National Partnerships- Low SES Project

Queensland Catholic schools eligible to participate in the Low Socio-Economic Status National Partnership Agreement were identified by Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) on the basis of their low socio-economic status (IRSED score) and their need. These schools are being supported with additional funding or resourcing for a four year period in order to improve their student learning outcomes.

The National Partnership Agreement between Queensland Department of Education and Training and DEEWR outlines six reform areas that schools and schooling authorities are to focus on in order to create change and improvements.

These reforms areas are:

- Incentives to attract high-performing principals and teachers;
- Adoption of best-practice performance management and staffing arrangements;
- School operational arrangements which encourage innovation and flexibility;
- Provision of innovative and tailored learning opportunities;
- Strengthened school accountability;
- External partnerships with parents, other schools, businesses and communities and provision of access to extended services.

The Low SES NP aims to improve the outcomes for identified cohorts of students. These cohorts include Indigenous students, students with a disability and students from a non-English background, refugees and homeless students.

St Monica’s school Oakey has been very lucky to be nominated as part of this funding project. We will be receiving $91,385 each year from 2011 - 2014.

We will be providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities through the following Strategic plan:-
NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS- LOW SES- STRATEGIC SCHOOL PLAN

Name of school: St. Monica’s School
Name of Principal: Roland Poulton
Address of school: 75 Lorrimer Street – Oakey Q 4401
No. of students enrolled 2013: 186

School Contextual Background:
Oakey is a rural town, in south west Queensland. It is a low socio-economic town with one of the lowest SES scores in Queensland. Consequently at St. Monica’s we have a significant number of students who are at risk of not meeting their potential in Literacy and Numeracy – 11% of students have been verified as children with special needs. St. Monica’s student enrolment is drawn from extremely varied demographics, including a considerable number of indigenous, children in care of the state, single parent/low income and unemployed. As a result, children entering our Prep program have experienced limited exposure to early literacy and numeracy content. Consequently, a significant number of students attending St. Monica’s have substantial delays in their learning development. Following a recent survey on availability of home and school access to innovative learning technologies, it is clearly evident that the students are at a distinct disadvantage. Due to the low socio economic status, the school has experienced difficulty in allocating funds to make provision for innovative learning technologies. Addressing the social and emotional needs of the students has been the priority for the expenditure of any surplus funding over the past 5 years.

Outcomes of the Project:-
- All students are successfully engaged in learning
- Increase student’s exposure to literature
- Provide greater assistance in numeracy and hands on mathematical resources
- Students are meeting basic literacy and numeracy standards and overall levels of literacy and numeracy achievements are improving.
- Provide greater exposure to innovative learning technologies
- Increase inclusivity in the classroom via increased visual & kinesthetic modes
- Our way of schooling promotes social inclusion and reduces the education disadvantage of children, especially indigenous children and students from socially/financially disadvantaged backgrounds.

Community Engagement and Consultation Process:
This project has been discussed with the parents through the School Board and the P & F Association. Teachers were consulted as to the best way to address individual needs of the students. This report has been compiled with the assistance of the schools learning Support Teacher, Curriculum Officer (CEO) and Education Officer – Special Needs (CEO) Our Indigenous school officer has been provided with additional time to assist the students and liaise with the teachers and parents.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Plan</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Time frame</th>
<th>Budget allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students are assessed to evaluate the areas where they are most at risk.</td>
<td>A number of assessments are used involving both school and other personnel. Class teachers, LST, SLP OT, Education Officer: LST. Assessments include: Reading, Spelling, Vocab Maths ages/levels.</td>
<td>Whole School Standardized Testing is conducted in Oct of each year; further diagnostic information is gathered early in term 1 through additional testing.</td>
<td>School and CEO resourced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual learning plans are developed and strategies put in place for identified students.</td>
<td>Principal/LST liaises with CEO-IESS personnel to develop plans and programs for identified students. Follow up testing will be conducted in Feb each year for all students requiring intervention. Experienced teachers appointed to develop and manage literacy and numeracy intervention programs.</td>
<td>Feb each year Diagnostic testing Review Standardized tests Oct 2013 onwards</td>
<td>School and CEO resourced 2 Teachers funded by the project 36 hrs. per week 1 teacher funded 6hrs per week for 25 weeks across terms 2, 3 &amp; 4. (Specific teachers are to target specific area of the school population)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students needs are addressed through focused learning opportunities</td>
<td>Teacher Aides appointed and work with LST to implement oral development, reading engagement, literacy awareness and gross and fine motor skills. Ongoing in-house PD for teachers and teacher assistants in the use of interactive technologies in order to raise literacy and numeracy standards.</td>
<td>Semester 1 2013 - ongoing</td>
<td>Teacher Aide (5 hrs. per week) Funded through the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom teachers become more aware and are able to cater for the educational needs of the students in their class</td>
<td>Classroom teachers to attend Professional Development organized by LST and Curriculum co-ordinator. Write 2 Spell PD with neighbouring schools. Oral Language Development PD with neighbouring schools</td>
<td>Semester 1 2013 – pupil free days</td>
<td>School funded Education Officers – Curriculum - CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents are educated in how to assist their children’s educational needs at home</td>
<td>Parent workshops provided to train parents on supporting their children at school. Early literacy / early numeracy strategies.</td>
<td>Semester 1 ongoing</td>
<td>School resourced Education Officers – Curriculum – CEO IESS Staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>