

Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)

OVERVIEW

The Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO) is the unifying framework for improvement in Victorian schools.

The FISO uses contemporary school improvement and school effectiveness research to help schools focus their efforts on key areas that are known to have the greatest impact on improved student outcomes.

The FISO is made up of three elements. Together, these complement and reinforce the capacity of schools to deliver the Education State reforms and improve outcomes for all students:

- the Improvement Cycle
- the Improvement Model, including six high-impact Improvement Initiatives, and
- the Improvement Measures.

FISO IMPROVEMENT CYCLE

The Improvement Cycle uses an evidence-based model that helps schools to implement a more effective continuous Improvement Cycle. Schools use the Improvement Cycle to: self-evaluate, review and diagnose areas that require attention, plan for improvement and report to their communities on their activities, outcomes and plan for improvement.



FISO IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

Each of the six Improvement Initiatives, including their respective theories of change, are outlined in detail in the following pages. The six Improvement Initiatives are:

- Building practice excellence
- Curriculum planning and assessment
- Building leadership teams
- Empowering students and building school pride
- Setting expectations and promoting inclusion
- Building communities.



1. Building Practice Excellence

Under this initiative, teachers, principals and education support staff work together across schools to build knowledge and expertise; develop, test and strengthen teaching and assessment approaches; master the use of learning interventions; and enhance feedback to students and staff.

Theory of change – Building Practice Excellence

If we privilege extended opportunities for collaborative learning with a focus on developing new pedagogical strategies and evaluative skills,

then we will support the development and uptake of high-impact pedagogical strategies, encourage a culture of ongoing professional learning, and incorporate targeted feedback and continuous improvement in everyday teaching practice,

so that we improve the precision of teaching practice and our collective capacity to meet every student's learning needs.

2. Curriculum planning and assessment

Under this initiative, schools embed a culture of curriculum planning and assessment of the impact of learning programs, adjusting task, content and practice to suit individual student needs to accelerate student progress and ensure all students can reach their potential.

Theory of change – Curriculum, Planning and Assessment

If we establish and embed continuous curriculum and assessment planning, research and documentation,
then we will ensure that what students learn is relevant, contemporary and targeted to their needs,
so that we maximise student engagement and help students to evaluate, understand and take increasing responsibility for their progress.

3. Building leadership teams

Under this initiative, schools will: develop the capabilities of their leadership teams in using evidence and proven coaching and feedback methods, build a culture that is focused on improved performance, strengthen their succession planning and strengthen the induction of new teachers into the professional learning culture of their school.

Theory of change – Building Leadership Teams

If we strengthen the capabilities of school leadership teams to create a performance and development culture,
then we will enhance the capacity of Victoria's schools to continually challenge, support and improve practice,
so that we make a greater positive difference to student outcomes and ensure Victoria's schools are challenging, empowering and professionally rewarding places to work, develop and lead.

4. Empowering students and building school pride

Under this initiative, the whole school community engages with students so they have a voice in the learning process, fully and proudly participate in school life and have a greater say in the decisions that affect their learning and their lives at school.

Theory of change – Empowering Students and Building School Pride

If we develop a culture where teachers and students work together, and where student voices are heard, respected and acted on,
then we will build students' confidence and a sense of self-worth, mastery and self-efficacy,
so that students feel proud of and connected to their school, and develop responsibility for their learning and development.

5. Setting expectations and promoting inclusion

Under this initiative, schools work across their communities to implement a shared approach to supporting the health, wellbeing, inclusion and engagement of all students. This includes building teachers' understandings of positive behaviour support and engagement practices, and ensuring students have the tools and skills to develop positive and self-regulating behaviours.

Theory of change – Setting Expectations and Promoting Inclusion

If we embed students' individual and collective wellbeing in curriculum design and in the daily activities and experiences of each school,
then we will create a positive and inclusive learning environment that enables a stronger focus on learning,
so that all students are supported to reach their full potential regardless of background or individual need.

6. Building communities

Research shows that parent and community involvement in school life and operations is one of the factors most closely associated with improved student learning outcomes.

Under this initiative, schools build relationships within their broader communities by partnering with organisations in the community sector. Such partnerships enable fuller use of existing community resources and capabilities, and increase the efficacy of services delivered 'inside the school gate'.

