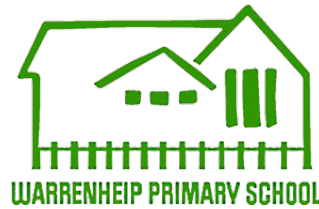
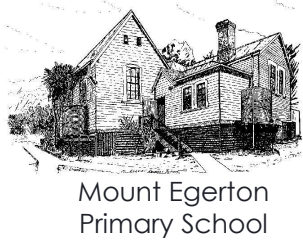




# Small schools making a big difference together





***We would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands on which we all live and learn, and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community.***

***We acknowledge the Wadawurrung people of the Kulin Nation, where our schools share a place of belonging; and of the Wurundjeri people, where we gather today.***

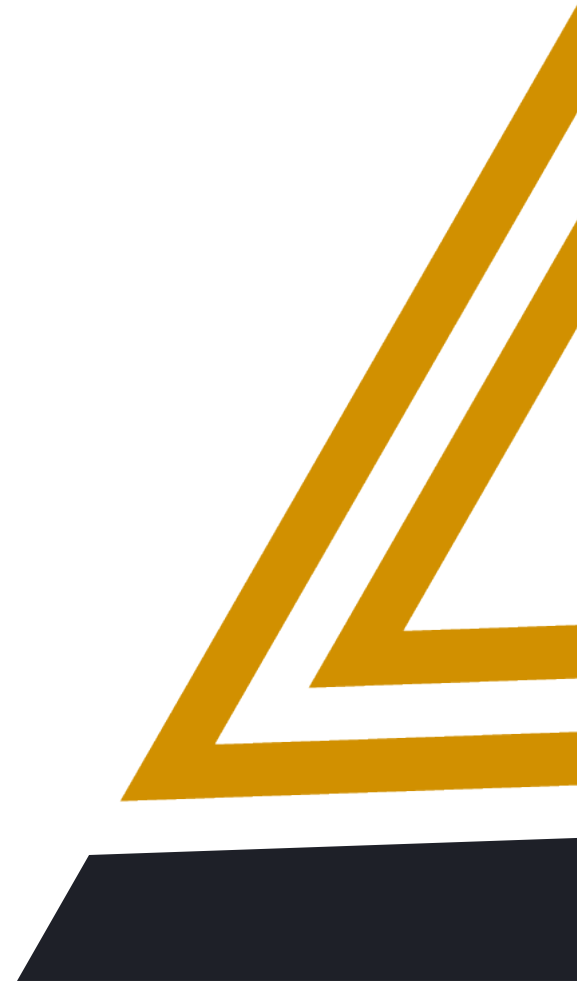
***We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and thank them for taking care of this country over countless generations.***

***Koling wada-ngal (Let us walk together)***



# Turn and talk

You've got 90 seconds. Go!

