John Curtin College of the Arts

2016

Independent Review Findings
Disclaimer

This document reports the findings of the Department of Education Services' review and verification of the school's self-review. The school's self-review has been complemented by information provided by the Department of Education, the School Curriculum and Standards Authority and the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority.

The findings of the independent review are forwarded to the School Principal, the Board Chair, the Director General of the Department of Education and the Minister for Education.

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School and Review Details

Principal: Mr Mitchell Mackay
Board Chair: Mr Robin Pascoe
School Location: 90 Ellen St Fremantle WA 6160
Number of Students: 1497
Reviewers: Ms Kerry Usher (Lead)
           Ms Maureen Lorimer
           Mr Peter Wilson
Review Dates: 1 and 2 March 2016
Initial Review: 2013

Purpose of the Review

The purpose of the independent review is to provide assurance to the school and its community, the Director General of the Department of Education and the Minister for Education on the extent to which the school has met its commitments as outlined in its Delivery and Performance Agreement (DPA) and associated Business Plan.

The focus of the review is on:

- how well the school has implemented self-review
- how well the school has improved student learning (achievement, progress and engagement) for all students
- how well the school has created an environment that promotes learning and student well-being
- how well the school is placed to sustain and improve its performance.
Review Methodology

The school has been required, under the DPA, to undertake annual self-assessments of its performance. The outcome of these assessments formed the basis for the school’s self-review. The school sent its self-review documentation to the IPS Review Team, Department of Education Services one month prior to the commencement of the review.

The IPS reviewers supplemented the information provided by the school with information on the school’s achievements, its processes and its student performance data from a number of sources which included:

- the My School® website
- the Department of Education School Performance Monitoring System
- Schools Online reports
- School Curriculum and Standards Authority Year 12 Student Achievement data.

Reviewers analysed the evidence presented in the school’s self-review documentation to verify achievement and developed lines of inquiry where further verification was required.

An agenda for the review visit was subsequently negotiated with the Principal to enable the gathering of evidence to verify claims made by the school. During the review visit the reviewers sourced evidence to support the school’s self-review claims through observation and discussion with leaders, teaching and support staff, board members, parents and students.

The evidence provided by the school, along with information gathered by the reviewers prior to and during the review visits, was used as the basis for the verification of how well the school has met its commitments as outlined in the DPA and Business Plan.

This document reports on the findings of the independent review.
School Context

What are the important features of this school's context that have an impact on student learning?

John Curtin College of the Arts is unique as a public school offering fully selective Gifted and Talented (GAT) programs in ballet, dance, drama, media arts, music, music theatre, visual arts and a soccer specialist program. The college is located within the City of Fremantle and enjoys a long-established connection to the arts. Programs for gifted and talented dance and drama students have been offered at the college since 1973.

The college provides students with opportunities for attainment of the West Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) through accredited certificate courses in arts-related industries, as a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), and through academic achievement. The college is committed to a duality of purpose through excellence in the arts and academic achievement in line with the school motto Learning for Life emphasising the continuous and cumulative nature of education. The college academic achievements in both Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR) and vocational education and training (VET) at a State-wide level are exceptional and documented elsewhere in this report. This attainment is underpinned by the belief in providing an education that values creativity, innovation and imagination, respect, care, excellence, a fair go, taking responsibility and integrity.

The development of the physical and natural environment was a key priority in the 2013–2015 Business Plan and aimed to enhance college grounds and buildings following the Master Plan developed in 2012. Development over time has seen the upgrade of the existing infrastructure and the addition of purpose built performance and classroom facilities, the most recent coinciding with the transition of Year 7 students to secondary education for 2015. The $11m building has provided state-of-the-art facilities to support teaching and learning. The college also has the Curtin Theatre, a $6m performing arts facility specifically equipped for theatrical, dance and musical performance. The Curtin Theatre is used as a training facility for production and front-of-house VET certificated courses. Technical staff provide support for the delivery of performing arts programs in the theatre.

