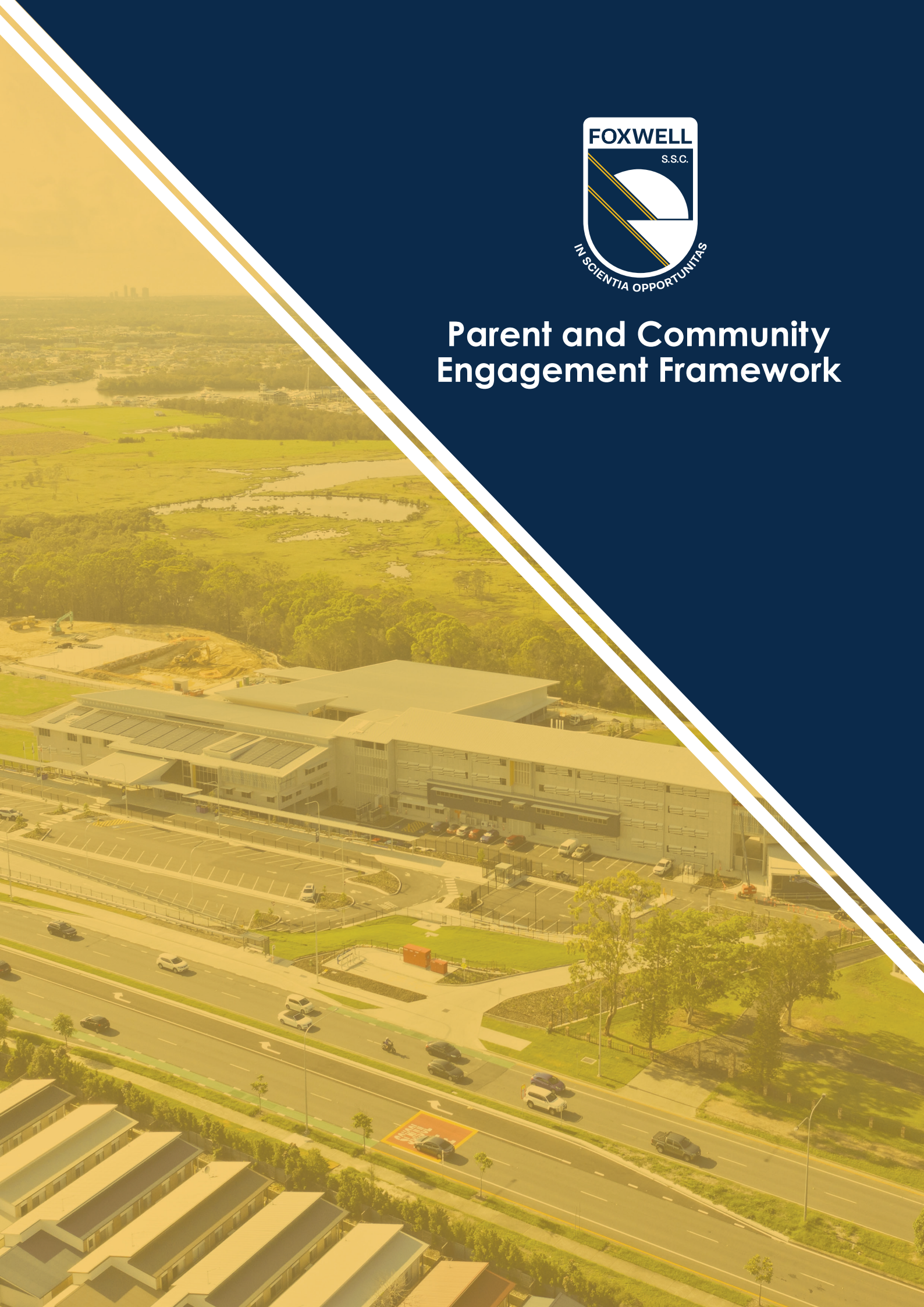




Parent and Community Engagement Framework



Introduction

Parents/carers, and the broader community play a vital role in supporting successful learning outcomes for our children.

