Improving School Governance
1. Governance

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1.0 Introduction

Goal

This module provides participants with an understanding of:

• the framework within which school councils operate
• what school councils do
• school council operations
• important features of the school.

Overview

School councils play a key role in Victorian government schools and being a member of the school council is a rewarding and challenging experience. Acting as a team, the council supports the principal to enhance the educational opportunities for students.

Good governance strengthens community confidence in the school and school council and helps to ensure the council’s reputation is maintained and enhanced. Good governance enables the council to perform efficiently and effectively and to respond strategically to changing demands and educational challenges.

Good governance relies on the professional leadership of the principal, who is a council member and the council's executive officer, the school council president and the school council. The establishment and implementation of appropriate processes achieve a balance between formal meeting procedures and a friendly atmosphere of cooperation. Council members can strengthen their performance by developing their skills, knowledge and contributions through professional development.
Overview continued

Although each councillor brings their own valuable life experience and knowledge to the role, councillors may need to develop skills and acquire knowledge in areas that may be unfamiliar to them. These might include developing an understanding of strategic planning, interpreting data or financial statements, working effectively as a council or understanding legislative and policy requirements.

This training module will help councillors understand their roles and responsibilities and develop the skills and knowledge to perform their governance tasks successfully.

In addition to this governance module, there are other modules to support councillors in the areas of strategic planning, finance, policy and review and school council president. There is also a training presentation on the Department’s website, for principals and school staff, to help them understand their obligations under the Child Safe Standards. It is recommended the school council should be informed of the Child Safe Standards and their obligations, by reviewing the presentation annually with the principal. Department log-in is required.
1.1 Legislative framework

Why is this topic important?

School councils operate within the Victorian government school system under a legislative framework.

The system has a strong history of establishing efficient and effective mechanisms that:
- meet the expectations of Victorians for well-governed schools
- reflect local community and Department of Education and Training (the Department) Values
- meet the needs of local communities served by particular schools.

On completing this unit, school councillors should:
- know the legal requirements which apply to school councils
- understand the framework under which they operate.

Legislation

The Government school system is administered by a combination of the Minister for Education (Minister), the Secretary of the Department, the Department and school councils.

The Minister has overall responsibility, with the Secretary, Department and school councils separately accountable to the Minister for the performance of their functions.

All school councils in Victoria are established under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (the Act) and operate under the Act and Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (the Regulations).

Each school council is established by Ministerial Order 1280 Constitution of Government School Councils, which, together with the Act and Regulations, specifies the council’s membership, size and composition; its objectives, powers, functions and accountabilities; and the role of its executive officer, who is the principal.
Constitution of Government School Councils

Coming into operation on 1 January 2021, the new Ministerial Order 1280 Constitution of Government School Councils consolidates existing school council constituting Orders with global Ministerial Orders such as Ministerial Order 52, the school council composition and elections Order, into a single Order. The objectives, functions and powers of school council remain set out in the Act.

School councillors are also subject to the Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities made under the Public Administration Act 2004.

As a corporate body, school councils may exercise and discharge the powers, duties and functions given to them by or under the Act. As such, school councils are separate legal entities from the Department.

The Secretary, Department of Education and Training, is required to ensure there is an effective quality assurance regime over the financial and operational activities of school councils. The Secretary is also required to advise the Minister on matters relating to school councils and work with and provide guidance to councils to assist them in their operation. The Secretary, however, cannot direct or control a school council in the performance of its functions.

It is important that school councillors understand the key features of the relevant legislation because it affects all aspects of their work: including how they interact with the community, develop and consider options, make decisions and generally conduct themselves both during and outside of council meetings.

A well-informed and effective school council strengthens community confidence in the school and helps to protect and build the school's reputation.

School councils that oversee or operate an outside school hours care (OSHC) or kindergarten service also need to understand the different legislative framework that applies.
The National Quality Framework provides a national approach to the regulation and quality assessment of early childhood education and care services, which includes OSHC and kindergarten services. The National Quality Framework (NQF) includes:

- the National Law and National Regulations (the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011)
- the National Quality Standard
- the assessment and rating process
- national approved learning framework – My Time, Our Place: Framework for The School Aged Care in Australia and The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework, while not a national approved framework, may also be used in Victorian services.
- Belonging, Being and becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF).

The Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) supports the implementation of the NQF and works with state and territory regulatory authorities to implement and administer this framework.

School councils hold a duty under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 to ensure that the school, as a workplace, is, so far as reasonably practicable, safe and without risks to health.

This means that the duty will extend to all matters over which school council has management and control. This includes matters such as engagement of goods and services, oversight of the management of contracts, and the maintenance of school buildings, grounds and facilities. The duty extends to all persons affected by the conduct of the school, including students, parents, visitors and contractors.

Under the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 all schools are required to comply with the Child Safe Standards. Compliance with Ministerial Order 870 – Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse (Ministerial Order 870) is part of the prescribed minimum standards for school registration.

School council membership

Ministerial Order 1280 Constitution of Government School Councils makes provision for each school council structure and membership:

- **Parent members**
  Parents of students at the school must comprise more than one third of the school council’s total membership, according to Ministerial Order 1280 Constitution of Government School Councils. ‘Parent’ includes a guardian or person responsible for the maintenance or with custody of a student of the school. Department employees, except for the principal, (who is a member of the school employee member category), are eligible for membership in this category as long as they have children attending the school and the Department employees do not work at the school of that school council.

- **School employee members**
  To be eligible for election to this category, a person must be a member of the school employee electorate of the school. The principal is automatically included in this membership category and has full voting rights. Other school staff (teaching and non-teaching) are elected to this category. School employee members are considered Department employees. The number of school employee members must not be more than one third of the school council’s total membership, according to Ministerial Order 1280 Constitution of Government School Councils.

- **Community members**
  At some schools the council’s membership schedule may include members in this category. If a council includes community members, the council decides who to approach and co-opt into this position. Community members are co-opted to bring additional skills and perspectives to council decision making. Community members hold the same rights, responsibilities and terms of office as elected members. Parents are eligible to be co-opted to a community member position, but Department employees are not. Students may also be co-opted to a community member position.

- **Student members**
  Schools that provide secondary level education must have two student members on council unless an exemption has been granted. ‘Student’ is a student who is enrolled at and attends the school and is in Year 7 or above. To be eligible for election, a student must be a member of the student body of the school.

- **Nominee members**
  A very small number of school councils have a nominee member category. Nominee members are appointed by organisations authorised by the Minister for Education. Nominee members generally have the same rights, responsibilities and terms of office as elected members unless otherwise provided in Ministerial Order 1280 Constitution of Government School Councils. Principals review the terms of appointment of the nominees at the start of each school year.
Code of conduct for school councillors

School councils in Victoria are public entities for the purposes of the Public Administration Act 2004. School councillors are directors of public entities and must abide by the Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities (Code of Conduct) issued by the Victorian Public Sector Commission.

The Code of Conduct sets the standard of behaviour and requires councillors to:

• act with honesty and integrity – be truthful, open and clear about their motives and declare any real, potential or perceived conflict of interest and duty

• act in good faith in the best interests of the school – work cooperatively with other councillors and the school community, be reasonable, and make all decisions with the best interests of students in mind

• act fairly and impartially – consider all relevant facts of an issue before making a decision, seek to have a balanced view, never give special treatment to a person or group and do not act from self-interest

• use information appropriately – respect confidentiality and use information for the purpose for which it was made available

• use their position appropriately – not use their position as a councillor to gain an advantage

• act in a financially responsible manner – observe all the above principles when making financial decisions

• exercise due care, diligence and skill – accept responsibility for decisions and do what is best for the school

• act consistently with legislative and policy requirements when making decisions

• notify the school council if they become a candidate for an election in any state, local or federal election and not use the council’s resources in connection with their candidature

• demonstrate leadership and stewardship – set a good example, encourage a culture of accountability and child safety, manage risks effectively and responsibly to keep the school strong and sustainable.

Public Sector Values

School councillors must also abide by and demonstrate the Victorian Public Sector Values set out in the Code of Conduct. These Values are Responsiveness, Integrity, Impartiality, Accountability, Respect, Leadership and Human Rights.

The Values underpin the behaviours that the government and community expect of all directors of public entities, including school council members.

A failure to uphold the Values can result in reputational damage for the school council, school and Government, and can undermine confidence in the community and in democratic practices.

Breaches of the Code of Conduct are taken very seriously.
Why do we need Values?

Values describe a commonly understood set of expected behaviours.

The Values set out the way that school councillors, as directors of public entities, should think and act. These behaviours increase trust and confidence in our work. The public expect employees and school council members to act in accordance with the Values. Doing so is central to building and sustaining trust in the important work we do.

When school council members act in accordance with the Code of Conduct and the Values, it strengthens the school’s capacity to operate effectively and achieve its objectives.

The Values have been adopted by the Department as the DET Values and complement each school’s values and teachers’ professional standards, such as the Codes of Conduct and Ethics issued by the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

For all school staff and school council members, behaving with integrity and respect in everyday decisions and actions goes to the heart of the community’s trust in the school and the public education system.

Working together

School councillors must abide by the Code of Conduct and work together in the best interests of the school, including:

- assisting in the efficient governance of the school
- ensuring that the council’s decisions affecting students are made having regard to the best interests of the students as a primary consideration
- enhancing the educational opportunities of students at the school
- ensuring the school council adheres to all legal and Department requirements.

Conflict may occur when school councillors do not understand the difference between the role of the principal as educational leader of the school as well as executive officer of council, and the governance role of school council members. See ‘Distinctions in roles and responsibilities’ in this module for examples of school activities that school councils may be involved in.

The Department’s Policy and Advisory Library provides information and advice on the Code of Conduct and managing conflict on council should it arise. In an environment where mutual trust and respect prevail, conflict can be a positive force. It can encourage people to find creative solutions, clarify an issue, increase the involvement of members, encourage growth, and strengthen relationships. However, conflict or misconduct can divert energy from the group, compromise morale and create disharmony.
Confidentiality

School councillors bring diverse views to the council and work together to develop a shared vision for the improvement of student outcomes.

Confidentiality and the proper use of information is an important component of the code of conduct for school councillors.

School councillors are expected to use the information they gain in the course of their council responsibilities for its intended purpose only. Members use the information at council meetings to guide their discussions and decision-making. Councillors cannot use the information, including privileged information or sensitive information, to obtain an advantage for themselves or another person or to cause concern or loss of the community’s trust.

Council members must feel assured their discussions and views are treated confidentially by other members. All councillors must respect privacy and use their discretion and good judgement when dealing with school council information. For example, council members should not discuss who said what or the different views of councillors, outside of the council meeting. Private information from council meetings that could identify a staff member, student or their family must not be discussed, such as information that could identify applicants in a principal selection process. The school council president and principal can provide guidance on any matter and the need for confidentiality, if required.

RESPONSIVENESS
We respond in a timely way with our best work

INTEGRITY
We are honest, ethical and transparent

IMPARTIALITY
We behave in the best interests of the public by making fair and objective decisions

ACCOUNTABILITY
We hold ourselves and others to account for the work that we do

RESPECT
We value others and accept their differences

LEADERSHIP
We are genuine, supportive and do the right thing

HUMAN RIGHTS
We uphold and respect the rights of others
Resources and links

Information, related policies and advice can be located in the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library for schools www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal including:

- School Council – Powers and Functions
- School Council – Composition and Office Bearers
- School Council – Conduct and Conflict of Interest
  www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-conduct/policy
- Values – Department and VPS Values for School Employees
  www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/values-department-vps-school-employees/overview
- Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality
- Procurement – Schools
- Child Safe Standards
- PROTECT
- Protect – online learning for schools – Login required
elearn.com.au/det/protectionchildren/schools
- Outside School Hours Care – Decision Making Regarding the Provision of OSHC

Other relevant resources:

- Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority and the National Quality Framework website acecqa.gov.au
- National Quality Framework
- Quality and Assessment Regulations Division (QARD) on the Early childhood regulation and quality assessment page on the Department’s website
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 on the Department’s website
- Victorian Public Sector Commission Code of conduct for directors of Victorian public entities page
1.2 What school councils do

Why is this topic important?

Under the Act, a school council has a particular function in establishing the school’s broad direction and vision. Councillors need to understand what their role is, the powers, functions and duties of the school council and how they are required to work with the principal and the school community.

On completing this unit, councillors should understand:

- how the legislative functions of school councils translate into governance roles and responsibilities including those that require decisions of council
- the distinctions in roles and responsibilities of school council and those of the school principal
- how partnerships can assist the school council in performing its functions, powers and roles.

Objectives of a school council

The objectives of a school council are specified in the Act and include:

- to assist in the efficient governance of the school
- to ensure that decisions affecting students of the school are made having regard, as a primary consideration, to the best interest of the students
- to enhance the educational opportunities of students at the school
- to ensure the school and the council complies with any requirements of the Act, the Regulations, a Ministerial Order or a direction, guideline of policy issued under the Act.
Functions of a school council

The functions and powers of a school council are specified in the Act and include:

• establishing the broad direction and vision of the school within the school’s community
• participating in the development, monitoring and endorsement of the School Strategic Plan (SSP) and Annual Implementation Plan (AIP)
• approving the annual budget and monitoring expenditure
• raising funds for school-related purposes
• having general oversight over the school’s grounds and buildings
• providing the cleaning and sanitary services that are necessary for the school
• ensuring that all money coming into the council is used for proper purposes relating to the school
• the provision of meals and refreshments for the staff and students of the school and charging for those meals or refreshments
• entering into contracts, such as for cleaning in regional schools or construction work
• reporting annually to the school community and to the Department
• creating interest in the school in the wider community
• taking into account the views of the school community
• developing, reviewing or updating school policies that fall within a school council’s responsibilities
• regulating and facilitating the after-hours use of the school premises and grounds, for example: managing the hire, licence and shared use of school facilities
• if desired, the school council of a school that provides primary education and in relation to which the council is constituted may provide preschool programs at the school or other premises controlled by the Minister

A school council should exercise its powers and perform its functions for the purpose of meeting its objectives. However, a school council is not responsible for a school’s compliance with obligations that fall outside the scope of their functions and powers.

