

# Tagai State College

## Executive Summary





## Acknowledgment of Country

The Department of Education acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands from across Queensland. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.

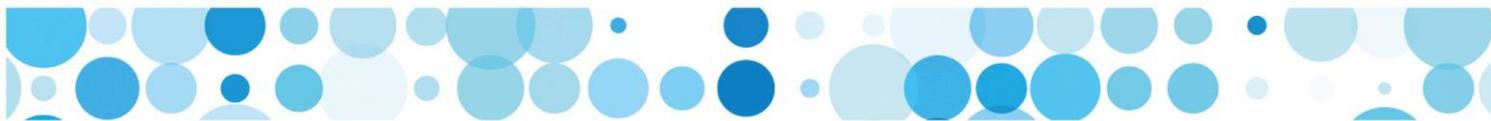
A better understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures develops an enriched appreciation of Australia's cultural heritage and can lead to reconciliation. This is essential to the maturity of Australia as a nation and fundamental to the development of an Australian identity.





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## 1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU) at **Tagai State College** from **11 to 16 August 2019**.

The report presents an evaluation of the college's performance against the nine domains of the [National School Improvement Tool](#). It also recommends improvement strategies for the college to implement in consultation with its regional office and college community.

The report's executive summary outlines key findings from the review and key improvement strategies that prioritise future directions for improvement.

Schools will publish the executive summary on the school website within two weeks of receiving the report.

The Executive Principal will meet with their Assistant Regional Director (ARD) to discuss the review findings and improvement strategies.

An action plan will be developed and submitted to the SIU and region within six weeks of the college receiving the report.

For more information regarding the SIU and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SIU [website](#).

### 1.1 Review team

Andrew Helton	Senior reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Jenny Hart	Senior reviewer
John Bosward	Internal reviewer
Bernadette Hanna	Director, SIU
Wayne Troyahn	Internal reviewer
Lee Goosens	Internal reviewer
Gary Lacey	Internal reviewer
Lesley Vogan	Internal reviewer
Sandra Perrett	Internal reviewer
Darren Marsh	Internal reviewer
Stephen Bobby	Senior reviewer
Bert Barbe	External reviewer



## 1.2 Exit Interview

Jan Carr	ARD (by phone)
Judy Ketchell	Executive Principal (in person)
Steven Foster	Associate Principal (in person)
Susan Michelmore	Associate Principal (in person)
Stephanie Savage	Associate Principal (by phone)
Adam Ronald	Business Manager (in person)
Suberia Bowie	Head of Campus, Waybeni Koey - Thursday Island Secondary campus (in person)
Ned David	Principal Advisor – Education & Chair of Torres Strait Islanders' Regional Education Council (TSIREC) (in person)

## 1.3 School context

The Torres Strait Islands are populated by a distinct group of people with their own traditions and beliefs developed over thousands of years. The Tagai State College works in partnership with the many groups of people from the Torres Strait Nation.

To deliver to the needs of students from this distinct region, the composition of the Tagai State College is unique. It is comprised of 17 school campuses and the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) facility, spread across 15 islands and 48 000 square kilometres. Educational services are provided to students aged from birth to adulthood.

Tagai State College strives to promote a strong college identity that unifies the members of the college whilst preserving the unique heritage and culture of each campus location. The effective delivery of education services to many remote areas provides a high level of challenge for the college. The main challenges are the high staff turnover, cost of transport and materials, the cultural understandings of staff members, maintenance of facilities and distance.

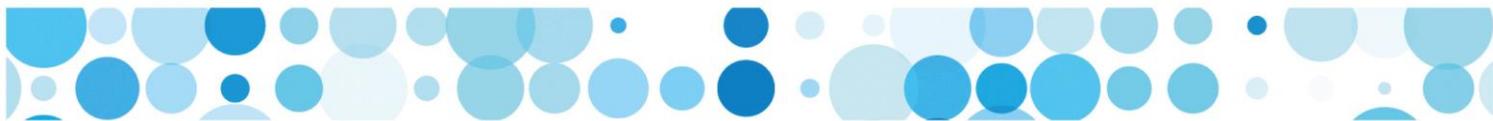
To ensure the college delivers teaching and learning in a context that reflects the aspirations of the Torres Strait peoples, the college uses the YUMI approach to education that is defined as the unique brand of education that merges academic excellence and protects the integrity of students' cultural identity and language in every classroom.

