# Carlisle Primary School

## 2017

## Review Findings

Independent **Review** of
Independent Public Schools

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## School and Review Details

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| **Principal:** | Mr Cameron Lindley |
| **Board Chair:** | Mr Tristan Scalmer |
| **School Address:** | 271 Orrong Road |
| | Kewdale WA 6105 |
| **Number of Students:** | 355 |
| **ICSEA**[1] | 1000 |
| **Reviewers:** | Mr Tim Emery (Lead) |
| | Mrs Barbara Browne |
| **Review Dates:** | 19 and 20 July 2017 |

## Purpose of the Review

The purpose of the Department of Education review is to provide assurance to the principal and school community, the board, the Director General of the Department of Education and the Minister for Education of the extent to which the school staff and board have met the commitments of the Delivery and Performance Agreement (DPA). The review verifies the degree to which there are effective processes in place bringing about improved student learning.

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[1] The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) is a scale of socio-educational advantage that is computed for each school. It allows for comparisons to be made between schools that are matched according to their socio-educational advantage, allowing fair comparisons of NAPLAN results between schools with students who have a similar ICSEA. The median ICSEA value is 1000.
http://www.acara.edu.au/_resources/Fact_Sheet_-_About_ICSEA.pdf

# Review Methodology

Underpinning the review methodology is the understanding that the principal is required to ensure the roles and responsibilities of the DPA are met; school performance and student improvement targets and priorities, as detailed in the school's business plan, are assessed, reviewed annually and an annual report made publicly available. The review seeks to determine the extent to which these commitments have been met.

The principal forwarded the school self-review conclusions to the (then) Department of Education Services one month [i] prior to the commencement of the review.

The Department of Education reviewers supplemented the information provided by the principal with information on the school's achievements, its processes and its student performance data from a number of sources which included:

- the *My School*® website
- the Department of Education's School Performance Monitoring
- Schools Online reports.

Reviewers analysed the evidence presented in the school self-review documentation to verify achievement of the DPA and business plan commitments, and developed lines of inquiry where further in-school verification was required.

An agenda for the site visit was negotiated with the principal to enable the gathering of evidence to verify claims made in the school self-review statements. During the review visit the reviewers sourced evidence to support the claims through observation and discussion with leaders, teaching and support staff, board members, parents and students where required. Where the school belongs to an Independent Public School (IPS) cluster of schools the review considers whether the purpose of the cluster has been met and the benefits to the school.

The evidence provided by the principal, along with information gathered by the reviewers prior to and during the review visit, was used as the basis for judgements made in verifying how well the school staff and board have met the commitments of the DPA and business plan.

# Business Plan

*How effective was the business plan in responding to the school's context and improving student learning (progress, achievement and engagement)?*

## Findings

- Carlisle Primary School is an inner-city school located 8 km east of the Perth CBD. The Pre-primary to Year 6 student population as at semester 1 2017 was 355. There is a diverse cultural mix at the school with 102 students who were born overseas and 198 students with language backgrounds other than English. Student numbers in Pre-primary to Year 6 have declined from 331 in 2015 to 302 in 2017; however, Kindergarten enrolments of 54 in 2016 and 53 in 2017 indicate a sustainable enrolment pattern.

- The 2015–17 Business Plan is responsive to the context of the school and outlines the strategic approach for the school. It describes six priority areas: excellence in teaching and learning; pastoral care and cultural diversity, environment, partnerships, assessment and target setting and specialist teacher priority programs. Strategies and milestones were identified as means by which the school could maintain a cycle of continuous improvement in these areas. Student performance targets were set using National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) and compared against the national minimum standard but other targets were expressed as strategies or milestones and were not measurable.

- The business plan was developed with minimal consultation or collaboration with stakeholders and consequently there has been a low level of ownership of the plan. A thorough and collaborative self-review of the business plan and DPA in Semester 1 of 2017 followed the appointment of a new substantive principal in Term 1 of 2017. Future needs and directions were identified during the self-review process and will inform the development of the next business plan. The self-review and IPS review highlighted for leaders, staff and board the need to develop more measurable targets in the next business plan.

- In 2017 a renewed focus on the contents of the current business plan and its purpose has energised staff and parents. Reviewers are confident that a more collaborative approach will be taken in the development of the next business plan.