School council is generally also involved in the school principal selection process. When principal selection occurs, a panel is formed to review applications, interview shortlisted applicants and recommend one or more applicants to the Secretary of the Department to employ. The selection panel includes councillors, and Department staff. Principal selection panel members are provided with principal selection panel training.

The school council president, on request from the Regional Director, provides input to principal contract renewal discussions. The president advises the school council of that input at the next school council meeting.

1. Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) s 2.3.5(a). 2. Ibid s 2.3.5(g). 3. Ibid s 2.3.5(c). 4. Ibid s 2.3.5(e). 5. Ibid s 2.3.5(f). 6. Ibid s 2.3.5(g). 7. Ibid s 2.3.5(h). 8. Ibid s 2.3.6(1)(a). 9. Ibid s 2.3.27 (1) and (2). 10. Ibid s 2.3.5(j). 11. Ibid s 2.3.5(i). 12. Ibid s 2.3.5(d). 13. Ibid s 2.3.20 (1)(a).
What a school council is not authorised to do

A school council is not authorised to:

• acquire land or lease land or premises
• employ teachers for longer than 12 months or with no fixed date for the termination of that employment.

Unless authorised by or under the Act, Regulations or a Ministerial Order, a school council is not able to:

• hire or licence school facilities for a purpose that is not educational, recreational, sporting or cultural or involves the construction and long-term shared use of buildings and facilities
• purchase a motor vehicle, boat or plane for the school
• enter into hire purchase agreements for the school
• obtain credit facilities or loans on behalf of the school
• form or become a member of a corporation
• provide for any matter or thing outside of Victoria unless it is related to an excursion by school students or the professional development of school staff.
Indemnity for school council members

School councillors are indemnified against any liability in respect of any loss or damage suffered by the council or any other person in respect of anything necessarily or reasonably done, or omitted to be done, by the councillor in good faith in:

- the exercise of a power or the performance of a function of a councillor, or
- the reasonable belief that the act or omission was in the exercise of a power or the performance of a function of a councillor.

In other words, school councillors are not personally liable for any loss or damage suffered by council or others as a result of reasonable actions taken in good faith.
Distinctions in roles and responsibilities

Understanding the functional split between school councils and the principal of the school is critical for the effective functioning of the council.

The school council has a limited governance and oversight role, whereas the principal manages the day-to-day activities of the school and is responsible for ensuring the delivery of a comprehensive education to every student with the knowledge, capabilities and attributes for their future role in society. The principal also holds a duty of care for, and is responsible for the care, safety and welfare of the students at the school.

The following table shows a range of school activities that school councils may be involved in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of activity</th>
<th>The principal …</th>
<th>The school council …</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>• leads the organisation, management and administration of the school&lt;br&gt;• allocates teaching or other duties to teaching staff&lt;br&gt;• is responsible for the general care, safety and welfare of students&lt;br&gt;• determines the overarching education decisions for students, such as curriculum and staffing arrangements</td>
<td>• establishes the broad direction and vision of school&lt;br&gt;• ensures all money is expended for proper purposes relating to the school&lt;br&gt;• informs itself of the views of the school community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic direction of the school</td>
<td>• leads development of curriculum – teaching and learning programs&lt;br&gt;• determines teacher, subject and time allocations; timetable; class sizes; and structures</td>
<td>• develops the broad direction and vision for the school, using guidelines provided by the Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student dress code policy</td>
<td>• implements the student dress code developed by school council in consultation with the wider school community&lt;br&gt;• considers and, where appropriate, grants exemptions to dress code guidelines for individual students&lt;br&gt;• enforces the student dress code</td>
<td>• develops student dress code policy in close consultation with the wider school community&lt;br&gt;• consults with the school community before adopting changes to this policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of activity</td>
<td>The principal ...</td>
<td>The school council ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Camps and excursions** | • is responsible for approving all excursions and relevant operational requirements, including camps, interstate and international  
• Where a camp or excursion involves more than one school, all relevant principals are responsible for approving all excursions involving another school | • is responsible for approving the financial component of an excursion or camp. That is, in relation to the school’s budget and the parent payments policy or contracts engaging third party providers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| **Buildings and grounds** | • is responsible for maintenance of school buildings and grounds  
• monitors implementation of contracts | • exercises a general oversight of school buildings and grounds to ensure they are kept in good condition and order  
• oversees school cleaning, and in regional schools only, enters into contracts for school cleaning  
• enters into contracts for building and grounds improvements  
• makes decisions about the hiring and shared use of school facilities in accordance with Department policy requirements                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| **School review**       | • keeps the whole school community and council informed about the school review  
• leads the Pre-review Self-evaluation in consultation with the whole school community  
• is a member of the core School Review Panel  
• presents the findings of the review report to the school staff and school council | • participates in the Pre-review Self-evaluation  
• value-adds to the review as defined in the terms of reference e.g. participation in focus groups etc.  
• is presented with the findings of the report and accepts the report  
**The school council president:**  
• is a member of the core School Review Panel                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| **Strategic and Annual Planning** | • engages the staff and school community in development of the School Strategic Plan following the school review  
• engages the staff and school community in the development of the Annual Implementation Plan  
• engages the staff and school community in the monitoring of progress against annual targets  
• endorses the School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan in the Strategic Planning Online Tool (SPOT) | • contributes to the finalisation of the School Strategic Plan following the school review  
• contributes to the development of the Annual Implementation Plan  
• president endorses the School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan in SPOT  
• ensures regular monitoring of the Annual Implementation Plan, including any risks to achieving goals and milestones                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of activity</th>
<th>The principal ...</th>
<th>The school council ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Outside school hours care or kindergarten service | - engages the school community in the decision-making process to establish or change operating models or service provider  
- informs the school community and school council about the service on a regular basis  
- may be nominated by school council as the person with management or control for a school council managed operating model  
- has knowledge of the National Law and National Regulations and the Child Safe Standards as they apply to education and care services | - decides whether to establish a school council operated service or engage a third-party service provider  
- is the legal entity under the National Law of a school council managed operating model, and therefore has the role as approved provider. As approved provider, the council nominates people with management or control, noting this does not take away from the approved provider's legal responsibilities  
- in a third-party provider operating model, selects, engages and contract-manages the preferred provider, and endorses the licence agreement negotiated with a third party  
- receives regular program reports from the OSHC or kindergarten provider  
- regularly monitors the provider's compliance with the requirements of the National Law  
- should be consulted on the development of the service's Quality Improvement Plan and be provided with a copy of the service's Assessment and Rating report |
Delegations

The Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 allow school councils to delegate their powers and duties. A school council must generally obtain approval from the Minister for Education to delegate a power or duty to a person or body other than the principal.

A school council cannot delegate any of its functions or powers in relation to the approval of the school budget or Annual Report.

The delegation must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting of school council and a register of delegations must be kept by the school council. The instrument setting out the delegations, and the terms and conditions of the delegations, must be signed by the president of the school council, or a council member appointed for this purpose, and delivered to the delegates. Further information on delegating a school council power or function, including a fact sheet and template instrument of delegation, is available on the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library under School council - Powers and Functions.

A person or body to whom a delegation has been made must provide a written report about any activities performed as a delegate at each ordinary meeting of the school council.
Strategic planning

One of the key functions of school councils is to contribute to the establishment of the broad vision and direction for the school.

The school council president must also endorse or attest to a number of school planning and implementation documents in the Strategic Planning Online Tool (SPOT) on behalf of the council. Accessing the SPOT system requires the use of a Department Education Mail account which should be regularly checked by the president to ensure they are up to date with any Department requirements.

Strategic planning is the process for reflecting on past performance, establishing future directions and deciding what will build success. Further information on school council’s role in strategic planning is provided in the ISG training module: Strategic Planning.

In other words, it involves the school community considering the following questions:

- where have we been?
- where do we want to go?
- how will we get there?
- how will we know if we have been successful?

The Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO) Improvement Cycle outlines a clear cycle for developing the School Strategic Plan and planning for improving student outcomes.

The cycle includes:

- **Evaluate and diagnose** – monitoring and reviewing the school’s performance against its current School Strategic Plan through:
  - annual self-evaluation
  - Pre-review Self-evaluation (every four years)
  - conducting a school review every four years, to examine the school’s performance over the previous strategic plan period and to plan for improvement, including undertaking a process by which the school’s compliance with registration requirements is checked, every four years.
  - publishing an Annual Report for the school community, including parents/guardians, students and other interested people about the school’s successes and challenges in implementing the strategic plan and improving student outcomes.

- **Prioritise and set goals** – developing a four-year School Strategic Plan that outlines goals, targets and key improvement strategies and expected outcomes in a school-based plan that reflects local needs, based on data, including any key risks to achievement and aligned to FISO, including the FISO four statewide priorities and six high-impact Improvement Initiatives.

- **Develop and plan** – developing Annual Implementation Plans that describe how the key improvement strategies and other specific projects in the School Strategic Plan will be implemented, monitored and evaluated each year. This links to performance and development plans for the principal and teachers.

- **Implement and monitor** – collaboratively monitoring and reviewing the impact of the school’s improvement strategies and initiatives on student learning, including key risks to achievement. The potential risks associated with the delivery of the Annual Implementation Plan and the School Strategic Plan should be reviewed, discussed and approved by the school council.
The following table provides an overview of how the principal and staff, school council and school community would typically be involved in the strategic planning process. Senior Education Improvement Leaders, who work within each of the regions, also play an important role in the strategic planning process. These roles and responsibilities are examined in detail in the Strategic Planning module.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal ...</th>
<th>The school council ...</th>
<th>The Senior Education Improvement Leader ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluate and diagnose</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• plans and manages the Pre-review Self-evaluation, in consultation with the school improvement team</td>
<td>• reviews the plan and timeline for the Pre-review Self-evaluation</td>
<td>• supports the school in undertaking a Pre-review Self-evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• organises consultations, gathers and analyses data</td>
<td>• participates in working groups and involves the community in consultations</td>
<td>• works with the principal to access and interpret data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• oversees the drafting of the Pre-review Self-evaluation report</td>
<td>• endorses the final Pre-review Self-evaluation report in SPOT</td>
<td>• provides feedback and endorses the Pre-review Self-evaluation report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• plans for the school review and provides performance data to the School Review Panel</td>
<td>• president, as a member of the core School Review Panel, analyses the Pre-review Self-evaluation report and other school data in preparation for the review</td>
<td>• as a member of the core School Review Panel, analyses the Pre-review Self-evaluation report and other school data in preparation for the review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Prioritise and set goals</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• finalises the School Strategic Plan using the directions provided in the school review report in SPOT</td>
<td>• supports the development of a long-term view of the school's directions</td>
<td>• supports the school council to prepare the draft School Strategic Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• organises consultations</td>
<td>• involves the community in consultations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• reviews the draft School Strategic Plan and provides advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• endorses the School Strategic Plan and the president endorses the plan in SPOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• obtains endorsement for the School Strategic Plan from the Regional Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• communicates and implements the School Strategic Plan</td>
<td>• communicates and monitors the School Strategic Plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The principal ... The school council ... The Senior Education Improvement Leader ...

**Implement and monitor**

- keeps the school community informed about progress in implementing the School Strategic Plan
- monitors progress in implementing the School Strategic Plan, including key risks to achievement
- drafts and signs the Annual Report in SPOT
- endorses the Annual Report to the school community
- president endorses the Annual Report in SPOT
- organises a public meeting to present the Annual Report to the school community
- reports to the school community on the school’s performance together with the principal and president
- provides quality assurance for the Annual Report

**School council annual self-assessment**

School councils operate effectively when there is a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities and a clear and consistent process for decision-making. Self-assessments are an important process for reflecting on school council effectiveness.

Councillors should use this tool to reflect on their roles and the effectiveness of the school council as a whole. The council can then discuss the results in small groups or as a whole team and develop an improvement plan.

Most school councils will identify some areas for improvement. For example, they may agree that some council operational practices could be refined or improved.

School council may wish to build particular knowledge and capabilities by undertaking the Department’s Improving School Governance (ISG) training. The training is available via a virtual facilitator-led format, or face-to-face delivery at the school, or online as interactive, self-paced, activity-based modules. The training is available free of charge to Victorian Government school councils.


The Public Administration Act 2004 (PAA) provides guidance and accountability standards for all Victorian Government school councils as public entities. It is a requirement under the PAA that all school councils undertake an annual self-assessment.

A school council self-assessment tool has been designed by the Department to assist school councils in evaluating their effectiveness as a group and identifying areas for improvement.
Finance

It is a legal requirement that school councils ensure that funds coming into the school council are being properly used and authorised.

To this end, school councils are responsible for overseeing a functioning and effective system of internal controls in accordance with the Finance Manual for Victorian Government Schools. Further information on school council’s role in financial management is also provided in the ISG Finance module.

**Internal controls are the procedures that ensure:**
- all financial activity within the school is sound, accurate and legal
- the school’s assets are safe
- school council can rely on the accuracy of the financial information it receives.

School council also helps develop the school’s program (non-staff) budget that shows how the school will allocate its resources to implement the key improvement strategies in the School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan. Council then monitors the school’s financial performance against the budget in conjunction with the principal.

Finally, council is responsible for how the school raises funds, over and above the funding provided by the government. It must manage any financial and reputational risks that could arise and ensure that all legal and policy requirements are met.

It is recommended all school councils have a treasurer, although this is not mandatory. Most school councils have a finance subcommittee which handles many of the council’s routine financial responsibilities. The treasurer is usually the convener of the finance subcommittee, is elected from council members, and is preferably a non-Department employee. The Business Manager/bursar must not hold this position. It is recommended the office bearer position of treasurer be elected at the first meeting of the school council after the declaration of the council election, in line with current practice.

