Implementing Positive Behaviour for Learning Smoothly and Successfully

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Acknowledgements

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report was to observe how some Queensland schools have implemented the PB4L programme within their schools. With the specific objective of identifying what works and why, and what doesn't and why not? No conclusive results have emerged, however it was evident that each school has implemented the programme to suit their own context.

This report finds that schools need to take their time implementing the programme ensuring they have got the support of the principal and staff. Recommendations discussed include:

- Following the implementation plan developed in New Zealand
- Ensure that the schools teaching programme suits the schools needs
- Have a reward programme that is easily administered, students have been consulted and it is not too expensive to operate long-term.

The report identifies some limitations of the research including:

- A limited number of schools were visited
- The schools were selected by the Queensland team and were schools they felt were going well and maybe did not have the problems I was hoping to see
- Unfortunately I did not see any school that was using restorative approaches.

Purpose

To visit a number of Queensland schools who have been on the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) journey for a number of years – in most cases longer than New Zealand schools. These visits would provide a three-fold benefit for my research: hearing their success stories, what worked and why it worked; their pitfalls or challenges, what did not work and how they could have done it better; and final how they have integrated their PB4L programme with restorative practices.

Queensland was selected as the region to visit, as they have been involved in PB4L since 2005, and also restorative practices are well established in Australia through the work of Margaret Thorsborne.

Research Findings

As mentioned in the proposal I took a trip to Brisbane, Queensland and visited a number of PB4L schools while there. Lorna Hepburn, a School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) co-ordinator who is a member of the South East Behaviour Advisory Team, arranged the selection of schools I visited. These schools were selected by the team to try and meet my proposal needs while also being some of the more effective and efficient SWPBS schools in the South East region.

SWPBS Team – Queensland

Despite New Zealand using essentially the same model as Queensland there are some implementation and support differences. The advisory team is employed by the Queensland government and is housed in a building on a school site. The team here not only does the training but in most cases they are the coaches for those schools as well. This means that they attend the meetings at the schools and support each school in their delivery of the programme.

At the time of my visit there were 59 schools in the SWPBS programme, which was 24% of Queensland schools, and four employed SWPBS co-ordinators to support these schools. Thus these four staff are allocated to a number of these schools and they attend their meetings and provide their support for each school. However, this means that these four co-ordinators are constantly travelling and trying to manage their timetables to ensure they are meeting as many of the schools needs as possible. Under this structure it also meant that each school needed to have a staff member who became the driver of the programme delivery, this would ensure that the day to day school requirements were being met as the coach was not on site to ensure this happened.

Training sessions provided by the advisors includes a one and a half hour information session, which is delivered to induce new schools to join the programme, whilst also providing an opportunity for new team members from existing schools. Many schools have indicated that their school team members have changed and this information session provides them with the basics to allow them to be an effective team member in the future. Principals of new schools are provided with basic information, which they in turn take back and share with their staff with the hope of gaining an 80% acceptance by staff to join the programme.

Flagstone State Community College

A reasonably new school built in a new housing development, Flagstone, 40 minutes from Brisbane CBD. The present principal is the foundation principal and the school has been on the SWPBS programme for four years. At present they are still on Tier One but are hoping to move to Tier Two in the near future.

Tier One of PB4L is when the school concentrates on teaching the school's expectations/values to all students. Tier Two is when the school has mastered the teaching to the majority of the students (80% success achieved in all categories of the Effective Behaviour Support [EBS] survey) and it then concentrates on teaching the behaviour to the small identified groups found from the school data. Tier Three is when the school concentrates on the individual students who still get it wrong (the red zone students).

The school has a good team that is well established and has the full support of the Principal through attendance at all meetings and willingness to be involved in teaching of school values. They have a young teacher who is vibrant and takes a major role in the development and delivery of the schools SWPBS programme.