The college has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) of 1132 and an enrolment of 1500 students at the commencement of the 2016 school year. At the time of the last IPS review the enrolment was
The increase in enrolment is consistent with the addition of Year 7 students in 2015 and the increased capacity to enrol selective students. The selective intake is drawn initially from 124 primary schools from all parts of WA and from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Thirty students board at the City Beach Hostel in order to attend the College. Student enrolment consists of 95% from selective programs with 5% drawn from contributory schools in the local community (10% in 2013). As GAT programs are available to all students in WA, applications for places are heavily oversubscribed with in excess of 800 applying for each of the 265 places available for both Year 7 and Year 8 in 2016. The successful cohort size has shown a slight increase from 256 in 2013. The attendance rate for students at 93.4% is well above expected levels.

In striving to provide a holistic education for students, the college has trained staff and merit selected new staff to support the development of its programs. The effectiveness of teaching has also been enhanced by the college being a Teacher Development School in the arts and science. Training in GAT education is a key element for staff understanding and knowledge to develop excellence in curriculum, academic, artistic and cultural opportunities in meeting the needs of students engaged in academic programs. Staff capacities to implement programs that support the development of the college culture are enhanced by a reflective framework of accountability and performance management.

The college has been proactive in developing effective partnerships to support student learning. It has external partnerships with peak arts and industry groups that support the arts programs and organisations at a national and international level that assist in the development of its soccer specialist program. Universities also play a role in the life of the college with access to key groups and organisations that support curriculum and student welfare development.

The College Board has articulate, experienced, well-informed and committed members who understand their role and responsibilities as set out in the DPA. It provides effective support to leadership and plays a significant part in promoting the vision, ethos and values of the specialist role of the college in public education. It is involved in the ongoing development of the college vision and values, the Business Plan and associated targets, the one-line budget, reviewing and writing a new constitution, and in the ongoing development of the guidelines for their operations.
The School’s Self-Review Process

How effective was the school’s self-review in accounting for its performance during the period of the DPA and Business Plan?

John Curtin College of the Arts staff conducted a comprehensive self-review process that provides a clear account of student performance during the period of the DPA and the 2013–2015 Business Plan. The self-review documentation includes extensive analysis of the outcomes of plans to improve student learning in academic and non-academic areas. Verification of achievements of targets and the implementation of strategies to support improvement were articulated in subsequent meetings with senior staff and teachers with additional supporting evidence supplied to affirm the college’s strong performance in priority areas. Notable in the self-review process was the contribution made by staff to analyse the performance of students at an individual/coh Ort and whole-school level.

Data and information collection and analysis is a particular strength of the school and accounts for consistency in the practice of using evidence-based decisions for planning. The data collection and analysis is especially rigorous with staff utilising comparative data to determine the extent to which performance meets high standards of progress and achievement. The traditional like-schools’ comparisons are made with NAPLAN and Year 12 data with the addition of performance judgements made against high fee-paying non-government schools and public secondary schools in the western and southern suburbs. Comparative data has been used consistently over time to demonstrate improvement in student learning and achievement of high standards of performance.

Self-review documentation and the opportunity to discuss college performance with staff, board members, parents and students confirmed that the requirements of the DPA were being met. In particular, the Business Plan sets out a range of priorities to improve student learning and strategies to support implementation that are consistent with key elements of the DPA.

The principal and school executive team have been instrumental in ensuring that the self-review process has been embedded in reflective staff practice and is of considerable rigour and effectiveness. This provides assurances that performance strengths are the result of planned interventions and strategies. Any weaknesses are identified as key elements of ongoing and future planning to maintain high academic and non-academic standards. Reviewers
noted the reporting of the progressive outcomes of achievement against Business Plan priority area targets in Annual Reports to parents and the community.
School Performance—Student Learning

How well has the school performed in improving learning (achievement, progress and engagement) for all students?

