



Department of  
**Education**

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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## 1 POLICY STATEMENT

Every school is required to seek continual improvement and account for its performance by undertaking self-assessment, planning for improvement, reporting on performance and progress and participating in, and acting on, review processes.

### **POLICY**

Principals are accountable to the Director Schools for the performance of their school and teachers are accountable to the principal for the progress of their students.

Principals, in collaboration with school staff are required to undertake self-assessment that results in judgements about the standards of student achievement and the effectiveness of school processes in maximising student achievement.

Principals, in collaboration with school staff are required to undertake school planning processes that include the development of a School Plan, operational planning and classroom planning.

Principals, in collaboration with school staff are required to publish annually a School Report that describes the school's performance and report on legislative and designated policy and program requirements.

Principals, in collaboration with school staff are required to participate in and actively respond to school review processes including Standards Reviews and, as required, reviews conducted by the Expert Review Group.

## 2 SCOPE

This policy applies to public school principals, school staff, School Councils, Directors Schools, the Expert Review Group and district and central office staff, all of whom have responsibility, in part, for its implementation.

## 3 BACKGROUND

The *School Accountability Framework* (2002) and supplementary documentation, including the *School Review Framework*, were extensively reviewed in 2006 and 2007. The review had three main components:

- an independent, external evaluation of the *School Accountability Framework*;
- investigation of international and national practices and trends relating to school accountability; and
- stakeholder consultation relating to the findings of the evaluation, international and national research and possible future directions.

The key findings from the three components of the review have guided the development of this policy.

## 4 PROCEDURES

### 4.1 ACCOUNTABLE OFFICERS

**Principals are accountable to the Director Schools for the performance of the school and teachers are accountable to the principal for the progress of their students.**

Directors Schools will performance manage school principals.

Teachers will demonstrate their accountability for the progress of students through performance management processes.

### 4.2 SELF-ASSESSMENT

**Principals, in collaboration with school staff are required to undertake self-assessment that results in judgements about the standards of student achievement and the effectiveness of school processes in maximising student achievement.**

School principals, in collaboration with school staff:

- critically assess data and other evidence related to student achievement and school operations, as a basis for decisions about the actions required to maximise student achievement;
- establish an ongoing self-assessment process that provides verifiable judgments about student achievement and school operations; and
- make student achievement, both academic and non-academic, the central focus of school self-assessment.

### 4.3 PLANNING

**Principals, in collaboration with school staff are required to undertake school planning processes that include the development of a School Plan, operational planning and classroom planning.**

School principals, in collaboration with school staff:

- develop and make publicly available a School Plan spanning a number of years, that provides a succinct, strategic direction for the school;
- include in the School Plan objectives, priorities, improvement targets, major strategies, resources, reference to systemic policies and directions, evaluation measures, and a timeframe, including a provision for annual review;
- develop operational plans, in forms that best suit the school's context, detailing how the School Plan will be implemented in each school year; and
- monitor the alignment of classroom planning to school planning through performance management.

School Councils:

- take part in establishing and reviewing the School Plan.

#### 4.4 REPORTING

**Principals, in collaboration with school staff are required to publish annually a School Report that describes the school's performance and report on legislative and designated policy and program requirements.**

School principals, in collaboration with school staff:

- produce annually a School Report that provides parents and other members of the community with a clear and succinct indication of how students are progressing and what the school is doing to maximise their achievement;
- include in the School Report contextualised information about student achievement, progress on identified priorities, annual budget and accounts and highlights of the school year;
- publish the School Report in a form best suited to parents and the local community and submit the document for electronic publication;
- report on legislated and designated policy and program reporting requirements including all relevant reporting requirements listed in *Reporting Requirements of Schools*; and
- report accountability requirements as prescribed in agreements between the State and Australian Governments.

#### 4.5 REVIEW

**Principals, in collaboration with school staff are required to participate in and actively respond to school review processes, including Standards Reviews and, as required, reviews conducted by the Expert Review Group.**

School principals, in collaboration with school staff:

- in the Standards Review, present to their Director Schools evidence, analysis and judgements about the standards of student achievement;
- respond constructively to feedback resulting from a Standards Review; and
- enact any recommendations arising from a review conducted by the Expert Review Group.

Directors Schools will:

- in the Standards Review, interrogate school evidence, analysis and judgements about the standards of student achievement;
- make an overall judgement about school effectiveness including the capacity of the school to enact improvement; and
- in relation to reviews conducted by the Expert Review Group, approve, support and monitor the intervention plans developed by the school in response to the review report.

The Expert Review Group will:

- closely interrogate the operations of schools whose performance raises concern and develop a report outlining a set of prescribed improvement strategies;
- present reports on schools whose performance raises concern to the Director General for approval, with a summary of the report made publicly available;

- undertake follow-up reviews of schools whose performance raises concern to determine the progress of intervention plan implementation;
- conduct validation reviews of the Standards Review process;
- undertake reviews of schools with identified areas of exemplary practice; and
- undertake reviews at the discretion of the Minister or Director General.

## 5 RELEVANT LEGISLATION OR AUTHORITY

*Curriculum Council Act 1997*

*Disability and Discrimination Amendment (Education Standards) Act 2005*  
*[Australian Government]*

*Equal Opportunity Act 1984*

*Financial Management Act 2006 and Treasurer's Instructions*

*Public Sector Management Act 1994*

*Schools Assistance (Learning Together – Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity) Act 2004 and Regulations (2005) [Australian Government]*

*School Education Act 1999*

### 5.1 RELATED DEPARTMENT POLICIES

*Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting in Public Schools*

## 6 DEFINITIONS

### 6.1 STANDARDS REVIEW

In a Standards Review, principals, in collaboration with school staff, present to their Director Schools evidence, analysis and judgements related to the standards of student achievement – academic and non-academic. This includes longitudinal, comparative and sub-group data from system testing and other school-generated information on student achievement.

## 7 CONTACT INFORMATION

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## 8 HISTORY OF CHANGES

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17 February 2009	31 July 2018	1.1	D18/0335669	Minor changes to include reference to Public Schools D18/0151652.