

Pioneer State High School

2007 School Annual Report

School Details

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Principal's Foreword

Introduction

Pioneer State High School is the third largest secondary school in Mackay with approximately 900 students and over 80 teaching and support staff. It is located in the tropical northern suburbs, servicing the residential communities of Andergrove, Beaconsfield, Eaglemount Heights, Slade Point and the Northern Beaches including Eimeo and Bucasia. Pioneer prides itself on the contribution it makes through the achievement of "quality educational outcomes for all students in a positive, caring, learning community". Pioneer State High School's mission is 'to achieve quality outcomes for all students in a positive, caring, learning community'.

Future Outlook

LEARNING

- improve literacy outcomes for all students by reviewing the Whole School Literacy Plan and writing a Whole-School Numeracy Plan
- improve learning outcomes for all students by strengthening Schoolwide Positive Behaviour Support program
- enable indigenous education strategies by improving attendance rates
- encourage flexible pathways for Senior students
- review and upgrade Junior Curriculum re QCAR
- develop the area of extension learning

SCHOOLS

- develop a structured school promotion approach
- enclose the multi-purpose shelter to our maximum advantage
- continue to develop the school's ICT network and its usage
- increase landscaping
- upgrade facilities as finances allow
- further develop the school as a community asset by enclosing the multi-purpose shelter to an assembly/sports hall
- implement appropriate strategies to meet the corporate requirements of reporting
- implement the operational implications of EGPA 2006
- complete landscaping projects in SEU corridor and learnscapes areas

WORKFORCE

- Reinforce teacher induction processes
- encourage professional development especially in Behaviour/ATSI education/ICT's
- develop and implement strategies to promote teacher professionalism, using EQ professional development agenda, QSA seminars and in-house meetings
- expand leadership skilling through Eungella retreat

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Our school at a glance

School Profile

Total enrolments:	879
Year levels offered:	8-12
Structure:	Co-educational

Curriculum offerings

Our distinctive curriculum offerings and Extra Curricula Activities:

The curriculum structure for Years 8 to 10 at Pioneer State High School has been developed in order to encourage students to acquire a breadth of learning experiences, as a foundation from which future career options may be explored. The curriculum is structured in such a way that is described as a unitised curriculum. This unitised curriculum is designed to allow students to plan a course of study that suits their particular needs, interests and abilities.

Our unitised curriculum allows students to work at different levels within the eight Key Learning Areas - English, Maths, Science, Study of Society and Environment, Languages Other Than English, Health and Physical Education, Technology and the Arts. Students can move through the curriculum at their own pace.

To enable this to happen, all subjects have organised their Junior courses of study into semester length units. Each of these units is set at a specified level of difficulty (for example, Year 8, known as Level 1, Year 9 known as Level 2 etc.). Students plan their three year course of study by building up sequences of these units within each Key Learning Area. It is therefore quite likely that class groups will consist of students from different years and different ages, except for Semester 1, Year 8. Classes are no longer bound by age groupings.

Our organisational structure is designed to provide flexibility and to cater for the full range of student abilities. It is expected that the majority of students will progress through their Junior schooling (ie. Years 8, 9 and 10) at about the same rate. The average student will study mainly Level 2 units during the second year of high school, and mostly Level Three units in the third year. However, high ability students have the opportunity of rapid advancement and lower achievers have the opportunity to master important learning before progressing to more advanced work.

The curriculum has the following features:

- An opportunity for a wider variety of choice to assist students to better prepare themselves for Years 11 and 12;
- Bridging courses in Semester 2, Year 10 where students will have an opportunity to enrol in introductory Senior subjects, for example, Introduction to Accounting;
- Students will be able to work at their own rate, level of ability and maturity, allowing for extension and learning support;
- It will enable students to experience success (as shorter term objectives are more easily attainable);
- Students will be allowed to choose courses appropriate to their needs, interests and abilities;
- Students have the opportunity to master skills / processes before moving to a higher level, by being able to study another unit at the same level;
- Each unit will contain specific information and communication technology skills;
- Units will contain embedded higher order thinking skills.