The 2013–2015 Business Plan is a clear statement of the purpose, values, vision and priorities. The Plan states that the purpose of the college is to develop creativity, innovation and imagination in every student with special emphasis on the arts. The college endeavours to ensure that all students are committed to the pursuit of excellence and has integrated its motto of learning for life within learning programs. The values of respect; care and compassion; a fair go; responsibility; and integrity are successfully embedded in college life. Five priorities are pursued within the Plan: gifted and talented education; academic excellence; excellence in teaching; a safe and caring learning environment; and the physical and natural environment.

The college has excellent academic achievements, particularly in the 2015 school year, with highly successful results in both ATAR and VET. These results attest to the high level of progress the college has made toward achieving its purpose of excellence in academic results. The 2015 Year 12 academic success included:

- 2nd top public school in the State for 75% or better in WACE courses (16th out of all schools)
- 2nd public school in the State for 65% or better in WACE courses (17th of all schools)
- equal 1st public school in Vocational Education and Training as well as equal 1st of all schools
- the Year 12 cohort also achieved the highest median ATAR for 10 years at 84.85.

Business Plan strategies and targets support the priorities of the college at a whole-school level, within cohorts and different groups. The college has placed a priority on academic success within the arts area consistent with its ethos of integrating artistic talent with academic success in traditional WACE attainment. In the words of the Chair of the College Board, the college is developing an 'arts-infused curriculum' across all areas.

The college has also targeted high achievement in Stage 3 WACE courses in the areas of dance, drama, media, music and visual arts. There has been
consistent achievement over time of these targets in the drama, dance and visual arts areas. Excellent Year 12 results have also been achieved in media, and while not yet historically consistent, there is a strong improvement trend. Improved Year 12 results were shown in the music Stage 3 course in 2015; however, this area has not yet achieved the target in the Business Plan.

The Business Plan has set targets, within its gifted and talented priority and its academic excellence priority, in relation to Year 12 ATAR results in all courses and within the arts area. There has been strong development of these areas in the most recent planning cycle with a steady improvement in the results over time. Reviewers noted that the highest scaled WACE course marks across the school in the 2015 results were in mathematics 3C/D and in literature, along with highly positive results in biology, English, mathematics specialist and physics. The target in the Business Plan of greater than 30% of gifted and talented students achieving a final scaled course mark of 75% or better in relation to all courses is aspirational, however, four of the Stage 3 targets were achieved. Discussion affirmed the college view of maintaining aspirational targets in planning to ensure long-term success.

The college has developed a comprehensive VET program, particularly in the arts area, to cater for the different talents, abilities and future pathways for all students. The college has a particular strength in the delivery of arts-related VET courses supported by its status as an RTO delivering courses in the arts areas. An increasing completion rate of Certificate II VET courses has placed the school equal first in the State in 2015 achieving the high-level target set. High completion rates in the VET areas of sport and outdoor recreation were also noted. The reviewers were impressed with the range and quality of VET courses available to students and with the professionalism of staff in achieving the target in VET.

College priorities target improving student achievement and progress in Year 7 and Year 9 NAPLAN assessments. The overall relative achievement of students in Year 7 and Year 9 NAPLAN show students consistently achieving at or above expectations. The MySchool data shows the 2015 Year 9 students achieving above those from schools serving students from statistically similar backgrounds. The reviewers noted and discussed with leadership the lower performance in Year 7 numeracy in 2015 and the strategies proposed to improve performance.

Student progress from Year 7 to Year 9 in NAPLAN assessments is higher than expected for the group tested in 2015 in the domains of writing, spelling
and grammar and punctuation and as expected for reading. Progress in the area of numeracy is below expectation. College staff were aware that the change to secondary schooling for Year 7 is an opportunity for them to work intensively with younger cohorts to ensure that these students make the greatest possible learning progress. The focus on staff undertaking professional learning in Gifted Education Research, Resource and Information Centre, University of New South Wales (GERRIC) to develop effective teaching strategies shows significant promise in improving the learning of students as they progress through the school.

