Principal’s Reflection – 2016 at a glance

The 2016 school year has been an exciting year for the Centre with a number of significant changes, innovations and achievements throughout the year. The 2016 Annual Implementation Plan prioritised three key improvement areas from the recommendations outlined in the Centre’s internal school review conducted late in 2015.

The Centre’s Improvement Agenda for 2016 focused on the following key areas:
1. Embed the centre’s new core program, the Hero’s Journey
2. Ensure a consistent enactment of the Centre’s pedagogical framework
3. Implement effective business planning across all areas of operation.

Client teacher feedback on the Beach School’s core program the Hero’s Journey has been extremely positive with a range of associated benefits, including reduced incidences of off-task behaviours by students. The design of the program has also reduced the amount of time students are in shared public space reducing the number of complaints by members of the local community in relation to overuse of Tallebudgera Creek.

The Hero’s Journey program and centre’s redefined pedagogical approach continued to evolve and improve over the year. The main challenge moving into 2017 and beyond is to ensure a consistent approach across all areas of operations. This will remain a focus for capability development in 2017.

The number of students accessing the Centre’s programs reduced in 2016 due to a decreased number of day visit programs and increased number of residential programs at the Beach School. TheCurrumbin Community Farm Campus also experienced an increased level of visitation. The decision to reduce the number of cabins at the Beach School in 2017 and increase bookings at the Farm Campus will see another decrease in student numbers as we explore strategies to establish and maintain a sustainable level of service delivery.

The Centre’s Registered Training Organisation has continued to develop and deliver training packages for students, teachers and community groups across Queensland. The Catch Program significantly contributed to an increased number of Indigenous Year 12 students (2% of the state cohort) attaining a QCE, which closed the gap between Indigenous and Non-indigenous QCE attainment. This was achieved by delivering Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways and Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management to students across Qld. The value of this project was recognised with our partner, Nudgee Beach EEC winning a Showcase award in 2016.

Another exciting development for the Centre was the successful application for $525 000 from the Smart School Subsidy Scheme for the provision of cabin accommodation at the Currumbin Community Farm Campus. The project will be completed by the end of semester 1 in 2017.

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<tr>
<th>Explicit Improvement Agenda</th>
<th>Not Started</th>
<th>Started</th>
<th>Achieved</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Successful Learners – Embed the Hero’s Journey at the Beach School Campus</td>
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<td>2. Teaching Quality – Consistent enactment of the Centre’s pedagogical framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Centre Performance – Implement effective business planning processes across all areas of operation.</td>
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Teaching Quality

The key focus for teaching staff development this year has been on experiential education and facilitation processes in order to build the capacity of staff to deliver the Hero’s Journey and refine our pedagogical approach. The Centre committed $48,512 to Professional Development in 2016 with all teaching and instructional staff participating in the National Outdoor Education Conference at the Sunshine Coast. This expenditure represents 16.2% of total core grants received. Other staff development areas included:

- National Outdoor Education Conference – All teaching and instructional staff
- Certificate II & III Outdoor Recreation – volunteer, Centre instructional staff and school based teachers
- Glynn Thomas – All teaching and instructional staff
- Nature Play – Farm Campus staff and interested teaching staff beach school
- Coaching and Mentoring – selected key teaching staff Beach and Farm Campuses
- Workforce planning – Administration and Leadership Team
- Staff Wellbeing – All staff
- Annual Accreditation and Mandatory Training – All staff
- Crossing Cultures training – RTO staff.

All staff accessed professional development activities during the year and staff opinion survey data indicates high staff morale and a high level of satisfaction with the workplace.

Work has commenced on reviewing the Centre’s Supportive Learning Environment and Responsible Behaviour plan for Students. The introduction of the Hero’s Journey and changes to timetabling has resulted in a significant reduction in negative student behaviour from an average of 25 incidences per week to less than 5 incidences per week.