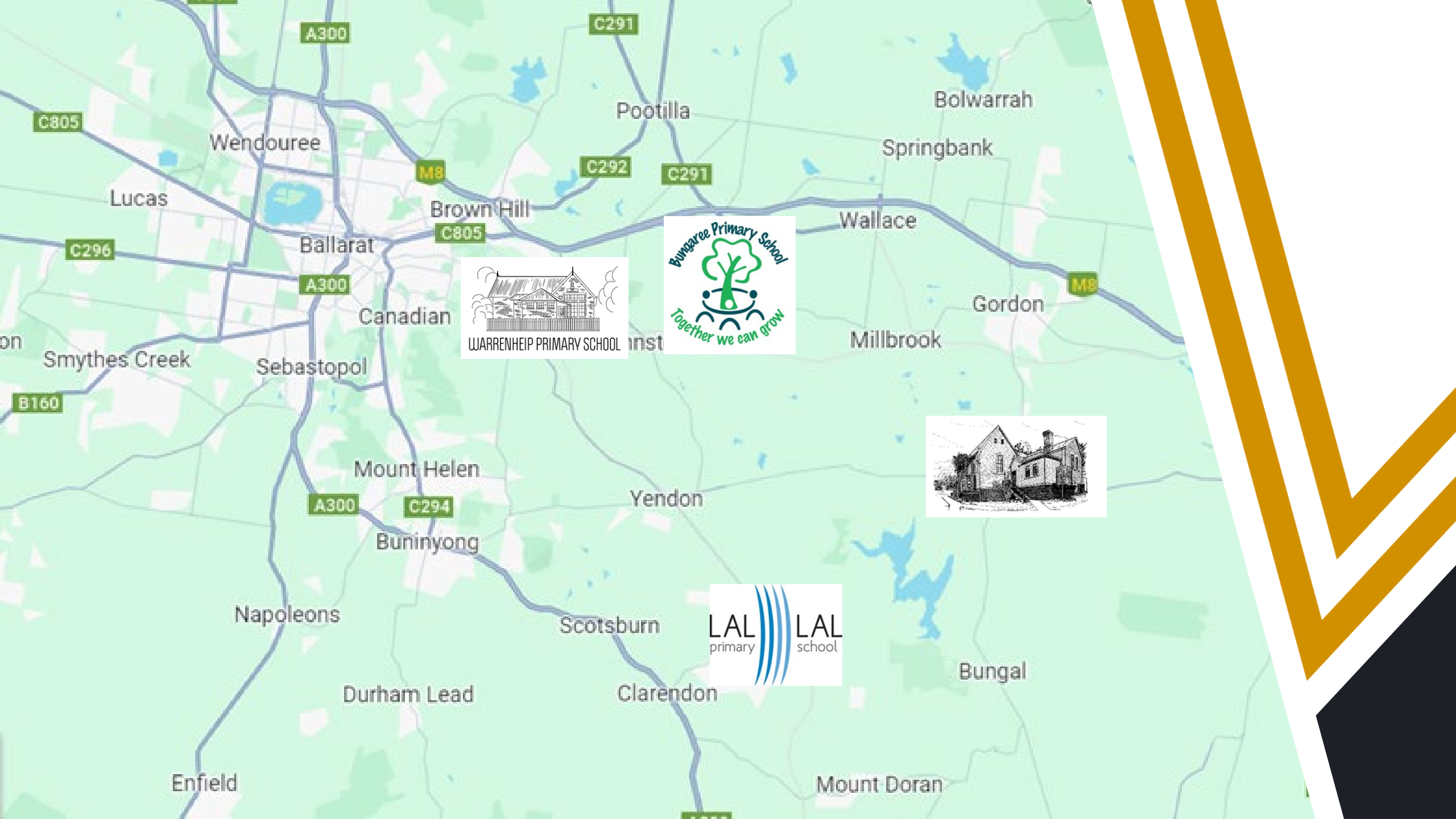


# Learning intentions

To share how very small schools (enrolment <50) can work collaboratively to improve teacher capacity and student achievement outcomes.

To consider how a small cluster or partnership of schools may work in your local area.





C805

A300

C291

Wendouree

Pootilla

Bolwarrah

Springbank

Lucas

M8

C292

C291

Brown Hill

Wallace

C296

Ballarat

C805



Gordon

M8

on

Smythes Creek

Sebastopol



WARRENHEIP PRIMARY SCHOOL

Millbrook

B160

Mount Helen

A300

C294

Yendon



Burinyong

Napoleons

Scotsburn



Bungal

Durham Lead

Clarendon

Enfield

Mount Doran

# Bungaree Primary School



- Enrolment (2024): 21
- Staffing: 1.0 Teaching Principal, 1.7 Classroom Teachers, 0.48 Education Support, 0.26 Business Manager, 0.3 Wellbeing (most staff part-time)
- SFOE: 0.2825
- Rural, farming community (spuds, dairy) and cockies
- Personalised learning focus
- Two classes (F-2; 3-6) for English and Mathematics)
- One class (F-6) for Specialist Learning (Art, Auslan, Kitchen Garden, Music, PE, STEAM, Wellbeing)
- Evidence based pedagogy, trauma informed instruction
- Very supportive and engaged families and wider community