Theory of change – Building Communities

If we strengthen and focus collaborative partnerships between schools, families and the broader community, then we will create a more comprehensive network of support for students and promote proven 'protective' factors,

so that we harness the full capacity of the community to support student learning and enhance student outcomes in all facets of their lives.

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Strengthened alignment of school planning

- School Strategic Plan – developed by the principal and school council. Endorsed by the Regional Director on behalf of the Secretary and refreshed annually (if required).
- Annual Implementation Plan: for improving student outcomes – how the school will implement improvement strategies and monitor actions to understand progress towards annual targets. The plan is endorsed by school council and region.
- Performance and Development Plan – Aligned with School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan: For Improving Student Outcomes. Principal Performance and Development Plan endorsed by Senior Education Improvement Leader. Teacher Performance and Development Plan endorsed by principal.

School-level structures and practices

- Documented curriculum plan, assessment and shared pedagogical approaches.
- School-based professional learning program developed and implemented that supports the school's identified improvement strategies.
- School Improvement Team formed to develop, oversee and evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the Annual Implementation Plan.
- Student voice, leadership and agency in own learning activated so students have positive school experiences and can act as partners in school improvement.
- Whole school approach to health, wellbeing, inclusion and engagement.
- Moderation of common student assessment tasks.
- Data collection, analysis and evaluation of student learning growth over time.
- Explicit use of evidence based school improvement strategies and teacher professional practice activities.

Theory of change – Improvement cycle

If we use data to accurately diagnose the areas of our practice requiring the greatest improvement,

then we can prioritise and set goals in a few key areas to intensively focus our attention, efforts and resources.

If we develop strategies and staged actions to implement our priorities and goals, and identify measures of success for these actions,

we can then intentionally and rigorously monitor our progress towards improving student outcomes.

If we make routine the way we monitor and evaluate the impact of our actions,

then we understand what has contributed to our successes, and diagnose issues and where further effort is required.

HOW IS FISO IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESSING?

The evaluation of FISO has concluded with some very pleasing findings about the uptake and implementation of FISO by Victorian schools.

Overall, the evaluation found that FISO is an effective continuous improvement framework and its implementation is on track and comparable to that of other leading jurisdictions at this point in time in their reform journeys. It also finds:

- the FISO Model is well-established, as evidenced by the alignment of schools' key improvement strategies against FISO priority areas and initiatives
- schools are increasingly aware of and comfortable with the FISO Improvement Cycle, however further

targeted efforts are required to help schools use it with greater sophistication

- FISO should remain a mechanism for driving continuous improvement in schools
- the FISO Model and Improvement Cycle should remain relatively stable for the life of the Education State agenda.

KEY LINKS

Watch a video about FISO see:

[Frameworks for improving student outcomes.](#)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What's the big idea behind FISO?

The big idea behind FISO is that our system is more likely to deliver success for students if we approach our work using a common language, a common cycle of improvement and a common set of success criteria to define our improvement, all based on the best available evidence. From the classroom, to networks, to the system as a whole, the FISO supports us to improve **as a system**.

How does FISO interact with the other Education State priority projects?

FISO provides the evidence base, advice, guidelines, tools and resources to support schools as they implement the Education State initiatives to improve outcomes for all children and young people.

- Leadership projects support school leaders to drive improvement through the *Professional leadership* priority of the Improvement Model.
- Professional Learning Communities provide a way of working that uses inquiry for schools to focus on the *Excellence in teaching and learning* priority of the Improvement Model, as they also implement the Victorian Curriculum.
- In order to build system capability, networks apply a Communities of Practice approach to problem-solve, share best practice and work collaboratively on implementing the high-impact Improvement Initiatives of the Improvement Model.
- The *Positive climate for learning* and *Community engagement in learning* priorities of the Improvement Model support schools, Navigator services and LOOKOUT Education Support Centres to work closely together to meet the needs of disengaged learners and the children and young people in out-of-home care.

How do we strike a good balance between FISO and the use of other improvement frameworks?

There are many school improvement frameworks and FISO draws on the strengths of these to suit the Victorian context. FISO gives our government schools a common language to discuss, share and build system capacity for continuous improvement. Schools can make use of various tools and strategies to implement their selected initiatives from the Improvement Model.