Extra curricula activities

Inter-Island Activities

The four sporting houses or islands are Brampton, Carlisle, Keswick and St. Bees. The islands keenly contest a wide variety of cultural, sporting and academic competitions.

These include:

- Swimming Carnival
- Athletics Carnival
- Cross Country
- Basketball
- Inter-island Sport (Touch Football, Soccer, Volleyball, Softball)

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Our school at a glance

Inter-School Sport

Students have the opportunity to trial for selection in Mackay and District representative teams via a series of Trial Days. These trials cater for a wide range of sports and successful sportspersons have the opportunity to advance on to Regional and/or State Trials.

Because Year 8s have limited opportunities to compete in Mackay and District Trials, they are encouraged to participate in a Year 8 Sports Day where they compete socially against other Year 8s from District schools in a wide range of sports.

Besides Inter-School Sport which focuses on the selection of Mackay and District teams, students have the opportunity to compete in a variety of school-based state-wide competitions whereby school teams compete in a series of elimination games in order to advance onto district, regional and state levels of competition. Our school has competed in a number of competitions including the Hockey, Netball, Rugby League, Rugby Union and Australian Football.

Students on Level 2 are not able to represent the school. Level 3 students may negotiate participation.

Musical Production / Theatrical Performances

- Students from all year levels are given many opportunities to participate in a wide variety of productions.
- Performances are a mixture of:
 - (a) small scale productions (puppet shows, theatre restaurant activities, arts soiree and talent quests) held primarily in Pioneer's own theatre complex; or
 - (b) large scale musicals involving over 100 students and teachers, three solid months' preparation and heaps of fun; or
 - (c) participation in dance activities eg. Rock Eisteddfod and the annual Rock Pop Mime which is part of the Sugartime Festival.
- Students who do not wish to perform, are given the opportunity to offer their services for the numerous tasks "behind the scenes".

Performance Groups

Students who learn advanced brass, woodwind and percussion instruments will be asked to be included in a variety of ensemble situations. The school already has a regular Junior Band, Concert Band and Stage Band. These groups rehearse weekly and perform at occasions such as school assemblies, Arts Festival, Eisteddfod, N.Q. Junior Jazz Festival, Awards Night and with other individuals and groups like Don Burrows and the Mackay Big Band.

Choir

The Pioneer State High School singers go by the name "Pioneer Voices".

Pioneer Voices is a fledgling group in the school's strong musical program and is open to students of all ages who like to sing, improve their singing voice or become more expert on their musical instrument.

Members of Pioneer Voices are involved in many activities and performance opportunities in the Mackay community such as the Mackay Festival of Arts Lunchbox Concerts, the Mackay Eisteddfod, as well as supporting school events and having an annual choral camp. Uniform is formal school shirt and tie or, for special occasions, white formal shirt with black trousers or skirt.

Co-Curricular Activities

These include a wide variety of opportunities for participation like

- (a) National academic competitions;
- (b) OptiMinds;
- (c) CQU Science Quiz;
- (d) Science Olympiads;
- (e) Business ventures;
- (f) Catering for functions;
- (g) Japanese visitors on tour;
- (h) Local competitions eg. Pacific Coal Maths; Chess
- (i) Mackay Show entries;
- (j) Mackay Eisteddfod entries;
- (k) Arts Council performances;
- (l) Motivational Media.

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Our school at a glance

School Camps

Year 11 camp is conducted in term 4 each year. Year 11 camp seeks to provide Year 11 students with some leadership skills, self confidence and a desire to be involved in school activities as leaders of the student body, when they are in Year 12.

Student Leadership

In Year 11 and 12, students can apply to become a Senior Leader by outlining their leadership credentials. After the Year 11 leadership camp in October, students and teachers elect the School Captains and Vice-captains, and also the Island Captains. A group of responsible senior leaders are appointed as Year 8 Care Counsellors, working with Year 8 students as role models.

