



# Kuraby Special School Parent and Engagement Framework



# Parent and community engagement framework

## PURPOSE

Parents\* and the broader community play a vital role in supporting successful learning outcomes for our children. This framework is about schools engaging with parents and communities to work together to maximise student learning outcomes.

The research tells us that the most meaningful partnerships are those where schools, parents, students and the community work together to focus on student learning. Parent and community engagement that is effectively focused on student learning can deliver powerful outcomes.

This Parent and Community Engagement Framework identifies what schools can do to strengthen learning outcomes for students – through effective partnerships between principals, teachers, students, parents and the community. It sends a call to action to our schools to focus on parent and community engagement as a key part of supporting student learning.

Many of our schools have already developed effective strategies to engage with parents and community, however with the overwhelming evidence that parent engagement has a positive effect on student achievement, all state schools are encouraged to strengthen their approaches in this area.

Queensland has a diverse range of communities and it is important to acknowledge that each school has its own contexts to which they respond. A range of contexts apply including remote locations, high proportions of working parents, high proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, recent disasters and other community events. For this reason, it is essential that schools individualise their engagement strategies to suit their particular needs and those of their parents and communities.

This framework uses current best practice to provide a model to support all partners in their quest to boost parent and community engagement.

## INTRODUCTION

The education of our students is a shared responsibility, benefiting all students, our society and economy as a whole. Therefore, parents and broader communities have a reciprocal responsibility to engage with schools.

Schools are better able to support student achievement by developing strong engagement with and between:

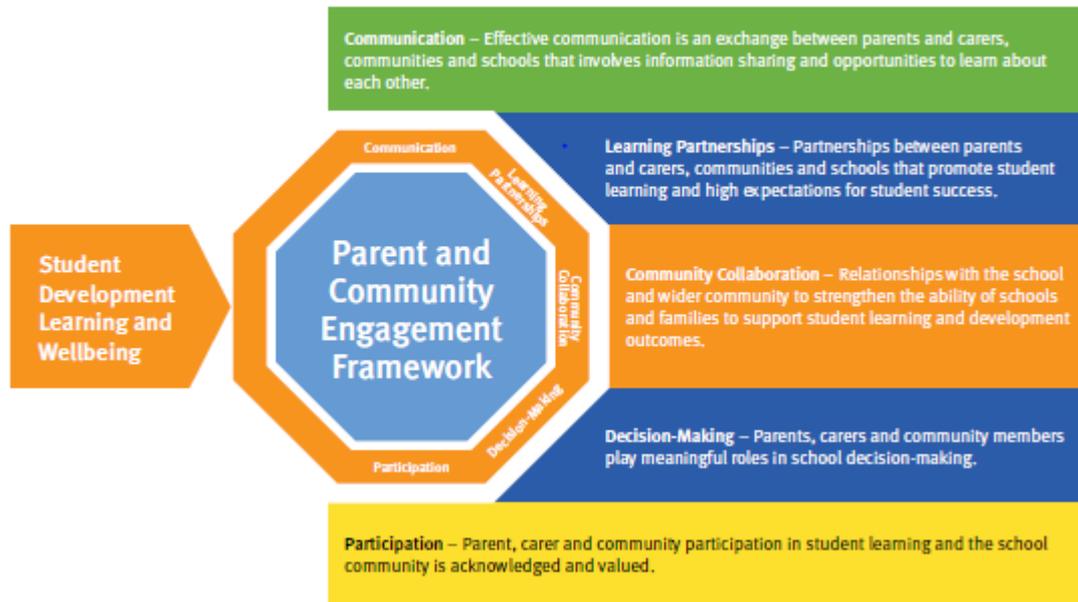
- Students
- Teachers
- Parents and carers
- Support staff
- Community industry and business groups.

The quality of these relationships will determine the quality of the learning. This framework outlines five key elements of parent and community engagement to make a positive difference in our students' education.

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\* Throughout the document, where the term 'parent' is used to refer to parents, carers and families.

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## COMMUNICATION

Effective communication between schools, parents, the community and students forms the foundation in developing and maintaining partnerships. Schools also have a responsibility to help parents understand the language of learning.

At Kuraby Special School we believe in:

- Communicating student progress to parents in a positive and meaningful way.
- Establishing a common language of learning between teachers and parents to explore the learning development, challenges and successes of our students.
- Working with parents and the community to establish a shared set of expectations about schooling.
- Providing opportunities for all parents regardless of work, cultural, custodial or language challenges to communicate with the school.
- Communicating with industry, business and community partners to support student learning.

