

Strategic Improvement Plan 2021-2024

Kotara High School 8423



School vision and context

School vision statement

A school that inspires excellence and empowers every student to be the best they can be.

School context

Kotara High is a comprehensive co-educational high school located in the city of Newcastle with an enrolment of over 1150 students and over 120 staff. The school offers an extensive curriculum allowing for students to access post-school studies at work. Our students are highly motivated learners who excel academically across the curriculum. Students have built a strong sporting culture at the school, that historically, has been, and continues to be, competitive on a state and national level. There is a significant enrolment of Aboriginal students at Kotara High School and the whole community is committed to promoting its cultural and linguistic diversity.

The staff at Kotara High School is dynamic with various levels of experience and differing expertise. They are all committed with a strong ethos of collaboration, professional learning and continuous school improvement.

Recent initiatives that have had a positive impact upon our school include - the ALARM Matrix, Canvas, Student Mentoring, the Senior Learning Hub, transition and vocational programs.. Kotara High School has strong connections with its partner primary schools, The University of Newcastle, Ube High School in Japan and the business community of Newcastle.

Throughout the 2021-2024 School Improvement Plan, KHS will be focused upon a number of key areas including, but not exclusive to, improving the percentage of students in the top two NAPLAN bands, improving the percentage of students in both Band 5 and 6 in the HSC, and increasing the percentage of students attending school greater than 90% of the time. These improvement measures have been isolated from a deep situational analysis and collaboration with all stakeholders, including students, staff, community and AECG.

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Purpose

To empower all students to achieve their learning potential through a focus on effective evidence-based teaching practices, quality and inclusive curriculum provision, and a sustained focus on learning excellence and evaluative practice.

Improvement measures

Target year: 2022

The percentage of students achieving in the top 2 bands in NAPLAN increases from 29.7% (baseline) to 35.8% in numeracy, and 24.3% (baseline) to 30.1% in reading.

Target year: 2023

The percentage of students achieving expected growth in NAPLAN increases from 75.2% (baseline) to 77.8% in numeracy, and 69.1% (baseline) to 72.1% in reading.

Target year: 2022

The percentage of students achieving HSC course results in the top 2 bands increases from 29.9% (baseline) to 37%.

Initiatives

Literacy and Numeracy

Embed a dynamic whole school approach to literacy and numeracy skill development through a focus on differentiation, informed staff professional learning and critical thinking strategies.

- Establish a structured Literacy/Numeracy intervention program in the school. Focus on the use of student performance data to set clear targets and goals for individual student improvement.
- Strengthen the whole school approach to A Learning and Responding Matrix.
- Consistent strategies in both literacy and numeracy to be authentically embedded into teaching and learning programs across all KLAs.

High Impact Teaching Practices

Drive student improvement through a focus on data driven practice, authentic collaboration, quality feedback, and innovative and responsive learning environments.

- Empower staff through professional learning that synthesises the analysis of student data (HSC, NAPLAN, Best Start and internal assessment), the use of formative assessment strategies and individual student learning needs.
- Sustain high quality collaborative practice across the school to facilitate professional dialogue and sharing of quality practice and evidence-based teaching strategies.
- Review and improve the use of feedback and formative assessment practices to enhance student learning and provide individualised explicit areas for growth.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

Teaching and learning programs show evidence that they are adjusted to meet the needs of students at different levels of achievement, including adjustments to support learning or increase challenge. Adjustments lead to improved learning.

All teachers understand and explicitly teach literacy and numeracy to students at all levels of achievement, with success that can be measured by improved student progress and achievement data.

The school has identified what growth is expected for each student. Students demonstrate expected growth on internal school progress and achievement data.

Student assessment data is regularly used school-wide to identify student achievements and progress, in order to reflect on teaching effectiveness and inform future school directions.

Evidence-based teaching methods optimise learning progress for all students. Effective methods are identified, promoted and modelled, and students' learning improvement is monitored, demonstrating growth.

Assessment is used flexibly and responsively as an integral part of daily classroom instruction.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Question: To what extent have we enhanced student learning outcomes through effective, evidence-based teaching practice and curriculum provision? Have our practices been high impact?

Data: A combination of data sources will be used to evaluate our success. These will include:

- External student performance measures (NAPLAN and HSC)
- Internal student performance measures/assessments
- Student work samples

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

- Teaching programs and feedback surveys.

Analysis: Data will be analysed regularly to determine the impact of the initiatives and the extent to which the purpose and improvement measures have been achieved.

Implications: Analysis of the data will guide ongoing implementation and future priorities by providing an evaluative lens for continuous school improvement, ensuring students achieve their potential and grow as learners.

Strategic Direction 2: School learning culture

Purpose

To cultivate educational aspiration through high expectations and a shared responsibility for student learning across the school community.

Improvement measures

Target year: 2022

The percentage of students attending school greater than 90% of the time increases from 63.1% (baseline) to 71.5%.

Target year: 2024

SEF assessment of the element of 'Learning culture' indicates improvement from Sustaining and Growing to Excelling .