Junior Curriculum is unitised- full description of modules is on website or CD provided at enrolment.

Distinctive subjects include Classroom Instrumental Music, Plastics Technology, Enterprise, Integrated units, consolidation units and extension units in Maths, English and Science

Extra-curricular activities are also listed on the website, and are extensive. They include

Parents, in the Opinion Survey, reported a level of satisfaction with the variety of school activities at 88.2%

Students reported their level of satisfaction at 78.3%

How computers are used to assist learning:

ICT's are a priority of the 3 year plan. Maintaining a quality network is a very high priority for budgeting, and the employment of a full-time technician is considered essential.

Social climate

The Care System

We are concerned for the total development of our students. Each morning all students see their Care teacher, whether at assembly or in their Care Group. As far as possible, the Care teacher will be the same teacher for the full five years that students attend Pioneer SHS.

All students have the opportunity to participate in our Social Life-Skills Program for a half-day each term.

The program covers four (4) major areas of:

- Study Skills, Thinking Skills and Personal Organisation;
- Career Education;
- Drug and Alcohol Education;
- Human Relationships Education

The school Guidance Officers, Drug and Alcohol Consultant, School Based Police Officer, School Nurse and Human Relationship consultants have assisted and in-serviced staff in the development of Year Level packages on these topics.

Year 8 Care classes each have two Year 12 students who work with them as Care Counsellors. This helps them to settle into high school and to enjoy the activities planned throughout the year.

School Opinion Survey data indicates that Parents say their students are happy to attend Pioneer SHS in excess of State means. The data also shows that Parents believe their students are treated fairly in this school at levels higher than the State mean. Students responses in the same areas are above State means.

20.2% of students reported satisfaction with the behaviour of students at this school.

51.4% of parents reported satisfaction with the behaviour of students at this school.

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Our school at a glance

Involving parents in their child's education

There are many ways in which parents may assist their students.

Including the particular instances listed below, the administration and staff of Pioneer State High School value highly the interest parents and guardians take in their children's school life - the programs they follow, the work they do, the friends they make, the teachers who teach them and the extra-curricular activities in which they take part.

We urge and most sincerely invite you to take a keen interest in your student(s). It will help them and us tremendously as we all continue to encourage good habits such as punctuality, neat appearance, appropriate language, completing effective homework, good study habits and responsibility for equipment.

Parent Assistance.

Parents are encouraged to visit the school to discuss a student's progress or any problems that may arise. We request parents telephone the school office on 4955 9222 to make an appointment to see any of the following staff:

- Principal or Deputy Principals
- Individual teachers
- Care Teachers
- Year Co-ordinators
- Guidance Officer
- Other personnel

It is advisable to arrange an interview in advance so that information can be gathered relating to the particular student.

Communication With Parents.

Parents are given an insight into the day to day operation of the school every second Friday through our fortnightly newsletter, "Pioneering". Parent interview evenings are held following the issue of reports early in Terms 2 and 4.

Voluntary Assistance.

Many parents of Pioneer High have enjoyed joining teachers to improve the opportunities offered to our students. There are several areas where voluntary help would be much appreciated. Please contact the school if you are able to give a small amount of your time to any of the following areas:

Canteen (weekly, monthly or on call). Phone convenor, Linda Lamont on 4955 9249 from 9.00am – 2.00pm.;

- **Library - cataloguing, putting books away, covering new books;**
 - Subject Areas - filing, collating, preparing charts, typing (at home or school);
 - Assisting with sporting activities;
 - Providing help with lunchtime activities or after school;
 - Assisting with school musical, bands, and choir;
 - Tutoring during class time or after school.

We are eager to access the wide variety of skills which exist amongst our parents. If you can give us any time to help with our students' education, please phone 4955 9222.

Membership of Parents' & Citizens' Association.