The teaching of the school values takes a variety of methods. Normally the teaching is done through care groups, which are the same as a vertical form group. On some occasions there is a provided lesson plan but often it is left

up to the teacher to develop his or her own lessons using "The Flaggy Update". This is a staff newsletter, which sets out the lessons to be taught and the week in which they should be taught, along with the previous months' SWPBS data and reminder of the voluntary breakfast PD available for all staff on SWPBS.

On the day of my visit it was a whole school assembly with the students seated in their house groups in the gym. Each house group has staff and student captain elected which work closely with their house group. Each house has a large sign in the gym, which indicates their house name in each corner of the gym. A school wide PBS role play took place on how to line up correctly with the staff, including the principal, demonstrating how not to line up, with the sports captains demonstrating the correct way to line up. By using the staff to demonstrate the incorrect way to perform lining up it brought an aspect of humour for the students, but also meant that they did not see other students lining up incorrectly which would give them an opportunity to copy bad behaviour.

To help embed the SWPBS values for staff initially the whole staff were asked to pick a buddy who visited their room for 10 minutes to observe how many positive and negative corrections they made in that time period. This data was then shared with the staff member, with a school goal for staff to give four positives for every negative given. This was a great way to encourage all staff to use positives in the classroom rather than negatives.

The school uses ICE (I C see Everything) awards to reward students on getting it right. These were previously handed out at a full school assembly but feedback from students indicated they would prefer to get these at year level assemblies only. The school has identified that it needs to put more time and effort into their reward system.

The school has an Exit room that is run by one woman staff member who is a member of the SWPBS team and spends the time with withdrawn students, chatting and trying to get them to change their behaviour to meet the school

values. Students fill in two forms with the staff member's help, one is kept in the Exit room and the other is returned to the teacher who arranges a meeting during break time. The purpose of this is to have a conversation and student is also given a detention. While the school did not formally follow a restorative process this procedure does follow a restorative method.

I did not observe the school values around the school or in classrooms but lots of SWPBS information is contained in the student diary, which all students must have with them at all times. Staff use the active supervision model with walkie-talkies but no record is kept of behaviour observed during this time.

Beenleigh State High School

Is a co-educational secondary school with approximately 900 students who have been on the SWPBS programme for about 5 years. The school has had a falling roll and has been given state support in the form of an extra Deputy Principal, money to refurbish and paint the school, and is part of the raising achievement initiative. The school culture is now starting to change and they are seeing a rise in their student numbers. The school feels as though it is making progress, but I question with all the extra funding for a variety of projects they will not be able to do them all service in the long run.

SWPBS signs are well published around the school. However, the school has chosen to use the full matrix so they are very wordy and I wonder how many students or staff actually read them.

Teaching of school values is done through horizontal form times. Last term they had three 5-minute slots to teach but found that five minutes was not enough. Their solution was to lengthen this time for the rest of the year to allow for better teaching and learning. Some lesson plans were provided for teachers to use for teaching the values but not all lesson plans were provided. Whole school teaching of values occurs at school assemblies and ensures a consistent message is delivered to all students. I did not observe any teaching of values taking place on this visit.

The school has issued each staff member with a stamp, which is attached to their school keys which ensures they have it with them at all times. This stamp is used to reward good behaviour by placing a stamp in their student diaries. The students must have their diary with them at all times, which is a new initiative this year and appears to be working well. Students tell their form teacher when they have reached a certain reward level and they let the management know. At that point the student is permitted to go to the Library to select a prize they want. The rewards have been selected with help from the student body so they are items they want to get, for example, $50 at a surf shop. By involving the students in the prize selection it has meant the students are more interested in obtaining the recognition for good behaviour.

Ormeau Wood State High School

This is a new secondary school, which was opened in 2009 with Year 8 and 9 students only. The foundation Principal is still there and the school now has a roll of 850 students. The school has been custom built in a new subdivision with a campus size of approximately 30 acres. The school has been future proofed so that as and when it needs new facilities they can be built. They were in the process of completing a new performing arts theatre. The campus does not use bells to indicate the next period – music is played and if a student arrives after the music they are deemed as being late.