### Strategies:

- Use school information sessions to inform parents of the nature of today's classrooms, how to speak with teachers and how to talk to their children about their schooling experiences
- Use a range of communication tools and channels, including newsletters, websites, e-mails, assemblies, parent/teacher interviews, P&C meetings, web conferencing and text messages

- Print a school calendar in the school newsletter outlining key points in the school year encouraging engagement of parents and the community
- Be aware of and communicate how to access information in other languages and forms or provide meetings with teachers using the government interpreter service
- Provide professional development for teachers to effectively communicate with parents
- Share consistent and ongoing messages of high expectations for all students and their learning.

## **LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS**

Learning is not limited to the classroom. The beliefs, expectations and experience of parents is a powerful determinant in student's achievement. Understanding the school, home and community contribution to student learning helps cultivate a holistic learning environment.

At Kuraby Special School we believe in:

- Supporting parents to be positively involved with their child's learning, at home and at school.
- Leveraging community, industry and business knowledge and skills.
- Developing partnerships with parents and the community that can deliver more innovative models of partnership development, education and training.
- Developing Staff understanding and learning about students, including their home and community contributions, their culture and what contributions it makes.

Strategies:

- Build relationships with local early year's services including ECDPs and Child Care centres.
- Include practical literacy and communication activities that involve parents in key priority areas of their child's growth and development.
- Use our Parent Room to provide parent/teacher workshops targeting areas of need or interest.
- Connect culture and learning by partnering with local Elders in educational experiences.
- Develop local strategies to support transitions between early childhood education and care, primary school and secondary school, higher education and the workforce.
- Embed the practice of involving parents in goal setting and monitoring discussions with their children through the development of their child's Individual Curriculum Plan in years Prep to 10 and through the development of the Senior Education and Transition Plan, (SET-P), and the PATH, (Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope) planning sessions and review in years 9,10, 11 and 12.

At Kuraby Special School we believe in:

- Meeting the needs of our parents and students and building the strength of our community.
- Identifying opportunities for the community to support the school in areas such as life education, anti-bullying, civic responsibility and the development of social skills.
- Building the skills of our students to meet the needs of our community, including industry and business.
- Strengthening partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and individuals.

Strategies:

- Generate and maintain contact with relevant health professionals in the area to support student referrals.

- Develop a school community awareness through our school and community notice board, parent information materials, school banners and fence signs.
- Open school facilities for community use, including adult learning, community meetings and community interest groups.
- Build networks to establish a community integrated student support/health/post school community links.

## **DECISION-MAKING**

Our school is committed to providing opportunities for relevant consultation to ensure decisions reflect local needs – whether for an individual student or the school as a whole. We aim to develop greater community ownership and a trust of school directions and decisions through open and authentic consultation.

At Kuraby Special School we believe in:

- Genuine consultation, encouraging open and honest dialogue.
- Offering training and support to build parent leadership capacity, empowering parents to participate effectively in consultation.
- Community consultation on formal/informal decision-making, reviews and new school policies (for example, assessment, reporting and curriculum changes).
- Consulting actively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultative groups.

Strategies:

- Consult flexibly to reach a cross-section of students, parents and community members.
- Ensure information regarding consultation opportunities is widely circulated in a variety of forms.
- Offer training or skill development opportunities to parents and teachers.
- Develop strategies to help teachers balance any time and workload issues that may result from their involvement with consultative decision-making.
- Encourage active participation in the P&C and encourage student participation in decision-making processes including special student events such as the senior formal.

## **PARTICIPATION**

We recognise that in a society where parents lead complex lives, opportunities to participate in a variety of ways, times and places is key to improvement. Parent and community participation in student learning and the school community is acknowledged and valued. This involvement fosters and models educational value to our students.

At Kuraby Special School we believe in:

- Parents and community members participating in school activities.
- Recognising and supporting volunteers.
- Volunteers contributing to teaching and learning.
- Notifying parents about major events well in advance so they can plan ahead.
- Celebrating significant cultural days.
- Celebrating significant days which highlight key issues for students; for example Day for Daniel

Strategies:

- Publish events, meetings and school events on calendars on the school website/Facebook at the start of each term.
- Engage community members and business in designing learning experiences and extracurricular activities.