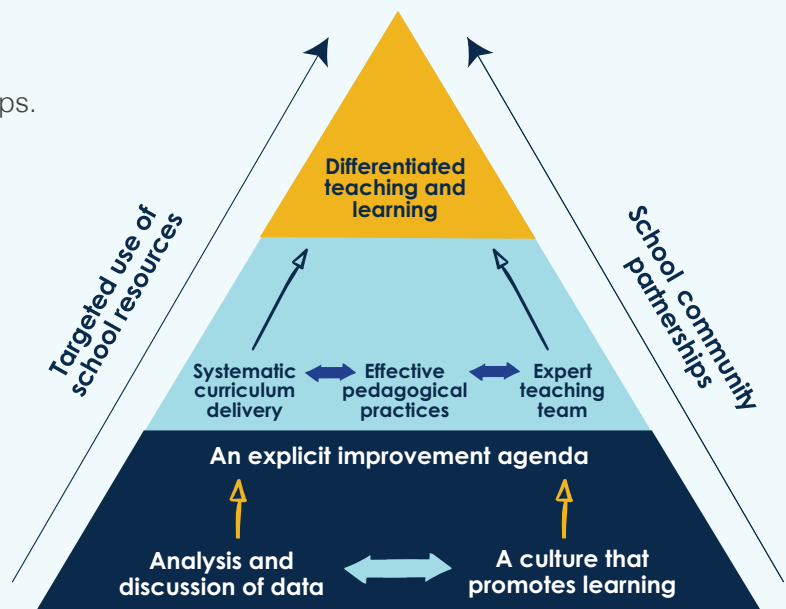
The research tells us that the most meaningful partnerships are those where schools, parents, students and the community work together to focus on student learning. Parent and community engagement that is effectively focused on student learning can deliver powerful outcomes.

Each school's 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.

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.



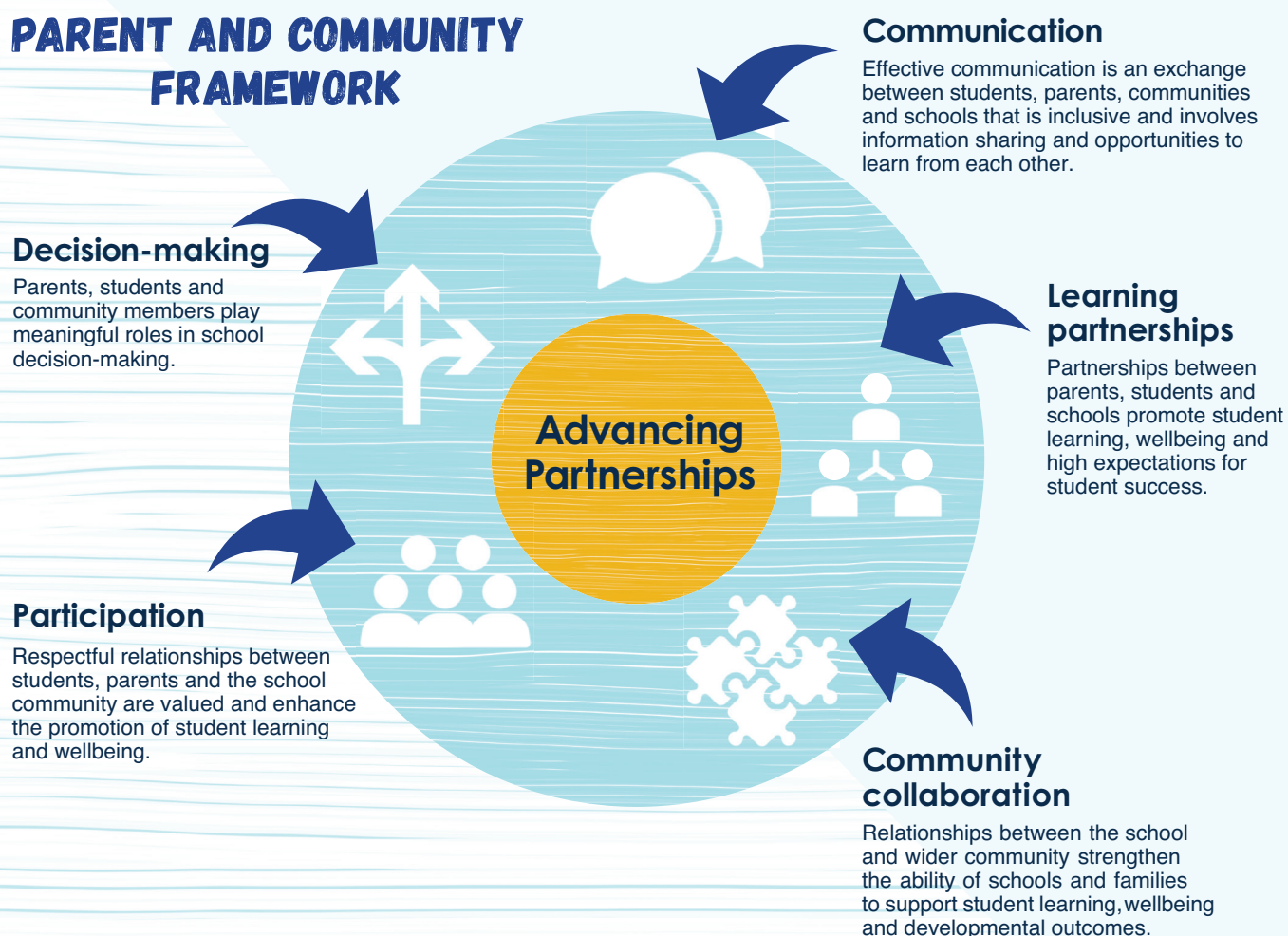
Parent and Community Engagement at Foxwell State Secondary College

