

KalbarStateSchool



What does “Independent School” mean to Kalbar?

As of 2015, Kalbar School became an Independent Public School. Just 5% of State Schools are selected as IPS. To become an independent school both teachers and community needed to support the move by a majority. An application was submitted which provided reasons as to why we should become an IPS and provide ideas for innovation, which is one of the key aspects of being IPS.

A prerequisite to become independent was results of a variety of audits including curriculum, behaviour, financial, and academic achievement.

So now that we are independent, what does it mean for us?

The key features of an IPS school include:

1. Financial independence
2. Greater freedom around decision making
3. Greater staffing flexibility
4. Governed by a School Council
5. Innovative
6. Partnerships

These features are explained further in the next column.

Features of an IPS

The term “Independent Public School” may lead people to believe that we are no longer bound to Education Queensland. This is not true. We are just as bound to Education Queensland policy and procedures as any other State School. We are encouraged to think outside of the box at times in order to make the education system better. This may lead to cutting some red tape, or simply doing things better than traditionally thought.

Financial Freedom

This comes in the form of some allocations of money being traditionally ear-marked for certain areas within the school. IPS schools could choose, with justification, to alter this allocation to ensure better outcomes for students.

Staffing allocations can also be more easily balanced to provide staff in areas where they are needed within that particular school.

Decision Making

In order to provide for innovation, IPS schools are given a little more freedom around decisions made in their particular setting. IPS schools are not bound by the regional offices in which they are geographically found. The key is to ensure that decision making provides the best education for the school’s students. The School Council may choose a strategic direction for the school which they believe suits their own community. This freedom is needed to provide for INNOVATIVE thinking.



Innovation

In order to move forward, it is important to try new things. Innovation is a key pillar of the IPS framework. Innovation allows individual schools to try ideas that suit the immediate community to improve outcomes. Should innovations breed success, it may be the case that the concept be tried in wider circles by other schools. IPS schools are given the freedom to try these ideas and furthermore are given authority to try innovations.



Staffing Flexibility

Sometimes it is necessary to manipulate staffing arrangements to achieve better results for the school. IPS schools have a unique arrangement with the human resources staff to ensure that the best possible staffing arrangements can be made for the school.

Principals of IPS schools cannot dismiss staff any more or less than any other state school. They do however have greater freedom around who to hire when a vacancy occurs. This can allow schools to source people more suitable to the community's needs.

If you always do what you always did, you will always get what you always got.
[Albert Einstein]

What has changed at Kalbar so far?

After one term the election of the school council has been held and the committee is now in place.

Several innovations are already



in place. The first of which is a focus on Early Learning for pre-prep children. Three pillars underlie this program (i) Building partnerships with local Kindies, (ii) Implementing a Koala Joeys program at Kalbar, & (iii) Organising an Early Years Conference.

The second is to organise cluster sport within the Fassifern

district and the third is to implement a music enhancement program for all students.

Once the Council commences, it is expected that further work will continue around strategic direction.

IPS has already opened doors not thought of before. This is a journey that we believe will bring great benefits.

School Council

The School Council is a body consisting of the P and C President, teachers, parents and can extend to community members. The Council is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the school. They are not responsible for curriculum decisions or staffing decisions.

The focus of the Council is to ensure that the needs of the community are met in the school.

Ideas are useless unless used.