- Student attendance and punctuality is an ongoing concern for the school. In 2015 and 2016 student attendance was slightly below like-schools and Western Australian public schools. There is concern about the large numbers of students who are absent for

extended periods, sometimes due to families taking overseas holidays in term time. Staff are aware of the need to develop strategic responses to this situation.

- The current business plan is available to the school community on the school website, and electronically or as a hard copy on request.

### Areas for improvement

- Ensure broad participation by all stakeholders in the development and ongoing, regular monitoring of the next business plan.

- Create academic and non-academic business plan targets that allow for quantifiable measurement of the effectiveness of programs and student performance.

# Teaching and Learning

*How has the quality of teaching improved and sustained student learning (progress, achievement and engagement)?*

## Findings

- In the priority area "excellence in teaching and learning", focus was given to information and communications technology (ICT) capabilities, science, national and State imperatives and staff, student and parent/carer accountability. A range of strategies and milestones to address these were included in the business plan but current staff were not involved in their development. Staff and board reviewed progress towards the achievement of these in 2017 and determined that progress was being made incrementally in all areas. The ICT specialist teacher reported that skill audits indicate current Year 3 students are at a level of competence similar to the Year 7 cohort of several years ago.

- The business plan focus on accountability included strategies to ensure teachers: were explicit in their instruction, delivered a comprehensive range of teaching strategies, engaged in collaborative planning at each phase of learning, moderated student performance in and across schools, and staff performance management was aligned with the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. Self-reviews and anecdotal accounts indicate these milestones were being met and staff capacity was developing in all these areas.

- Teachers plan programs of work using the Western Australian Curriculum and School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) documents. Reviewers verified a high level of collaboration occurs among year level and phase of learning colleagues. Common assessment tasks are developed to ensure moderation helps align grading of students' work compared to students in the same year level. In some cases; however, grades are not well aligned with NAPLAN results and consideration needs to be given to ensure these are more closely aligned.

- Teaching programs in literacy and numeracy draw on a range of approaches based on previous programs used in the school or others that have been adopted by individual teachers. While all are pedagogically sound, staff are strongly in favour of adopting consistent, cohesive, whole-school approaches from Kindergarten to Year 6. This is exemplified in the staff's endorsement of the use of Words Their Way as a whole-school approach to teaching spelling.

- In the priority area "assessment and target setting" measurable targets were included in reading, writing and numeracy. In reading they were:

      o   "Year 3 – to maintain the upward trend of student progress across the achievement bands.

      o   Year 5– to increase the percentage of students in the middle bands moving into the top bands.

      o   To increase the percentage of students in the lower bands meeting the National Minimum Standard."

In writing they were:

      o   "Year 3 – to increase the upward trend of students to achieve above the National Minimum Standard.

      o   To develop and maintain an upward trend of student progress in spelling and punctuation.

      o   Year 5 – to increase the percentage of students in the middle bands moving into the top bands.

      o   To develop and maintain an upward trend of student progress in spelling and punctuation."

In numeracy they were:

      o   "Year 3 – to increase the upward trend of students to achieve above the National Minimum Standard.

      o   To increase the percentage of students in the middle bands moving into the top bands to be equivalent to or above like-schools.

      o   To increase the percentage of students in the lower bands meeting the National Minimum Standard.

      o   Year 5 – to increase the percentage of students in the middle bands moving into the top bands.

      o   To increase the percentage of students in the lower bands meeting the National Minimum Standard."

- All the above targets were achieved when comparing trends, increased numbers in higher proficiency bands and average NAPLAN scores. The only exception was in Year 5 spelling which saw a decline from 2014 to 2016.

- Overall absolute achievement is within the expected level with a positive upward trend. While the overall relative achievement for 2015–16 is below the expected level of performance, in 2016 Year 3 and Year 5 achievement was at the expected level. Overall progress in numeracy is below expected performance and staff have identified this in self-reviews. NAPLAN comparative performance in Year 5 shows a gradual but consistent decline from above expected performance in 2011 to below expected performance in 2015. In 2016 this improved to expected performance level. Reviewers recommend this data be closely monitored. Reviewers have confidence that the ensuing 2018–2020 Business Plan will include specific and measurable targets and strategies to redress this.

