

Target year: 2022

The percentage of students achieving in the top 2 NAPLAN bands in reading will increase by 6%.

Target year: 2022

The percentage of students achieving in the top 2 NAPLAN bands in numeracy will increase by 7%.

Target year: 2022

The percentage of Aboriginal students in the top 3 NAPLAN bands in reading will increase by 6%.

Target year: 2022

The percentage of Aboriginal students in the top 3 NAPLAN bands in numeracy will increase by 8%.

Target year: 2023

The percentage of students achieving at or above expected growth in NAPLAN reading will increase by 8%.

Target year: 2023

The percentage of students achieving at or above expected growth in NAPLAN numeracy will increase by 8%.

Initiatives

A focus on the explicit teaching of language to drive reading and writing

Cowra High School will create a supportive learning environment and drive sustainable change in teaching and learning over time through:

- increasing the capability of staff to use data to monitor and report on student attainment and growth in reading and writing
- increasing the capability of staff to evaluate and refine teaching to improve reading and writing skills
- using data to develop purposeful learning tasks to challenge all students to extend their skills in reading and writing
- ongoing collaboration with partner primary schools to deliver consistent teaching and learning approaches in the teaching of literacy.

A focus on the explicit teaching of mathematical skills to connect learning to real world situations

Cowra High School will create a supportive learning environment to connect mathematical content, skills and concepts to real world situations through:

- increasing the capability of staff through high impact professional learning to ensure a shared understanding of mathematics and numeracy
- increasing the capability of staff to use data to monitor and report on student attainment and growth in mathematics and in numeracy
- increasing the capability of staff to evaluate and refine teaching strategies to extend student skills in problem solving, analysing, reasoning, questioning and interpreting
- ongoing collaboration with partner primary schools to deliver consistent teaching and learning approaches in mathematics.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

There are consistent and effective school wide processes to accurately monitor, plan and report on student learning.

Teachers demonstrate a high level of skill in planning and delivering explicit teaching methods to improve student performance.

Teaching and learning programs are dynamic and show evidence of revision based on reflective teacher practice and student achievement.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

In evaluating the success of this strategic direction the focus will be on the following questions:

- what did we do?
- how well did we do it?
- what outcomes did we achieve?

Cowra High School will use data from the following sources to assist in evaluating the success of this strategic direction:

- internal student performance data
- external student performance data
- differentiated teaching and learning programs
- annotated student work samples
- pre and post assessments
- lesson observations and peer observations
- learning walks
- staff evaluations from professional learning.

Future implications from the analysis will be integrated into next steps in the school plan.

Strategic Direction 2: Quality teacher practice through instructional leadership

Purpose

An increased focus on high quality teaching, assessment and feedback to ensure students progress in learning.

Improvement measures

Target year: 2022

The percentage of students in the top 2 bands of the HSC will increase by 5%.

Target year: 2022

The percentage of students in the top 3 bands of the HSC will increase by 6%.

Target year: 2023

Increase the proportion of Aboriginal students obtaining the HSC, whilst maintaining cultural identity by 24.5%.

Target year: 2024

The percentage of students achieving at or above expected growth in Year 10 VALID (Science) will increase by 8%.

Target year: 2024

The percentage of students achieving the HSC Minimum Standard by the end of Year 10 will increase by 8% across all three domains - reading, numeracy and writing.

Initiatives

A focus on high quality assessment and feedback to increase student performance

Cowra High School is committed to building staff knowledge, skills and understanding of quality assessment and feedback to improve student performance through:

- increasing staff capability in using data to inform teaching and learning activities
- reviewing and refining assessment processes
- ongoing professional learning in assessment and feedback
- a focus on consistent judgement of student work

Instructional leadership to improve teaching and learning

Cowra High School is committed to supporting leaders to refine their skills in planning, coordinating, delivering and evaluating teaching and learning through:

- support for Head Teachers and aspiring leaders to develop skills in areas of whole school improvement
- the development of instructional rounds and peer coaching practices to support continuity in learning
- the building of skills in evaluative practice to drive improvements in teaching and learning
- ongoing collaboration with partner primary schools through the Cowra Network Middle School Initiative

Success criteria for this strategic direction

Teachers demonstrate expertise in formative and summative assessment practices.

Student progress and achievement data is used by all staff in planning and teaching.

Students demonstrate their understanding of how to improve work based on effective feedback.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

In evaluating the success of this strategic direction the focus will be on the following questions:

- what did we do?
- how well did we do it?
- what outcomes did we achieve?

Cowra High School will use data from the following sources to assist in evaluating the success of this strategic direction:

- internal student performance data
- external student performance data
- differentiated teaching and learning programs
- annotated student work samples
- pre and post assessments
- a range of formative assessments including exit slips
- assessment schedules and tasks
- marking rubrics / criteria
- lesson observations including peer observations
- learning walks and instructional rounds
- staff evaluations from professional learning

Future implications from the analysis will be integrated into next steps in the school plan.

Strategic Direction 3: A school culture focused on high expectations for learning

Purpose

To increase personalised and differentiated learning to ensure students are engaged, motivated and connected to learning.

Improvement measures

Target year: 2022

The percentage of students reporting positive wellbeing (Tell Them From Me) will increase by 5%.

Target year: 2022

The percentage of Aboriginal students reporting positive wellbeing (Tell Them From Me) will increase by 5%.

Target year: 2022

The percentage of students attending school 90% or more will increase by 9%.

Target year: 2022

The percentage of ATSI students attending school 90% or more of the time will increase by 9% by 2022.

Target year: 2024

The percentage of students attending school less than 85% of the time will decrease by 10% by 2024.

Target year: 2024

The percentage of ATSI students attending school less than 85% of the time will decrease by 10% by 2024.

Initiatives

A shared understanding of wellbeing to support students to learn and grow

Cowra High School will support students to connect, succeed and thrive through:

- enhanced systems and processes to support attendance and wellbeing of all students
- promoting student voice across all years to build a positive culture of belonging
- challenging students to be resilient, passionate and expert learners
- integrating employability skills across the curriculum.

A focus on positive and responsive classrooms that advocate high expectations

Cowra High School will create positive and stimulating learning environments through:

- professional learning for staff to develop a culturally rich curriculum to extend the achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- professional learning for staff in the differentiation of teaching and learning activities to meet the needs of all learners
- support for beginning and early career teachers to embed quality teaching practices in classrooms
- increased support for students transitioning between Year 6 and 7 and also from Year 10 into Year 11.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

Students are supported to fulfil their potential.

Evidence informed strategies lead to improvements in engagement and wellbeing of students.

Positive and respectful relationships provide the environment for student learning to flourish.

Collaboration with the community, including partner primary schools leads to successful transitions and the continuity of learning for students.

Evidence based changes to whole school practices result in measurable improvements in wellbeing, including attendance.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

In evaluating the success of this strategic direction the focus will be on the following questions:

- what did we do?
- how well did we do it?
- what outcomes did we achieve?

Cowra High School will use data from the following sources to assist in evaluating the success of this strategic direction:

- internal and external student performance data
- internal student attendance and wellbeing data
- external attendance and wellbeing data including Tell Them from Me (TTFM)
- differentiated teaching and learning programs
- student work samples
- staff and student surveys
- community feedback

Future implications from the analysis will be integrated

Strategic Direction 3: A school culture focused on high expectations for learning

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

into next steps in the school plan.