PB4L delivery is very structured and has been developed by a team of teachers, but one in particular has developed a full set of detailed lesson plans and supporting power points that were used by all staff members in 2011. At the beginning of the year the whole staff are presented with the big picture for the school and how the school will implement PB4L within the school. All form teachers at the school were expected to deliver the lessons throughout the week – this generally took three attempts to get the full lesson covered. This was found to be a very useful tool for teachers but the time involved in developing the material was extensive and unsustainable. As the teachers had their own distinct style it was agreed by the management of the

school that some teachers delivered the lessons better than others. However, on the whole the teachers agreed and supported the programme, and therefore did their best to teach the values to the best of their ability.

A change was made in 2012 to provide only a power point so that teachers can use their own style of delivery. This has meant less work to develop the teaching resources but also means that teachers that have been in the programme for two years are more than capable of delivering the material in their own style.

I observed a Year 8 class working on appropriate use of electronic devices, but the teachers need to spend at least three sessions each week to complete the material that is provided in the power point. This is quite stressful for the teacher and the students as it is very hard to get continuity in the teaching and learning.

Year level assemblies are held each week and have a PB4L focus which supports the teaching that is going on within the school that week. Behaviour is not assumed it is taught so that students are not put into situations where they do not know the appropriate way to behave. The Principal is very supportive of programme and does a lot of the teaching at assemblies when required.

Discipline system is set up in a three-tier system where the classroom teacher generally deals with tier 1 and then tier 2 was dealt with by the Head of Departments. However, this has changed to Year Level Co-ordinators (Deans) to ensure HOD's have more time for curriculum planning and delivery.

A very effective reward system is being used and has been developed within the school at very little cost to the school. Every student has a school diary and in this there is a section for rewards earned by each student. There are three categories – red (classroom), yellow (property) and blue (self and others). The teacher places a sticker in the appropriate section in the log book

for that particular student. When a student receives five stickers in one section then they are given a token, which they take, to the school library and post in their form class tube. These tubes are very visible by all the school and they can all see who is winning at any point in time. At the end of each term the top form class, in the past, has been treated to an activity for example ice skating, surfing etc. The school has since moved away from the form class idea as some of the students in the form class did very little and still went on the trip. They are now identifying the top 50 students who receive the award at the end of the term.

All classrooms have a poster up of the school values but to this point there is no external signage used.

Coomera Rivers State School (Primary)

This is a brand new primary school that was opened in 2011 and still has the foundation Principal, who ensured that PB4L was put in place when the school was established. All staff and students are very clear what the school expectations are and they need to be followed by the students.

A student enrolling in the school is given a business card with the school rules on it, and there is an expectation that the student will learn the rules before they start at the school.

Every class must elect a student of the week and they are given a school pencil. This award if not given out to all class students, they must earn it. As a result the award is very sought after by all students and the actual prize is irrelevant as such.

The school has a "Rule Ranger" who is an elected senior student who wears a cape and mask and introduces the new rules for the school. The number of rule rangers has increased because it is seen as a very prestigious position, having more rangers has allowed the school to share the responsibility. They

now have three rule rangers – one for "safe", one for "respectful" and one for "learner". Each rule ranger has their own arm signal that the students can identify. These rule rangers are really enjoyed by the younger students and are a great way to involve students in the delivery of the school rules and values. The principal follows up any new rule introduced so that it is seen as school wide initiative.

Lesson plans for teaching the rules are provided and each teacher must demonstrate how they taught the rule to their class. This method allows each teacher to put a personal touch on how the rules are taught for their class. This allows for the difference needed for junior and senior classes.

Signage around the school is both inside and outside the building and is very effective.

The school has a reward system called "River Rewards" which are a card which has two parts – one is written on and goes home to the parents, and the other part is glued into their books and signed off by their teacher. When the student reaches a given point they are allowed to pick a reward from a given list. This may be playing handball with the principal which is very popular. Rewards have been carefully thought out so they are cheap and sustainable.