The Foxwell State Secondary College Parent and Community Engagement Framework outlines how our school engages with parents and communities to work together to maximise student learning outcomes.

- 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
- Schools have regular and ongoing ways of finding out what parents need to engage with their child's learning
- Parents can list the school's key expectations for behaviour, attendance, homework
- 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
- There are mechanisms to build relationships with relevant members of the community

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.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK





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 Foxwell State Secondary College we:

- Share consistent and ongoing messages of high expectations for all students and their learning.
- 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
- Employ a Community Engagement Officer to focus on effective, timely and accurate communication between the school and our parents and community
- Develop a school Parent and Community Engagement calendar outlining key points in the school year where engagement of parents and the community is vital and the specific activities to be used to engage them
- Develop a shared language of learning between teachers and parents to explore the learning development, challenges and successes of our students
- Agree to live by the Foxwell State Secondary College SPIRIT values and engage in respectful communication as partners in the learning of our students
- Remain aware of and communicate how to access information in other languages and forms
- Provide professional development for teachers to effectively communicate with parents
- Develop strong partnerships and ensure regular communication with industry and business partners.

OUR VALUES

SERVICE

- ‡ concern for the welfare of others
- ‡ playing a positive role in your school community
- ‡ contributing to a safe, secure environment

PERSEVERANCE

- ‡ trying new things and trying again to get it right
- ‡ the development of self discipline and pursuit of improvement in academic results, sport, the arts and personal development
- ‡ courage to give and accept advice for improvement
- ‡ positively adapting to change

INTEGRITY

- ‡ always doing your best and supporting and celebrating others to do the same
- ‡ consistency of approach
- ‡ the continuous improvement in the teaching and learning program

RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

- ‡ rights of all members of the community to achieve their full potential
- ‡ care of the physical environment and the property of others
- ‡ self respect
- ‡ being sensitive and understanding to the needs of others contributing to a safe, secure environment

INCLUSIVITY

- ‡ providing opportunities for everyone to participate
- ‡ acceptance of individual differences and the cultural diversity within the school community
- ‡ developing an awareness of our global community
- ‡ respect for individual differences

TEAMWORK

- ‡ the encouragement of collaboration and cooperation
- ‡ support given to all members of the college community
- ‡ strong partnerships between parents, teachers and students working together in a positive and constructive way

Achieving results

Every day

- ✓ Ensure communication is positive, accurate, meaningful and respectful to nurture a shared belief in high expectations for all students.
- ✓ Use language that is clear and accessible to parents and the community. Avoid or explain confusing educational terms. Find ways to educate parents in the language of learning (for example, through school newsletters, social media, and information or discussion sessions).
- ✓ Establish consistent expectations for how teachers communicate with parents to support student learning and wellbeing.
- ✓ Provide access to information in other languages and modes to meet the diverse needs of parents and community members (for example, in person through sign language, translators, easy English, in written languages other than English). This may include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and parents and next of kin for whom English may not be a first language.
- ✓ Show that the school is genuine in its desire to build understanding of students' backgrounds by creating an environment that provides opportunities for students and parents to share their stories and perspectives.
- ✓ Use assistive technology and other communication aids to better support inclusion of students and parents with disability.