*Principal:  
Catherine Barnes*



# Lal Lal Primary School



- Enrolment (2024): 40
- Staffing: 1.0 Teaching Principal, 3.1 Classroom Teachers, 0.75 Education Support, 0.2 Business Manager, 0.3 Wellbeing (most staff part-time)
- SFOE: 0.3588
- Lifestylers, tree changer community
- Personalised learning focus
- Three classes (F/1; 2/3; 4-6) for English and Mathematics)
- Two classes (F-2; 3-6) for Specialist Learning (Art, Chinese, Music, PE, STEM, Personal Learning)
- Evidence based pedagogy, trauma informed instruction
- Fantastic community
- School is central hub in the area



*Principal:*  
*Siobhan Gosney*



# 'Clusterness'









# Bungaree and Lal Lal PLC – Junior snapshot

## **Inquiry Question:**

*How does effective implementation of the Sounds Write program impact student spelling achievement?*

## **Challenges:**

- Different school sizes, cohorts, class structures – determining ‘like’ groups. One size doesn’t fit all.
- Creating consistency in gathering and recording student progress.
- Peer observations of phonics programs in multi-age classrooms.

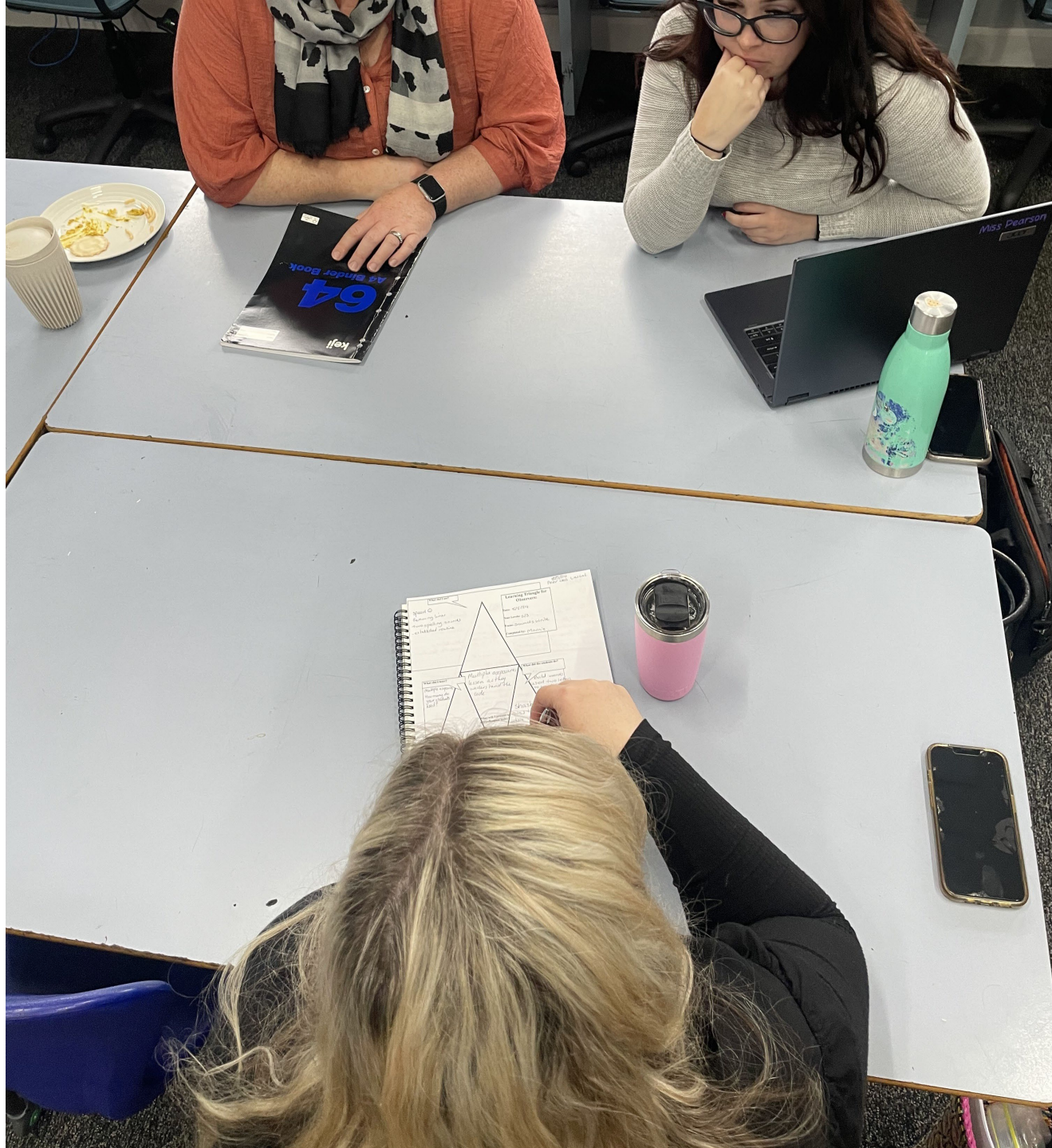
## **Successes:**

- Peer observations across very small schools (staffing.)
- Building teacher capacity; improving student achievement outcomes.
- Sharing resources, providing opportunities for professional discourse.

## **Leadership:**

- Providing opportunities for professional learning together, creating sense of urgency.
- Perseverance in ensuring fidelity in PLC time – prioritising teacher capacity building, timetabling, communication and feedback.





# Bungaree and Lal Lal PLC – Senior snapshot

## **Inquiry Question:**

*Can students successfully identify and use sentence level grammar to construct their own simple, compound and complex sentences?*

## **Challenges:**

- Planning cycles in Literacy – aligning across two schools.
- Limited resources and budgets available, needing to share texts in multi-age classrooms.
- Wanting to deep dive early with students, needing to consolidate new teacher learning. Back to basics first!