Active supervision happens and staff wear a coloured vest and record the behaviour in folders, this allows the team to analyse the data and address any issues that may arise. In the past the need for more handball courts was identified and have been provided to stop inappropriate behaviour.

Park Ridge State High School
This is a co-educational secondary school on the outskirts of Brisbane which has been a member of PB4L for a while but has addressed that they are not making much progress, and as such had arranged for some additional training with the regional co-ordinators. This extra training was an opportunity for the

team to meet for the day and work together to develop the school's common purpose and develop the matrix to fit around their school values.

The team was very excited about the new signage they have purchased which would be arriving soon. These signs are to go outside and show the school expectations.

The school has decided to call the PB4L initiative "learning together" as they felt this had a much more positive feel to it.

To encourage staff to support the PB4L initiatives they are rewarded by the Senior Leadership team taking their class on Friday if they have given out the most merit awards during the week. Each week the Special Needs Unit nominates a teacher as "Star Teacher of the Week".

Students' merit points are recorded in the school absence system and when they get to a certain point the Head of the Department's contact home with a letter. When a student reaches 500 merit points they are presented a certificate and a gift at school assemblies.

The school operates a withdrawal room but the staff at this stage does not see that sending a student to the withdrawal room is a major behaviour misdemeanor, as they are removed from the teaching and learning environment in the classroom.

Mabel Park State High School
This is a co-educational secondary school 23 km south of Brisbane's centre. The school has a roll of approximately 500 students from 42 different cultures. A large number of New Zealander's attend this school. The principal, Mike O'Connor, is dynamic and has worked hard to change the teaching and learning environment within the school since his arrival in 2008.

His focus for the school has four sections:

- Focus on student learning

- Working in teams

- Professional learning

- Sharing expertise.

All sections must be covered to ensure the school achieves success. The achievement data, truancy and incident rates are spectacular. The change took four years and has meant that some of the existing staff has since left the college.

The school is a PB4L school and has four expectations, which all students abide by. The Principal at school assemblies teaches these expectations each week. Classroom time is for learning and increasing students' curriculum level. The school data supports this as attendance rates are up and the school has reduced the number of incidents in class, which indicates students are engaged and learning.

Learning intentions and success criteria are used in all classes without fail. To ensure they are using these teaching strategies and observation by their buddy teachers checks this. These buddy teachers are selected by the individual teachers to ensure they feel comfortable having regular observations conducted by them. This is a full trust model as none of the data gathered on the teaching is related to competency. Professional development sessions are developed to meet staff needs identified through the observations. The principal does not see the observations sheets; these are just seen by the HOD.

A wide and varied number of professional development sessions are offered each term. The teachers have some compulsory sessions and the rest are voluntary, with the teacher choosing to attend or not attend.

All students are assessed every six weeks with the students' results being posted by the teacher using the student's photo on a big whiteboard in a common staffroom, this way other teachers can see students' results.

A weekly newsletter by the Principal highlights the number of excellence letters sent to families and behaviour referrals for each year level for the week. This sharing of data provides encouragement for both staff and students about how well they are going and how much improvement the school has made. Daily attendance data is also shared on the weekly newsletter.

The school has had major success in academic, attendance and behaviour referrals and this has been model from the Principal down. Students within the school believe they can achieve and now do.

Implications

Financial Support and Training

In Queensland there is an abundance of training provided by the state but there is no financial support given to the schools that join the programme. This means that any new initiative they want to put into their school must be funded from the schools general funding. This has meant that things like publicity, signage and the reward system have to be as cost effective as they can be so they are easily sustainable.

Training in Australia is different in that the regional co-ordinators are generally the coach of a variety of schools which means that they have to be available to attend that school's meetings when scheduled. It also means that they have to try and keep up to date with each school they are working with. There has been a change recently which has seen the newer schools now selecting their coach from inside the school which, as a result, makes the school more accountable for their journey and the school's implementation.