Early in the school year

- ✓ Take the opportunity to communicate and engage with parents and children during the comprehensive and personalised enrolment process and again once the student commences at school.
- ✓ Establish opportunities for parents to meet with their child's teacher/s.
- ✓ Encourage parents to share knowledge, aspirations and concerns with their child's teachers.
- ✓ Have Community Engagement officer/s or cultural liaison staff available to welcome and assist families.
- ✓ Ensure parents know about the various protocols and methods of communication the school will use, and what opportunities are available for parents/carers to formally and informally communicate with the school.
- ✓ Engage with parents and communities to establish relationships characterised by our SPIRIT values, ensuring knowledgeable respect for all cultural groups in the school community.
- ✓ Consider every aspect of communication including non-verbal cues, the design of physical spaces in the school (especially the school office), signage and the processes used by staff to make parents and community members feel welcome and valued.
- ✓ Engage with the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) to assist school staff to get to know their community.
- ✓ Ensure the P&C is reflective of the school community.

Throughout the year

- ✓ Make informal contact a deliberate part of parent and community engagement. Spend time with parents and community members in informal settings and at social events so that school staff and family/community members can get to know each other and build respect and trust over time.
- ✓ For new students, review OneSchool information, transfer notes and any other information available from previous education providers.
- ✓ Send home positive examples of students' work regularly to show parents what their child has learnt.
- ✓ Invite the wider school community to special event days at the school to showcase students' learning for example, Showcase Days, Open Days, Celebrations of Learning, NAIDOC week, Career Expos.
- ✓ Promote good news and activities through newsletters, social media and local media.
- ✓ Welcome parents to our Celebration Assemblies held each fortnight.

Once a year

- ✓ Develop a social media plan as an additional communication channel for parents and the community.
- ✓ Organise school open days to allow community members to tour the school, promote students' work and allow the community to experience how the school operates.

