

Celebrating State Education Week in Central Queensland- Spotlight on Staff

Did you know?

In Central Queensland, we have 71 cleaners, 95 public servants, 18 schools officers, 172 teacher aides and 701 teachers that have been an employee of the Department of Education for over 20 years.

The Centre for Learning and Wellbeing would like to acknowledge all staff throughout rural and remote schools for their commitment and efforts in contributing to small communities, families and schools. With appreciation to all, we would like to spotlight some of our longest standing staff members for their longevity and dedication to servicing rural and remote education.

Bruce McPaul – Schools Officer – Blackall State School

Year of commencement: 1985

Years in Central Queensland: 35

Favourite aspect of your role: Knowing the students right from Prep. Seeing how successful they become and where life takes them. So many stay or return to our community over the years.

Why do you believe rural and remote schools are so vital? Our communities need options. The financial burden to send students away to school can sometimes be too great for families.

What do you think makes rural and remote schools so special? There seems to be a different approach to the bigger picture. The students are 'fair dinkum' and they have very different knowledge and life skills to those in metropolitan areas.

Bruce has seen many changes in his role over the years, however he still loves his work and being able to contribute to his community and provide a safe and welcoming environment for students of Blackall.



Leisa Goodwin – Small Schools Business Manager – Alpha State School

Year of commencement: 1989, in schools since 1998

Years in Central Queensland: 31

Favourite aspect of your role: Each day is different. I enjoy the variety of work required in my role and working with others across the department.

Why do you believe rural and remote schools are so vital? Families in these areas depend on schools to provide peer interactions and learning without the need to send their children to boarding school.

What do you think makes rural and remote schools so special? Small settings allows for a personalised approach to learning. Everyone knows each other's strengths and limitations, and work together to achieve goals.



Maria Hoare – Principal – Springsure State School

Year of commencement: 1979

Years in Central Queensland: 41

Favourite aspect of your role: The ongoing relationships that I have developed with students, staff and parents.

Why do you believe rural and remote schools are so vital? Every child should have access to a quality education, teachers and experiences regardless of their postcode or the place they live.

What do you think makes rural and remote schools so special? The relationships and involvement that you can have within the community. Knowing the parents and community allows you to know what the students need and what might be the best options, pathways and opportunities for each student. We are often privileged to know students very well in their family settings, gaining further insights into their aspirations and providing further support or assisting them to succeed in other areas, e.g. sporting pursuits or agricultural/business/mining endeavours. Given that we do hold a well-regarded role within these small communities also brings with it a high level of respect and appreciation. I have had the privilege of having had unexpected impact on so many students which I value enormously.

Maria has taught at Moranbah, Port Curtis Road, Pinalba, Longreach, Barcardine, Mackay West and Springsure. Maria shares the role of Principal in her home town of Springsure.



Vicki Hawkins – Teacher – Emerald State High School

Year of commencement: 1981 –

Years in Central Queensland: 39

Favourite aspect of your role: Working with amazing teams of enthusiastic teachers and staff. Everyone just gets the job done and is so supportive. Seeing students grow and mature into young adults, working in the community and eventually becoming parents or even grandparents has been personally rewarding.

Why do you believe rural and remote schools are so vital? They prepare students who are the next generation of primary producers, engineers and technicians working in the mining industry. It is important to keep our young people in Queensland, coming back to regional and rural towns. Many jobs in the agricultural industry are passed down through family businesses (eg. cattle properties, farming enterprises) and skills are passed on to young people at an early age.

What do you think makes rural and remote schools so special? As a teacher, you instantly become part of a community. Everyone knows who you are and the important role that you do in the community. Within the school environment, there are so many more opportunities to act in various roles and receive professional development opportunities. It's great to work out where your strengths and interests are or to collaborate across schools.



Ann Morgan – Cleaner – Emerald North State School

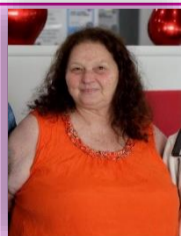
Year of commencement: 1975

Years in Central Queensland: 45

Favourite aspect of your role: self-satisfaction and being able to play an important part in schools.

Why do you believe rural and remote schools are so vital? They are vital so that all children are receiving an education.

What do you think makes rural and remote schools so special? They are very important part of our communities.



Lenore Roberts – Teacher – Longreach State High School

Year of commencement: 1972

Years in Central Queensland: approx.. 40 – some years away

Favourite aspect of your role: The relationships I developed with students; knowing them and understanding them as individuals. This allowed me to know their learning needs and capabilities and then structure my teaching to be relevant to them.

Why do you believe rural and remote schools are so vital? For me it is because families should be able to access quality educational experiences for their children wherever they live and regional Queensland is one such important place. The learning delivered to them needs to match that of other students anywhere and it is vital that rural/remote students are not disadvantaged.

What do you think makes rural and remote schools so special? For teachers there is something in particular that makes rural and remote schools special- it's the opportunities that are there for staff to identify new ideas and be innovative to introduce new programs. It happens because with fewer staff, yet still the same needs for teaching and learning, we each have opportunities to pursue passions for different aspects of the curriculum and thus make special contributions to our students.

Lenore has taught in Blackall, Lockyer District, Julia Creek and Longreach. Lenore is currently working part-time in her area of passion, IT.



Jean Self – Teacher Aide – Denison State School

Year of commencement: 1977

Years in Central Queensland: 43

Favourite aspect of your role: Daily interactions with students.

Why do you believe rural and remote schools are so vital? Interactions. Students are able to interact with other students and adults.

What do you think makes rural and remote schools so special? Relationships are closer with students, seeing them and being a part of a community where we are familiar with one another.