Signage (external and internal)

A key focus for an outsider when visiting the Queensland schools was to see how they had publicized their involvement in the PB4L programme around the school. Some very effective signs were seen – the most effective were colourful, well placed and had concise wording so the message was easily understood by the viewer.

Internal signage was generally similar to the outside signage but often there was more variety, and these were usually A3 in size and had been photocopied within the school to keep costs to a minimum. Many of the schools used a variety of postcards that were either given to the student or posted to the parents. The pre-printed postcards are a great way to showcase the school's expectations both in the school and in the local community. See examples provided in Appendix A.

Data Usage

The schools that used incident behaviour data to guide their PB4L teaching programme appeared to be getting the best results. Queensland schools do not have a centralized programme to collect this data and therefore each school was doing their own thing with regard to their data. Many were using a spreadsheet to try and maximize their data feedback.

In New Zealand, for secondary schools using Kamar you can now modify your pastoral data to allow you to collect and analyse your data to allow you to identify problem areas around the school, specific students that constantly get it wrong and staff they may need support in their classroom. Kamar allows you to extract a multitude of data from your school database – but your staff need to make sure they enter the data in the first place.

Teaching Programme around PB4L

Once again this was varied between the schools from one where everything including the lesson plan was provided, to another where the only teaching of school expectations was a school assembly and the Principal did this. All schools admitted that developing a detailed teaching programme for the school involved a huge amount of work, and they were not sure that those teachers who were expected to deliver them always delivered the lessons proficiently.

Principal Involvement

A principal that was actively involved in the programme, modeling the behaviours and teaching the expectations, was essential if the school was to have success with the programme. None of the schools I visited had a principal change since the PB4L programme was put in place.

Reward Systems

A variety of reward systems were observed and a key focus mentioned before was the need to be cost effective and sustainable over a long period of time. An effective reward system for the school is one that has immediate rewards, short-term rewards and long-term rewards. This system allows students to get

motivated instantly, encouraged to continue to use the correct behaviour for short-term rewards and then having the long-term reward available for which students can strive for.

A VIP line at the canteen was an effective free reward that was enjoyed by secondary school students. Providing each staff member with a stamp, which they attached to their keys, was a simple and effective way to ensure all teachers had their stamp with them at all times. It could be used both in and outside the classroom to reward a student in their school dairy. The use of a token system, which is displayed in the school library, allows a sense of competition to emerge between the form classes. Using a trip at the end of the term as the incentive means that it worth the students trying to get the rewards to enable them to go on the outside school trips. Allowing students to select the prizes ensures you are catering specifically for their tastes and means they want to strive to win the prizes. Pencils and time spent with the principal were effective rewards for a primary school, but unlikely to be effective or sort after for a secondary school student. Letters home to the family were quite widely used and appeared to be well-liked by all the students at all year levels.

Restorative Justice

None of the schools I visited had a formalized restorative justice system in place and it appeared that the programme had not been given the same focus as the PB4L programme by the Queensland government. It is pleasing to see that New Zealand has identified how well the two systems work together and is now looking at ensuring both PB4L and restorative practices are embedded within their schools.

Benefits

The benefits of this study were to visit a region outside of New Zealand that has been involved in the PB4L programme for a longer period of time and see how they have successfully implemented the programme within their schools.

The benefits for our students, staff and the school in general were to try and provide me with some ideas on how to implement the PB4L programme successfully into a secondary school, ensuring the teaching and learning is authentic and effective.

The trip also confirmed for me that the way New Zealand is implementing the PB4L programme is well researched and thought out. It appears to have taken the best approaches from the United States and Queensland to ensure the greatest chance of success in New Zealand schools.

Conclusions

While the trip to Queensland did not provide me with a complete bag of tricks that will allow my school to successfully implement the PB4L programme, it did provide me with an opportunity to see a variety of delivery methods within a variety of schools, and allowed me to see the benefits of the programme when it is working well.

It also allowed me to see that the PB4L journey is a slow and steady process if it is to have the greatest success within the school. Tier One will take two years to implement if not longer within the school and schools should not try and hurry the process.