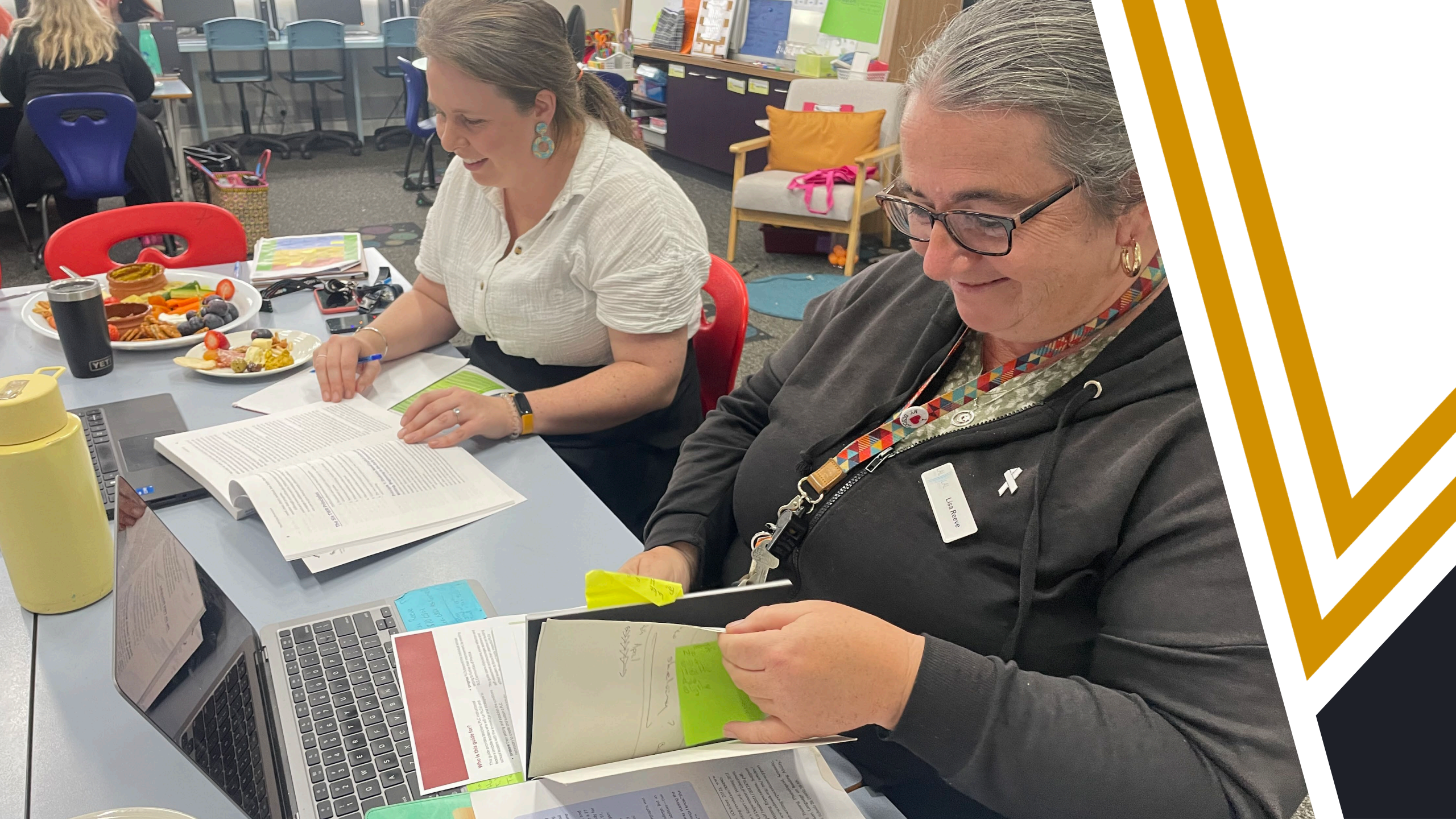
## **Successes:**

- Identifying and sharing professional readings to ‘find the crumb’, creating a shared language.
- Creation of shared teaching resources (reducing teacher planning time and cognitive load.)
- Peer observations across very small schools (staffing.)

## **Leadership:**

- Creating a ‘sandpit’ and safe space for learning – try, learn and grow, try again.
- Using variety of teacher experience from expert to novice, mentoring and supporting one another.
- Creating value in collaborative and collegiate action research; establishing staff ownership in inquiry.







# Bungaree and Lal Lal PLC – Principal snapshot

## **Inquiry Question:**

*How can we, working collaboratively, create an effective instructional playbook that significantly improves teaching quality and resultant student achievement?*

## **Challenges:**

- Teaching Principals ... juggling every hat!
- Return on investment – small school budget, competing priorities, maximising effectiveness.

## **Successes:**

- Working alongside Bronwyn Ryrie-Jones, Reid Smith and Pip McIlroy – The Playbook Project.
- Documenting, refining, describing, sharing new and existing big ideas and teaching techniques.
- Receiving quality feedback from colleagues – a) critical friends and b) school staff.
- Turnaround from planning to classroom response in small schools – rapid.