All parents are encouraged to attend these meetings. They are held in the Administration Block's Common Room on the second Wednesday of each month at 7.30pm. We welcome parental participation in all P&C activities – these are advertised via the school's fortnightly newsletter.

The P&C operates the school's Canteen, five days per week. P&C fundraising has previously been centred on providing air-conditioning under the Cooler Schools program.

School Council.

The School Council is comprised of four parents, four staff and four students. It meets each term to

- (a) approve the school's strategic plans and accountability documents;
- (b) monitor the progress of the school's strategic directions
- (c) and advise the Principal on strategic matters.

The Council is the chief decision-making body in determining the strategic directions of the school, and a key element in the school's democratic processes.

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Our school at a glance

Parent, student and teacher satisfaction with the school

94.3% of parents expressed satisfaction that their child is getting a good education at school.

Students reported their level of satisfaction at 87.5%

Parent responses to the Opinion Survey question about this being a good school indicated a level of satisfaction at 91.4%

81.7% of staff members reported that they were satisfied with the morale in the school.

Value added

- Year 12 Apparent retention rates remain relatively stable.
- Senior Pathways are becoming more flexible with increasing numbers of students involved in completing Certificate II courses or School Based Traineeships and Apprenticeships.
- Some Federal Funding has been accessed to enhance the facilities of the school by enclosing the Multi-purpose shelter. This should be finalised in 2007/8.
- The facilities for Students with Disabilities were enhanced by the acquisition of a purpose built Special Education building.
- The school has become part of the Queensland Minerals and Energy Academy. Our Earth Science teacher won a State award as part of the QMEA.

- In 2006, 87% of Parents and 82% of students indicated that they are satisfied they are getting a good education at Pioneer SHS. In 2007 94% of Parents were satisfied and 88% of Students. This is already above Education Queensland's targets for 2008.
- In 2006, 92% of Parents indicated that Pioneer SHS is a good school. 91% in 2007.
- In 2007, Staff indicated an Above State Mean result for: having a say in decisions about my work at school.
- In 2007 Student results were flagged Above the State Mean in all areas of Student Outcomes, Pedagogy & Curriculum.

Student attendance

The average attendance rate as a percentage in 2007 was 86%

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Our Staff Profile

Qualifications of all teachers and school leaders

Highest level of attainment

Percentage of classroom teachers and school leaders at the school

Doctorate

Masters

Bachelor degree

84

Diploma

14

Certificate

2

Expenditure on and teacher participation in professional development

The total funds expended on teacher professional development in 2007 was \$23350

The major professional development initiatives are as follows:

- Introduction and implementation of School-Wide Positive Behavioural Support program
- Christine Richmond "Behaviour Management Minimalism"
- QSA Initiatives and updates
- First-Aid and CPR Training
- Beginning Teachers Initiatives

The involvement of the teaching staff in professional development activities during 2007 was 80.6%

Average staff attendance

For permanent and temporary staff and school leaders the staff attendance rate in 2007 was 96%

Proportion of staff retained from the previous school year

93% of staff were retained by the school from the end of the 2006 school year for the entire 2007 school year.

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Performance of our students

Key outcomes in the senior phase of learning

Apparent retention rates Year 8 to year 12 (Feb to Feb)

Year 12 student enrolment as a percentage of the Year 8 student cohort:

Outcomes for our Year 12 cohort of 2007

Total number of Senior Certificates awarded:

Percentage of Overall Position (OP) -eligible students with OP 1-15:

Percentage of students awarded Senior Certificates and awarded a Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualification:

Percentage of students awarded Senior Certificates with OP-eligibility or awarded a VET qualification:

Percentage of Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) applicants receiving an offer:

Post-school destination information

At the time of publishing this School Annual Report, the results of the 2007 Year 12 cohort's post-school destinations survey, Next Step 2008 – Student Destination Report for the school were not available. Information about these post-school destinations of our students will be posted to our website by early September.