The teaching programme is the most difficult aspect of the programme to implement and needs lots of input and time from the team to develop a teaching programme that fits with the whole school teaching pedagogy, and is as near as possible to an authentic teaching opportunity. Research states that when a behaviour is seen this is when the most effective teaching takes place

to change the behaviour in the future. Unfortunately some classes and some students will never misbehave and therefore any teaching for them must be provided in a simulated situation. Most simulated situations I saw tended to be in an assembly situation where the Principal either led or took a major part in the teaching of the expected behaviour. Role-plays with humour are an effective way to teach behaviour in a secondary school.

Expectations need to be taught to some students as they are often not taught these values at home. Having formed our coastal cluster with a local primary school, intermediate, alternative education centre and our school this means that our three common values will be well taught and engrained for these students and they will therefore require less teaching and more rewarding for getting it right.

The New Zealand model appears to have taken the best of the United States and Queensland models and has provided not only effective and on-going training support but money to allow the programme to develop specific initiatives needed to support the programme, such as relief for teachers to develop the lessons and money to purchase relevant rewards for students and staff.

One part of the Queensland set up I thought that worked extremely well was the initial introduction session where the Principal attended and they then did the introduction of the programme to their school. This allowed the Principal to focus on the parts of the programme that will be most beneficial to their school. The New Zealand model where the co-ordinator comes into the school and presents the programme to the staff can mean that the key aspect the school needs may not be given the depth of explanation needed for the staff to see how the programme could benefit their school. To be considered for this programme in New Zealand there must be an 80% support from staff.

That our school has become a PB4L school with its set of practices and interventions complements our existing restorative practice programme. The PB4L programme provides the structure, teaching and learning needed to

change behaviour while restorative practice provides an effective process to deal with students who still get the behaviour not quite right. Our school has seen a positive improvement in behaviour using a restorative method – where the victim and wrong-doer are brought together to fix the harm caused and this now being supported by the structure of the PB4L programme. Our values are clearly stated and our students know what they are and what is expected of them. Our reinforcement system has been developed and has the structure needed to ensure consistency by the staff. This was a major concern of our staff and students and a solution was needed.

My trip to Queensland has now provided me with the next steps needed for our school in our PB4L journey. The framework in Appendix B has allowed me to see what we need to concentrate on so that we as a school can move to Tier Two in the near future.

References

Background supporting data provided by:

Professor George Sugai, The Centre for Behavioural Education and Research, University of Connecticut

Professor Tim Lewis, Dean for Research and Graduate Students, University of Missouri – Columbia

Warren Dawson, State-wide Co-ordinator, School-wide Positive Behaviour Support, Education Queensland

Appendix A – Signage

Beenleigh High School
PBL Prizes
Earning 150
stamps

Ormeau Reward Bank

Respect teaching and learning

Respect myself and others

Respect property

Remember:
Place your dollars in the Form Class **BANK** in the Resource Centre to win a **REWARD**.