The focus on the arts and creativity is more broadly demonstrated in the life of the college: in its performances and exhibitions; its links to the community; and in student participation in artistic and creative endeavours. The engagement of students in these activities is demonstrated by the 78 performances and exhibitions held at the college during 2015 with 14 000 tickets sold for these events. The performance and exhibition program has, over the past three years, demonstrated increases in student engagement. The college staff has actively encouraged and supported student engagement in activities during and out-of-school time and participation in events within the broader community.

The Business Plan for the college contains twenty-nine targets that detail statistical improvements in student results in a range of academic measures. This includes the college priority areas of Gifted and Talented Education, Academic Excellence and a Safe and Caring Learning Environment. The reviewers affirm the staff judgement on these academic targets, having examined the relevant data sets, annual reports and held discussions with college leaders, learning area staff, support staff, students, parents and board members. A significant number of targets have been achieved. The college has made remarkable progress toward becoming a school of academic excellence in a range of areas, not only those in the arts disciplines. Some targets are aspirational rather than achievable on a consistent basis and as such not all targets have been achieved.

The college has demonstrated through its planning intentions and review of performance that it has been highly successful in improving student learning (achievement, progress, engagement) with outstanding artistic and academic results. College leadership and reviewers discussed future directions including the next Business Plan. Consideration may be given to a smaller number of more holistic targets, or targets that are exemplars and more strategic, with
detailed strategies and targets included in operational planning to assist the college and Board in its self-review and reporting processes.
School Performance—Quality of the Learning Environment

How well has the school performed in creating an environment that promotes learning and well-being for all students and the attainment of the school vision?

As Western Australia's only fully selective arts public school, John Curtin College of the Arts provides a unique learning environment for gifted arts students. The importance of what the arts bring to the school is encompassed in the John Curtin value of Creativity, Imagination and Innovation. Students are expected to bring to their whole program the qualities they develop through the arts such as persistence, empathy for others, discipline and attention to detail.

Students are also selected into a specialist soccer program, an academic excellence program, and in addition, students residing in the local intake area attend the college. A strength of the college lies in the expectation that all students, whatever their area of interest and ability, share the values of the college in their pursuit of excellence. The college recognises and celebrates its point of difference in its commitment to the overall development of its students to achieve 'learning for life'.

It was evident to the reviewers that this valuing of the school vision, 'Learning for Life', has united and inspired the college community. This is exemplified by the high levels of passion and sincerity displayed by teachers and students in every aspect of their day-to-day activities. College staff model the values in their interactions with students, parents and fellow teachers. This is supported by regular acknowledgement and reference to them by the school leadership and student services team at public events and assemblies. Students, in discussion with reviewers, verified that the college values are reflected in a safe and inclusive environment that supports diversity and allows each student to retain their individuality.

A culture of high standards and expectations is prevalent in the college while maintaining the social and emotional well-being of the individual as being equally important. A whole-school approach to mental health and well-being is a feature of the Business Plan and evidenced by a raft of support processes. Discussion with staff illustrated the holistic view of the student that places an emphasis on each individual. Students' academic and social progress is effectively tracked and monitored, with issues that may be affecting student learning or emotional health being discussed with students, parents and staff.
In 2015, the Student Services team used the Mind Matters audit tool to survey whole-school approaches to mental health and well-being. The results compared favourably to Friendly Schools data.

There is an emphasis on students being ‘happy’ as well as being academically successful. The reviewers affirmed through meetings with students, parents and student services staff that a range of strategies are in place to support this approach. These include: the peer support program for Year 7 students who are teamed with senior students to offer a positive transition to secondary school; a course advisory team to ensure appropriate course selection and pathways for senior students; a wide range of revision seminars and before-school tutorials; an attendance monitoring system that responds to individual students at risk; the restorative approach ‘certainty not severity’ to address the complex behavioural issues of students; and social activities conducted by the student services team. Other initiatives identified by students and parents as contributing to a learning environment where students felt well-supported are the ‘Are You Okay’ day that encourages the school community to support all individuals who may be struggling with life; the ‘Think’ campaign for internet safety promoted by the student councillors to encourage positive student behaviour; and the SWAN awards program which recognises student achievement at four different levels.