The following table provides an overview of how the principal and staff, school council and the school community would typically be involved in school financial management. These roles and responsibilities are examined in more detail in the ISG Finance module.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>The principal ...</strong></th>
<th><strong>The school council ...</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal controls</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• provides financial reports to council</td>
<td>• considers financial reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• puts in place a system of internal controls consistent with Department policy</td>
<td>• ensures the school has and uses a system of internal controls consistent with Department policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• conducts school financial business in line with the system of internal controls</td>
<td>• adheres to internal controls such as:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- appointing a school councillor, normally the school council president or another member who has been delegated the authority by the school council, to approve payments and sign cheques; this councillor cannot be the Business Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- approving trading operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- ensuring issues raised by auditors are addressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- identifying and managing conflicts of interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- monitoring and overseeing offers and provision of gifts, benefits and hospitality within the school and at least annually, reviewing the School Register for compliance with policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budgeting</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• develops the budget timeline</td>
<td>• approves the budget timeline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• develops program budgets with staff, and salary and revenue budgets</td>
<td>• reviews budget submissions and program priority list. This can be undertaken by the finance subcommittee if school council has one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• evaluates program outcomes, prepares and prioritises budget submissions</td>
<td>• reviews and approves the budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• communicates the budget to staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Reports</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• prepares financial reports</td>
<td>• monitors revenue and expenditure against the budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• explains financial reports to the finance subcommittee and school council, and recommends action as appropriate</td>
<td>• takes action to address issues arising from the financial reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• implements the council’s decisions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fundraising</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• assists with the review of fundraising proposals</td>
<td>• approves fundraising activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• advises council about available cash</td>
<td>• reviews approved fundraising profit and loss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• develops a parent payments policy</td>
<td>• contributes to and approves the parent payments policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• implements policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contracts and contract management

A school council can purchase goods, equipment and materials for carrying out its functions, subject to the Act. School councils are strongly encouraged to use the PAL policy, Contractors, Insurance and Contract Agreements to locate template Agreements (www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/contractors-insurance-contract-arrangements/policy) created by the Department for the purchase of goods and services. If a supplier insists on using their own Agreement or you would like to amend a template Agreement, it is recommended the principal seek advice from the Legal Division.

School councils must:
• provide and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risks to health for all employees, independent contractors and contractor’s employees
• ensure that contractors are competent and able to control their own systems of work
• retain a general supervisory power over any work undertaken by a contractor
• define the contractor’s respective areas of responsibility, particularly where there is more than one contractor involved
• examine carefully the contractual arrangements
• ensure that selection, supervision and management practices for school council employees and contractors are child safe
• ensure that the activities undertaken do not put staff, students or the contractors at risk.

School councils should use the standard contracts or related documents available from the Legal Division which include:
• maintenance or cleaning services
• school canteen licence
• hiring school premises by third parties
• school uniform items
• Outside School Hours Care service approval
• Expression of Interest template for third party OSHC program
• Kindergarten service approval.

School councils must ensure that the school complies with the Department’s Procurement Policy and the Finance Manual for Victorian Government Schools, found on the Policy and Advisory Library.

Further information on school council’s role in financial management is provided in the ISG Finance module.
Sponsorship and school councils

Sponsorship can provide a mutually beneficial and purposeful relationship between organisations, local businesses and Victorian Government schools. Well-managed sponsorship arrangements can provide an effective way of increasing awareness of school initiatives, building stakeholder relationships, and help communicate with specific audiences within the community.

The role of school councils regarding sponsorship is two-fold. School council members should be aware of, and refer to, the Department’s sponsorship policy, and have a broad understanding of the processes involved when seeking, planning, implementing and evaluating a sponsorship proposal.

School principals, councils and staff must:

- undertake sponsorships in an ethical and fair manner and disclose any conflict of interests
- only engage in sponsorship activities that meet one or more of the following sponsorship principles:
  - promote and improve educational outcomes
  - support school goals and objectives
  - increase effectiveness of the Department’s strategic programs
  - engage or build relationships with stakeholders.
- assess proposed sponsorships against the policy and guidelines
- assess the value and benefits of the sponsorship against project or program criteria
- draft sponsorship agreements on receipt of relevant approvals
- ensure all sponsorship agreements have end dates
- register and record all sponsorship details
- monitor and evaluate the sponsorship arrangement.

In particular, school councils need to be aware of the types of external sponsors that are and are not permitted, and the types of activities that can be sponsored.
Appropriate activity

The Department and schools must not engage in sponsorship that is inappropriate, either through association or activity, and the following activities/organisations should not be considered for sponsorship:

- activities aimed at delivering or replacing core Departmental, school or agency services
- activities or sponsorship partners whose values, products, purposes or objectives are inconsistent with the Department’s policies, values, priorities or objectives
- political parties, tobacco companies, gaming venues, companies involved in the sale or promotion of alcohol, or involved in the sale/promotion of firearms
- companies that encourage unhealthy food choices by young people
- religious organisations or religious activities
- unregistered charities and not-for-profit organisations, including those not registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission
- organisations or companies that are financially unsound or unstable
- agencies with inspectorial or regulatory powers over the Department.

Schools should seek advice from Schools Procurement in the first instance by email at: schools.procurement@education.vic.gov.au

School councils also need to be aware of approval thresholds. School councils are responsible for approving incoming and outgoing sponsorships $25,000 and under. Sponsorship activities above $25,000 must be approved by the school council and the relevant Regional Director. Once approved by the Regional Director, the school must then inform the Communications Division by email at: sponsorship@education.vic.gov.au

Detailed guidance on the process, required approval levels, registers, agreements and other recording requirements is contained within the Schools Sponsorship Procedure document, which must be read and followed in conjunction with the Department’s Sponsorship Policy and Guidelines. Schools must comply with this policy. Additional resources relating to sponsorships and sponsorships above $25,000 are also included in the policy. The policy is located on the Department’s website.

For further information on the approval process please contact the Strategic Communications Branch, Communications Division, by email at: sponsorship@education.vic.gov.au
The Victorian Schools Building Authority (VSBA) School Asset Management Roles and Responsibilities Framework

The School Asset Management Roles and Responsibilities Framework (the framework) describes the school facilities management roles and responsibilities for school councils, principals and corporate (Department) staff. The Framework has been designed to help school councils understand their unique asset management role and responsibilities and explain how these responsibilities work in conjunction with those of principals and the Department. In particular, the Framework provides practical information about the school council’s legislative function to ‘exercise general oversight of school buildings and grounds’ and how this function applies to a variety of key asset management topics. Councillors can work with the president and principal to inform themselves of their role and responsibilities.

The following table provides an overview of what the principal and leadership team, and the school council are responsible for in terms of asset management.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal ...</th>
<th>The school council ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• is the asset manager for their</td>
<td>• is responsible for the supply of goods,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school and responsible for the</td>
<td>services, facilities, materials, equipment and other things or matters that are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>planning of and delivery of safe</td>
<td>required for the conduct of the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and sustainable learning</td>
<td>• is responsible for general oversight of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environments</td>
<td>the school buildings and grounds and ensuring that they are kept in good order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and condition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• is responsible for overseeing,</td>
<td>• must ensure that the school (as a workplace) is, so far as is reasonably</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>planning and managing the</td>
<td>practicable, safe and without risks to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maintenance of school</td>
<td>health. This duty extends to the oversight of ESM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>facilities, and ensuring their</td>
<td>• must ensure that the school (as a workplace) is, so far as is reasonably</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school site is safe and secure</td>
<td>practicable, safe and without risks to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for all staff, students and</td>
<td>health. This duty extends to the oversight of ESM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>visitors</td>
<td>• must ensure that the school (as a workplace) is, so far as is reasonably</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>practicable, safe and without risks to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>health. This duty extends to the oversight of ESM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• is responsible for ensuring</td>
<td>• must ensure that the school (as a workplace) is, so far as is reasonably</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compliance with Occupational</td>
<td>practicable, safe and without risks to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Safety regulations and</td>
<td>health. This duty extends to the oversight of ESM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policies and facilitating the</td>
<td>• must ensure that the school (as a workplace) is, so far as is reasonably</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regular inspection, testing and</td>
<td>practicable, safe and without risks to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maintenance of Essential Safety</td>
<td>health. This duty extends to the oversight of ESM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures (ESM)</td>
<td>• must ensure that the school (as a workplace) is, so far as is reasonably</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>practicable, safe and without risks to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>health. This duty extends to the oversight of ESM.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Councillors can work with the president and principal to inform themselves of their role and responsibilities.

For further information, contact the Victorian School Building Authority on 1800 896 950 or on the Victorian School Building Authority’s email at vsba@education.vic.gov.au
Policy development and review

The school council can play a valuable role in developing selected school policies. Council can also advise the school principal and leadership team on the views of the school community where appropriate.

School principals are responsible for operational school policies, procedures and decisions. However, there are a small number of policies that must be developed and approved by the school council because of legal requirements or Department policy, for example uniform policies and finance policies.

For other local school policies, the principal may choose to seek school council approval of a policy (even where there is no legal or other requirement to do so), may consult with the school council during the policy development phase or may present policies to the school council for noting.

The ISG Policy and Review module provides further information on the school council’s role in policy development, review and approval. Information and template school policies are also available on the Department’s School Policy Templates Portal which can be accessed by staff and school council presidents with an education email address.

The following table provides an overview of what the principal and leadership team, and the school council are responsible for in terms of policy development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal ...</th>
<th>The school council ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• advises council about the need for the school policy to meet government policy and guidelines</td>
<td>• determines the need for policy on local issues within its powers and functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• contributes to policy development as a member of council</td>
<td>• develops selected policies, including consulting with the school community if required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• implements policy</td>
<td>• reviews existing policies on a cyclical basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• monitors policy effectiveness where appropriate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Community Engagement

The functions and powers of a school council are specified in the Act and include the important component of community engagement within school council’s role.

Engagement with the community supports the council in establishing the broad direction and vision of the school, reflecting the community and Department’s expectations.

Consultation provides members of the school community with an opportunity to provide input into decision-making and allows school council to recognise and take into account the views of the community. Consultation can inform council, and provide clarity, however it does not mean the community makes the decision. School council seeks opinions, advice and views on matters pertaining to the school and community and then makes its decision within the scope of its powers and functions.

Involving the school community in school matters, activities and programs generates interest, involvement and knowledge of the school. It enhances positive relationships and confidence in the school and the school council.

School council reports annually to the school community and to the Department. The public reporting meeting is an opportunity to promote the school’s achievements, annual priorities and present an overview of the school to the local community of the school.

Community engagement can also be encouraged through involvement in school council subcommittees or working parties. Working on a subcommittee can provide an introduction into the work of council and that of the school. School community ideas and views can be incorporated into recommendations that are taken by the subcommittee to council.

School council meetings are usually open to the school community and are conducted according to standard meeting requirements. The council standing orders will describe the process for visitors to request their attendance at council meetings and clarify their level of involvement.
Partnerships with council members and with the school community

In an effective school council, processes are characterised by a mutual sharing of information, knowledge and ideas.

There is a focus on dialogue in which all school council members are able to exchange information, share experiences, honestly express perspectives, pose questions, clarify viewpoints, explore relevant research and develop a shared vision and way forward.

Effective school councils are conscious of the need for positive working relationships and partnerships within both the council itself, and the school community.

The main partnerships that a school council will have are described below and will potentially include partnerships with businesses, industry, community organisations, early childhood education and care services, such as OSHC and kindergartens, universities, technical and further education institutions, such as TAFEs and other schools.

The principal

The principal holds two distinct roles within the school.

Firstly, the principal, as an employee of the Secretary to the Department, is responsible for the organisation, management and administration of the school and implementing Department policies.

In practice, the principal is the leader of the school and is the Department representative in the school. The principal and school council must have a close working relationship to bring together the school’s strategic and operational activities.

Secondly, the principal is the school council’s executive officer and is responsible for implementing the decisions of the school council, ensuring school councils have adequate and appropriate advice on educational and other matters, and providing support and resources for the conduct of school council meetings.
Staff

Staff are represented on school councils, in the school employee category. It is important that staff members work closely with all council members, as council recommendations and decisions can directly affect the work of staff through the school council’s strategic planning work, setting the school’s long-term direction, policy development and/or budgeting, and allocating resources for their programs.

Students

School councillors are required by legislation to ensure that decisions affecting students of the school are made in the best interest of the students.

Students are represented on school councils of schools that provide secondary school level education. Student members will be involved in discussions and decisions on matters relating to the school and have the same voting rights as other council members.

School council might also have links with the student representative body. At times a school council will consult with all students, particularly in relation to policy development on topics which have an impact on students.

The school community

The school community includes staff, students, parents and families. The broader community may comprise businesses, industry, services clubs, sports clubs, early childhood services and other interested individuals and organisations. Parent and community representatives on school council contribute community perspectives to all deliberations. They also build links with and explain the school’s values and directions to the community.

Community members are represented on council if the Ministerial Order 1280 Constitution of Government School Councils includes members in this category (community members are optional). Department employees are not able to be community members.

The Department

All Victorian government school councils must comply with relevant legislation, Ministerial Orders and directions as well as guidelines and Department policies, where required to do so by the Minister.
High risk areas for conflicts of interest

Any interaction between the school council and school community raises the potential for conflicts of interest.

Some examples of conflict of interest risks may arise when a school council undertakes the following activities or in the following areas:
- recruitment and selection activities
- procurement activities
- funding allocation activities
- previous associations
- gifts, benefits and hospitality.

Conflicts of interest in recruitment might include:
- family relationships or friendships with an applicant
- close working relationship with an applicant
- a hostile relationship with any applicant.

Conflicts of interest in procurement or funding allocations might include:
- gifts, benefits or hospitality being offered to employees involved in the procurement process
- family relationships or friendships with a supplier
- close working relationships as a result of regular business with a supplier.

Other interests and associations that may result in actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest are:
- external consulting
- other (external) employment
- private tutoring
- out-of-hours sporting or community activities
- using contractors for private works
- personal relationships with employees
- group affiliations
- other public duties; for example, member of local council or political party
- family and other relationships.