Coomera
Rivers
State School
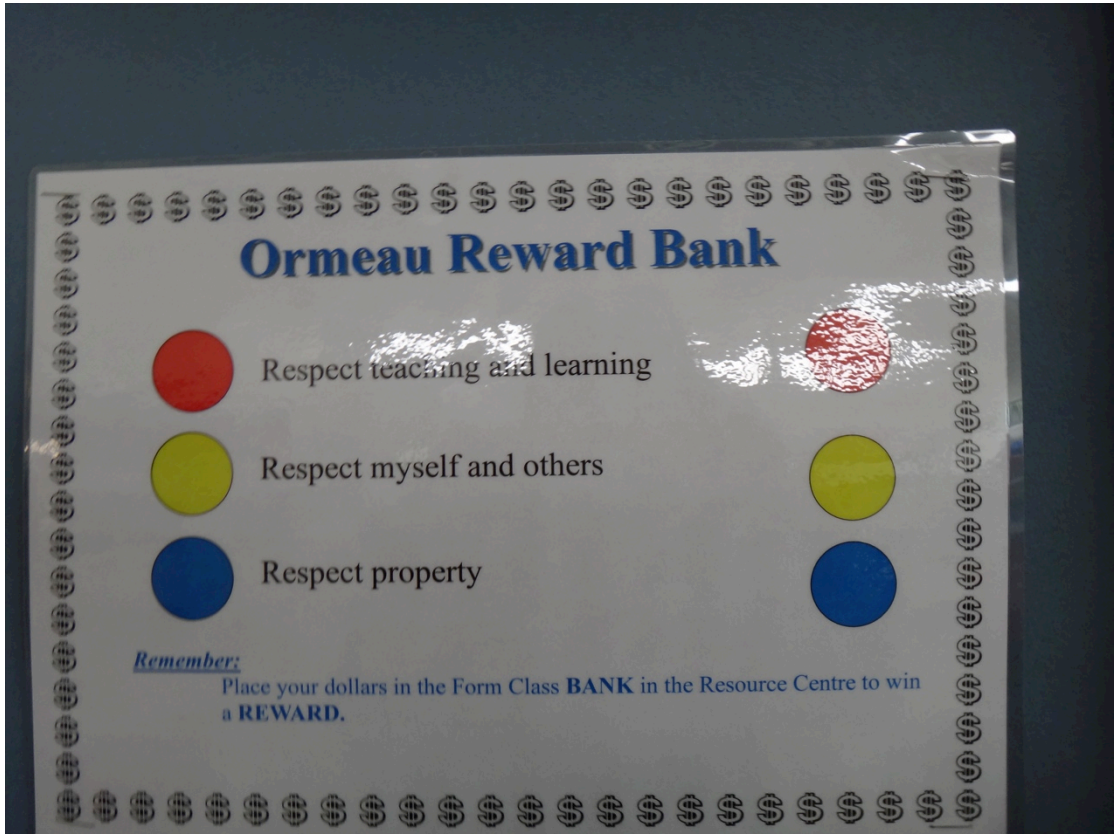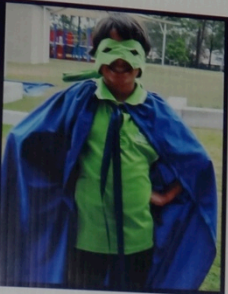
Our School Rules...

Be Safe

Be Respectful

Be a Learner

I Am...