How do regions and schools participate in the co-construction of the FISO initiative?

FISO draws on the latest research on student learning and global best practice to assist schools to focus their efforts on key areas that are known to have the greatest impact on school improvement.

Regional staff work closely and collaboratively with school leaders to support them to identify the improvement priorities and initiatives that the school will focus on, aligned to their diagnoses and circumstances.

Senior Education Improvement Leaders (SEILs), in particular, work closely with schools to build strong relationships and foundations for improvement, through conversations and actions that focus on the quality of Annual Implementation Plans, pre-review self-evaluations, the school review process, and new or refreshed School Strategic Plans. At every stage in these processes, SEILs work alongside schools to strengthen the focus on evidence-based school improvement, and provide advice and guidance as schools are planning, implementing and monitoring Improvement Initiatives.

Does equity funding play a role in implementing FISO?

A key Education State objective is to reduce the disparities in student achievement – or close the gaps that are evident between regions, between schools and between classes within schools. The successful use of equity funds is seen in the leverage they provide for better use of core funds and in their direct application to the school's Improvement Initiatives.

Equity funding should be used by schools to improve the learning outcomes of all students. This funding should be used to support:

- A whole-school approach to supporting students from low socio-economic backgrounds and/or requiring individual targeted assistance, characterised by:
- high-quality leadership
- a clear vision
- agreed goals and targets
- high expectations of students, teachers and parents in relation to each student's outcomes, and

- strategic and coordinated use of these additional resources.
- A prime focus on individual students – to ensure that teachers know where each student is up to in their learning and can regularly monitor each student’s progress as a basis for planning the next learning steps for this student.
- Ongoing evaluation and monitoring of student progress through systematic use of:
- data (e.g. literacy and numeracy outcomes data; student satisfaction and attendance data) to identify students at risk, and
- diagnostic and developmental assessment tools to identify student learning needs and to ensure that the programs being implemented are resulting in improved outcomes for individual students.
- Professional learning to strengthen teacher capacity to develop individual learning plans for students requiring the most intensive assistance; supporting teachers to monitor student progress and adjust learning plans and teaching strategies accordingly.
- Development of programs that create and maintain positive and productive partnerships with families and community organisations.

ACTIVITIES COMPLETED TO DATE

Professional learning for regions and schools	Feb – Dec 2016
Evaluation of the implementation of FISO commenced	Aug 2016
Peer and Priority reviews underway	Sep 2016
End-year AIP review with SEIL and planning to develop 2017 AIP	Nov 2016
Draft continua of practice published and 2017 AIP resources released	Nov 2016
Materials released for the 2017 AIP process	Nov 2016
Teaching and Learning toolkit aligned with the FISO dimensions	Dec 2016
Principal Practice Survey undertaken	Jan – Mar 2017
Training delivered for Priority and Peer Review schools	Jan – Mar 2017
Continua of Practice (incorporating the Essential Elements) published	Jan – Mar 2017
Evaluation interim report delivered	Jan – Mar 2017
Equity funding online form released	Feb 2017
FISO public website updated	Mar 2017
Schools completed and submitted their Annual Report to the school community	Apr 2017
School Review training delivered across the state	Apr 2017
30 new FISO case studies published	Jun 2017
Launch of Strategic Planning Online Tool (SPOT)	Oct 2017
FISO – Teacher Survey	Oct 2017
End of year self-assessment of 2017 Annual Implementation Plans	Term 4, 2017
School Annual Reporting templates developed	Dec 2017
New School Review process commences	Term 2, 2018
2017 Annual Report to the School Community due	Apr 2018
School Strategic Plan launched in Strategic Online Planning Tool (SPOT)	Term 3, 2018

FISO Evaluation Final Report	End of Term 3, 2018
Schools complete end of year self-evaluation	Start Term 4, 2018
Schools commence development of 2019 AIP	Mid Term 4, 2018
2019 Annual Implementation Plans due	21 Dec 2018

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES AND MILESTONES

2019 Annual Implementation Plan signed endorsed by School Council	Feb 2019
Annual Report to the school community due	30 Apr 2019
2019 Annual Implementation Plan monitoring	Jun – Jul 2019