If you are involved in any type of recruitment or selection process, you must consider whether you have an actual potential or perceived conflict of interest. If so, or if you are unsure, you must declare the conflict of interest to the school council at the earliest possible stage.

Conflict of interest risks can affect any stage of procurement. Regardless of the monetary value, these risks must be proactively managed throughout the life of a procurement project.

For more information on conflicts of interest and how to appropriately manage conflicts, see the Legal Requirements section of this manual.

For advice on matters of integrity and DET Values, contact:
Manager, Integrity Policy and Engagement: 03 8688 7840
Or
Integrity Branch: integrity.enquiries@education.vic.gov.au
Resources and links

Further information, related policies and advice can be located on the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library for schools at www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal including:

School Council – Powers and Functions

School Council – Training and Good Governance
www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-training/policy

School Council – Conduct and Conflict of Interest
www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-conduct/policy

School Council – Liability and Legal Proceedings

School Strategic Plan

Annual Implementation Plan (AIP)
www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/annual-implementation-plan/policy

Sponsorship
www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/sponsorship/policy

Asset Management

Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality

Philanthropic Partnerships
www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/philanthropic-partnerships/policy

Finance Manual – Financial Management for Schools

Child Safe Standards

Outside School Hours Care – Decision Making Regarding the Provision of OSHC

Procurement – Schools

Principal Selection

Strategic Planning Online Tool – log-in required
apps.edustar.vic.edu.au/spot

School Policy Templates Portal

Other relevant resources:

Code of conduct for Victorian public sector employees on the Victorian Public Sector Commission Code of conduct for directors of Victorian public entities page

Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) services

An OSHC training program has been designed to assist school councillors understand their roles and responsibilities in establishing and managing an OSHC service in their school.

The training program consists of an 8-minute introduction to OSHC video, and a 30-40 minute online training module.

The OSHC video and online module is available from the Improving School Governance Training portal, accessible from the Department’s school council web page.

The video will also be available from the Department’s OSHC website.

Public Administration Act 2004 (PAA) on the Legislative Framework: the Public Administration Act 2004 page, on the Victorian Public Sector Commission website

Victorian Schools Building Authority (VSBA) website
schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au/Pages/home.aspx
1.3 Council operations

Why is this topic important?

Clarity in the following two areas assists school councils to operate effectively and efficiently:

- the roles and responsibilities of members, particularly office bearers such as the principal and the president
- the way in which the school council establishes a set of rules, such as Standing Orders, to ensure that its meetings run smoothly and fulfil its governance functions.

On completing this unit, school councillors should understand:

- the roles and responsibilities of the school principal and school council president
- the roles and responsibilities of school council subcommittees
- the need for Standing Orders.
# Roles and responsibilities of the principal and school council president

To provide clarity about the role of the school principal and that of the school council president, the table below provides a brief outline of the differences between their respective roles and responsibilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal ...</th>
<th>The school council president ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>As executive officer of the school council, the principal is responsible for:</strong></td>
<td><strong>The role of the school council president is to:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• providing school council with timely advice about educational and other matters related to school council functions and powers</td>
<td>• effectively chair school council meetings, ensuring that everyone has a say in meetings and that decisions are properly understood and well-recorded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• preparing the school council’s agenda in consultation with the school council president</td>
<td>• be a signatory to contracts, the School Strategic Plan and financial accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• reporting regularly to the school council about the school’s performance against its School Strategic Plan</td>
<td>• together with the school council, endorse the school Pre-review Self-evaluation, terms of reference for the school review, School Strategic Plan, Annual Implementation Plan and Annual Report and communicate this information to the school community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• making sure that council decisions are implemented</td>
<td>• ensure school council stays focused on improving student outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• providing adequate support and resources for the conduct of school council meetings</td>
<td>• with the principal, be school council’s spokesperson and official representative on public occasions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• communicating with the school council president about school council business</td>
<td>• with the principal, confirm in the school’s Annual Report that the school has met VRQA registration requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• confirming in the school’s Annual Report that the school has met the Victorian Regulations and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) registration requirements</td>
<td>• when votes are tied, have a second or casting vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ensuring that new council members are inducted</td>
<td>• access email communications each week from the Department through the president’s Education Mail account and communicate these to school council members where relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• creating an Education Mail account for the school council president and encouraging the president to check their account regularly</td>
<td>• recording the president’s details on CASES21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• keeping the community informed about council’s decisions.</td>
<td>• keeping the community informed about council’s decisions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Roles and responsibilities of school council subcommittees

Subcommittees assist school council in the work that needs to be done and report regularly at school council meetings. These committees provide advice and make recommendations to school council, which has the final responsibility for making decisions.

The decision-making responsibilities of the school council should not be compromised by the work of any subcommittee.

The membership, purpose and terms of reference of subcommittees are determined by the school council. Members of a subcommittee may be school council and non-school council members. Subcommittees must have at least three members, including at least one school council member. Subcommittees should have procedures for developing agendas and ensuring minutes are taken at subcommittee meetings and reported to the school council.

All school councils are encouraged to have a finance subcommittee. Some examples of other areas in which subcommittees may assist school council perform their functions include buildings and grounds (facilities), local policy development and review, student leadership, information technology, community building or community relations, OSHC, and kindergarten or canteen if the school provides these services. Sample terms of reference and agenda templates for OSHC subcommittees, for both council and third-party managed services, are available on the Department website.


Standing Orders

A school council may develop and agree on Standing Orders to assist it to operate effectively and efficiently. It is good practice to establish Standing Orders and review them each year following completion of the election process.

Standing Orders typically comprise:

- an introduction – that outlines the purpose of the Standing Orders, their influence in promoting teamwork, avoiding conflict, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the council, the school councillors’ code of conduct and the importance of following the Standing Orders
- reference to the Ministerial Order 1280 Constitution of Government School Councils – which lists the membership structure by membership category and numbers
- an outline of office bearer positions and subcommittees
- a description of meeting procedures – how the school council will operate, including length of meetings, agendas, minutes, quorum requirements, meeting arrangements, open and closed meetings, effective decision-making, member absence from meetings, arrangements for extensions of meetings and meeting etiquette.

Legal requirements

The Regulations set out certain legal requirements in relation to conducting school council meetings. These requirements cannot be overridden by the Standing Orders determined by a school council. Set out below are the legal requirements and Department guidelines for the operation of school council meetings. School councils may approve additional guidelines to assist in effectively and efficiently conducting meetings.

Number of school council meetings each year

A school council must meet at least eight times a year and at least once every school term.
**Who presides at a meeting**

The school council president must preside at school council meetings. If the president is unable to preside, the meeting must be conducted in the following manner:

- if a vice-president has been appointed by the school council, the vice-president must preside at the meeting if available
- if the school council has not appointed a vice-president, or the vice-president is unable to preside, the school council must decide on a member of the council, other than an employee of the Department, to preside
- A Department employee, including the principal, is ineligible to be school council president or chair a school council meeting.

**Quorum at a school council meeting**

A school council meeting requires a quorum so that the proceedings of the meeting including any decisions made, are valid. Ordinarily, a quorum requires not less than one half of school council members currently holding office to be present at the meeting and the majority of members present must not be Department employees. Any parent members on school council who also work for the Department are counted as Department employees for the purpose of a quorum.

However, some school councils’ constituting Orders, particularly those with nominee members, provide that a majority of the school council’s total membership is not required to consist of persons who are not employees of the Department. In these cases, a quorum for a school council meeting is constituted if not less than one half of the members of the school council currently holding office are present.

A member of the school council may be present in person or by video conferencing or teleconferencing.

If at the end of 30 minutes after the appointed time for a school council meeting there is not a quorum, the meeting must stand adjourned to a time and place determined by the school council members present.

**Decisions and voting**

Decisions of school council must be made with quorum and must be supported by the majority of the members of the school council who are eligible to vote and are present at the school council meeting. Decisions are made by voting. School councillors need to ensure their votes on decisions affecting students, are made having regard, as a primary consideration, the best interests of the students. All decisions of council, the motions as well as the name of the person that moved the motion and the seconder, must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The principal is a voting member of the school council. A council member’s temporary absence for a vote on a particular matter, due to conflict of interest, does not affect the meeting quorum.

**Tied votes**

When a vote is tied, the school council presiding member, usually the school council president has a second or casting vote.

**Conflict of interest**

Conflicts of interest are an inevitable part of organisational life and many arise without any wrongdoing.

The public trusts school councillors to behave in an ethical and impartial manner. Conflicts of interest that are not effectively identified or managed put the school council and the school’s reputation at risk and jeopardise the public’s confidence in our school system.

A conflict of interest occurs when a school councillor’s personal interests may influence, or may be seen to influence, their public duty. A personal interest may arise from a member’s personal preference, relationship, business connections, bias, property, hobby, or a desire to help family and friends. Personal interests can also be pecuniary (financial) or non-pecuniary.

Actual conflicts of interest occur when a school councillor’s private interest influences their current public duty.

Potential conflicts of interest occur where an actual conflict of interest may arise in the future.
Perceived conflicts of interest occur where a reasonable person might suspect that a school councillor is subject to an actual conflict of interest, whether or not one actually exists. Perceived conflicts may be just as damaging as ‘actual’ conflicts. Any reasonable perception that you, or your friends or family, are benefiting from the exercise of your public duty could result in the loss of public trust. You are obliged to identify these risks, and take action, in consultation with the principal and the president to mitigate them.

If a school council member or a member of their immediate family has an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, either a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest, in a subject or matter under discussion at a school council meeting, the member must declare the conflict of interest. If the school council decides that the conflict of interest is material, the councillor must not be present during the relevant discussion unless invited to do so by the chair of the meeting and must not be present when a vote is taken on the matter. The declaration of interest must be included in the minutes of the meeting. If the conflict of interest involves a principal or Business Manager, it must be entered onto the Conflict of Interest Register on eduPay and managed appropriately.

**Minutes**

Minutes are the official record of the proceedings at a school council meeting. Generally, a designated council member records a summary of what has been discussed, any decisions made and any actions to be taken before the next meeting. The minutes are written up under the agenda item headings and circulated by the principal to members before the next school council meeting where they are considered and confirmed.

The principal should keep the community informed about the council operations by publishing a report following a meeting in the school newsletter and/or on the school website.

A person does not have a right of access to the minutes of a school council meeting or other documents or records of a school council under the Freedom of Information Act 1982.

**Public reporting meeting**

A school council must call a public meeting, where any member of the public can attend, at least once each year and report the proceedings of the council since the date of the previous public meeting. The council must present the Annual Report to the public meeting and, if the school council accounts have been audited, present a copy of the audited accounts.

**Open and closed meetings**

School council meetings would normally be open to the school community and conducted according to standard meeting requirements. Visitors or observers can be present at the council meetings with the agreement of the principal and a decision of school council. Visitors may be invited to speak but must do so through the invitation of the person chairing the meeting, usually the school council president. They have no voting rights. There may be times when, for the purpose of confidentiality or other reasons, the council meeting, or part of the meeting, needs to be closed, such as considering a principal selection report.
Extraordinary meeting

An extraordinary meeting of a school council may be held at any time decided by the council, if all members are given reasonable notice of the time, date, place and object of the meeting.

The president, or if absent, the principal, must call the extraordinary meeting of the school council if either of them receives a written request to do so from three members of the council.

The business of an extraordinary meeting must be confined to the purpose for which the meeting is called.

Extended leave of school council member

A school council member may apply in writing to the president for extended leave of up to three consecutive meetings. If leave is granted to a member, his/her membership is excluded in determining the requirement for a quorum of not less than half the members of the school council currently holding office.

Casual Vacancies

A school council fills a casual vacancy by co-opting an eligible person to the relevant category. The person nominated to fill the casual vacancy serves the unexpired portion of the vacating member’s term of office.

A casual vacancy is created when a person:
- dies
- becomes insolvent under administration
- is of unsound mind
- resigns in writing to the school principal or school council president
- is found guilty or convicted of an indictable offence or an offence that would be an indictable offence if it had been committed in Victoria
- ceases to be eligible for the particular membership category under which they were elected or co-opted
- is a registered offender within the meaning of the Sex Offenders Registration Act 2004
- is subject to any medical condition that would make them unable to fulfill the role of a member of school council
- is absent from three consecutive school council meetings without special leave previously granted by the school council and subject to a decision of the school council
- in the school employee member category and goes on any form of leave with or without pay for more than six months.
- in the parent member category becomes a Department employee during their term of office in circumstances where this causes the school council to be in breach of the requirement that the majority of a school council’s total membership must be persons who are not Department employees
- in the student member category, ceases to be enrolled in the school
- in the student member category, goes on any form of leave from the school (including an exchange) for a period of more than six months
- in the community member category becomes a student member during their term of office
- who is a member of another membership category, is appointed as a nominee member of the school council
- who is a nominee member becomes a parent member, school employee member, or community member of the school council
- is found to have been ineligible for election, co-option, or appointment to the council at the time of their election, co-option, or appointment

Where a student who is a member of the student member category on school council ceases to be enrolled in the school, a casual vacancy will be created for the remainder of the term of office.

If Year 12 students, who are serving a two-year term, graduate they are no longer enrolled at the school and therefore cannot remain on school council. However, these students are eligible to stay on council for the remainder of their Year 12 year, and until the school council election is held in the following year.

A casual vacancy is also created if a member of school council is appointed as a principal of the school, other than if the appointment is temporary. An appointment for more than 12 continuous weeks shall not be considered temporary.
Other considerations

Agenda
The agenda lists the business that school council will consider at the meeting. Some items are for information only, some for discussion and others for decision. In order to avoid the agenda being crowded with too much business to consider, a significant amount of work may be undertaken by subcommittees. Reports from these subcommittees are considered at council meetings when appropriate.