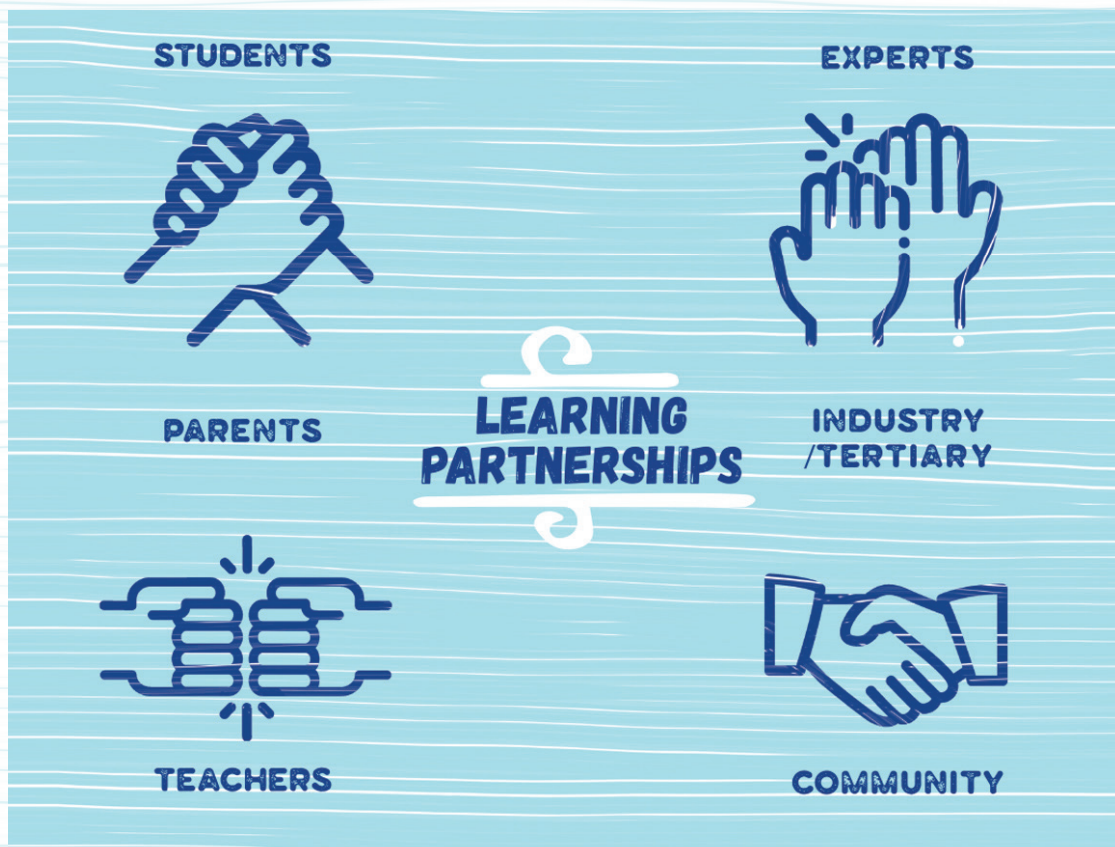


Learning partnerships

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 Foxwell State Secondary College we:

- Support parents and carers to be positively involved with their child's learning, at home and at school
- Lead student-lead conferencing between students, their parents and their teachers to reflect on progress and outcomes and plan forward towards further success.
- Embed the practice of involving parents in goal setting and career planning discussions with their children
- Seek to understand and learn about students, including their home and community contributions, their culture and what contributions it makes
- Build relationships with local primary schools, community organisations, tertiary institutions and local industry
- Network across the South East Region, Queensland, Australia and internationally
- Provide parent/teacher workshops targeting areas of need or interest such as student health and wellbeing, student resilience, social and emotional development and literacy and numeracy.
- Develop partnerships with parents or the community that could deliver more innovative models of partnership development, education and training
- Connect culture and learning by partnering with 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
- Implement innovative partnership programs with universities and industry to expand the curriculum, co-curricular and extra-curricular programs for our students, including our Programs of Excellence.



Achieving results: ideas for improvement

Every day

- ✓ Encourage all staff to model best practice by being friendly, caring and welcoming to parents to create a supportive environment and positively influence the behaviour of students.
- ✓ Recognise, acknowledge and utilise the expertise of staff, for example, consult with key staff for advice on engaging with cultures represented in the school community.

Early in the school year

- ✓ With consideration of the school community, work with parents to identify ways they can help their child's learning at home, for example:
 - provide advice about spaces and routines for homework
 - encourage parents to take a supportive interest in their child's progress and set clear expectations for outcomes
 - provide activities that parents can use to enrich learning in areas of interest or need
 - include practical activities in homework that involve parents, especially in literacy and numeracy.
- ✓ Consider a School Community Engagement Officer to facilitate communication between parents, the community and the school.

Throughout the year

- ✓ Offer professional development that gives teachers strategies to enhance communication with parents. Discuss parent engagement strategies and ideas at staff meetings.
- ✓ Involve students and parents in the development of individual curriculum, behaviour and/or personalised learning plans.
- ✓ Conduct parent workshops, information sessions or webinars on commonly asked queries, for example, how to develop literacy and numeracy skills, coding and robotics, transitioning to high school. Offer specific workshops for targeted groups of parents who require more tailored and individual assistance for example, how to assist children with their homework for specific subjects. If staff members volunteer to deliver these workshops, provide compensation for the preparation and delivery time and show their expertise is valued and their time commitment is respected.

Once a year

- ✓ Identify different aspects of parent participation occurring in the school and which staff members are responsible for supporting each aspect.
- ✓ Collect and analyse feedback from parent and teacher survey.
- ✓ Establish a clear process for parents to provide feedback to the school about what is working well, along with suggestions for improvements.



Community collaboration

Schools do not exist in isolation – they are often the central hub of their community. Schools should leverage their position in the community to work together with other community members, for the benefit of all.