Many partnerships are sustained by the college to enhance student learning and wellbeing. One significant partnership committed to the common purposes and goals of the college is the Torres Strait Islanders' Regional Education Council (TSIREC). TSIREC is an educational advocacy body, representing the interest of the Torres Strait Region, including the Northern Peninsular Area. TSIREC strives to connect the Torres Strait community with key government officials and initiatives.



## 1.4 Context table

<b>Location:</b>	Hargrave Street, Thursday Island
<b>Education region:</b>	Far North Queensland Region
<b>Year opened:</b>	2007
<b>Year levels:</b>	Early Childhood to Year 12
<b>Enrolment:</b>	1620
<b>Indigenous enrolment percentage:</b>	95.5 per cent
<b>Students with disability enrolment percentage:</b>	10.44 per cent – Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) 109 students, 31 awaiting verification – Adjustment Information Management System (AIMS) data
<b>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</b>	743
<b>Year principal appointed:</b>	Refer to individual campus review reports
<b>Day 8 staffing teacher full-time equivalent (FTE):</b>	Refer to individual campus review reports
<b>Significant partner schools:</b>	James Cook University (JCU) Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Partnership – A Night Under the Stars, Brisbane School of Distance Education (SDE) – IMPACT program, Remote Schools Alliance
<b>Significant community partnerships:</b>	Torres Strait Island Regional Council (TSIRC), Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA), Torres Strait Islanders' Regional Education Council (TSIREC)
<b>Significant school programs:</b>	Strait Start Programs (0-3 years) Montessori programs, State Delivered Kindergarten Program in all campuses, Premier's Reading Challenge, P-10 Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Languages Syllabus, STEM (Mathematics & Science curriculum), Systems Leadership –college signature way of working together



## 1.5 Review methodology

The review was conducted by a team of 12 reviewers. The review consisted of:

- a pre-review audit of the school's performance data and other school information
- consultation with the college Executive Principal and other members of the executive leadership team (See Appendix 1 for organisational chart)
- consultation with the Regional Director and Assistant Regional Director (ARD)
- onsite visits to nine campuses with duration varying between two and three days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives as recorded in individual campus reports
- telephone meetings with heads of eight campuses
- interviews with college support personnel



## 2. Executive summary

### 2.1 Key findings

**The college covers 17 campuses covering 48 000 square kilometres linked by the common purpose of providing an education based on the YUMI way to meet the needs of its students.**

An extensive organisational structure provides links between all campuses and key leaders. The enactment of the organisational structure consolidates college approaches providing desired connections to benefit students. Facilities management, human resource allocation, curriculum resources, support for student and staff wellbeing, partnerships with community and financial processes are linked with the common goal of supporting student learning in a common framework.

**Staff members of the college are committed to improving the learning outcomes for all students.**

Staff members are able to articulate the college's vision and elements of the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA). They demonstrate a passion to support the social, emotional and academic needs of students across all campuses. The college seeks new solutions to meet the challenges of providing education services within the Torres Strait and engages with staff members on this journey.

**The Tagai College Teaching and Learning Blackboard site houses all strategic planning and teaching and learning resources.**

College staff members are inducted into this online 'one stop shop' as the central repository of all documents and resources to support the administrative and teaching requirements of the college. Staff members are encouraged to engage with these resources to build knowledge and capability to demonstrate expected college practice. Leaders and school staff members use these resources to support their day-to-day operations and professional learning needs.