- In the 2016 National School Opinion survey 90% of staff felt they provided their students with useful feedback. This view was endorsed by 80% of students and 69% of parents surveyed. Students are provided with formal written reports at the end semester one and two and parents and teachers meet to discuss student progress and achievement as and when needed. Seventy-nine students have individual education plans (IEPs) and they receive an additional report showing progress and achievement against goals stated in the IEP. All staff agreed or strongly agreed that they held high expectations for the students. This view was supported by 89% of parents and 97% of students surveyed.

- Prior to 2017 there was minimal performance management of staff. This has been addressed and all staff now engage in a reflective and line-managed process that focuses on the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. Self-reflection in the performance management process ensures teachers are cognisant of the requirements of the role of teacher and subsequent setting of personal goals contributes to continuous capacity building. The process is in the early stages of implementation and reviewers recommend its development includes some additional goals be set related to targets in the next business plan.

- Staff engage in relevant internal and external professional learning opportunities. For example, staff trained as NAPLAN markers supported colleagues in developing expertise in teaching and assessing writing and others who participated in mathematics workshops with Dr Paul Swan applied their learning to develop the resourcing and teaching of mathematics.

**Areas of strength**

- The collaborative and collegial nature of staff professional relationships that focus on improving student outcomes.

- Consistent and broad achievement of literacy and numeracy targets.

**Areas for improvement**

- Adopt consistent, cohesive, collaborative whole-school approaches to teaching literacy and numeracy designed to improve student learning.

- Monitor the NAPLAN comparative performance data of Year 5 students.

- Strive for greater alignment between student grade allocations and NAPLAN results.

# Student Performance Monitoring

*How well established are the school's self-assessment practices in accounting for school improvement?*

## Findings

- Students participate in national and State assessments including (NAPLAN). Additional assessments include On-entry assessment, Progressive Achievement Tests in mathematics, PM Benchmark Reading Assessment Resources, Probe Reading assessment, Words Their Way and other teacher designed assessment tasks. Data from selected assessments is gathered regularly and teachers use this to inform teaching programs. Line by line NAPLAN test item reviews are done to inform student ability groupings and targeted teaching programs. Various other approaches to monitoring student progress and achievement are used including Brightpath exemplars and descriptors, First Steps and SCSA judging standards work samples. In 2017 a self-review of student performance was comprehensive and highlighted the outcomes from all of the major assessments that were used to monitor student progress and achievement.

- Operational plans in English and mathematics have been collaboratively developed in 2017 building on plans written in previous years. These provide clear direction and include fine grained targets that link with the business plan.

- Collaboration between year level and phase of learning colleagues is regular and frequent. On occasions year level teachers use cross-setting to meet the needs of students and close monitoring of progress is central in this approach. Student progress in reading is recorded in a central data base using PM Benchmark Reading Assessment Resource and Probe Reading age data. Current handover files on all students includes student performance scores on initial sounds, sight words, writing samples and PM Benchmark Reading Assessment Resource and Words Their Way levels of achievement. Handover files do not include data on performance in mathematics and there is no whole-school, cohesive monitoring of student progress or achievement in mathematics. Included in the development of a whole-school approach to teaching mathematics, regular recording and tracking of student progress and achievement is needed. In 2015 a staff workshop was held to review the business plan. The subsequent report was not produced until 2017 but described a need to develop an ongoing measurement and evaluation framework that was paired with key business plan targets. Staff continue to state that an updated policy confirming the cycle of assessments would be beneficial.

- Students who have a diagnosed learning disability or difficulty are placed on an IEP. A case management approach is taken involving teacher, students at educational risk (SAER) Coordinator, school psychologist and parents to plan for and review progress and achievement of goals that are clearly articulated in the IEP. English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) Progress Maps are used to plan, monitor and assess the performance of EAL/D students. In 2016 there were 65% of EAL/D students making 'moderate progress' which exceeded that of like-schools. Of the cohort, 20% made 'high progress' and 8% made 'very high progress'.

- An annual report is prepared and made publicly available, which details the performance and achievements of the school including consideration of the priorities and targets described in the school's business plan. It would be beneficial to the community if the report included discussion of graphs and tables explaining student performance data.

