



BPLA IN NSW: THE DATA STORY

The success of the Big Picture Learning design is demonstrated by its power to attract, retain and engage students, support them to learn through their personal passions, connect them to opportunities to trial their interests in the world outside school, and facilitate their transitions to meaningful post-school pathways.

The significant increase in uptake of the Big Picture learning design in NSW government high schools in recent years has afforded Big Picture Learning Australia (BPLA) the opportunity to capture and analyse many sources of data in order to provide robust evidence of success and growth.

However, data alone cannot always capture the intricacies of personal experiences and stories. Because all members of the Big Picture learning community are viewed as unique individuals and learners, the story of Big Picture is best told through a combination of data and the voices of our students, advisors, and parents.

This report contains data highlights in categories including growth, wellbeing, attendance and engagement, behaviour, outlearning, retention rates, transition and disability.

TEN-YEAR GROWTH

In NSW Big Picture Learning (BPL) is re-organising the way we do secondary education for a growing number of young people..

- **2012** – **one** BPL academy of two advisories;
- **2021** – **ten** BPL academies/schools with a total of 48 advisories;
- **2023** – there will be a total of **twenty** BP academies/schools, effectively doubling in two years.
- This growth has occurred in a range of settings – urban, regional, rural and remote areas – at all socio-economic status (SES) levels and reinforces the suitability of the design for all students.

Parent Quote: "Big Picture, please let it be the way of our future education system."

WELLBEING

- According to surveys, **95%** of students 'feel better in general' since joining BPL. Students experience improvements in their level of confidence, sense of purpose, sense of belonging, connectedness, and learning opportunities.

Parent Quote: "My daughter is the happiest she has ever been. Six months ago, I could not have imagined her being able to attend school. She has had long periods of school refusal but has finally found a learning environment that suits her and where she feels she belongs. I am so grateful to have this opportunity available to her. Her mental health has also improved significantly."

ATTENDANCE & ENGAGEMENT

The personalised nature of the Big Picture learning design generates intrinsic motivation, strong

relationships, awareness of self as learner, and a sense of belonging to a supportive learning community. As a result, discipline and behaviour issues tend to decline markedly.

- **90-100%** of students demonstrate improved learning, engagement, relationships, and wellbeing since joining BPL.
- Students identify most elements of the design as having personal importance to them, demonstrating the significance of consistently implementing the design in its entirety.
- Students in **60%** of advisories have had the same advisor throughout their time in BPL, allowing strong, nurturing relationships to develop.
- Students in BPL continued learning and feeling connected to their advisory during the COVID-19 lockdown due to the flexibility and personalisation of the design, and the strength of established structures and relationships in their learning community.

Student Quote: "Big Picture is ten times better than mainstream for me. Students help each other out, no one is better than anyone else, you are not compared to others. Everyone is good at something, Big Picture helps you find out what that is."

BEHAVIOUR

- Negative incidents occur in BPL at a rate of one-tenth of that in mainstream.
- Suspensions occur at a rate of **3%** of students in BPL compared to **13%** in mainstream.

Advisor Quote: "At her previous school [student] was disengaged, not achieving very highly, in frequent trouble for behaviour issues, and wanted to leave school ASAP. Since joining Big Picture she has excelled. She is on a university pathway and is a standout in her good behaviour and maturity."

OUTLEARNING

The opportunity to make connections with expert mentors in the community and apply learning to practice is a powerful and compulsory aspect of the Big Picture learning design. Every week from the age of 14, students attend an internship with an expert mentor in a field that is of interest to them.

- Over **90%** of students participate in outlearning experiences that include internships, field work, external coursework, sporting or cultural events and volunteer or part-time work.

Student Quote: "LTI's [internships] are a great place to not only learn but also show and apply that learning in your work. It helped me get my first job!"

RETENTION RATES

- The retention rate of students from Year 11 in 2020 to Year 12 in 2021 was higher for BPL students (**80.8%**) than mainstream (**67%**).
- More than **75%** of BPL students reported they would not still be engaged in mainstream schooling or home-schooling if they had not attended a Big Picture learning campus.

Student Quote: "BPL was my last chance before dropping out."

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY

The personalised Big Picture learning design allows students with disability to experience engagement, inclusion and successful transitions to life beyond school.

- The proportion of students with disability in BPL is more than double the proportion of students with disability in mainstream. However, these Big Picture students require adjustments at less than half the rate of those with disability in mainstream. This is attributed to the fact that rather than do a standard curriculum, all students devise personal learning plans around their individual interests and abilities accommodating their learning needs and preferences with little or no modification.
- **100%** of students with disability report that they are provided with opportunities to pursue their passions.

Advisor Quote: "We have a high satisfaction rating from parents of students with disabilities in terms of the learning environment and design. If we are looking for a better design for students with disabilities, I have yet to see it."

TRANSITIONS and the International Big Picture Learning Credential

The new International Big Picture Learning Credential (IBPLC) is an attractive option for seniors that offers non-ATAR pathways to university, further training and employment. Students can, however, access HSC courses where desired. In fact, in one BPL academy 4 Band 5 and 1 Band 6 results were achieved by Year 11 and 12 students.

- **100%** of students feel that BPL prepares them well for life after school.
- **100%** of BPL graduates that went to university stated that the degree/program in which they are enrolled was their first choice.
- **94%** of these students felt that they had chosen a course that was right for them.
- **88%** were passionate about being at university.
- Almost **50%** of these graduates were the first in their immediate family to attend university.
- Of IBPLC graduates in 2021
 - **39%** went to university
 - **21.5%** went to TAFE or other training
 - **26.5%** were employed
 - **10%** were in apprenticeships
 - **3%** Other/unknown
- The standard of attainment of students for the new metrics assessed in the IBPLC, most notably Personal Qualities and Knowing How to Learn, is impressive. The most frequently awarded level for both Personal Qualities and Knowing How to Learn was **5 out of 5** with a median level of **4 out of 5**.

Student Quote: "Big Picture Learning has set me up for university because of in-depth learning and collaboration with adult mentors."

Student Quote: "I am good at problem solving... Big Picture has allowed me to explore IT and I plan to do a TAFE diploma in Information Technology and continue my part-time work in computer retail. After that, who knows what the future holds for me?"


Big Picture
LEARNING AUSTRALIA

ONE STUDENT AT A TIME IN
A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS



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