## **Leadership:**

- Prioritising and making time for the important work.
- Creating a culture of opportunity, continual improvement and making a real difference.

# Activity: NOISE Protocol

- NOISE uses more solution focused language than SWOT.
- NOISE is great for creating a strategic approach to opportunities. You identify the needs in order to take advantage of opportunities to solve them. This approach trains you to see potential growth.
- Don't follow the acronym exactly. Begin with *Strengths*, then move to *Needs*, *Opportunities*, and *Improvements*. End with *Exceptions*, which are applied to each of the previous discussions.
- When we know the NOISE conditions, we can create a path toward the future that allows our schools to flourish.

# STRENGTHS

1 Start here. Strengths are things internal to your organization, process, or project that are within your control.

- What is working well?
- How do you know?
- What is your team good at?
- Examples?



Jackie

# EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions are areas of the N, O, I, S that are already happening, even just a little. By identifying what is currently happening, you stand a higher odds of increasing what is working well, decreasing what is not working well.

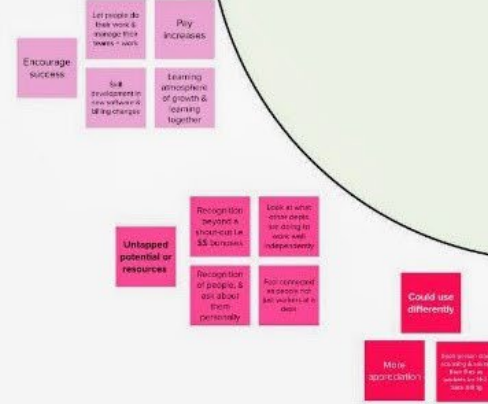
• Of the N, O & I Listed what is already happening, even just a little bit?