Most information regarding agenda topics to be discussed in council meetings will be provided by the principal or in reports from relevant individuals or subcommittees. Meeting papers should be sent out prior to the meeting date to allow councillors to reflect on the issues, to gather more information if necessary and to canvass the opinions of school community members. The wisest decisions are made from a sound knowledge base.

Effective and informed decision-making
For effective and informed decision-making at council meetings, there needs to be:
- a carefully prepared agenda and papers that are distributed at least five working days before the meeting
- frank and open discussion
- accurate records of decisions
- access to independent and external professional advice where appropriate.

Meeting etiquette
When discussing a topic, it is good practice, but not necessarily documented in the Standing Orders that:
- only one person talks at a time
- all requests to speak are directed to the chairperson
- all speakers are listened to in respectful silence
- no ‘side conversations’ are held
- members listen to the discussion carefully in order to avoid making points that have already been made or asking questions which have already been answered
- when the chairperson indicates that the topic of discussion is closed, no further comments are made
- no-one uses jargon or insider knowledge
- all electronic devices, such as mobile phones and pagers, are silenced and no calls are taken during the meeting
- regardless of how difficult or challenging the topic, everyone stays calm.

Length of meeting
School council meetings should require no longer than 2.5 hours, regardless of the setting. If business has not been concluded by the scheduled closing time for the meeting, the chair should ask school councillors whether they wish to defer the rest of the business until the next meeting or to extend the meeting by a specified period of time, for example, 15 minutes. A motion is necessary if the school council wants to extend the meeting.
Resources and links

Information, related policies and advice can be located in the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library for schools [www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal](http://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal) including:

- School Council – Powers and Functions  

- School Council – Conduct and Conflict of Interest  

- School Council – Meetings  

- School Council – Subcommittees  

- Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality  

- Outside School Hours Care – Decision Making Regarding the Provision of OSHC  

- Strategic Planning Online Tool (SPOT) – Login required  

Other relevant resources:

- Victorian Public Sector Commission – *Public Administration Act 2004* at the VPSC webpage  
1.4 Understanding the school

Why is this topic important?

To provide good governance, school councillors need to understand their school, what it seeks to achieve, and how it functions. This means knowing about the organisation itself including areas such as the curriculum, teaching and learning program, support services, staffing structure, specialist programs, student numbers and demographics and physical facilities.

On completing this unit, school councillors should:
- be able to find information about the school
- be able to identify who’s who at the school
- know about regional support services available to the school
- be aware of the school’s curriculum, teaching and learning program and student assessment and reporting practices.
Finding out information about the school

The principal or school council president will usually welcome new school councillors with a package of information about the school.

This could include:
- promotional information given to families of prospective students
- the School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan
- the school’s Annual Report
- a map of the school noting the major facilities
- a list of any specialist programs, such as Performing Arts or English as an Additional Language
- minutes of the last school council meeting
- a list of policies, procedures and relevant information applying to schools located on the Department’s website.

As the school council’s role is to establish the broad direction and vision for the whole school, councillors should extend their knowledge beyond one specific area. Good sources of information are the principal and the school’s most recent Annual Report to the school community.

Who's who at the school

As well as meeting the principal and teachers who are members of the school council, it is useful to find out who’s who among the teaching staff. Government schools have three classes of employee: principal class, teachers and education support.

The principal is responsible for the delivery of a comprehensive curriculum plan, governance (in conjunction with the school council), managing financial and human resources and providing a safe learning environment. A school might also have one or more assistant principals responsible for significant areas or functions within the school, such as Transition, Years F–2 or VCE.

Leading teachers may have responsibilities across a range of school operations. They typically coordinate a number of staff to improve teaching and learning. Leading teachers usually have titles such as year level coordinator, transition coordinator or literacy coordinator.

The majority of teachers in a school are classroom teachers. They plan, prepare and teach programs to achieve specific student outcomes.

Each school also has education support employees who work in school administration and operations and support teachers and students in the delivery of educational programs. They include Business Managers, office managers, education staff and health and wellbeing staff.

If the school is operating a school council managed kindergarten or outside school hours care service, the school also employs the staff in the service.

When there is an agenda item concerning areas for which senior staff are responsible, school councillors may request them to address the council meeting.
Regional support services available to the school

The Department’s regional offices support early childhood services, schools and higher education and skills service providers. The Department has four regions in Victoria: North-Eastern Victoria Region, North-Western Victoria Region, South-Eastern Victoria Region and South-Western Victoria Region.

Regions are responsible for supporting and monitoring the provision of early childhood and higher education and skills services along with planning, managing, supporting and reporting on the delivery of outcomes for children and students from 0–18 years. Through its regional offices, the Schools and Regional Services: Department of Education and Training, play a key role in supporting schools by providing a range of services including facilitating the establishment of networks and services for local communities.

Regional offices offer advice and guidance in a wide range of areas including school management, workforce planning, leadership, youth pathways, transitions and student wellbeing.
Curriculum and student assessment

Foundation to Year 10

Curriculum

The Victorian Curriculum Foundation to 10 (F–10) sets out what every student should learn during their first 11 years of schooling. The curriculum is the common set of knowledge and skills required by students for life-long learning, social development and active and informed citizenship. The Victorian Curriculum F–10 incorporates the Australian Curriculum and reflects Victorian priorities and standards.

The Victorian Curriculum F–10 sets out a single, coherent and comprehensive set of content descriptions and associated achievement standards to enable teachers to plan, monitor, assess and report on the learning achievement of every student.

Schools may also use the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) when developing teaching and learning programs for F–2. The VEYLDF describes the key knowledge and skills for children from birth to eight years.

Teaching and Learning program

Victorian schools value digital learning. This takes place in a technology-rich environment using computers and other devices such as iPads, digital cameras and a range of online resources and software for learning and teaching. Starting from Foundation, schools are integrating information and communication technology (ICT) into their teaching and learning program in ways that not only increase children’s digital literacy, but improve their ability to create, investigate, collaborate and share knowledge. In some cases, ICT is overcoming barriers of isolation created by living in a remote location or having a disability.

Languages education is a core part of the curriculum and all schools are provided with additional funding in their Student Resource Package (SRP) to support the provision of a languages program. Schools have the flexibility to choose the language/s they provide in consultation with their community. Advice on how to select a language is available on the Department’s website. Students (Years F–12) who do not have access to the study of a specific language in their school can attend language programs outside school hours at the Victorian School of Languages or at community language schools.

Assessment

All students are involved in an annual program of standardised assessment in addition to assessments completed by class teachers. Under the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), all students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are assessed annually on the same days using national tests in reading, writing, language conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy. The school receives feedback about the test results. The resulting data, which identifies individual student achievement also rates the school’s performance on a national scale.

Councillors can view NAPLAN results on the MySchool website. The NAPLAN results in literacy and numeracy are presented in a way that shows each school’s performance against statistically similar schools, based on student backgrounds, and all other Australian schools.
Senior secondary

Victorian government secondary schools offer a variety of curriculum options for senior secondary students to pursue interests, qualifications and their future beyond school. These are described below.

Victorian Certificate of Education

The Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) is a course of study designed to be completed over a minimum of two years. It is usually undertaken over Years 11 and 12. It prepares students for university and further training or employment, and is an internationally recognised qualification. There are more than 90 studies (subjects) in the VCE. Students can start their VCE as early as Year 10 and about half of Year 10 students undertake one or more VCE units. It is also possible to undertake a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship within the VCE.

A VCE ‘study’ or subject is broken up into four units over two years. Each unit is half a year or two terms in length and is numbered 1, 2, 3 or 4. Units 1 and 2 can be taken as single units, but Units 3 and 4 must be taken as a sequence of two units. Students are awarded the VCE by satisfactory completion of a minimum of 16 units.

The school’s VCE coordinator ensures each student is undertaking the right number of units and the right combination of units to meet VCE requirements.

Within the 16 units, students must satisfactorily complete at least three units from the English group, including a Unit 3 and 4 sequence. They also need three sequences of Units 3 and 4 studies in addition to the English requirement. These sequences can be from VCE studies or from vocational education and training (VET).

Students in Year 12 may also undertake a first-year university study that counts towards satisfactory completion of their VCE; this is called the Higher Education Studies in the VCE program.

The VCE Baccalaureate is an additional form of recognition for those students who choose to undertake the demands of studying both a higher-level mathematics and a language in their VCE program of study. To be eligible to receive the VCE Baccalaureate, the student must satisfactorily complete the VCE and receive a study score for each prescribed study component. The VCE program of study must include:

- Unit 3 and 4 sequence in English or Literature or English Language with a study score of 30 or above, or
- Unit 3 and 4 sequence in EAL with a study score of 33 or above;
- Unit 3 and 4 sequence in either Mathematics Methods (CAS) or Specialist Mathematics;
- Unit 3 and 4 sequence in a VCE Language; and at least two other Units 3 and 4 sequences.
**Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning**

The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) is an accredited hands-on option for Year 11 and 12 students, offering practical work-related experience and learning. Like the VCE, the VCAL is an accredited secondary certificate. Students who undertake the VCAL are likely to be interested in further training at VET providers, doing an apprenticeship or traineeship, or getting a job directly after finishing school.

The VCAL is offered at three levels: Foundation, Intermediate or Senior. Students enrol in a VCAL learning program at the level that matches their skills and abilities. Students can gain one or more VCAL qualifications at different levels depending on their abilities and learning goals.

Students in Intermediate and Senior VCAL must undertake VET studies (see following section) as part of their qualification. If students start their VCAL and then decide they would like to complete their VCE, they can transfer between certificates. The VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook provides further advice for students wishing to transfer from the VCAL to the VCE.

The VCAL has four curriculum areas, called strands. These strands are Literacy and Numeracy Skills, Industry Specific Skills, Work Related Skills and Personal Development Skills.

A student’s VCAL learning program must include at least one unit from each strand. A student is awarded a VCAL certificate when they successfully complete the course requirements outlined in the VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook. A unit of study can be one VCAL unit, one VCE unit or approximately 90 hours of VET units of competency and/or further education modules.

The school’s VCAL coordinator is responsible for ensuring that VCAL students undertake the right number and combination of units to achieve their certificate.

**Vocational Education and Training**

Students who are interested in undertaking a vocationally oriented study program in a specific industry have the option of choosing to complete a Vocational Education and Training (VET) program as part of their VCE or VCAL studies.

VET programs provide students with a nationally recognised training qualification in conjunction with their VCE or VCAL.

VET programs are typically delivered through partnerships between schools and training providers. They enable students to take part in structured workplace learning and gain practical skills in the industry in which they are interested. VET programs include school-based apprenticeships and traineeships.

Programs undertaken as part of the VCE or VCAL provide students with a pathway to university, further training or employment.
School-based apprenticeships and traineeships

In the past, many young people had to leave school to pursue an apprenticeship or traineeship. With the introduction of school-based apprenticeships and traineeships, students can have the best of both worlds. Students taking part in school-based apprenticeships and traineeships undertake part-time paid employment, and structured training, while completing their VCE or VCAL.

The student enters into a training contract with an employer and has a training plan signed by the school that is formally registered with the VRQA. The school-based apprenticeship and traineeship becomes part of their study timetable, with the student spending some time during the normal school week in their employment and training.

Part-time apprenticeships and traineeships undertaken outside of school can also contribute to the VCE or VCAL.

Structured workplace learning

As part of a nationally recognised VET program, secondary school students can undertake structured workplace learning to acquire skills and knowledge in an industry setting. In Victoria, structured workplace learning is an important part of VET programs undertaken by VCE and VCAL students.

Reporting

The VRQA State Register provides a rich source of information on individual schools including their latest:

• Government School Performance Summary
• Annual Report to the school community
Support to school councillors

The School Operations and Governance Unit (SOGU) of Schools and Regional Services provides advice and guidance to school councils on a range of governance issues. Councillors can contact SOGU directly by email at school.council@education.vic.gov.au or 03 7022 1343 or 03 7022 1345 for information and advice.

Councillors can also contact their regional office for information and advice.

School council training


Virtual live/ face-to-face training

The Department offers comprehensive face-to-face training free of cost to school councils of Victorian Government schools. The training is based on four modules of the Improving School Governance (ISG) materials; Governance, Strategic Planning, Finance and School Council President. Face-to-face training is accessed by contacting the provider, Synergistiq on 03 9946 6801 or email Synergistiq: sct@synergistiq.com

Interactive Online training

School council members can also access an interactive online training program featuring videos and activities on the five ISG training modules as well as additional training modules of effective meetings, conflict resolution, and reaching agreement, elections ad succession planning, community engagement and being a school councillor.

School councillors can self-register to access the Interactive Online training through The Big Canvas learning management system (LMS) and complete these modules in sections, in their own time and pace.

Online training can be accessed individually or in small groups, at a time and place convenient to participants.

Training can be completed as a whole module or in part. Participants can bookmark and return to a module at a later time and a completion certificate can be downloaded at the conclusion of a module.

