

# **PORT FAIRY CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL**

## **Peer Review Report Summary ( Nov 2015)**

### **Executive Summary**

#### **2.1 School Context**

Port Fairy Consolidated School is a P-6 school located in the historic township of Port Fairy in the state's south-west. Port Fairy can make claim to be one of the earliest settlements in Victoria and retains many of its earliest seafarer dwellings and coastal community facilities. Many nineteenth century residential, commercial and merchant buildings remain and significant restrictions are placed on construction activity in an endeavour to conserve the significance of the town within the state's history.

The town continues to service a popular tourist trade and restricted fishing industry. The town, the most westerly of the famed Shipwreck Coast, is well known and highly regarded as a cultural precinct with an annual Folk Festival drawing in excess of 20,000 visitors to the town each year and a range of art and other cultural orientated activity dispersed throughout the year. Its high profile cultural reputation is built on inclusive community participation. The school actively exploits many of these opportunities, offering a wide range of extra-curriculum learning experiences linked in some way to many of the town's scheduled events.

The school serves the educational needs of students primarily located within the town, but also those who choose to travel daily, either by subsidised bus services or by private arrangements. In 2015 the school's enrolment was 229 with a slight decline anticipated in 2016. Over the four-year period of the last strategic plan, year by year enrolment variations occurred, but overall, enrolments have been stable and are expected to reflect a similar pattern over the next strategic period. The school shares responsibilities for the provision of primary educational with a local catholic primary school.

The school's budget is primarily dependent upon the annual Student Resource Package (SRP) based on its annual enrolment profile. Port Fairy Consolidated School's current Student Family Occupation (SFO) index does not enable the school to access additional equity funding although the new Student Family Occupation and Education (SFOE) index will provide the school with a small social disadvantage base allocation and the provision of a low level of primary welfare funds designed to support student engagement and wellbeing initiatives.

Port Fairy Consolidated School's buildings are a mix of modern flexible learning spaces, post-war Light Timber Construction standard classrooms, and historic blue stone buildings. The more recent building, a Building for the Educational Revolution (BER) acquisition, provides contemporary teaching and learning spaces. The historic buildings, while a complement to the many of the town's historic dwellings, poses instructional and long-term maintenance challenges for the school.

## **2.2 Summary of the School's Performance.**

### **2.2.1 The school's Performance against the previous strategic plan.**

The Peer Review panel examined the school's Self-Evaluation and considered its outcomes and its associated data in light of what the school had set out to achieve over the course of the four-year period.

The panel examined student achievement, student engagement and student wellbeing and concluded that overall the school achieved positive outcomes throughout the strategic period in relation to what it had set out to achieve. While acknowledging the gains made and the demonstrated accomplishments of individual students, the panel shared the school's view that challenges remain, particularly in relation to achieving consistent, progressive growth in learning across all levels and improve its effectiveness in accessing and exploiting the extra-curriculum learning opportunities provided by the community's highly creative cultural dynamic.

An analysis of the school's self-evaluation and data reveals a level of diversity in learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy against the goals and targets the school set for its 2012-2015 strategic period. Concerning the goal to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes, the panel found the school achieving outcomes consistently similar to that of all Victorian schools and with schools with similar students in particular. The panel, while acknowledging these outcomes, viewed the range of growth outcomes as variable with contrasting conclusions between the National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) and the AusVELS teacher judgement program. The 2011 to 2014 NAPLAN data reveals that the school achieved high student growth outcomes in both literacy and numeracy. All literacy areas recorded at least 80 percent of students achieving above the *National Minimum Standard* while numeracy recorded 100 percent of the student cohort attaining this level. Growth levels exceeding the national average has receiving national recognition for the school with respect to year 3 to year 5 gains attained during the 2013-2014 period.

The Parent Opinion Survey (POS) revealed continued success in gaining parental support and co-operation at Port Fairy Consolidated School. The panel noted school climate and student engagement domain outcomes tracking slightly above those of schools of a similar type, with student behaviour the area signalling the need for a raised level of strategic attention.