# OPPORTUNITIES

3 Opportunities should be treated as external factors that the organization, process, or project should (or could) develop. Ideally, these already exist in some fashion.

- Other departments / locations / companies / teams / etc are doing \_\_\_\_\_
- An area of untapped talent OR under-utilized resources \_\_\_\_\_
- What do we currently have that could be used differently?
- What opportunities are we missing that we ought to be aware of?



# NEEDS

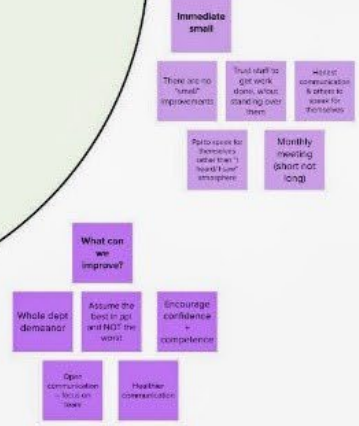
2 Needs are also internal factors within your control. These might be resources, materials, processes, people, etc. that you know you need to meet your goals.

- If we just had \_\_\_\_\_ this would be a better place to work, or we would be effective in completing our plan or make it fit what you need.
- Organizational needs
- Individual needs

# IMPROVEMENTS

4 Improvements are internal or external. They are areas of immediate improvement that could make us better or support progress.

- What small concrete improvements can we as a team/ department complete in the next 90 days?
- Based on our strengths, needs, & opportunities what areas can we improve?
- What is already working well that we can make work better?
- A consistent area of improvement I hear people wish for is \_\_\_\_\_
- One area of improvement that would support our capacity/ growth is \_\_\_\_\_





# Strengths

Start here.

Strengths are things internal to your school/s, process or project that are within your control.

- What is working well?
- How do you know?
- What is your team good at?
- Examples?



# Needs

Needs are also internal factors within your control. These might be resources, materials, processes, people, etc. that you know you need to meet your goals.

If you just had \_\_\_\_\_ this would be a better place to work or we would be effective in completing our plan or make it fit what you need.

- Organisational needs.
- Individual needs.



# Opportunities

Opportunities should be treated as external factors that the organisation, process or project should (or could) develop ideally, these people exist in some fashion.

Other departments/locations/teams /etc. are doing\_\_\_\_\_.

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- A consistent area of improvement I hear people wish for is \_\_\_\_\_.
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# Exceptions

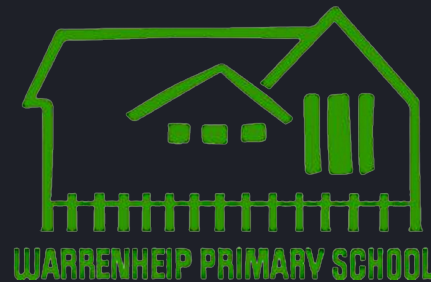
Exceptions are areas of N.O.I.S. that are already happening even just a little.

By identifying what is currently happening, you stand in a higher odds of increasing what is working well, decreasing what is not working well.

Of the N, O & I listed what is already happening, even just a little bit?



# Warrenheip Primary School



Respect

Safety

Learning



# Mount Egerton Primary School



**Kindness:** Being friendly, generous and considerate...

**Wisdom:** Having experience, knowledge and good judgment...

**Integrity:** Being honest, respectful and having strong moral principles...

**Courage:** The ability to face challenges; bravery...



# How we came to be...

- Warrenheip and Mount Egerton completed the PLC training in Semester 1, 2023.
- Both Principals and two teaching staff completed PLC training together.
- We came together as the PLC leaders of both schools to discuss the implementation of this initiative across both schools.

## From the beginning:

- We had open and honest communication.
- Everyone has roles within the PLC.
- Time booked in to work together.

## Discoveries:

- Needed more direction of how this would continue across the schools.
- Staff needed to be prepared for meetings with required data.
- Ensuring time is set out in advance to meet together.