**The college pursues a strong vision and commitment to educational excellence for Torres Strait students through the 'the learner guarantee'.**

The guarantee is focused on the unique language and culture of the Torres Strait and the provision of multiple post-school pathways. A strong approach to supporting students from P-12 in their learning progress, pathways and goal setting is set out in the Primary Education Training (PET), Junior Education and Training (JET) and Senior Education and Training (SET) planning processes. In preparation for the new Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE), a review of the senior secondary curriculum has resulted in expanded options for students.



**Members of the executive leadership team understand how the organisational structure of the college can be refined and utilised to continue to ensure that every student will reach their learning potential.**

The executive principal works with four associate principals and other members of the leadership team to develop the strategic direction of the college and drive enhanced staff member capability and improved student outcomes. The team works together with a range of organisations in partnership with staff members, parents, caregivers, students and community members. Their sense of purpose and professionalism strengthen the dynamics of the college.

Conversations with a broad cross-section of college staff members indicate the need to continue to build ways in which leaders ensure the effective delivery of the college vision and expectations across all campuses. The work between senior leaders and Heads of Campus (HoC) is vital in providing the depth of expertise required by all HoCs. Many leaders express the need to continue to pursue instructional leadership, common ways of supervision and Quality Assurance (QA) practices to promote stronger accountability and oversight.

**The college places importance on the effective use of data to inform leadership decision making and classroom practices.**

The college data plan outlines the collection and analysis of data aligned to the EIA, including student attendance, behaviour, reading and numeracy. College leaders identify the importance of clear targets in addition to processes to monitor and support student learning through effective differentiation. The range of processes to utilise and display data includes consolidation reports, data monitoring and data walls that are apparent across many campuses. Staff Professional Development (PD) is provided to continue to build data literacy. Staff members indicate a degree of uncertainty regarding how to use the data to support learning for the wide range of students in their classes. Regular scheduled meetings by teaching teams to discuss and analyse data are yet to be consistently implemented.

**The college has a sequenced plan for curriculum delivery aligned to the Australian Curriculum (AC).**

The plan supports consistent teaching and learning expectations and provides a reference for monitoring learning across the year levels. Year level plans in mathematics, English and science have been developed by college curriculum leaders. The college is progressing the development of unit plans, summative assessments and supporting resources across all learning areas of the AC from Prep to Year 6. Faculty coordinators have responsibility for developing unit plans and supporting resources across all learning areas at the secondary campus. Teaching staff indicate they follow the college curriculum plans as developed for the primary campuses and the programs developed in the senior campus. HoCs and teachers indicate varying approaches to implementing the curriculum.

Assessment practices vary across campuses with moderation practices occurring in the college. The level of engagement of staff members regarding the fidelity of these processes varies. The college has yet to develop a rigorous, college-wide QA process to monitor the



implementation of the college curriculum plan to ensure that the planned intended curriculum is enacted in every classroom.

**The college is committed to further strengthening the capability of every teacher in each stage of their career.**

The college 'Teaching and Learning Declaration' underpins teaching and learning processes across campuses. All staff are aware of the college signature pedagogy – Explicit Instruction (EI). A consistent understanding and effective use of all aspects of the school's pedagogical framework is yet to be embedded across the college. HoCs acknowledge that observation, feedback, modelling and coaching are important aspects of QA for effective pedagogical practices. There is an intent to implement these processes in a more formalised and regular way across all campuses.

**The college expectation is that teachers' day-to-day teaching is identifying and addressing the individual learning needs of all students.**

A range of documentation including the Teaching and Learning Handbook, differentiation placemats and extensive online resources is available to build capability in the implementation of differentiated strategies in classrooms. Malu Os, based on Thursday Island, provides outreach services to support the educational needs of students with disability across the college.

Conversations with teachers confirm a range of capability and use of differentiation. Teaching staff members articulate that they require greater understanding in implementing ICPs, bandscaling and in the use of EAL/D strategies. Some teachers require further support and direction in the use of data to support their understanding of where students are at in their learning and to identify next steps for teaching.