Student wellbeing is a key factor for the school and remains an enduring challenge. The panel recognised the key strategies applied to improve student wellbeing and agreed that while feedback around student behaviour expressed improved outcomes, there is an on-going need to develop and improve the school's wellbeing framework.

The 2015 school staff School Climate Survey, conveyed an overall outcome similar to all primary schools. The survey conveyed areas of satisfaction and areas that are seen as problematic with issues around leadership in the school challenging the cohesion of learning and development across levels of the school. Some components rated low on comparative terms and reinforced the concerns staff have for their consistent level of collegiate output. The staff profile demonstrated a balance of experience, mobility and infusion of new ideas and the panel acknowledged the implementation of a wide range of effective initiatives and research-based teaching and learning strategies. The panel acknowledged the positive work of staff in the face of identified challenges and viewed their self-evaluation as demonstrating knowledge of the need for renewal and alignment with contemporary educational practice.

Overall, the panel viewed the school as operating effectively and efficiently within the opportunities and constraints of its human resources, facilities, outdoor environment, financial position and community characteristics. Available school data suggests that the school is catering for all its students with a review of instructional and operational practices both through self-evaluation and and external peer process, determining areas for re-focussing or improvement. .

### **2.2.2 Summary of considerations for the next strategic plan**

The school prides itself in providing a rich and varied educational experience for all its students. With a desire to maintain a continuous improvement focus, the school's self-evaluation reflects the need for achieving a school wide student-learning plan for the school which has high expectations,

is consistent in intent and action, is collegiately driven and focuses on delivering a high level of personalised learning and development. The panel recognised this focus and considered how the school could enhance and strengthen this within the context of its next strategic plan.

In relation to student achievement, the panel recommended that the school retain and expand its goal to achieve improve literacy and numeracy outcomes through a continuing heightening of teacher capacity and collegiate practices to effectively collaborate, consistently assess, plan and deliver to every student's point of need.

The panel recommended the school continue to define a balanced, school wide 'guaranteed' curriculum and maintain consistent and agreed instructional approaches with a focus on each student's learning growth and driven by a shared, structured planning model. Continuing to build teacher capacity to enable and support 'real time' teacher/student/parent conversations around the full scope of a student's learning and development and enabling targeted intervention at a student's 'point of need' were suggested to help the school achieve their high expectations around personalised learning.

In relation to engagement, the panel recommended that the school strengthen the home/school partnership to improve personalised learning outcomes for all students. Improvement will be achieved by a having a greater focus on communication, building strong relationships, giving students a greater voice in their learning and making sure good feedback is provided. Guaranteeing families and students understand and appreciate how the home environment can support the *school's work*, will assist in improving the engagement of all students and families with the school.

The panel considered student wellbeing a key component of the school's next strategic plan. In this respect, it recommended the school build a strong, whole school approach to wellbeing to address concerns and determine non-negotiable behavioural priorities and practices. Further development of the school's *Restorative Practices* strategy and exploring the scope of the '*Understanding Poverty*' initiative were considered important to achieving this result.

In relation to productivity, the panel recommended the school utilise its personnel and resources to assist the school to meet agreed priorities. This should include exploring opportunities to exploit the capabilities and expertise of staff, expanding and defining the role of its staff to enable coaching and mentoring, implement targeted intervention strategies, and initiating an agreed audit process to systematically determine the impact of the school's program and practices on student learning and development.

The panel recommended the school continue to apply budget discipline and that the allocation of resources according to agreed priorities and evidence based strategies that contribute to or increase the likelihood of successful student outcomes.

### **2.2.3 Next steps**

The school is well prepared to tackle the challenges and opportunities it will face over the course of the next plan. Recommendations made throughout this review are based on an understanding of the school's strengths and vulnerabilities and how best to address areas of concern. With the support of everyone concerned, the school can turn its attention to the personalisation of learning and development and achieve consistent, continuous improvement for every student.