# What is currently being implemented and why





# What is currently being implemented

- Fortnightly whole school PLC meetings via Webex
- Agreement of norms
- Weekly shared planning time via Webex



## Warrenheip and Mount Egerton shared PLC and planning



### Shared Professional Learning Communities

#### Purpose (the why):

To allow for collaboration across schools, reflection and change of practice which will address the wellbeing and learning needs of our students.

#### The what:

We will meet every second Wednesday 8am-8:50am (see meeting schedule).

Our focuses will be as follows:

Term 1	Wellbeing Maths
Term 2	Wellbeing
Term 3	Writing
Term 4	Reading



## Warrenheip and Mount Egerton shared PLC and planning



### Shared planning time

#### Purpose (the why):

To allow teachers of the same year level to brainstorm ideas and collaborate, sharing expertise in a range of curriculum areas.

#### The what:

staff will be allocated one hour a week of shared non face-to-face teaching time in order to collaborate with teachers from the other school.

#### The how:

Who	When
Junior teachers: Lisa Filmer and Maria O'Neill	Thursday 12:30-1:45 (15 minutes per teacher for their own tasks)
Senior teachers: Laura Millar, Kate Hammond, Helen Collins	Thursday 2:15-3:30pm (15 minutes per teacher for their own tasks)
Tutor: Carly Milroy and Tegan Bell/Jo Reyntjes	Fridays 12:30-1:30pm (to be confirmed)

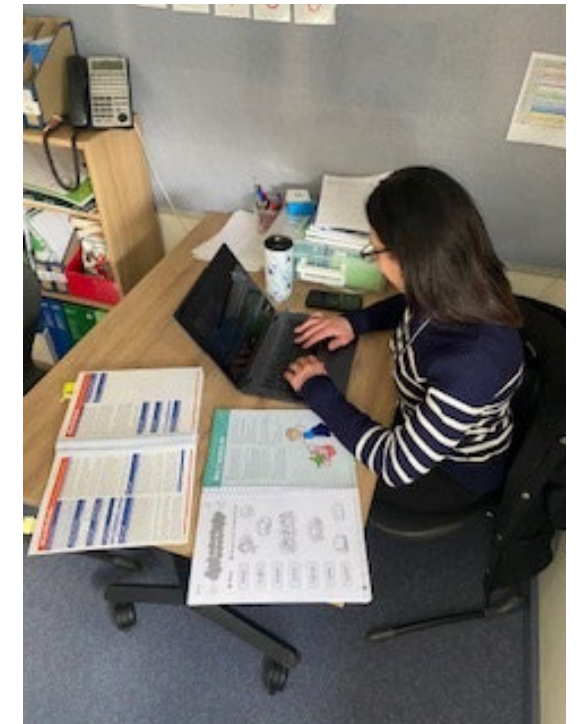
# How we monitor

## Staff feedback - Pluses

- Sharing of ideas
- Strong focus on data
- Hearing different perspectives
- Developing shared goals
- Learning from other's experiences
- Gives an insight to what we are doing well

## Staff feedback - Deltas

- Not having the same timetable, and needing to plan a different amount of lessons
- Not having alignment in what we teach when
- Not planning beyond literacy and maths
- Difficult to share workload equally
- Student abilities - variation





# How we celebrate

- Principals meet regularly to recognise our collective achievements and to discuss where to next.
- Every staff meeting we share a positive snapshot from our previous week, recognising what we are doing well.
- Acknowledge we are working really hard together and seeing results for our work.
- We take time to reflect on what we have accomplished and set new goals for the future.
- We thank our staff for the hard work they are doing and working outside the normal boundaries



# Where to next...

- Shared face to face Curriculum Day.
- Leaders to align more focuses across the two schools e.g. inquiry topics.
- Participation in cross-school observations.
- Ensuring time is continued to be privileged for shared planning.
- Continue to meet every fortnight for inquiry cycle collaboration.
- Remain focused on student data.
- Continue to use data to drive our work.





# Protocol

## Collaboration Between Schools

WHAT ARE WE  
CURRENTLY  
DOING WELL

WHAT CAN WE  
CAN CHANGE

AN ACTION I AM  
COMMITTING TO

# Predispositions and conditions for success





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# Thank you



Mount Egerton  
Primary School