A Learner

Respectful

Responsible

EAGLEBY SOUTH

STATE SCHOOL

Aim Higher

Do the
'High Five'
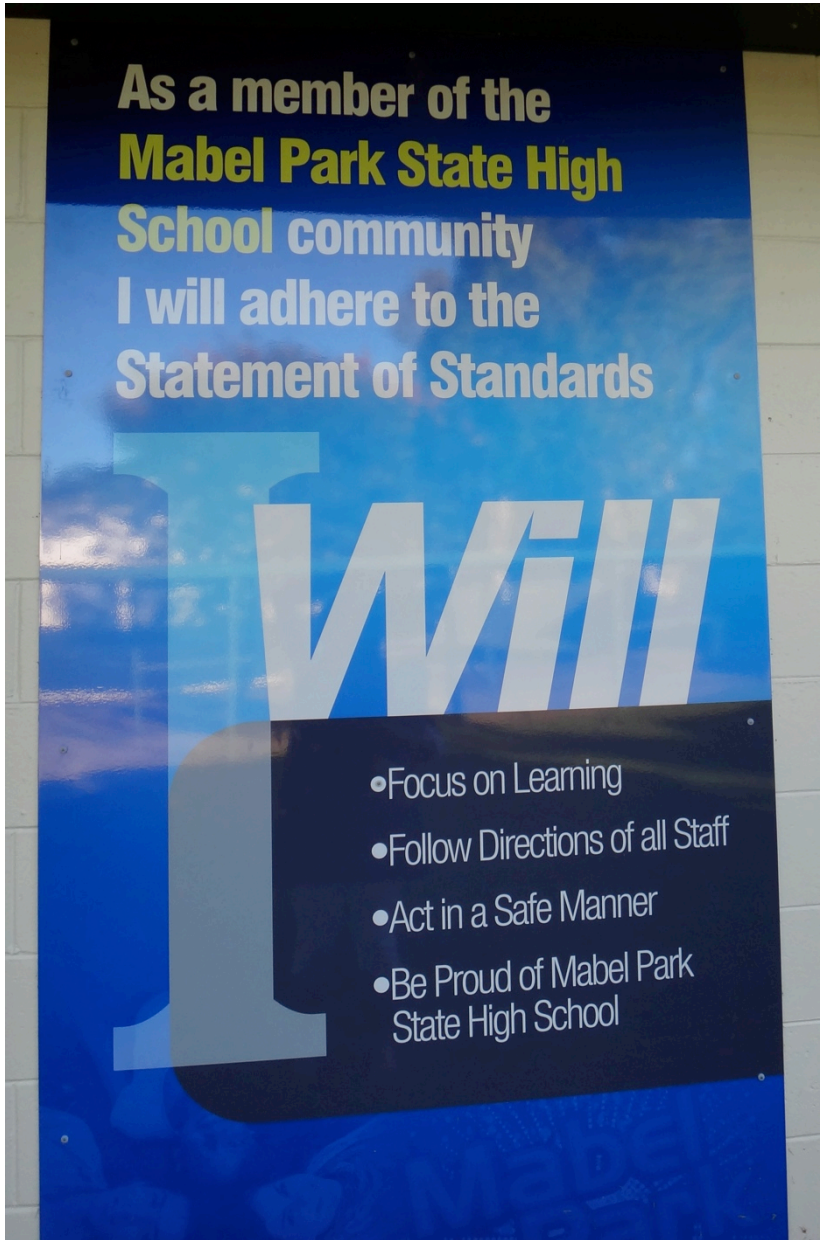
Mabel Park
100%
Attendance
Postcard

Appendix B

SUGGESTED GUIDE TO SWPBS FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT - SEVEN ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS

SWPBS is grounded in the PBS principles of prevention, instruction and function. These principles need to be built into all school systems and practices, using evidence based decision making processes. As living documents are created to support each system, providing practices for school members to follow, it is important to remember the need for revision and reflection as an ongoing activity.

1 — PRINCIPAL ENDORSEMENT
Principal / Administration endorsement, participation and leadership from Principal to guide decision making and problem solving. Communication strategy development

2 — COMMON PURPOSE & APPROACH TO DISCIPLINE
Establish a team, review operational / strategic plan, develop a statement of purpose, Working Smarter Matrix completed. Branding possibilities – use of logo /school badge/ traditions & treasures

3 — EXPECTATION SYSTEM
3-5 positively worded expectations, matrix development, visuals created and posted in all settings

4 — TEACHING SYSTEM
Teaching plans developed using matrix, formal teaching times named - place and day, staff trained to directly teach classroom and non-classroom routines

5 — REINFORCEMENT SYSTEM
Continuum of procedures for encouraging expected behaviours, reward structure and plan for each setting; links to expectations, resourcing, valuing by students / staff

6 — PROBLEM BEHAVIOUR RESPONSE SYSTEM
Continuum of procedures for discouraging inappropriate behaviours, define problem behaviour, define consequences, office vs teacher management (major vs minor), crisis management

7 — SWPBS IMPLEMENTATIONS SYSTEM
Procedures for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of SWPBS effectiveness, Tier I Team continues work on all systems as Tier II and Tier III teams are formed. Continued skill development for staff

COMMUNICATION SYSTEM
For staff, students and parents, encouragement of family involvement, expectations, reward and problem behaviour systems made known

DATA SYSTEM
Monthly collection and analysis, The Big 5, quarterly report to staff, evidence-based decision making