Research supporting Ashmore State School’s GRG Agreement

The Administration team, comprising of the Principal and three Deputy Principals, in consultation with the Learning Support team and Special Needs Teacher, referred to Ashmore State School’s Pedagogical Framework and 4 Year Strategic Plan to determine our priorities in the allocation of funds received with the grant of $181,732.00. This was to ensure the grant was spent efficiently for the enhancement of student outcomes.

The school’s Pedagogical Framework is informed by Michael Fullan’s philosophy regarding ‘Moral Purpose’. This incorporates personalisation, pedagogical practice and professional development. Furthermore, we referred to John Hattie’s work regarding ‘effect size’ of pedagogical practice. Consequently a significant amount of funding to build teacher capacity was directed to strategies to improve teacher practice.

Strategies used to inform the GRG Agreement

LEGEND
- Red: Limited progress
- Amber: Substantial progress
- Green: Outcomes met or exceeded

Ashmore State School (an Independent Public School) utilised the following strategies to inform the GRG Agreement:

- Introduction of a Pre–Prep program to more readily prepare children for school through immersion in early literacy and numeracy;
- The establishment of the Ashmore Literacy Development Centre to provide support and professional development to our teachers, cluster teachers and Principals in the teaching of literacy;
- Appointment of a Literacy Advisor to staff the Literacy Development Centre and provide coaching, mentoring and modelling of expert teaching practice to teachers and teacher aides;
- The upskilling of present teacher’s aides involved in the school’s Link-It! program to ensure that expertise in teaching is occurring across all ability levels for two hour daily literacy blocks. Link-It! is a whole of school intervention program to support students at all levels of their literacy and numeracy learning;
- Focused data meetings with individual teachers each term based on diagnostic data results and utilising school produced quadrant data that tracks achievement and progress of students;
- The employment of an ESL trained teacher aide who complements the work of the ESL teacher and assists students who have English as their second language;
- Engagement in professional development by STLaN to enhance capacity in the teaching of literacy and numeracy for learning support and extended learning.
Selection criteria for strategies relating to GRG Agreement

Primarily, strategies were selected on the basis of those which best met the needs of the school. These needs were determined through literacy and numeracy indicator data, the previous success of the school's Link-It! program, feedback from the community regarding the desire to introduce the Pre-Prep program. Brigance data from previous years that demonstrates how students in Prep would benefit from earlier immersion in literacy and numeracy. Also, the influx of students through the International Schools Program required a strategic approach to ensuring they receive maximum assistance in literacy and numeracy to enable them to be successful at Ashmore State School.

Evaluation of strategies relating to GRG Agreement

The strategies are designed to be on-going and ‘constructivist’ in nature. This allows the school to continually evaluate and build upon a focused agenda of improvement both in the short term and long term. Ashmore State School is committed to oral language, literacy and numeracy as outlined in the Explicit Improvement Agenda, an agenda which is confirmed by the continued improvement in student outcomes. Additionally, these strategies align to the school's Pedagogical Framework of aspirational, personalised and connected learning.

Distribution of funding across strategies

Funding is distributed in a manner that aims to ensure equity of access to quality human and material resources to all students. The specialist staff build expert teaching practice across the entire school and thus all children benefit – not just early childhood. The provision of material resources is focused on the Link-It! Intervention literacy and numeracy initiative that benefits all students from early childhood to the upper years and across the entire learning spectrum. Ashmore State School has developed a strategic plan for the disbursement of funds which is aligned to the whole school Annual Implementation Plan, 4 year Strategic Plan and data sets. Great Results Guarantee funding has been expended as was planned and thereby achieving the outcomes intended.
Actual expenditure against planned expenditure after 12 months

Ashmore State School had a residual of $22,000.00 which has been rolled over to the next planned stage for the design and development of an Outdoor Learning Centre while also continuing with the original strategies for 2014. The Outdoor Learning Centre will complement the Pre-Prep program together with Prep-Year 2 in gross motor skills, language development, literacy and math concepts. Additionally, the Outdoor Learning Centre will cater for mainstream students, ESL students and SEP students.

Funding challenges and advantages

Students, staff and the community have been advantaged by the Great Results Guarantee funding as it has enabled Ashmore State School to provide additional teaching and learning resources in a range of priority areas. Enrolments have increased as a result of the community appreciating and valuing the opportunities offered to students. This is evidenced by the number of children enrolled in surrounding day care centers whose parents are choosing Ashmore as their preferred school. Ashmore is also accepting enrolments in the catchment area from private schools.

Funding influences for 2015

Ashmore State School has aligned the Great Results Guarantee funding to the strategic direction of the school as outlined in key documents and the DETE Strategic Plan. In undertaking this approach, the school will avoid spending money on ‘quick fixes’ and rather has developed a long term plan which is intended to be effective and sustainable. To achieve this goal regular reviews of data will continue to occur that informs students’ progress so that adjustments can be made if necessary. These actions will subsequently inform the 2015 Annual Implementation Plan.

Ashmore State School targets and timelines

Ashmore State School targets are:

- In Prep 30% of students will be reading above PM Level 5 within the timeframe from January to September. Recent data indicates that 60% of Prep students are reading above PM 5.
- In Year 1 the reading target is set at 30% of students reading above PM Level 15. Recent data confirms at minimum 50% of Year 1 students are above PM 15.
In Year 2 the reading target is set at 40% of students reading above PM Level 20. Data indicates in excess of 50% students are above PM 20.

In Year 3 an increase in proportion of students achieving in the upper two bands in Naplan from 33% to 44% was set as the target. Year 3 students achieved 48.2%.

In numeracy an aspirational target of 100% achieving National Minimum Standard was set. Year 3 students achieved 97.4% with 54.4% in U2B – well above national standard.

In writing the target was 56% of students scoring in the upper two bands. Students achieved 47% which placed Ashmore above the nation in the upper two bands and national mean score. As a result writing will be the focus for forthcoming GRG Strategic Plan.

The ‘flow on’ effect due to increased staff capacity in the teaching of literacy and numeracy has resulted in Year 5 Naplan reading exceeding the school’s target of 49% in the upper two bands. Students achieved 50.6% and were above national standard. In writing, 29.9% of students achieved in the upper two bands and were well above national standard. In numeracy students also achieved above nation.

Year 7 students, in reading, achieved the target of 35% in the upper two bands which was above nation while in writing students achieved well above national standard. In numeracy 100% of students achieved national minimum standard with 51.4% of students in the upper two bands which is 22% above national standard.

**Early indicators for success**

Early indicators for success included the speed of increase in achievement of literacy and numeracy indicators. Other indicators include:

- More rigorous student Personal Improvement Plans (PIPs)
- Significant increase in demand for enrolment in Pre-Prep
- Increased participation by surrounding schools in the Literacy Development Centre
- Increased number of staff volunteering to engage in Collegial observation of practice and feedback with specialist teachers and the curriculum support team
- Significant increase in Prep enrolments for 2015 compared to previous years – up an additional 2 classes mainly through recommendation