The college has an established support staff with a range of specialist skills and knowledge that create a learning environment where students are actively and purposefully engaged in high-functioning programs. Examples include: theatre management staff; media and visual arts technicians; ICT staff; and marketing and communications personnel. All contribute to the necessary support to optimise learning conditions. It was apparent that each staff member is aware of the importance of their role in the broader context of the college’s success. Well considered management of physical and financial resources, new facilities plus a variety of complementary refurbishments provide a learning environment of a high standard of presentation of buildings and grounds.

GERRIC training undertaken by all teaching staff provides them with the necessary skill set to ensure that differentiation is targeted at both the program and individual level. Teachers exhibited a deep understanding of how students learn and maintain a shared pedagogical approach across the college. A comprehensive suite of programs and initiatives cater to all levels of student ability and interest. The GAT arts program provides a specialised differentiated curriculum for gifted and talented ballet, contemporary dance,
drama, media, music, music theatre and visual arts students. This enriched arts environment provides extensive opportunities to learn through performance, exhibition and film with graduates from the arts being successful in a range of art related careers and other professions. There is a strong correlation between the GAT Arts and Academic Excellence Program (AEP) for English, humanities, mathematics and science. The AEP has a differentiated curriculum for students identified through GAT testing and/or Nelson testing and who participate in enrichment programs across the four learning areas. Strong achievement in NAPLAN testing and ATAR results are indicative of the success of this program in engaging students in excellence.

Another unique aspect of the college is its successful Soccer Excellence Specialist Program. The soccer coordinator verified that the values of the college underpin the program with students being encouraged in the pursuit of excellence, discipline, persistence and ‘fair go’ in their chosen sport. Students have access to soccer industry-based professionals and opportunities to tour locally, nationally and internationally as well as participating in interschool matches. A large number of students from the program have been successful in being chosen as state and national representatives.

A number of the selected students come to the college with a learning disability, mental health and/or dual exceptionalities (students who are both gifted and learning disabled). The college’s PROPEL program (Providing Real Opportunities—Participation, Empowerment, Learning) identifies these students and has a comprehensive set of strategies to ensure academic success for them. There is an emphasis on teaching students how to learn. Data analysis, case study and student and parent testimonial evidence is impressive in attesting to the progress that these students have made since enrolling at the college. The average ATAR for these students in 2015 was 86.9, better than the whole-school average. Evidence presented to the review affirms that this program in particular has made an extremely positive contribution to the learning of these students. In meetings with parents, the reviewers received positive verification regarding the program.

An inclusive pedagogical approach is adopted school wide to suit learning styles and is well supported by a variety of co-curricular programs that enrich the learning environment for students. There is a cross pollination of learning areas working together in many of these programs, such as the Year 9/10 ‘Picture Happiness on Earth’ initiative and the ‘Roots and Shoots’ environmental sustainability program. These projects encourage students to apply their knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts. Similarly, other
significant programs that contribute to the holistic focus of the college include the Boys’ Project, which provides boys an avenue to target male issues and interests and the Thinking Science program designed to develop student’s thinking skills. Staff involved in these projects exhibited a high degree of enthusiasm and passion for their work, which adds significantly to the learning environment of the college.

The expansive range of VET pathways on offer at the college has strong partnerships with industry practitioners, assuring the delivery of nationally consistent and up-to-date information. These effective relationships with a range of industry groups support the seven arts programs with tutors and guest artists. These include, but are not limited to: WAAPA, Australian Dance Theatre, Spare Parts Theatre Company, Deckchair Theatre, Channel 7, The West Australian, School of Instrumental Music, Fremantle Arts Centre and Central Institute of Technology.

