Terms of Reference

Independent Review into the administrative and compliance activities in governments schools

The Minister for Education has commissioned an Independent Review of administrative and compliance activities in government schools, to be led by Katie Roberts-Hull

The Lead Reviewer will be supported in this role by an expert Reference Group of current principals and other school staff to provide input to the Review from those with contemporary first-hand experience of school operations.

The Department of Education will also establish a Consultative Committee comprising representatives of principal unions, the Australian Education Union, professional associations, and peak bodies, to ensure comprehensive engagement with key stakeholders at all stages of the Review.

Secretariat support for the Review, the Reference Group and the Consultative Committee will be provided by the Department of Education.

The Review will make recommendations on the actions the Victorian Government and schools can take to reduce and better manage administrative and compliance activity in government schools. The Review will do so by considering:

* the significant drivers of administrative and compliance activity.
* the technical sources of administrative and compliance activity, including legislation, regulatory and oversight requirements, policy and government initiatives.
* solutions that can counter those drivers and reduce unnecessary activity (acknowledging that some level of administrative and compliance activity is a necessary part of school operations, for example activities to ensure child safety).
* the evidence on what has worked (and not worked) to date, to reduce and better manage administrative and compliance activity in Victorian schools.
* approaches to reducing and better managing administrative and compliance activity, including what can be learned from other jurisdictions and sectors.
* different models of support, including the value of centralised services, networked models, non-teaching staff, that would help build the organisational resilience of our schools.
* what actions the Department of Education and its portfolio agencies can take to reduce and/or better manage administrative and compliance activity in government schools
* what actions other departments and agencies (e.g. National Disability Insurance Agency, Department of Families Fairness and Housing, WorkSafe Victoria) can take to reduce and/or better manage administrative and compliance activity in government schools.

The review will consider where different approaches may be required based on factors such as school type (primary, secondary and specialist) and context (such as geography, size).

The Review will also support the design of a pilot, as a ‘try, test and learn’ approach to reducing and better managing administrative and compliance activity.

The Review will give consideration to the findings and recommendations of the Victorian Auditor-General’s Office Performance Audit of Principal Health and Wellbeing and provide advice on strategies for measuring workload and evaluating the effectiveness of initiatives to reduce administrative and compliance activities for schools.

The Review should not consider activities or challenges currently the subject of other reviews.

The Department will convene a time-limited Oversight Committee with responsibility for monitoring the progress of the Review, advising on risks and issues, providing feedback on Review products, and (once the review has concluded) discussing next steps. The Committee will comprise:

* a Deputy Secretary-level nominee of the Secretary, Department of Education (Chair)
* a nominee of the Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet
* a nominee of the Secretary, Department of Treasury and Finance
* relevant Department of Education executives.

The Review will commence by May 2024 and provide a final report to the Minister for Education by December 2024.