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Perceptions of leaders, teachers, students and parents in high performing West Australian Catholic secondary schools within the context of tertiary entrance examinations

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APPENDIX 1

TEACHER SURVEY

Age (Optional):	Gender (Optional):
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The following statements have been designed to measure the role of key indicators in achieving successful tertiary entrance results in your school. Please respond to each statement using the scale provided.

Survey Item	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Thorough subject content knowledge on the part of the teacher is essential in helping students achieve success.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Direct instruction is more important than group work.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Passion and enthusiasm for your subject is vital for student success.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Building relationships with students is necessary.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Further study and PD is necessary for successful teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Careful assessment design cannot be underestimated as a teaching tool.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Timely, detailed feedback is important.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Regular feedback to students is necessary.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Working with colleagues on collaborative programming enhances my teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
10. ICT as an important teaching tool and should be integrated into teaching methods.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Being results focused is important	1	2	3	4	5
12. Our department works as a close knit team	1	2	3	4	5
13. Our department values the academic success of its students and therefore it is results focused	1	2	3	4	5
14. Our department has a strong developmental sequence in programming from Year 7-12 designed to maximize TCE results.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Our department engages in meaningful moderation and cross marking exercises.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Our department engages regularly in professional conversations.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Members of our department engage in professional conversations with staff in other departments	1	2	3	4	5
18. Counselling of students in subject choice is important.	1	2	3	4	5
19. A school culture supportive of academic success is vital.	1	2	3	4	5
20. A key role of the Head of Department is to promote and celebrate success of students and teachers	1	2	3	4	5
21. Our executive leadership team strongly promotes academic success.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX 2

Semi Structured Interviews of Leaders

Deputy Principals and Principals

The following questions were designed to promote a dialogue around the following topics, given the context of the school being identified as having attained a degree of success in the Tertiary Entrance Examinations results:

1. Leadership style – strengths and areas for development
2. Personal contribution to the enhancement of a successful academic culture
3. Overall culture of the school
4. Academic culture of the school
5. How does the Leader view characteristics of a successful department?
6. How does the leader view characteristics of a successful teacher?
7. What were the perceptions of the leader in relation to student contributions?

How long have you been a Principal / Deputy Principal?

How long have you been Principal / Deputy Principal at this school?

Your school has performed well in the TEE. Why do you think this is the case?

In what way do you think you have contributed to the enhancement of a successful academic culture in the school through your role as Deputy Principal or Principal?

How would you characterize your leadership strengths and where do you think you might need to develop?

What have been your key areas of focus?

Do you set high expectations of staff?

Is there a results focus?

Are you strategic in the way you approach teaching and learning in this school?

Are you personally engaged with the key curriculum issues?

Is curriculum a passion of yours? Do you see it as “core business”?

Is TEE success celebrated, promoted and valued?

How would you describe the characteristics of the successful TEE teachers on your staff?

How would you describe the characteristics of the successful departments in your school?

Do students contribute to a culture of success in this school? Do you deliberately look at ways to promote student contribution to the development of that culture?

Are parents a strong factor in the school's success?

How much personal contact do you have with the Year 12 students?

Do you promote goals and academic success with your Year 12 students? If so, how do you go about this?

Semi-structured interview questions for Heads of Department

How long have you been a Head of Department?

How long have you been a Head of Department at this school?

How would you describe your role?

Do you aspire to further promotional positions?

How would you describe your relationships with colleagues in your department? Is it a close knit team?

Do you share resources, ideas, programme collaboratively, have common assessment tasks, cross mark regularly? Do you have a high degree of professional dialogue?

Is there anything unique about your approach to programming and assessment?

As Head of Department are you relatively prescriptive or do you allow teachers a great degree of individual freedom in their programming and assessment?

Do you assess frequently? Do you use a variety of assessment types? Do you tend to design assessments that replicate exam scenarios or are your assessment tasks broader in their scope?

Do you insist on certain standards in terms of feedback to students?

Do you spend a lot of time and thought in planning and selection of resources? Is this done collaboratively or individually?

Is there a strong developmental sequence in your programming from Year 7-12 designed to maximize results in year 12? Or does that type of approach really start to take shape about year 10 - 12? Or is the Year 11 and 12 programme the key?