The college has well-established communication and marketing strategies in place as evidenced by its coordinated suite of promotional materials for the GAT Arts and Soccer Excellence programs. Parents expressed high satisfaction with the timeliness of email communication by teachers and the newsletter publication, Curtin Calls. The college intranet also provides parents with a secure login allowing them access to course outlines, assessment schedules, policies, excursion/camp/sporting fixture information and college performances. Further initiatives to use the intranet as a communication tool with parents are being implemented in 2016, providing a broader range of service for all stakeholders of the college community.

In 2014, the college conducted a ‘Raise the Curtin’ survey with teachers, students and parents. The results indicated that parents are generally satisfied with all aspects of the college. The identification of key concerns such as ‘teachers don’t provide useful feedback about school work’ and ‘informing parents if their child has a problem’ have been addressed. Reviewers noted that the survey response was 10% of the parent group. Parents who met with the reviewers were keen to recognise the commitment of staff at all levels of the organisation, as demonstrated by the many and varied after school activities. They appreciated the opportunities afforded them to meet teachers and the school leadership team informally at performances, sporting fixtures and media/arts exhibitions.

The reviewers confirm the provision of an effective learning environment through a culture of care and support for students. The breadth and variety of
the programs encourage high levels of engagement and achievement. The commitment to the 'whole' student supports the college vision of 'Learning for Life'.
School Performance—Sustainability

How well placed is the school to sustain and improve its performance into the next planning cycle?

John Curtin College of the Arts leadership and staff demonstrated through quality planning during the 2013–2015 DPA and the successfully embedded distributed leadership model, that it is strategically positioned to sustain its current performance, build upon success and further develop identified areas for the 2016–2018 Business Plan. Self-review practices are highly developed and consistently applied across all aspects of the analysis of student and school performance. Reviewers were able to verify the strength and consistency of practices across the college operations that have been adopted by staff. They are well placed to assess and sustain student progress across the range of learning areas and programs that constitute the college curriculum and targets for academic and non-academic success. This is particularly noticeable in the attention paid to detailed processes to support targeted students requiring additional assistance. The reviewers verified in discussion with students and staff, that the college’s holistic approach is implemented and understood at all levels ensuring that student needs are being met. Students in particular, were able to affirm the high level of support and recognition they received from staff as being a part of the college culture of ensuring ‘learning for life’.

The College Board has well established and understood governance processes that provide dynamic and strategic oversight and critical reflection. This supports the performance and advancement of the artistic, academic and sporting elements that typify the college’s unique and valued characteristics. The Board has played a significant role in the development of the current Business Plan including maintaining oversight of performance against targets over time. Board minutes and discussion with members verified the extent to which its obligations and responsibilities under the DPA have been met.

The consistent and expert leadership by the Board Chair, has ensured that a focus on the ethos and values of the college has been maintained and strengthened through involvement in setting policy directions and engagement in business planning. The current Board Chair is stepping down and a replacement process is underway. There is recognition of the need to maintain and build on the momentum already established in supporting and promoting the qualities of the college and its unique place in public education.
Leaders fostering continuous improvement, is a strong feature of John Curtin College of the Arts with the contribution made by leadership at all levels playing a major role in the college being a leading secondary school in WA. The Principal and executive team have modelled exceptional leadership in leading the college to achieve its current academic success and maintenance of a learning environment that enhances the well-being of students. Staff verified in meetings the extent to which they valued the culture of the college, its collaborative practices, high levels of co-operation between staff groups, positive interactions with staff and students and the enriching education provided. Staff, board members, parents and students were able to further verify commitment by leaders at all levels in providing the best educational opportunities for students.

During the review process, discussions with staff provided reviewers with the opportunity to verify their commitment and varied high level expertise in supporting student learning. Reviewers were able to affirm the specialised talents and knowledge of staff across artistic, academic and social domains and sporting endeavour. Professional learning, particularly in the domain of teaching gifted and talented students and in specialised areas, is a feature of practice in maintaining staff understanding and improving effectiveness. It was evident to reviewers that successful practice was embedded across specialist teaching and learning areas; high level, reflective and analytical decisions were being made about student performance; and, improved student learning was able to be demonstrated through progress and attainment over time.