- Staff acknowledge the tendency to provide greater support to students who require remediation than those who require extension. A trial extension program in which some Year 4–6 students worked with a small cohort of Year 2–3 students was considered successful and indicates increased efforts are being made to meet the needs of all students. Increased differentiation for higher performing students is an area of need identified by staff.

### Areas of strength

- The self-reviews of student performance conducted for the purpose of the IPS review.

- The quality of IEPs and subsequent reporting procedures for students at education risk.

### Areas for improvement

- Review and re-publish a policy on the cycle of assessments used to monitor student progress and achievement.

- Increase differentiation for higher performing students.

# Program Delivery

*How well has the school performed in providing education programs that promote learning and wellbeing for all students?*

## Findings

- The principal and staff have ensured education programs are designed and delivered to meet the needs of students and in accordance with the requirements of the *School Education Act 1999*, *School Education Regulations 2000* and the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Act 1997*. The Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline is being implemented according to the mandated timelines. Specialist teachers deliver science, physical education, visual arts, drama, music (vocal, instrumental and aural), ICT and languages other than English across Years 1–6. The instrumental program is offered through the School of Instrumental Music.

- Implementation of the National Quality Standard (NQS) has not met the mandated timeline. The principal and staff acknowledge this and are developing measures to redress this. There has not been a uniform uptake of the NQS by staff across Years K–2. The physical separation of the Kindergarten and Pre-primary area from Year 1 and Year 2 is an impediment to informal sharing, consistency and collaboration. An internal audit in 2016 found the school had met Quality Areas 2 and 7 and was working towards Quality Areas 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Now teachers are focusing on Quality Area 1 – Educational Program and Practice. There has been no external audit.

- Literacy and numeracy blocks have been established in some year levels. Consistent whole-school approaches are being explored collaboratively. A whole-school focus on writing was developed and implemented in 2016.

- A clearly defined evidence-based process is used to identify SAER and to set up IEPs. Students' progress is case managed by the learning support/SAER coordinator, the EAL/D teacher, the Aboriginal and Islander education officer (AIEO) and the school psychologist who work alongside class teachers and together with parents. The school works closely with a vast array of professionals in the allied health industry, from both government agencies and not-for-profit organisations, to provide additional support for students at risk.

- The full-time deputy principal now has responsibility for curriculum oversight and delivery with a focus on developing whole-school delivery of programs. The manager corporate services is now a member of the leadership team. Phase of learning teams and learning area committees have been given greater autonomy and flexibility in setting meeting

schedules and decision-making. So far it appears this change has energised staff who now feel a greater accountability and ownership of planning and implementing programs aligned to both academic and non-academic targets. These changes towards a more distributive model of leadership should streamline, and increase, the efficiency of the day-to-day management of programs and processes.

- ICT infrastructure is considered adequate with students being able to access laptops, desk top computers and/or i-pads from PP–6. The 0.5 full-time equivalent deputy principal has oversight of ICT. The school was fortunate enough to retain the additional ICT infrastructure that was provided as part of the proposed trial for online NAPLAN testing. There is wireless access throughout the school and classrooms have interactive white boards.

- There are plans for developing cross-curricula programs based around the Stephanie Alexander kitchen and garden program, and by incorporating digital design and technologies into the music program. Both programs offer the potential to build on the intrinsic interest around food and cooking that reflects the high ethnic density of the school community and the successful music program.

- The chaplain delivers a values program based on selected virtues that are explored in class. The staff review of the business plan identified that the values program needed to be more structured and consistent across the years. Aussie Optimism is delivered to Year 5 and Year 6.

- There are opportunities to participate in the senior school choir and to be part of the senior cultural dance group. The choir performs at many prestigious events and festivals; it is highly regarded, often winning awards for excellence.

- Special days such as Harmony Day and NAIDOC are successful in bringing the whole school community together through food, cooking, dance, singing and wearing of national costumes. Such celebrations involve all members of the school community and are considered pivotal to building the reputation of Carlisle Primary School as being welcoming, caring and inclusive of all, whatever the family background and/or circumstances.

- Staff reported there is early evidence that students are beginning to participate in the process of self-assessment and personal goal setting and to develop responsibility as partners in the learning journey. Strategies are also in place to build the capacity of parents to become involved in the learning journey of their children. This should lead to a smoother, more efficient delivery of programs and improved learning experiences.