**Success Criteria: We will know we have effective Parent and Community Engagement when:**

- Parents are encouraged to take a genuine and close interest in the work of the school, are acknowledged as the first teachers of their children, and engage as partners in their children's learning
- Communication with parents provides information about where students are up to in their learning, what progress they have made over time and what they might do to support their children's further learning
- Respectful and caring relationships are reflected in the ways in which staff, students and parents interact and in the language they use in both formal and informal settings
- Regular feedback between the school and parents ensure parents have the skills to engage with their child's learning
- Parents can list the school's key expectations for behaviour and attendance.
- The principal and the teachers use many styles of communication appropriate for parents' cultural backgrounds, availability, working conditions etc.
- The principal and teachers regularly connect with the parent/s of every child in the school
- Relationships with educational, business, industry and community members are established for co-benefit.

## Community Organisations Engage at Kuraby Special School

### Community Organisations and Business

Name of Organisation	Description	School Engagement
Woodridge Kingston Lions Club	Support the school with fundraising and Children of Courage Awards	Improving school facilities and engaging wider community clubs.
MacGregor Lions Club	Support the school with fundraising and Children of Courage Awards	Improving school facilities and engaging wider community clubs.
Rotary Club	Yearly presentation of 'student of courage' award. Supporting the P&C with fundraising	Improving school facilities and engaging wider community clubs.
Commonwealth Bank	Supporting the students of Kuraby to open a bank account for the students	Every account open and money deposited into the accounts, Commonwealth Bank will give 5% to the P&C for every deposit to support school initiatives.
Coles-Second bite	Providing donated food to the school to be used for class and school activities.	Distribution of fruit, and vegetables to classes and support the in-school breakfast club for students
Bunnings	Supporting the school to improve facilities and to offer school based workshops for senior school students	Construction of the butterfly garden and regeneration of sensory area.
Mission Possible	Donate knitted toys and clothes to the school to pass on to students and families.	Clothing, soft toys and motivators that could be used in class or at home.
Tabol of Nolidge	Support the school with fundraising and access to specific resources	Improving school facilities and resources to support engaging in the wider community.

## Work Experience and Post School Options

Name of Organisation	Description	School Engagement
Connect 2	Job network organisation to support students with disabilities to find paid work.	Support students with avenues of employment.
Open Minds	Traineeship program offering work readiness and opportunity for senior students	Students engaging in paid employment and TAFE training
Multi-cap Cafe	Hospitality training setting for people with disabilities.	Training and employment opportunities.
F.I.R.S.T	Transition setting providing music programs.	Leisure post school option for students.
Independent Grocers of Australia (IGA)	Warehouse packaging, shelf packing and training	Training and employment opportunities.
Substation 33	Local recycling centre that recycles old technology items	School training and job readiness program.
Endeavour	Transition setting providing leisure programs.	Leisure post school option for students.
Sports Star	Transition setting providing sport programs.	Leisure post school option for students.
Help Industry	Warehouse packaging and training.	Training and employment opportunities.
Tribe of Judah	Local food store to develop work duty skills	Senior school volunteer program
Lifeline Superstore Woodridge	Local charity store to develop work duty skills	Senior school volunteer program
Monte Lupo – Art Gallery	Transition setting providing training in the Arts	Training and employment opportunities

## Schools and Government Agencies

Name of Organisation	Description	School Engagement
Calamvale Special School	Tri-School partnership supporting local Special School community	Combined events throughout the year. Shared resources to support school improvement.
Sunnybank Special School	Tri-School partnership supporting local Special School community	Combined events throughout the year. Shared resources to support school improvement.
Mitchelton Special School	Metropolitan Special School supporting 4 blocks pedagogy implementation.	Shared professional development and staff capability.
Western Suburbs Special School (SETA)	WSS is the RTO for the VET courses delivered at Kuraby through the Special Education Training Alliance (SETA)	Three VET courses available for senior school students: -Hospitality -Active Volunteering -ICT
Kuraby State School	The local state school in the area	Shared school resource of school bus for activities.
Australian Sporting Commission	Provide school funding to access sports for students.	Employing local sports coaches to provide sporting opportunities.
Queensland Police - Adopt-a-Cop Program	Support the school with key police initiatives and supporting the school.	Supporting school events and functions.
Sunshine Buses	Providing assisted transport for students	Support for events to ferry students and staff.