Reviewers met with key staff responsible for the management of the human, physical and financial resources of this unique educational enterprise. They were able to verify the extent to which the complex operational requirements associated with artistic and specialist pursuits were manifested in extended hours on a daily, and weekend basis, which effectively kept the college operational for 51 weeks per year. The employment and deployment of specialist teaching, administrative and technical staff along with external tutors and the involvement of a range of community and industry bodies, adds great complexity to the management of all resources. The management of resources and budgets, including ensuring board oversight, are well led by the Principal and business manager, enabling the college to maintain and enhance its artistic, sporting and academic programs in pursuit of high standards of student performance.

College planning to ensure that gifted and talented students in the arts, and indeed all students, have sound academic achievement as an outcome of
their secondary education, has been achieved. Recognition at a State level of student performance in university entry and VET assessments places the school in company with the best performing public and private schools. While the achievement and recognition is well deserved, the practices that ensure college planning provides direction to the work of all staff is significant in developing a culture that reflects commonality of purpose. The development of this culture provides considerable insurance that beliefs and practice are able to be sustained into the future.
Conclusion

The unique qualities of John Curtin College of the Arts ensure that the development of learning programs and the creation of a learning environment to meet the specific needs of its gifted and talented population is a task that requires lateral thinking and the development of inspirational and engaging programs. The success of the college in its academic, artistic and sporting areas of speciality are testament to the dedication of the leadership and staff in creating an environment that fosters and develops student achievement. This has been ably supported by a Board that has provided oversight of the directions for the college.

The leadership team and staff of John Curtin College of the Arts have taken a long-term view in setting targets to improve student learning. This has been demonstrated since the last IPS review with clear expectations of standards of achievement and progress resulting in high-level success and recognition of student performance.

Commendations

The following areas are commended:

- the Principal and executive team for the rigour and scope of the self-review process as the rationale for evidence-based decision-making for future and ongoing planning, ensuring that staff are empowered to engage in self-reflective practice
- the Principal and staff for the high-level targets set in Business Plans for academic performance over time that has culminated in outstanding Year 12 results in ATAR and VET in 2015
- college staff, for the provision of an extensive range of performances and exhibitions that provide a platform for students to experience and gain expertise from artistic endeavours demonstrated in a community and public environment
- leadership and staff for the breadth of programs the college has in place that provide diversity of opportunities for students to be able to engage and excel in productive learning for life
• the college and staff responsible for the PROPEL program for the curriculum support and pastoral care provided to enable students with additional learning needs to achieve their potential

• the Principal, executive team and staff for their ongoing focus in ensuring all students receive appropriate support and guidance to enable them to reach their academic and social potential

• the Principal and executive team for their empowerment of staff to enable them to assume leadership roles that support and enhance the student-centred focus and high achievement levels demonstrated by the college as a leading public school

• the leadership team, responsible for the development of processes and practices that continually respond to the resourcing needs of the artistic and academic programs at the college.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas for improvement are identified:

• identification of processes to achieve improved parent response rates to future college satisfaction surveys

• consideration be given to developing strategic targets in the next Business Plan with detailed strategies and targets included in operational planning to assist the college and Board in its self-review and reporting processes.
Declaration

We, the undersigned, hereby confirm that the information provided in this findings document is to the best of our knowledge true and correct and is based on the verification of the evidence provided by John Curtin College of the Arts as part of the Department of Education Services’ independent review process. The Principal and Board Chair have had an opportunity to comment on any matters of fact contained within this document.

9 April 2016

Mrs Kerry Usher, Lead Reviewer

Date

8 April 2016

Ms Maureen Lorimer, Reviewer

Date

8 April 2016

Mr Peter Wilson, Reviewer

Date

27/4/16

Mr Richard Strickland, Director General, Department of Education Services

Date