Book Online Interactive training modules for school councillors at lms.learneyo.com/DETSC
Resources and links

Further information, related policies and advice can be located on the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library for schools www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal including:

Annual Implementation Plan (AIP)
www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/annual-implementation-plan/policy

School Strategic Plan

International Student Program
www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/international-student-program/policy

Structured Workplace Learning

Vocational Education and Training (VET) Delivered to Secondary Students

Curriculum Programs Foundation to 10
www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/curriculum-programs/policy

School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Other relevant resources:

Community Language Schools on the Department’s website

MySchool website
myschool.edu.au

Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships on the VCAA webpage
vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vet/apprenticeships/Pages/index.aspx

Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority F–10 Curriculum on the VCAA website
vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/foundation10/f10index.aspx

Victorian Early Years and Development Framework
vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/earlyyears/Pages/Index.aspx?Redirect=1

Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority Vocational Education and Training (VET) on the VCAA webpage
www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/studentguides/return-to-study/Pages/AboutVET.aspx

Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning on the VCAA webpage
www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vcal/Pages/AboutVCAL.aspx

Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework on the VCAA webpage

Victorian School of Languages website
vsl.vic.edu.au

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority State Register page
vrqa.vic.gov.au/aboutus/Pages/state-register.aspx
# Handout A1
## Role of school councillors: scenarios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Within the functions of school council?</th>
<th>Issues and how they might be resolved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The school council at a school in regional Victoria is recommending at tomorrow’s council meeting that the school cleaning contract be awarded to Nifty Cleaners. You have just been made aware that the owner of Nifty Cleaners is the brother-in-law of a school councillor.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A local franchise of a fast food company has offered to donate four trampolines with attached safety netting to the school. Their logos would be attached to the equipment but there would be no other advertising. Should the school council accept the offer?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A couple of parents have expressed concern to you about the performance of a particular member of staff. Should school council consider instigating a performance review process for the school’s teachers?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. At the request of a group of parents, the school council has decided to investigate the feasibility of running a before and after school care program.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. School council approves the school’s budget for the forthcoming school year at its December meeting.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenario</td>
<td>Within the functions of school council?</td>
<td>Issues and how they might be resolved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. School council is considering whether its role includes encouraging parents, students and community members to contribute to the development of the School Strategic Plan.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. It has been suggested that school council establish a standard contract and users’ guide for groups and individuals who want to hire the school hall.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Several school councillors feel it is time that the school uniform policy was reviewed.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. As a councillor of a primary school, you are aware that some parents in your small community do not want multi-aged classes next year. Should this issue be raised at the next council meeting?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The principal asks the school council to approve the school’s Child Safety Code of Conduct.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. You were elected to council as a parent member. You are also a member of the school’s parents and friends’ group. School council has proposed changes to the volunteers’ policy, some of the changes that are concerning the parents and friends’ group. The group has asked you to vote against the recommendations when they are put at the council meeting. As a school council member, how would you respond?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Standing Orders for School Council

These sample Standing Orders are intended as a guide only. A school council may determine its own Standing Orders but they must be consistent with the legal requirements set out in the Act, the Regulations, Ministerial Order 1280 Constitution of Government School Councils and Department guidelines.

School Council Standing Orders

Introduction

The purpose of these Standing Orders is to assist school council to operate efficiently and effectively within the legal framework and Department guidelines for school councils.

School council membership

The membership of the school council according to the Constituting Order is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Members</td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>employees</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

55
Co-option of community members
The community members, included in the Ministerial Order 1280 Constitution of Government School Councils, will be co-opted to the school council at a special meeting of council held as soon as practicable after the declaration of the poll and before office bearers are elected. If the appointment of the community members either cannot be resolved at the special meeting called or on the resumption of the adjourned special meeting, the school council may proceed to the first meeting of the school council to elect office bearers.

Office bearers
The school council will have the following office bearer positions:
- president
- vice-president
- treasurer.

Office bearers will be elected at the first meeting of the school council after declaration of the poll each year and following a special meeting to co-opt community members.

Election of office bearers
In the election of an office bearer, if the votes are tied, the school council will decide the outcome by either holding a new election or drawing of lots. If a new election is held and is also tied, the school council may decide the election by the drawing of lots or decide to conduct further elections until the election of office bearers is decided.

Subcommittees
The school council will have the following subcommittees:
- Finance
- Education
- Grounds and buildings.

It is recommended that there is a subcommittee for the outside school hours care or kindergarten service if one is provided by the school.

Each subcommittee will be chaired by a member of school council, unless otherwise decided by the council. A subcommittee must include at least one school council member and have at least three members.
Meetings

Regular
The school council will meet twice a term on the first Monday of each month. The meeting will commence at 7pm and will finish no later than 9.30pm unless agreed by the school council. Meetings will be held in the conference room.

Public reporting annual meeting
The school council will call a public meeting at least once each year and at that meeting will:

  a) report the proceedings of the council for the period since the date of the previous public meeting
  b) present the Annual Report published by the council
  c) if the accounts of the school council have been audited, present a copy of the audited accounts.

The school council may, from time to time, call additional public meetings.

Extraordinary meeting
- An extraordinary meeting of the school council may be held at any time decided by the school council, if all members are given reasonable notice of the time, date, place and subject of the meeting
- The president of the school council or, in the absence of the president, the principal must call an extraordinary meeting of the school council if either of them receives a written request to do so from three councillors
- The president or the principal must call this meeting by sending a notice to all school council members, providing reasonable notice of the time, date, place and subject of the meeting
- The business of an extraordinary meeting will be confined to the subject for which it is called.
Quorum for meetings

- For a quorum to be achieved at a council meeting, not less than one half of school council members currently holding office must be present and a majority of the members present must not be Department employees. Any parent members on the council who also work for the Department are counted as Department employees for the purpose of a quorum.

- If at the end of 30 minutes after the appointed time of the council meeting there is no quorum present, the meeting will stand adjourned to a time and place determined by the councillors present.

- A member of the school council may be present at a council meeting, in person or by video conferencing or teleconferencing.

Absence of the president and other members from a meeting

- If the president is unable to preside at a school council meeting, and if a vice-president has been appointed, the vice-president must preside at the meeting.

- If the president is unable to preside at a school council meeting, and there is no vice-president appointed, the school council must decide which member of the school council will chair the meeting. An employee of the Department, including the principal, is ineligible to chair the school council meeting.

- If a council member is unable to attend a meeting, an apology should be submitted to the principal prior to the meeting.

School council decisions

- Decisions of the school council will be by a majority of those eligible to vote and who are present at the meeting, where the majority are non-Department employee members. A vote by proxy is not valid.

- Members will vote on a matter and the number of votes for and against will be recorded in the minutes.

- Voting will normally be by a show of hands, but a secret ballot may be used for particular issues.

Tied votes

When a vote is tied, for example: an even number of people are for and against a decision, the president or presiding member, has a second or casting vote.

Conflict of interest

If a school council member or a member of their immediate family has any perceived or actual conflict of interest (either financial or non-financial) in a subject or matter under discussion at a school council meeting, that councillor:

- must declare the conflict of interest
- must not be present during the discussion unless invited to do so by the person presiding at the meeting
- must not be present when a vote is taken on the matter
- may be included in the quorum for that meeting.

The declaration of interest will be included in the minutes of the meeting. If the conflict of interest involves a principal or Business Manager it must be entered onto the Conflict of Interest Register on eduPay and managed appropriately.
Extended leave of a council member
- A school councillor may apply in writing to the president for extended leave of up to three consecutive meetings
- If a councillor is granted extended leave, their membership is excluded in determining the requirement for a quorum of not less than half the members currently holding office.

Minutes
- The principal will ensure a record of each school council meeting is kept and that draft minutes are prepared after each meeting and distributed to school council members prior to the next meeting. The principal may delegate this responsibility to another person
- The minutes will record the type of meeting (regular, extraordinary or public); date, time and venue of meeting; names of attendees and apologies received from members; name of presiding officer; a record of the business of the meeting including the decision on the minutes of the previous meeting; inward and outward correspondence and reports of any subcommittees tabled; and decisions including motions and any amendments, names of movers and seconders, whether the motion was carried or rejected and the number of votes for and against
- When school council minutes are submitted for confirmation, only questions regarding their accuracy as a record of the meeting are to be raised
- Once the minutes have been accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting, they are to be signed by the school council president or the person who presided at the meeting
- Business arising from the minutes is dealt with after the minutes have been confirmed.

Agenda
The principal will ensure an agenda is prepared for each regular meeting and distribute the agenda, draft minutes from the previous meeting and meeting papers such as subcommittee reports, principal’s and president’s reports to school council members no less than five days before the meeting.

Open and closed meetings
- School council meetings will generally be open to the school community, but the principal and school council may decide that only councillors may be present at a meeting or part of a meeting
- If the meeting is open, visitors may speak by invitation of the presiding member.

Length of meetings and extensions of meeting times
If business has not been concluded within 2.5 hours of the council meeting commencing, the presiding member will ask school councillors if they wish to defer the rest of the business until the next meeting or to extend the meeting. A motion is necessary if council wants to extend the meeting. The meeting will be extended for no more than 15 minutes.
Conduct of meetings

- School councillors must abide by the Code of Conduct and locally agreed etiquette.

School council principles

The school council will operate according to the following principles:

- respectful partnerships
- clear and honest two-way communication
- transparent processes
- democratic, informed decision-making
- personal and professional integrity.

In the conduct of meetings, the following etiquette will be observed by members:

- only one person talks at a time
- all requests to speak are directed to the presiding member
- all speakers are listened to in respectful silence
- no ‘side conversations’ are held
- members will listen to the discussion carefully in order to avoid making points that have already been made or asking questions which have already been answered
- when the presiding member indicates that the topic of discussion is closed, no further comments are made
- members will not use jargon
- members will ensure that all electronic devices, such as mobile phones, are silenced and no calls are taken during the meeting
- members will stay calm regardless of how difficult or challenging the topic.
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   School Strategic Planning: quiz
2.0 Introduction

Goal

To provide school councillors with an understanding of:

- working with the school leadership team to participate in strategic planning as part of the school’s improvement cycle
- using data to identify what the school is doing well and what needs to be done to further improve student outcomes
- fulfilling their governance role by ensuring that the school’s planning and practices reflect Department guidelines and community expectations.

Overview

One of the key functions of school councils is to contribute to the development of the broad vision and direction for the school as part of the school strategic planning process.

Strategic planning is the process of reflecting on past performance, establishing future directions and deciding what will constitute success.

In other words, it involves the school community considering these questions:

- where have we been?
- where do we want to go?
- how will we get there?
- how will we know if we have been successful?

The Department has developed a Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO). FISO has the following components: an Improvement Model with four statewide priorities, 16 dimensions including six evidence-based high-impact Improvement Initiatives; an Improvement Cycle and Improvement Measures.
The Improvement Model

The Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO) Improvement Model identifies the priority areas that are known to improve student outcomes.
The FISO Improvement Cycle

The FISO Improvement Cycle (the Improvement Cycle) supports schools to focus on better outcomes for students. It helps schools to apply an evaluative mindset to school improvement and use evidence to identify areas of strength, as well as areas of practice that need improvement.

The Improvement Cycle guides schools through four stages, during which schools:

- **Evaluate** and diagnose performance successes and challenges around their key improvement initiatives and strategies
- **Prioritise** and set goals for improvement strategies and initiatives that have the greatest impact on student learning
- **Develop and plan** their improvement strategies and initiatives and the impact these have on learning
- **Implement and monitor** their selected improvement strategies and initiatives and the impact these have on student learning.

Schools progress through the Improvement Cycle:

- **annually** – through annual implementation planning and the completion of an Annual Report to the school community, and
- **quadrennial** – through the four-yearly school review.

---

The Improvement Cycle

- **Evaluate and diagnose**
  - Assess performance and progress in student achievement, engagement and wellbeing
  - Evaluate the impact of prior effort, including successes and challenges
  - Diagnose areas requiring attention, based on identified issues and risks
  - Record and report current status, resources and baseline
  - Share successes and lessons with other schools.

- **Prioritise and set goals**
  - Prioritise key focus area/s for improvement
  - Be clear about what success or impact looks like
  - Set goals and targets
  - Establish indicators to measure improvement.

- **Develop and plan**
  - Plan and develop improvement initiatives with evidence base
  - Develop whole-school teaching and learning program
  - Determine specific actions and method
  - Determine roles, responsibilities and timelines
  - Agree and communicate.

- **Implement and monitor**
  - Implement, gather data and monitor
  - Professional learning
  - Collaboration and consistency
  - Resourcing
  - Community leverage
  - Curriculum and assessment
  - Programs
  - Student outcomes.
2.1 Evaluate and diagnose

Why is this topic important?

School improvement requires schools to have a clear and accurate picture of their current practice, performance successes and challenges, and areas requiring attention.

During the evaluate and diagnose phase of the Improvement Cycle, schools engage in a process of self-evaluation to determine progress, celebrate achievements, identify any areas for improvement and plan for the future.

School self-evaluation is an opportunity for the school to reflect on how it is tracking against the goals and targets in its four-year School Strategic Plan (SSP) and Annual Implementation Plan (AIP). This helps the school to identify what is working well, what needs to continue, and which areas of the school’s work may need to be improved or further developed. It informs decisions relating to priority setting, initiatives, strategies and actions for improvement.

Self-evaluation involves collating data from a diverse range of sources to inform action for improving student outcomes.

The whole school community, including students, parents/carers and staff, reflect on the observed outcomes, acknowledge and celebrate achievements; and identify effective strategies and areas for improvement during the next planning period.

The community can do this by contributing to discussion about:
- how well the school is meeting the community’s expectations
- where the school could improve its performance
- what the school’s priorities should be going forward.
Schools engage in self-evaluations:

**Annually through Annual Implementation Planning**

An annual school self-evaluation against the FISO Continua of Practice for school improvement is conducted to determine the school’s proficiency level against the FISO dimensions.

Schools complete this on the Strategic Planning Online Tool (SPOT) during Term 4 of each year as the first step in part of the development of the following year’s Annual Implementation Plan for the following year. Schools evaluate themselves against the six FISO dimensions identified as high-impact Improvement Initiatives, as well as any FISO additional dimensions the school focused on in the preceding year. This is undertaken in the Strategic Planning Online Tool (SPOT).

**Once every four years, through the Pre-review Self-evaluation**

The Pre-review Self-evaluation (PRSE) – is a rigorous process undertaken every four years in the term prior to the school’s review. Through the Pre-review Self-evaluation, the school evaluates its improvement efforts by drawing together evidence of the school’s performance in comparison to the previous SSP, proficiency levels against the FISO Continua of Practice for School Improvement, along with feedback from consultations with the school community. The PRSE should engage and empower the school community to contribute to a shared understanding of how well the school has performed over the life of its SSP.
The Pre-review Self-evaluation is completed in the Strategic Planning Online Tool (SPOT) and includes:

- an assessment of the school’s performance against the goals and targets in its SSP
- the key enablers that led to successful outcomes and the barriers that prevented success
- a collective school view on where the school places itself against the FISO Continua Practice for School Improvement for each of the 16 FISO dimensions
- a description and evidence of the school’s practices in the areas of teaching practice, student voice, agency and leadership, and curriculum content and teacher practice; knowledge and skills
- a school self-assessment against the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Minimum Standards for School Registration, including the Child Safe Standards.