How would you describe your department? Experienced? Collegial? Organised? What is its focus? How would you describe the culture or feel of the faculty staff room?

Do you as the Head of Dept lead in a particular way or with a particular focus?

Is the Dept results focused? Do you celebrate good results?

What are some of the mechanisms your department use that you think contribute to your success?

Do you see the leadership of the executive team as important in the development of a successful academic culture?

Are parents an influence in the development of the culture here?

Do students themselves contribute to a culture of success in this school? Do you deliberately look at ways to promote student contribution to the development of that culture?

Questions for Semi - Structured Interviews of Teachers

The following provides a framework for questions to initiate dialogue with identified teachers.

How would you describe yourself as a teacher?

What do you think contributes to your success in achieving the highest TEE subject score in the system?

To what degree has content knowledge played in your success? Is passion and enthusiasm also a key factor?

Could you outline the professional development that you engage in to enhance your capacity as a teacher? For example, active membership of professional associations, further post-graduate study and experiences such as TEE marking

What teaching strategies do you employ in your classroom?

To what degree would you favour direct instruction, or collaborative group work?

Do you use whole class discussion often? How would you rate your facility with questioning techniques?

Is there anything unique about your approach to programming and assessment?

Do you assess frequently? Do you use a variety of assessment types? Do you tend to design assessments that replicate exam scenarios? Or are your assessment tasks broader in their scope?

How do you provide feedback to your students?

Do you spend a lot of time and thought in planning and selection of resources? Is this done collaboratively or individually?

Is there a strong developmental sequence in your programming from Year 7-12 designed to maximize results in year 12? Or does that type of approach really start to take shape about year 10 - 12? Or is the Year 11 and 12 programme the key?

Do you think counselling of students in subject choice is important?

Are field experiences, labs, excursions important to you?

How would you describe your classroom management and the climate of your class?

Could you describe your expectations of students?

Do you do anything out of the ordinary?

Are you results focused?

Does the culture of the school support your work with students? Describe the culture?

Who shapes the culture and how?

How would you describe the student body here?

How would you describe your relationship with students?

Are parents an influence in the development of the culture here?

How would you describe your relationships with colleagues in your department? Is it a close knit team?

Do you share resources, ideas, programme collaboratively, have common assessment tasks, cross mark regularly? Do you have a high degree of professional dialogue?

How would you describe your department? Experienced? Collegial? Organised? What is its focus? What is the feel? How would you describe the faculty staff room? The culture?

Does the Head of Dept lead in a particular way or with a particular focus?

Is the Dept results focused? Do you celebrate good results?

What are some of the mechanisms your department use that you think contribute to your success?

Are parents an influence in the development of the culture here?

Do students themselves contribute to a culture of success in this school? Do you deliberately look at ways to promote student contribution to the development of that culture?

Semi Structured Interview questions for past students

You did well in your tertiary entrance exams last year. What were the main reasons for your success?

To what degree do you attribute your success to the work of your teachers?

What are some of the important things that good teachers do that helped you achieve your success?

Are there specific features of good teaching that are unique in particular subjects or are they found across most subjects?

Do you find that good teachers have particular personal traits?

To what extent were your peers an influence on your success?

Do you think the overall culture of the school was significant?

How do leaders such as the principal, deputy principal and heads of departments have an influence on the academic success of the school?

To what extent did your parents have an influence on your academic success?

QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS IN SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Going around the circle maybe we could share our experience and connection with the school. For example how many children have you had through the school over how many years?

How important is the leadership in the School in developing an academic culture?

To what degree do you attribute the school's success to the work of the teachers?

What are some of the important things that good teachers do that helped your child?

We may have covered this but do you find that good teachers have particular personal traits?

Do you think it is important for schools to be results focused and acknowledge academic success?

To what extent were your child's peers an important influence on their approach to study and their overall achievement?

Do you think the overall culture of the school has a significant influence? Can you pinpoint specific things the school does that help to achieve this.

Are facilities important?

To what degree was your support and encouragement at home a factor?

Is homework and the development of study patterns at home an important factor in academic success?

To what extent do you see feedback on your children's work and reporting mechanisms as important tools for their learning?

Do you think the development of communication and partnerships with parents is important if schools are to develop a strong academic culture? Have you been kept well informed about your child's progress? How?

Do you feel comfortable contacting the School to discuss your child's progress?