The Hero’s Journey provides a framework and language for students to deal with issues and challenges while on camp. The focus for 2017 is to embed a Positive Whole School approach more deeply within the Hero’s Journey program which will further reduce the number of negative behaviour incidents.
Principal Leadership

Underpinning our key improvement agenda was completion of the Centre’s Quadrennial School Review to identify our long term strategic direction. This was conducted in consultation with community, client schools, key partners and all staff. The successful QSR identified a new vision, sense of purpose, a proposed name change and a new logo.

The Centre’s new vision is to:

“be acknowledged by the Department of Education and Training as a high performing outdoor environmental education centre”

with a clear sense of purpose,

“To create positive change in the lives of young people across Queensland”.

The Centre’s School Council and P&C have supported an application to change the Centre’s name to reflect a unified organisation aligned to our core purpose. The Tallebudgera Outdoor and Environmental Education Centre acknowledges the two approaches to education beyond the classroom that have evolved over a long period of time.

A new logo was developed to reflect the two campuses, the Beach School Campus and theCurrumbin Community Farm Campus, to celebrate the Indigenous connection to place and define our new pedagogical approach.

A Memorandum of Understanding with the Queensland Recreation Centre Gold Coast and the Tallebudgera Beach Outdoor Education School was renegotiated by the Department of Education and Training and the Department of National Parks, Sports and Racing. This MOU will be in place until 2019 which gives certainty and heralds in a new era of cooperation and joint planning.

Reduced numbers of students and the use of offsite learning spaces has reduced the impact of student numbers on public spaces resulting in vastly reduced incidences of complaints by the local community.
Centre Performance

A clear focus for service delivery in 2016 was to maximise the use of the accommodation allocated to the Beach School by the Queensland Recreation Centre Gold Coast. Staff allocated to the Alternate Day Program developed a number of new programs delivered through a residential mode with great success. The Currumbin Community Farm Campus service delivery exceeded expectations with a 40% increase over the last 5 years in student visitation due to the number of programs delivered through both the Farm Campus and the Day Programs.

There was a slight decrease (8%) in the total number of students accessing programs through all areas of operations in 2016 from a peak in 2015. This is due to a reduction in the day programs leading to a fewer number of students but increased duration of education experience.

The majority of students (73%) receiving education services continues to be the upper primary school and 96% of students are from the state schooling sector. Again in 2016, students from every education region accessed education programs either at the Centre’s two campuses or through the Centre’s RTO certificate courses.

The Centre’s financial position remains strong with an end of year bank balance of $689 024, of which $481 000 will be the opening balance for the 2017 school year. A significant amount of expenditure in 2016 ($200 000) was used to purchase buses to access alternative learning sites for students. The majority of the residual funds have been targeted to support the Smart School Subsidy Scheme accommodation project for the Farm Campus in the 2017 school year.

Local Decision Making

The renegotiation of the Memorandum of Understanding between Queensland Active Recreation Centre Gold Coast and the Tallebudgera Beach Outdoor Education School was completed during the year and the new MOU will be in place from 2016 — 2019. This MOU provides certainty and heralds a new phase of cooperation and innovation by allowing greater sharing of information and the joint development of procedures.

The new core program at the Beach School has contributed to a significant increase in the number of students accessing the David Fleay Wildlife Park which has greatly enhanced the quality of the education experience delivered by the Centre.

A second quality partnership has been established between the Beach School and the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary where students access the high ropes challenge. Feedback from both organisations indicate the partnership has been crucial in achieving their established goals for 2017. These partnerships will be reviewed in 2017 and will continue to evolve.

The RTO continues to establish partnerships with other training organisations and Centres in order to improve access to quality training programs for students. A partnership in 2017 with Griffith University will provide opportunities for pre-service teachers to experience education in the outdoors through wider field experiences and teacher practicums.

The School Council membership will change at the beginning of 2017 and will include local school principals and management staff from the Queensland Active Recreation Centre Gold Coast. The new members will bring fresh ideas and new perspectives as we increase the level of input from key partners and client groups.