Target year: 2023

60% of Aboriginal students attain the HSC whilst maintaining their cultural identity.

Target year: 2024

Parent and community feedback data indicates improvement in community collaboration and a shared understanding of the school's high expectations culture.

Initiatives

High Expectations for Learning

Embed clear expectations for learning progress through a focus on high standards for academic performance, attendance and shared school values.

- Establish consistent and visible whole school learning expectations that promote quality learning environments, as well as the connection between student attendance and achievement.
- Promote a shared understanding of expectations for student learning and KHS school priorities through regular parent workshops and seminars.
- Identify and explicitly develop effective habits and skills for high quality learning.

Community Collaboration

Build a prosperous and responsive school community through reciprocal partnerships that empower students to thrive as learners.

- Establish partnerships through consultation with the Muloobinbah AECG executive to promote inclusivity, cultural immersion and connection for all students.
- Consolidate and extend upon established collaborative partnerships in the KCoS in the areas of student and staff leadership, school culture, Aboriginal education, and explicit teaching strategies.
- Develop the schools' involvement with local businesses and external agencies within the Kotara and Hunter communities.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

The whole school community demonstrates aspirational expectations of learning progress and achievement for all students.

Effective partnerships in learning with parents and students mean students are motivated to deliver their best and continually improve.

Teachers, parents and the community work together to support consistent and maximised student attendance.

The school is recognised as responsive by its community because it uses best practice to embed a culture of high expectations.

The school uses embedded and explicit systems that facilitate professional dialogue, collaboration, and the modelling of effective practice across the CoS. This drives ongoing improvement in teaching and learning.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Question: How effectively have we established a culture that promotes high expectations, educational aspiration and reciprocal partnerships?

Data: A combination of data sources will be used to evaluate our success. These will include:

- Whole school community (staff, students and parents) feedback surveys
- Sentral Wellbeing data
- Attendance data
- School Excellence Framework assessments

Analysis: Data will be analysed regularly to determine the impact of the initiatives and the extent to which the purpose and improvement measures have been achieved.

Implications: Analysis of the data will guide ongoing implementation and future priorities by providing an

Strategic Direction 2: School learning culture

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

evaluative lens for continuous school improvement, ensuring high expectations and community partnerships underpin quality school learning culture.

Strategic Direction 3: Coaching and mentoring

Purpose

To instil a collaborative student and staff learning culture that is underpinned by the connection between learning, wellbeing and improved student outcomes.

Improvement measures

Target year: 2022

The percentage of students reporting Expectations for Success, Advocacy and Sense of Belonging increases from 65.2% (baseline) to 68.8%.

Target year: 2024

Staff professional learning evaluation data indicates improvement in collaborative and instructional leadership practices.

Target year: 2024

SEF assessment of the elements of 'Learning and development' and 'Wellbeing' are validated at Excelling.

Initiatives

Student Wellbeing and Mentoring

Embed a focus on mentoring and wellbeing that empowers students to be active participants in their own learning

- Implement wellbeing and resilience programs for students, including programs for specific student groups.
- Further develop the KHS student Mentoring program - delivered through timetabled lessons across each year group with resilience, wellbeing and mental health themes addressed.
- Enhance whole school wellbeing practices through the triangulation of student, staff and parent wellbeing focus areas. Develop a program using *The Resilience Project* as a platform for a common language around wellbeing and resilience.

Instructional Leadership

Embed coaching and mentoring structures that actively support staff leadership aspirations and drive the improvement of whole school initiatives.

- Foster authentic cross faculty teaching and learning experiences through collaboration and observation.
- Introduction of a 2iC (second in charge) program for each KLA and whole school head teacher positions to build leadership capacity in the school.
- Promote expert practice through the sharing of staff expertise across the school. Areas such as HSC marking, teaching and learning strategies, and effective classroom practice to be targeted.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

The school has implemented evidence-based change to whole school practices, resulting in measurable improvements in wellbeing and engagement to support learning.

The school is organised so that students have regular opportunities to meet with an identified staff member who can provide advice, support and assistance to help students fulfil their potential.

The school identifies expertise within its staff and draws on this to further develop its professional learning community.

Professional learning in the school emphasises developing effective instructional leadership, management skills and leadership attributes to facilitate whole school improvement and build a strong pipeline of leaders.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Question: What impact have the wellbeing initiatives had on student learning? How effectively have these initiatives been supported by the focus on developing staff leadership capacity?

Data: A combination of data sources will be used to evaluate our success. These will include:

- Tell Them From Me data
- Classroom observations
- Student performance data (internal and external)
- Whole school community (staff, students and parents) feedback surveys
- Sentral Wellbeing data
- School Excellence Framework assessments

Analysis: Data will be analysed regularly to determine the impact of the initiatives and the extent to which the purpose and improvement measures have been achieved.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Implications: Analysis of the data will guide ongoing implementation and future priorities by providing an evaluative lens for continuous school improvement, ensuring coaching and mentoring for staff and students creates a quality collaborative school culture focused on learning, leading and wellbeing.