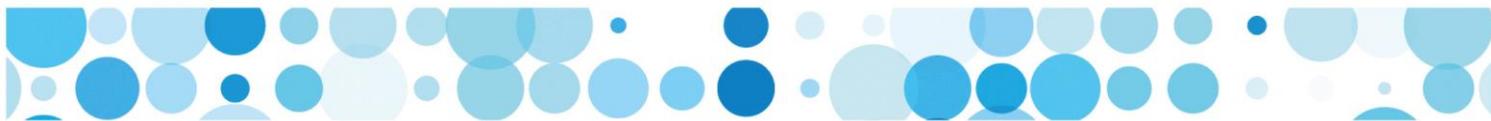
**Student engagement is a priority for the college in order to support the learning of all students.**

The college is building systematic processes to manage and encourage attendance. A range of work has commenced with the goal of improving student attendance and behaviour. The college has enacted the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) framework and has implemented a Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students (RBPS). Students know the college behaviour expectations of Proud, Safe, Respectful and Responsible Learners. There is a strong and concerted effort by staff members to address attendance.

Student behaviour remains a challenge for a number of campuses across the college. Teaching and learning, including the level of engagement and attendance of students during class time are significantly impacted by student behaviour. The implementation of PBL across the campuses is at varying stages.

**Staff wellbeing and support continues to be a high priority for the college.**

A positive and collegial staff culture exists across the college. The organisational structure, including dedicated coaching teams and personnel, promotes a strong support network in connecting colleagues across all campuses. There is a significant investment in staff



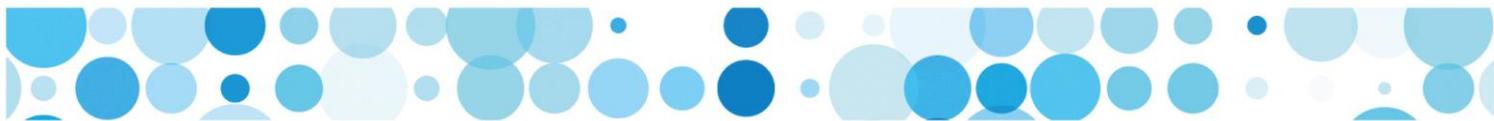
collegial engagement and professional learning, including through the biennial conference, regular webinars and phone meetings for all staff members.

College leaders, coaching and support staff visit all campuses. Meetings for leaders across all campuses to come together are additionally held at least once each term. Ongoing challenges identified by college staff and leaders include those in relation to dealing with remoteness, isolation and staff turnover. For certain campuses, persistent student behaviour challenges and disruptions are referenced by staff members as significant factors impacting on their wellbeing.

**The common goals and purposes of the college are supported through a range of partnerships internal and external to the Torres Strait.**

College leaders and HoCs play significant roles in achieving staff member and community commitment to the aims of the college within each of the campus communities. Significant partnerships exist with a range of organisations including campus Parents and Citizens' Associations (P&C), Torres Strait Islanders' Regional Education Council (TSIREC), Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA), TAFE (Technical and Further Education) Queensland, James Cook University (JCU), Department of Health, Queensland Police Services (QPS), and Remote Schools Alliance including Northern Peninsula Area and Western Cape Colleges.

These partnerships are strategically formed and aimed at addressing the identified needs of students. They have become an accepted and enduring part of the fabric of the college.



## 2.2 Key improvement strategies

Quality assure the processes used by senior college leaders to ensure systematic and consistent ways of working to deliver the college vision and expectations across all campuses.

Ensure all campuses schedule regular data conversations for teaching teams to rigorously interrogate and share student outcome data to monitor student progress and inform the next steps for teaching and learning.

Develop QA processes to ensure the consistent implementation of curriculum, assessment and moderation practices across all campuses.

Implement consistent observation and feedback protocols linked to the EIA and pedagogical framework to improve the capability of all classroom teachers.

Build the understanding of teachers to use college resources and processes to plan and differentiate curriculum to meet the diverse learning needs of students.

Strengthen and systematically implement the PBL program supported by an action plan with key targets and monitoring strategies.

Engage with regional support personnel to implement strategies to address staff wellbeing as a high priority.



### **3. Appendix 1**

Organisational Structure – Tagai State College – Term 1 2019