After the Pre-review Self-evaluation is completed:

- it is endorsed by the principal, school council president and Senior Education Improvement Leader (SEIL) through SPOT
- it is provided to core members of the School Review Panel and the challenge partners at least four weeks before the review
- the VRQA Minimum Standards documentation is sent electronically to the reviewer at least four weeks before the review.

The school participates in a school review, which looks at the school’s performance and informs key directions for improvement, including goals, targets and key improvement strategies.

The Pre-review Self-evaluation and the school review inform the development of the school’s new four-year SSP, which is then implemented through the school’s AIP.

On completing this unit, school councillors should be able to:

- understand the evidence related to school improvement
- consider the Pre-review Self-evaluation report for endorsement
- understand the school review process, including the school council president’s role and the way the school community engages in self-evaluation.
The Pre-review Self-evaluation

The Pre-review Self-evaluation report is provided to core members of the School Review Panel and challenge partners at least four weeks before the review.

The principal and School Improvement Team are responsible for leading the Pre-review Self-evaluation, which evaluates the school’s improvement efforts by drawing together the evidence of the school’s performance against specific measures. These include: the SSP; feedback from community consultations; a collective school view on where the school places itself against the FISO Continua of School Improvement for each FISO dimension; evidence of the school’s practices in the areas of teaching practice, student voice, leadership and agency, and curriculum content; and the school’s self-assessment against the VRQA Minimum Standards for school registration.

The principal, school council president and SEIL endorse the Pre-review Self-evaluation report through the Strategic Planning Online Tool (SPOT) and the principal ensures the outcomes are communicated to the community.

To provide feedback, councillors should reflect on the process to ensure that evidence from a wide range of sources has been considered to provide an accurate and agreed picture of the school’s context and improvement. They should be satisfied that the process aligns with the Department’s Pre-review Self-evaluation guidelines and that the views of the community are reflected.
The following table shows how the principal and staff, school councillors, and the school community, including parents, students and other interested people, would typically be involved in the Pre-review Self-evaluation process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal, in consultation with the School Improvement Team will:</th>
<th>Councillors will typically:</th>
<th>The Senior Education Improvement Leader will:</th>
<th>The school community have opportunities to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• plan the Pre-review Self-evaluation methodology and timeline</td>
<td>• review and contribute to the plan and timeline for the Pre-review Self-evaluation</td>
<td>• support the school with planning for Pre-review Self-evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• brief the school and its community about the Pre-review Self-evaluation process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• organise consultations with the council and school community</td>
<td>• participate in working groups</td>
<td>• provide support where necessary</td>
<td>• contribute to surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• participate in community consultations</td>
<td></td>
<td>• participate in parent meetings and focus groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• gather and analyse data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• engage with the data and findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• prepare the outcomes of the self-evaluation process for reporting and endorsement</td>
<td>• support the Pre-review Self-evaluation process</td>
<td>• provide input into and feedback on the outcomes of the Pre-review Self-evaluation process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• keep everyone informed about the outcomes of the Pre-review Self-evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• prepare the Pre-review Self-evaluation report for school council endorsement</td>
<td>• endorse Pre-review Self-evaluation report</td>
<td>• endorse Pre-review Self-evaluation report through SPOT</td>
<td>• engage with the outcomes of the Pre-review Self-evaluation via the school newsletter or other communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• forward the VRQA check self-assessment sheets and required documentation to the reviewer at least four weeks before the review</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• forward the Pre-review Self-evaluation report to the reviewer, school council president, SEIL and challenge partners at least four weeks before the review</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Establishing evidence of school performance

Information (evidence) from a range of sources is important in understanding a school’s improvement and performance. The Pre-review Self-evaluation report is reviewed against the SSP and targets in the four FISO priority areas – Excellence in teaching and learning, Professional leadership, Positive climate for learning, and Community engagement in learning.

Achievement

Achievement refers to both the absolute levels of learning attainment and growth in student learning that schools strive to support.

While recognising that literacy and numeracy are essential foundations for students’ success, achievement outcomes encompass a broader view of learning, spanning the full range of curriculum domains, as well as students’ co-curricular achievements.

Student learning outcomes relate to what students know and can do.

Schools develop and implement curriculum and report on achievement of student learning outcomes using data relating to the following sources:

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

Every year, all students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are assessed using national tests in reading, writing, language conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy.

Victorian Curriculum

The curriculum for Victorian schools is set by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA). The Victorian Curriculum Foundation – 10 (F–10) sets out what every student should learn during their first 11 years of schooling. The curriculum is the common set of knowledge and skills required by students for life-long learning, social development and active and informed citizenship. The Victorian Curriculum F–10 incorporates the Australian Curriculum and reflects Victorian priorities and standards.

The Victorian Curriculum F–10 sets out a single, coherent and comprehensive set of content descriptions and associated achievement standards to enable teachers to plan, monitor, assess and report on the learning achievement of every student.
Student learning outcomes for students supported under the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD)

Students covered by PSD funding have their learning outcomes assessed against the goals of individual learning plans.

English and Mathematics online interviews

Along with teachers’ judgements in English, English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Mathematics, school achievement in literacy and numeracy outcomes are also measured in the English, Mathematics and Fractions and Decimals online interviews.

The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)

This Framework builds continuity between the first years of schooling and the learning and development that precede these years. The VEYLDF describes the key learning and development outcomes for children from birth to eight.

Senior secondary certificates and programs

Student learning outcomes in the senior secondary years are defined as attainment in the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) and Vocational Education and Training (VET in schools), including school-based new apprenticeships and traineeships. Information is provided through school performance data available on the Victorian Assessment Software System (VASS) and through the VCE data service.

Other information

At the school level, schools also collect information on student learning using a range of school developed and commercially produced assessment strategies and instruments.
Engagement

Engagement refers to the extent to which students feel connected to and engaged in their learning and with the broader school community. Engagement spans students’ motivation to learn, as well as their active involvement in learning. Engagement also refers to students’ engagement as they make critical transitions through school and beyond into further education and work.

Measures of student engagement include student attendance data, students’ ratings of their connectedness to school and motivation to learn (Student Attitudes to School Survey for students in Years 5 to 12), teachers’ assessments of students’ motivation (School Staff Survey) and parents’ perceptions of the school climate (Parent Opinion Survey). Information collected at the school level can also be used.

The Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance provides advice for schools about improving student engagement, attendance and positive behaviours.

Additional outcomes data

Other outcomes data available for children that may be relevant for primary schools include:

- the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) – This is a population measure that provides information on how children are faring and the success of early childhood services in supporting children and families prior to a child’s entry to school. The AEDC is a summary indicator of children’s progress relative to others based on areas of early childhood development.

- the Victorian Child and Adolescent Monitoring System (VCAMS) – This system reports on the safety, health, learning, development and wellbeing of children and young people in Victoria. This data is reported against the 150 VCAMS indicators and provides a sound basis to support school strategic planning.

Wellbeing

Students’ health, safety and wellbeing are essential to learning and development.

An inclusive, safe, orderly and stimulating environment for learning is critical to achieving and sustaining students’ positive learning experiences.

Measures of student wellbeing include student safety, morale and respect (Student Attitudes to School Survey). Information collected at the school level can also be used.
A more detailed approach to school review and improvement is made available to the school principal through the school performance report. These reports utilise two dimensions of performance results, current performance and change in performance over time, and aggregates each school’s results across six performance domains and assigns schools to an overall performance group. This approach forges links between evidence, school review, strategic and annual planning. Please note that for 2020, school performance reports will be based on 2019 achievement results, due to the cancellation of NAPLAN testing because of COVID-19 and remote learning.

Multiple sources of information will enable a school to make better decisions about how to improve its performance. It is important not to draw conclusions from one set of data, but to try to use a range of sources to understand the various factors that are contributing to an aspect of the school’s performance.

Understandably, many councillors will not have experience in analysing this kind of data. The principal will explain to councillors the relevance of each set of data to school performance and will help councillors make sense of some specialised data, such as NAPLAN results.

The key points to remember with data analysis are that:

- **absolute** scores are useful for specifying targets and measuring increase or decrease in scores
- **relative** scores are useful for comparing one school’s performance with schools with students from a similar background.

Councillors also need to be aware of the importance of maintaining confidentiality in respect of the data they may examine during the school self-evaluation process.

Data analysis

The principal and School Improvement Team will use the data to:

- examine trends, to see how performance has changed over time
- consider the achievements of specific groups of students to assess their performance
- analyse outcomes for individuals and groups of students as they move from one-year level to the next
- evaluate differences in outcomes between different skill areas within English and Mathematics
- make comparisons with state averages or statewide information about schools with similar student backgrounds.

An annual summary of each school’s performance is provided as part of the Annual Report to the School Community and is available online on the VRQA State Register.

This information summarises school performance in relation to Key Improvement Measures. School performance data is made available to schools via Panorama interactive dashboards, reports and the School Information Portal. These resources also compare a school’s performance with similar Victorian government schools.
Data sources

There are various data sources available to analyse school performance. An excellent resource is the Department’s School Performance Reporting and Data advice on the Policy and Advisory Library available at www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/performance-reporting/advice.

Councillors can work with the president and principal to inform themselves of the data.

Panorama provides an entry point to various data sources such as:
• Panorama Dashboards
• School Information Portal
• NAPLAN Data Service
• VCE Data Service.

For explanation of these data sources please see the Appendix 1.

Benchmark Growth - measuring NAPLAN Learning Gain

In 2019, ‘Benchmark Growth’ replaced ‘Relative Growth’ as the NAPLAN Learning Gain measure in the School Performance Report; contributing to 60% of the school’s Reading and Numeracy performance.

The Benchmark Growth measure allows for significant improvements in NAPLAN learning gain to be reflected at a system, school and individual student level.

For more information on the new Benchmark Growth Measure, including how it differs from Relative Growth, see an explanatory video and information flyer at ‘School Performance Reporting’.

Resources and links

School Performance Reporting and Data

NAPLAN Benchmark Growth video
player.vimeo.com/video/358222192?title=0&byline=0&portrait=0
Engaging the school community

When considering how best to consult with its community, a school considers what form of consultation has worked well before, the resources available to the school for consultation and the geographic spread and diversity of the community.

Opportunities for face-to-face consultations include:
- inviting the community to participate in forums to discuss the school’s performance and its directions, ensuring interpreters are available if necessary
- holding small group discussions with parents/guardians and students, where performance data is presented and responses sought
- forming working groups to undertake a particular evaluation task.

Other considerations
Small group discussions might also be an option if the school community is geographically dispersed or has significant numbers of people who speak languages other than English. In these cases, the principal working with school councillors could:
- convene small group discussions in places, at times and in languages that suit participants
- consult with students for responses, recommendations and ideas
- talk to community organisations (such as cultural groups or local aboriginal education consultative groups in the case of Koorie families).

Other opportunities for consultation include:
- surveys of parents/guardians and students, asking for comments and opinions
- providing information about the self-evaluation in the school newsletter with an invitation to readers to comment
- suggestion boxes where people can leave their comments.
Endorsing the Pre-review Self-evaluation

The principal presents the Pre-review Self-evaluation report to council for endorsement. Councillors should be satisfied that:

- the report provides a valid explanation of the school’s practice and performance
- the VRQA check self-assessment includes evidence of the school’s compliance with the VRQA’s minimum standards for school registration
- all relevant facts and opinions were assessed in the process of developing the report
- the conclusions flow reasonably and logically from the information and data gathered.

Once the Pre-review Self-evaluation report is endorsed in SPOT, the principal briefs staff on the outcomes of the process and school council determines how best to communicate the findings of the self-evaluation to the community.

The principal forwards the endorsed Pre-review Self-evaluation report to the SEIL, school council president, reviewer and challenge partners at least four weeks before the school review.
School review

The school review aims to create a self-sustaining cycle of continuous improvement, where all schools are supported by the system on a needs basis, to strengthen improved student outcomes.

School reviews make an evidence-based contribution to the school's development of its new SSP and efforts to improve student outcomes.

A school review evaluates the school's performance against its previous SSP and investigates particular areas of focus in order to inform the development of the school's next strategic plan and determine the improvement goals for the next four-year cycle.

Throughout their review, schools have the support of a School Review Panel, including core members: an independent reviewer; the principal; the SEIL and school council president; challenge partners; and school community members, including students and the school's School Improvement Team. This collaborative approach allows for a deeper analysis of data and performance to help the school shape their plan for ongoing improvement.

The school council president is a core member of the School Review Panel and a key decision-maker in the review, contributing to the analysis of the school's performance against the previous SSP as well as planning directions for the next strategic plan.

