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**Grant Dale:** My name's Grant Dale, and I'm very proud to be the Principal of Thuringowa State High School. I've been the principal here since 2012. At the school, we're a large school over 700 now, heading towards 750. Our school is very much committed to ensuring that every student is succeeding, and to do that, we ensure that we have the right people and the right support in every classroom for every student. We've moved to a very much more inclusive model of education for students with disabilities. That's been a process that we've been on, especially for the last three years, and we'll have a number of other years where we'll keep moving towards fully inclusive programs.

Thuringowa State High School has a diverse population of students here. We have students from a range of different backgrounds, including over 35 per cent of students coming from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background. Regardless of where the students come from, it's really important that everyone gets a quality education, and that students have the opportunity to achieve to the best of their ability. With all of our students, we look at having high expectations for them. We look at that there is no limit on how high that they can achieve, and that's been a mantra that we've been enforcing, and working with staff to enforce right across the school.

The model that we're using at the moment isn't just about the students with disability. It's about improving outcomes for every student in every classroom. Right across the school, we've had a range of areas of improvement. One has been attendance. Our attendance has moved up 3 per cent in the last 12 months. We've also had great improvements in the senior schooling range. Last year, we achieved 100 per cent of students receiving a QCE, or a Queensland Certificate of individual Achievement. And as a school, we've also achieved some great OP outcomes recently.

At our school, we encourage staff to work very closely with parents and the community. We understand that education isn't a single thing that happens in the classroom. It's very important that you have a strong partnership with parents, and with the community. Our teachers work extremely closely with parents by maintaining contact, to talk about progress and support for each child, to make sure we're giving them the best opportunity to succeed. Students have really enjoyed our inclusive approach to education. Students with disability have become more involved in a lot of areas of education within the school. That is, both in the classroom side, and in the socialisation side as well, with other students.

One of the areas that's been important is that we involve students in their own plan for their learning as well, to make sure that we're meeting their needs. So, with that partnership with the student, the teacher and the parent, it's a pretty effective network to get the best results. As we move towards a more inclusive model at the school, it was really important that we had the right support available, and the first support was to ensure that everybody understood the concept and the why. So we spent a lot of time working with staff - not just teachers, but the whole staff, about why we were moving to an inclusive model. The next part of the process was to ensure that we had a trained and skilled workforce.

So we spent time with doing professional development, not just for teachers, but for teacher aides as well. We've still got a long way to go, and we always have new staff into the school, so we have to - it's a process that keeps continuing. But you need the skilled people there, to get the buy-in for the system. Judging the improvement that we've taken over the past few years in respect to an inclusive model, we've looked at some of our data, and we've seen some great improvement for our students with disability in their A to E data. Students are really striving and reaching their full potential in the classroom.

It's not only, though, in the classroom, the data that we're looking at. We're looking at students' involvement in a range of different activities across the school, whether that be within a - in the music world, the sporting world, or other social activities as well. Students have really shown a positive approach to being a member of the school community, and that's been one of the best successes we've had. One of the things that is important to us is that we give opportunities for all students, and it's not about putting labels on students at all. We have students with disabilities. We have students from a whole variety of different diverse backgrounds. It's about students being students.

**Loren Swancutt:** I'm Loren Swancutt, and I'm Head of Special Education Services at Thuringowa State High School. We've been on our inclusive education journey since the middle of 2014, when I was appointed into the role. I have a strong background in inclusive education, and training in that area. So when I was appointed to the school, I worked with the principal to make the decision around what we would do for students with disability in the future moving forward. We recognised that we had a moral obligation to change what we were doing in our current Special Education Unit practice, and looked for ways to improve that by utilising the Disability Discrimination Act in the work that was occurring with the United Nations at the time.

In that time, we made the decision to shift to an inclusive model. So we spent the second semester of 2014 engaging in research and planning out what that would look like, ready for implementation in 2015. So we spent a long time reflecting on what we currently offered to students with disability and what was missing, and then we mapped out how that would look in practice moving forward. In that time, we also invested in upskilling some staff, and building their capability to take on the inclusive model with Year 6 students in Years 7 and 8, in 2015, and we've spent a lot of time looking at co-teaching and differentiation practices.

At the start of 2015, we moved all students who were in Year 7 and 8 out of the segregated unit and into regular inclusive classrooms, and then we rolled that out in semester two of 2015 across the entire school. Since then, we have continued to refine our practice and reflect upon it, and make improvements based on the performance that we were seeing in the outcomes of the students, and now in 2017, we're seeing the full model that we had in mind being implemented across the entire school.