- Students indicated they felt safe at school and that teachers were caring and inclusive. A Managing Student Behaviour Policy and Procedures document exists but it is in a generic form, does not indicate clear processes that need to be followed and is too unwieldy for classroom display. There was evidence; however, of shared understandings between students and staff about ways to behave and the various actions that follow if this is not the case. Students were aware of the Evacuation Procedure but the Evacuation Plan was not visible in classrooms. A recent survey indicated strong support for the Protective Behaviours program. Recent professional learning on dealing with disclosures of abuse was appreciated by staff and they now feel more confident when faced with disclosures. There is a school excursion policy with accompanying guidelines to ensure student safety when off the school premises.

- The school is in the process of moving to a more rigorous and evidence-based whole-school approach to collection and interrogation of data upon which to base decisions. Once embedded such processes will ensure sustainability of programs that lead to improved learning and wellbeing for all students from K–6.

## Areas of strength

- Evidence-based approach to developing IEPs and case managing progress for SAER.

## Areas for improvement

- Ensure compliance with NQS implementation and request an external audit.

- Document and display a clear, consistent whole-school approach to behaviour management processes and application of rules.

# Resourcing and Support

*How well has the school established systems to monitor and review the allocation of resources to meet strategic and operational priorities?*

## Findings

- The 2017 operational plans for mathematics and English detail how financial and human resources are deployed to support the delivery of these learning areas. Planning for similar operational plans for other curriculum areas are being progressed and, when developed, should make more evident the resourcing required for programs that improve learning outcomes based on evidence gathered. This will provide increased transparency and clarity of inputs as well as to better organise deployment of learning support to the point of greatest need.

- Characteristic funding is used to deliver and support EAL/D programs, AIEO in-class support and pastoral care, and literacy and numeracy support across the school. The school continues to fund a community liaison officer who develops effective partnerships and networks among staff, students, parents, carers and the wider community. The program has been particularly successful in engaging parents of EAL/D students in cultural events held at the school, encouraging them to attend English classes and participate in community immersion experiences such as using public transport.

- The school identified the need to improve the delivery of physical education and science. Resources were deployed and a teacher appointed at the commencement of 2017. Indications from staff and students are this is revitalising both programs.

- Teachers are allocated a class budget. They understand the manner in which the finance committee operates should they wish to apply for additional funds. Applications need to be linked to teaching and learning programs and/or professional learning that has been identified during their performance management process.

- The workforce plan identifies reasons for the current staffing profile. It adequately describes future staffing requirements, particularly those associated with responding to students with educational needs and/or disabilities and the increasing number of EAL/D students. The plan outlines considerations for 2018–2020 to ensure sustainability of high quality teaching and learning programs that align with the student profile. This involves managing the mix of fixed-term to permanent staff, and also the mix of older staff nearing retirement with the appointment of younger staff. The senior leadership team is managing leave loading liability.

- Carlisle Primary School celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2019. Upgrading the grounds and a continuous plan for improvement over the next 2–5 years were stated as strategic priorities in the 2015–2017 Business Plan. This has yet to be implemented in a strategic manner. Progress is being made with the nature-based playground in the early childhood area, due to be completed soon. The middle years play area; however, was identified by parents as being inadequate due to the lack of stimulating play equipment/structures. The leadership team is aware of the risks posed to the budget in order to maintain and improve buildings and grounds and the need to do so in a staged and strategic manner.

- Partnerships exist between the Belmont Schools Network, including the South East Metropolitan Language Development Centre outreach service, and the local secondary schools of Belmont City College and Kent Street Senior High School. These partnerships are mutually beneficial both for the professional support of staff and increased learning opportunities for students. The school also has strong links to the Belmont City Council. Planning for future partnership building includes developing relationships with the University of Western Australia to contribute to, and deliver a high quality pre-service teacher development platform, and developing connections with other schools to support planning, teaching and assessment.

- The high number of SAER and EALD students places particular demands on the school's budget. The allocation of resources to meet the needs all students is being managed with reviewing and planning for 2018 and beyond taking place.

## Area of strength

- Investment of resources to appoint the community liaison officer.