At Foxwell State Secondary College we:

- Seek to understand the key characteristics and strengths of our local community
- Build strong connections and partnerships with local government and non-government external agencies
- Focus on thinking globally and acting locally to address the United Nations goals for Sustainable Development
- Collaborate with community to support our school and the local area in areas such as drug education, anti-bullying, the development of social skills, and civic responsibility
- Establish genuine partnerships between the school and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and individuals
- Engage with a range of cultural groups and collaborate with them to enhance opportunities and exposure of these cultures for our students
- Generate and maintain contact with relevant health professionals in the area to enact proactive strategies and support referrals
- Build networks to establish a community integrated student support/health/services hub
- Develop a Foxwell State Secondary College Business Network and school alumni group
- Develop and share community engagement and marketing materials to promote our vision, values and programs to the local community
- Open school facilities for community use, including adult learning, community meetings and community interest groups



We support the Sustainable Development Goals

Achieving results: ideas for improvement

Early in the school year

- ✓ Collaborate with staff and parents to determine a school vision to address students' learning, health and wellbeing needs, and to identify members of the local community who could complement and support the school to achieve this vision.

Throughout the year

- ✓ Reach out to the local community to determine potential partners.
- ✓ Build networks that have the potential for long-term sustainability, for example:
 - establish a community integrated student support/health/early childhood services hub, including Child and Family Centres — linking with feeder primary schools
 - establish connections with local businesses, tertiary providers, universities and sporting clubs.
- ✓ Establish relationships with community organisations, including disability organisations, to access expertise and perspectives that support improved learning and wellbeing outcomes for all students.
- ✓ Work with local community and business groups to develop shared policies and approaches to supporting effective learning and positive community outcomes - for example, anti-truancy measures or community volunteering.
- ✓ Develop relationships with key community personnel, for example, Elders to integrate cultural knowledge and protocols into the learning of staff and students.
- ✓ Work with local industry to develop opportunities to enhance student learning (for example, work experience and transition to work).
- ✓ If formalising a partnership with a community organisation, prepare meeting agendas and take minutes to record outcomes and actions.
- ✓ Include succession planning when developing partnerships, for example, who will continue the partnership and assist if the staff member transfers/retires.
- ✓ Consider options for guests to conveniently engage with the school for example, through online tools such as web conferencing or virtual classrooms.
- ✓ Consider how the school can formally recognise community partners or celebrate their mutual partnership.

Once a year

- ✓ Design, develop or review community collaboration strategies that support learning and wellbeing appropriate for students at different ages and stages of development.
- ✓ Invite local businesses to be involved in a 'careers expo' to showcase career opportunities to students.
- ✓ Use initiatives such as Mental Health week and Deadly Choices to invite health and wellbeing partners to present workshops for students, parents and teachers.

One-off

- ✓ Establish school alumni to encourage ongoing support from past students, families and staff. This can be especially useful where alumni also represent local cultural communities (for example, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities).
- ✓ Consider how successful past students can be involved in events such as award ceremonies or graduations.



Decision-making

Providing opportunities for relevant consultation ensure decisions reflect local needs – whether for an individual student or the school as a whole. Greater community ownership and trust of school directions and decisions can be developed through open and authentic consultation.

At Foxwell State Secondary College we:

- Consult flexibly to reach a cross-section of students, parents and community members, not just the most confident or loudest voices
- Encourage active participation in the P&C and encourage student participation in decision-making processes including Student Council and focus groups
- Ensure information regarding consultation opportunities is widely circulated in a variety of forms
- Arrange for the community to be consulted on formal/informal decision-making, reviews and new school policies (for example, assessment, reporting and curriculum changes)
- Ensure that consultation is genuine, encouraging open and honest dialogues
- Offer capacity building training and support to build parent leadership capacity, empowering parents to participate effectively in consultation
- Has the school considered how it will consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultative groups?



Achieving results: ideas for improvement

Every day

- ✓ Be open, accountable and transparent in decision-making.

Early in the school year

- ✓ Encourage active participation in the P&C and other school decision-making groups.
- ✓ Involve parents and the school community in developing the Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students to align the behaviour expectations of the school to community expectations and build a shared understanding of what is expected.
- ✓ Enlist Indigenous education workers and community liaison officers to help build connections and to enable all parents and community members the opportunity to participate in consultation and inclusive decision-making. In particular, these staff may be able to help school leaders understand and engage with local protocols and processes about how communities make and communicate decisions.
- ✓ Offer training and skill development opportunities to parents and teachers to help them make the most of consultation opportunities.

Throughout the year

- ✓ Ensure consultation processes are flexible to reach a wide range of students, parents and community members. Use different modes of communication for parents who may find it difficult to engage in decision-making and if needed, use different languages to ensure all respondents can participate. Organise interpreters if required.
- ✓ Encourage student participation in decision-making processes. Develop the capability of student leaders so they can participate effectively in decision-making, as appropriate.
- ✓ Discuss and review strategies being used to encourage parent and community engagement at school leadership team meetings.
- ✓ Consider involving independent third parties (for example facilitators) in consultation activities to enable discussion of matters that are particularly sensitive.
- ✓ Welcome a diversity of views, beliefs, behaviours and preferences within communities.
- ✓ Establish networks to link parent and community leaders to the broader school community.
- ✓ Encourage the school's P&C to review the P&Cs Qld website for ideas on how to work with school leaders and to contribute to collaborative decisions for example business operations, policies and procedures.

Once a year

- ✓ Depending on the school community, formally or informally survey parents (for example verbally or in writing) regarding their satisfaction with, and suggestions on, their involvement in the school's decision-making processes and suggestions for improvement.
- ✓ Evaluate if:
 - consultative mechanisms about school priorities and needs have been effective
 - goals are mutually set to meet the school's vision.
- ✓ Seek feedback from the P&C and other partnership members to determine if it considers parent and community partnerships are influencing school decisions and improving student outcomes.



Participation

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 should be acknowledged and valued. This involvement sends a clear signal to students about the value of education.

At Foxwell State Secondary College we:

- Recognise or celebrate significant cultural days and include students, staff, parents and community members in these events
- Encourage parents and community members to participate in school activities and to engage in opportunities that align with their skills, knowledge, experience and interest
- Develop a database of parent and community skills, talents and availability to draw on when required
- Support the engagement of volunteers and publicly recognise their contribution to our school
- Ensure timely and accurate communication and promotion of major events to provide parents and community members ample time to plan for their attendance. This includes loading events, meetings and assessment calendars on the school website at the start of each term, semester or year
- Engage community members and business in our Learning Design and developing extracurricular activities
- Invite parents and community members to become involved as guest teachers and speakers



Achieving results: ideas for improvement

Every day

- ✓ Model and demonstrate the importance of positive and caring relationships.
- ✓ Consult key staff for advice on engaging meaningfully with cultural groups in the school community for example Community Education Counsellors, regional and school-based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teacher Aides, and community liaison officers.
- ✓ Provide access to bilingual personnel for parent-teacher meetings, as appropriate.
- ✓ Consider opportunities for the leadership team and teachers to be visible to parents and students, for example, at school pick-up and drop-off times, in community areas of the school, at school events.

Early in the school year

- ✓ Ensure staff have an understanding of inclusive education and the Department of Education's commitment to ensuring schools are supportive and engaging places for all school community members.
- ✓ Provide a school calendar outlining key dates where parent engagement is encouraged. Include cultural events that are relevant to the school and broader Queensland community.
- ✓ Discuss the physical, attitudinal, communication and social environment of the school with parents and the community and look at ways to improve inclusion of students and parents with disability, illness or other needs that require consideration.

Throughout the year

- ✓ Collaborate with staff to build mutually respectful relationships across the school community and encourage staff to build relationships that will enhance student learning and wellbeing.
- ✓ Consider creating informal areas around the school where parents and teachers can meet for example, community courtyard, garden, or yarning circle.
- ✓ Seek advice from the community about the kind of school events and activities they value. Some communities may prefer more informal gatherings and opportunities to network with school staff rather than formal ceremonies, particularly early in the engagement process.
- ✓ Engage community members in designing and promoting learning experiences, school events and extracurricular activities.
- ✓ Invite and support a diverse range of parents and community members to become involved as guest teachers and speakers.
- ✓ Build parent, caregiver and community participation by offering activities, events and roles that are respectful and meaningful. Provide guidance to volunteers about their obligations, school protocols and cultures represented in the school.
- ✓ Formally recognise the contributions that volunteers make to the school (for example, thank you letters).

Once a year

- ✓ Establish a clear process for parents to provide feedback to the school on their beliefs/experiences in relation to inclusivity.
- ✓ Provide professional development for staff in English as an Additional Language or Dialect support, and cross-cultural awareness and communication.
- ✓ Develop/update a database of parent and community skills, talents and availability to draw on when appropriate.