## Areas for improvement

- Monitor and review resources and how they are allocated, based on evidence of improved learning outcomes that are aligned to strategic and operational priorities.

# School Board

*How effective has the board been in carrying out its functions, roles and responsibilities?*

## Findings

- Board membership complies with the *School Education Act 1999* and *School Education Regulations 2000* which specify the membership categories and composition. Board members have been inducted and show understanding of their functions and role, as prescribed in the *School Education Act 1999, School Education Regulations 2000* and Department policy. An open meeting is held each year. The board reviews its performance but members agree this could be more formalised. A recent review stated that "current membership does not yet reflect the high level of ethnic diversity within the school community."

- The induction process provided members with a better understanding of their roles and there was evidence of a renewed enthusiasm and interest to participate in board processes as outlined in the DPA. A range of expertise, interests and backgrounds of members enables the board to contribute, in a meaningful manner, to the governance of Carlisle Primary School.

- There was evidence of a working relationship between the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) and the board with each working towards common goals for the benefit of the students. A member of the P&C is on the board.

- Board members receive financial reports on the school budget and the results of school audits and reviews, including the results of surveys to determine the satisfaction levels of parents, staff and students. Their level of past participation in these processes appeared to be confined to one of endorsement rather than development and review. The board is now playing a more proactive role in reviewing school assessment data and processes, overall school performance and levels of satisfaction.

- The intention of the newly appointed principal is that the board will be more involved in the endorsement of the next DPA, development and endorsement of the next business plan, and preparation of future annual reports. This process has already commenced with the board taking an active role in the self-review undertaken as part of the IPS review. Members agreed their participation in meetings would be improved by establishing a standing agenda item to methodically review sections of the business plan and targets.

- The changing demographics of the intake area and the increasing diversity of parental expectations were recognised as challenges the board will need to address when considering the strategic direction of the school in the 2018–20 Business Plan.

- Members also recognised they had a role in explaining and supporting decisions made by the board to members of the wider school community. They identified this as an area for improvement. The increasing number of EAL/D students enrolled at Carlisle Primary School presents an additional challenge in communicating the board's function and activities.

- Board members are aware of the need to manage risks associated with a constant turnover in members and particularly the position of chair. Strategies to ensure sustainability of board membership and practices are yet to be fully embedded.

## Area of strength

- The commitment and enthusiasm of board members to now be more involved in their responsibilities, as outlined in the DPA. There is evidence of a developing culture that encourages an increased sense of ownership and participation in board processes.

## Areas for improvement

- Include a review of the strategic priorities and targets as stated in the business plan as a standing agenda item for each meeting.

- Increase communication to the school community about the functions and activities of the board.

# Conclusion

Carlisle Primary School is enjoying a sense of renewed energy and enthusiasm and there is a tangible commitment to developing programs and whole-school approaches that will bring about a more cohesive response to meeting the needs of students.

Leadership is distributed to many, formally and informally and this augurs well for the ongoing development of the school. There is a committed and highly competent staff who know their students well. Staff work in professional, trusting and collegial ways.

The school looks forward to the findings in this review coupled with their own thorough self-reviews to make positive changes that will enhance student progress and achievement. Staff and parents are embracing the opportunities to move the school forward.

Student performance in the main is at or above like-schools. Staff monitor the progress and achievements of the students and develop appropriate programs that nurture their ongoing development. The school has an exemplary approach to meeting the needs of SAER and EAL/D population.

Students work in a calm and orderly environment where high expectations are the norm. Staff and students demonstrate mutually respectful relationships. Students are happy and engaged.

Parents described the staff as welcoming and approachable. The high levels of cultural and language backgrounds offer the school a special inclusive feel which is fostered and supported by all. Satisfaction levels of students, staff and parents are high. There is a positive tone to the school.

## Declaration

We confirm the information provided is, to the best of our knowledge, true and correct, based on the verification of the evidence provided by Carlisle Primary School for the Department of Education's review.

The principal and board chair have had an opportunity to comment on any matters of fact contained within this document.

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Mr Tim Emery, Lead Reviewer                                      Date

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Mrs Barbara Browne, Reviewer                                    Date

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Mr Ken Perris, Director
Independent Public School Review                                Date