Schools for review in 2021 will:

- undertake a Pre-review Self-evaluation process with engagement from the whole school community
- understand that 2020 school performance reports will be based on 2019 achievement results, due to remote learning
- complete the Pre-review Self-evaluation report in SPOT in the term before their review
- provide the report and other school data to the School Review Panel at least four weeks before the review
- hold a preparation and planning meeting, where the reviewer visits the school
- participate in the review (with duration and scope finalised on the first day of the review: the Validation Day)
- receive the School Review Report, with directions for the new SSP (goal, targets and key improvement strategies)
- endorse the new SSP in SPOT.
The following table outlines how councillors, the principal and leadership team, the SEIL and school reviewer would typically be involved in the review process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal will:</th>
<th>The Senior Education Improvement Leader will:</th>
<th>School councillors will:</th>
<th>The reviewer will:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation and planning</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• provide the required documentation for the minimum standards assessment such as policy documents etc. to the reviewer electronically at least four weeks before the review</td>
<td>• engage with and analyse the school’s Pre-review Self-evaluation report and other data</td>
<td>• be aware of the required documentation for the minimum standards assessment</td>
<td>• engage with and analyse the school’s Pre-review Self-evaluation report and other data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• complete the school Pre-review Self-evaluation in SPOT (login required) and provide a copy to the core members of the School Review Panel and the challenge partners at least four weeks before the review</td>
<td></td>
<td>• engage with and analyse the school’s Pre-review Self-evaluation report and other data</td>
<td>• undertake a desktop audit of the school’s documentation for the minimum standards assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• engage with and analyse the school’s Pre-review Self-evaluation report and other data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principal will:</td>
<td>The Senior Education Improvement Leader will:</td>
<td>The school council president (or delegate) will:</td>
<td>School councillors will:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
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<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Validation Day (first day of review)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Validation Day (first day of review)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Validation Day (first day of review)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Validation Day (first day of review)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• participate in the first day of the review (the Validation Day) as a core member of the School Review Panel</td>
<td>• participate in the first day of the review (the Validation Day) as a core member of the School Review Panel</td>
<td>• participate in the first day of the review (the Validation Day) as a core member of the School Review Panel</td>
<td>• participate in focus groups etc. as required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• participate in the classroom observations/ focus groups on Validation Day</td>
<td>• participate in the classroom observations/ focus groups on Validation Day</td>
<td>• participate in the classroom observations/ focus groups on Validation Day</td>
<td>• support review activities as necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• support the participation of staff, students and community members in focus groups, interviews etc. as required</td>
<td>• support the participation of staff, students and community members in focus groups, interviews etc. as required</td>
<td>• support the participation of staff, students and community members in focus groups, interviews etc. as required</td>
<td>• support review activities as necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• contribute to the development of focus questions and methodology for the review</td>
<td>• contribute to the development of focus questions and methodology for the review</td>
<td>• contribute to the development of focus questions and methodology for the review</td>
<td>• participate in focus groups, interviews etc. as required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• support review activities as necessary</td>
<td>• support review activities as necessary</td>
<td>• support review activities as necessary</td>
<td>• participate in focus groups etc. as required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Panel time (final day of review)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal will:</th>
<th>The Senior Education Improvement Leader will:</th>
<th>The school council president will:</th>
<th>The reviewer will:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>contribute to a final determination of the school’s proficiency levels against the FISO dimensions using the FISO Continua of Practice for School Improvement</td>
<td>contribute to a final determination of the school’s proficiency levels against the FISO dimensions using the FISO Continua of Practice for School Improvement</td>
<td>contribute to a final determination of the school’s proficiency levels against the FISO dimensions using the FISO Continua of Practice for School Improvement</td>
<td>report back to the School Review Panel on findings and observations from the fieldwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contribute to the collaborative development of goals, targets and key improvement strategies for the next SSP</td>
<td>contribute to the collaborative development of goals, targets and key improvement strategies for the next SSP</td>
<td>facilitate the core members of the School Review Panel to collaboratively develop directions for the next SSP, including goals, targets and key improvement strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### School Review Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal will:</th>
<th>The Senior Education Improvement Leader will:</th>
<th>School councillors will:</th>
<th>The reviewer will:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>check the accuracy of the draft School Review Report</td>
<td>quality-assure the draft School Review Report</td>
<td>discuss the School Review Report at a school council meeting and accept the report</td>
<td>prepare and submit a School Review Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>set-up review meetings with staff and school council where the review findings can be presented</td>
<td>may co-deliver review findings to meetings of staff and school council</td>
<td>participate in the presentation of the review findings at a school council meeting</td>
<td>in some circumstances present review findings to meetings of staff and school council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provide feedback to the Department on the quality of the review process through an online survey</td>
<td>provide feedback to the Department on the quality of the review process through an online survey</td>
<td>provide feedback to the Department on the quality of the review process through an online survey</td>
<td>provide feedback to the Department on the quality of the review process through an online survey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annual Reporting

Each year, schools prepare an Annual Report to the School Community. Through the Annual Report, schools communicate: the success of their improvement initiatives; the effectiveness of resource allocation; and their future directions for improvement. The Annual Report is a legislative and regulatory requirement under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* and the *National Education Agreement 2008*.

The school council president attests to the Annual Report in SPOT. The following table shows how councillors, the principal and leadership team and the SEIL would typically be involved in the annual reporting process.

### The Annual Report review process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal will:</th>
<th>The Senior Education Improvement Leader will:</th>
<th>Councillors will typically:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• populate the 'About our school' section of the Annual Report</td>
<td>• provide quality assurance of the Annual Report where required</td>
<td>• review and comment on the draft Annual Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• provide councillors with time to review and comment on the draft Annual Report</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• table the completed Annual Report at a school council meeting for endorsement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• submit the Annual Report in SPOT for review and approval by the Department</td>
<td></td>
<td>• review and comment on changes made to the draft Annual Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• make changes to the submitted report at the Department’s request</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principal will:</td>
<td>The Senior Education Improvement Leader will:</td>
<td>Councillors will typically:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• sign and endorse the approved Annual Report to attest that:</td>
<td>• endorse the tabled Annual Report and the president will endorse the Annual Report SPOT and attest that:</td>
<td>• endorse the tabled Annual Report and the president will endorse the Annual Report SPOT and attest that:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- all teachers are Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registered</td>
<td>- all teachers employed or engaged by the school council meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT)</td>
<td>- all teachers employed or engaged by the school council meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- the school has met the VRQA minimum standards for registration (except where any exemptions apply)</td>
<td>- to the extent that the school council is responsible, the school meets prescribed minimum standards for registration as regulated by the VRQA in accordance with the Education and Training Reform Act 2006. This includes schools granted an exemption by the VRQA until December 2017 from the minimum standards for student enrolment numbers and/or curriculum framework for school language program</td>
<td>- to the extent that the school council is responsible, the school is compliant with the Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No. 870 – Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- all expenses and commitments of funds have supported educational outcomes and operational needs</td>
<td>• The Annual Report to the school community:</td>
<td>• The Annual Report to the school community:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- the school complies with the Child Safe Standards as prescribed in Ministerial Order 870</td>
<td>- has been tabled and endorsed at a meeting of the school council and will be publicly shared with the school community</td>
<td>- has been tabled and endorsed at a meeting of the school council and will be publicly shared with the school community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• organise a public meeting to present the endorsed Annual Report to the school community</td>
<td>• provide support as required</td>
<td>• attend and present to the public meeting (as appropriate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ensure that each member of the school community is provided with access to the report</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Structure of the Annual Report

The Annual Report contains:
• cover page with attestations
• About Our School statement, including the Financial Performance and Position statement
• Performance Summary.

Schools can view the Performance Summary and provide commentary in the ‘About our school’ section of SPOT.

Approving the Annual Report

The Annual Report provides the community with information about the school’s performance in implementing their improvement strategies and how the school’s resources have been used.

Councillors need to be aware that:
• an Annual Report is required to be developed and published every year
• a draft Annual Report is provided to council for review and comment
• the Annual Report is tabled at a school council meeting for ratification and must be approved by the school council and endorsed by the school council president in SPOT by 30 April
• the council must verify that the financial summary and commentary featured in the report are accurate and satisfy government requirements
• the council’s endorsement of the Annual Report must be recorded in the school council minutes
• school councils are required by law to hold a public meeting each year to present the endorsed report
• the school’s Annual Report must be published on the VRQA State Register of Victorian Schools. This process is managed by the Department once submitted by the school.
2.2
Prioritise and set goals

Why is this topic important?

The School Strategic Plan (SSP) is the school’s statement to its community about what it stands for and intends to do over the next four years to improve student outcomes. It defines the school’s values and sets out goals, targets and key strategies for improvement. It also influences resourcing priorities. It provides an important means for involving the school community in setting the school’s directions.

On completing this unit, school councillors should be able to:

- support the development of a long-term view of the school’s direction
- engage in the development of the draft SSP through the school review process
- provide feedback on the draft plan
- consider the plan for endorsement
- help communicate the plan to the community.
The following table shows what councillors, the principal and leadership team, and the SEIL are responsible for in the development of the SSP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal ...</th>
<th>The Senior Education Improvement Leader...</th>
<th>School councillors...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• contribute to the development of a long-term view of the school’s directions, based on school review findings</td>
<td>• provide support on reviewing and interpreting findings</td>
<td>• reflect on the findings from the self-evaluation and school review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• reviews the findings and recommendations from the self-evaluation and school review</td>
<td>• reviews the key directions for the next School Strategic Plan agreed to by the review panel</td>
<td>• submit the SSP in SPOT for SEIL endorsement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• reviews the key directions for the next School Strategic Plan agreed to by the review panel</td>
<td>• engages the community in the development or revision of the vision and values of the school</td>
<td>• reviews the draft SSP and provides advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• engages the community in the development or revision of the vision and values of the school</td>
<td>• submits the SSP in SPOT for SEIL endorsement</td>
<td>• endorse the SSP and communicate the SSP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• submits the SSP in SPOT for SEIL endorsement</td>
<td>• endorses the SSP in SPOT</td>
<td>• the president endorses the SSP in SPOT on behalf of council</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strategic Planning

Councillors make an important contribution to the strategic planning process through their contribution to determining a long-term view of where the school is headed, and why.

They can do this by:
- contributing to the development of the school's purpose and values
- reflecting on the findings and recommendations of the school's self-evaluation and school review ensuring that the school's profile and environmental context is considered
- supporting the identification of environmental factors likely to influence the way the school operates over the next four years such as changing demographics, employment patterns and student and parent expectations
- validating the key directions identified through the school review for inclusion in the new SSP goals, targets and improvement strategies
- assisting in the identification of key risks and mitigation strategies
- checking there is a clear line of sight between the findings of the school review, and the goals and actions
- testing that effective implementation and monitoring can occur as a result of strategic planning.

School council may decide to establish or improve their provision of early childhood education and care i.e. an Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) or kindergarten service, as a part of the strategic planning process. This decision requires an understanding of the legislative framework that applies and the way in which the OSHC service contributes to improving student outcomes. School council will ensure the policies and practices required under the National Quality Framework (NQF) for the service are compliant and driven by the National Quality Framework Guiding Principles.

The NQF provides a national approach to the regulation and quality assessment of early childhood education and care services, which includes OSHC and kindergarten. Further information on the NQF and the Quality Assessment and Regulation Division (QARD) is available in the Improving School Governance – Governance module.

Engaging the school community

When deciding how best to consult with its community, a school might consider what form of consultation has worked well in the past, the resources available to the school for consultation and the geographic spread and diversity of the community.

Opportunities for face-to-face consultations include forums, small group discussions, working groups and inviting observers to relevant parts of council meetings. Other opportunities for consultation include surveys of parents/guardians and students, coverage of the planning process in the school newsletter with an invitation to readers to comment, and suggestion boxes. The National Quality Framework identifies this aspect in QA 6 – meaningful engagement with families and/or community.
Endorsing the School Strategic Plan

The president endorses the final SSP in SPOT, on behalf of the school council, as part of its governance responsibilities.

Councillors need to ensure that the plan:

- reflects the community’s values and views about the school’s purpose and direction and that the goals and targets in the plan are consistent with these views
- draws on the findings of the school self-evaluation and review
- provides a concise and clear picture of what the school wants to achieve over the next four years and the broad steps that will be undertaken to achieve this.

The SSP is a living document and should be reviewed and updated based on the annual self-evaluation. Endorsement by the school council and the SEIL is required for significant changes.

Communicating the School Strategic Plan

Councillors support the principal and school leadership team in communicating the SSP to the school community.

They can do this by:

- drawing on information in the plan when discussing issues with the school community; for example, to answer questions about what the school is doing to improve numeracy levels
- referring to the plan when appropriate; for example, in meetings with parents/guardians and at open days
- supporting the principal at formal community reporting meetings; for example, when the Annual Report is presented to the community
- making reference to the plan when writing reports in school newsletters
- displaying the plan in school reception areas, on noticeboards, in offices, in classrooms and on the school website
- encouraging celebration of important achievements, for example, at assemblies, in the newsletter or at a special function.
2.3 Develop and plan

Why is this topic important?

The SSP establishes the broad direction for the school that is operationalised through the AIP: for Improving Student Outcomes. The AIP supports the school’s delivery of the goals and targets identified in the SSP.

On completing this unit, school councillors should be able to:
- understand the role and purpose of the AIP
- endorse the AIP
- monitor progress against the key improvement strategies and success criteria.

AIPs are completed using SPOT. The school council president is provided access to SPOT to review and endorse the final plan. To receive access to Education Mail, school council presidents should ensure the school has updated their details.

The following table shows how councillors, the SEIL and the principal and leadership team would typically be involved in developing, monitoring and reporting on the AIP. As the table below shows, the principal and leadership team are responsible for developing the AIP and for managing, monitoring and reporting activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal will...</th>
<th>The Senior Education Improvement Leader will...</th>
<th>Councillors will typically...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• in consultation with their School Improvement Team, develop the AIP</td>
<td>• support and feed into the development of the AIP</td>
<td>• contribute to the development of the AIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• approve the AIP</td>
<td>• endorse the AIP</td>
<td>• endorse the AIP at the first meeting of the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• the president endorses the AIP in SPOT on behalf of the council</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Developing the Annual Implementation Plan

The AIP identifies which of the SSP goals and Key Improvement Strategies (KIS) have been selected for four-year targets down into 12-month targets.

The AIP implements the SSP by breaking down each KIS into specific actions. For each action, it specifies:
- the intended outcomes of the action
- the success indicators which provide evidence of progress
- how the action will be implemented and resourced
- the person or team who will implement related activities and report back on progress.

The school then reports to the community on its progress.

The AIP is operational. It is important for school councillors to be aware of the plan and how it reflects the goals and targets established in the SSP as well as understanding their role in overseeing the annual budget and the resourcing of the identified actions.

Principals’ and teachers’ Performance and Development Plans are linked directly to the actions, activities and milestones identified in the AIP.

Endorsing the Annual Implementation Plan

After the SEIL has endorsed the AIP, the principal presents the final version to school council for endorsement. The school council president then reviews and endorses the final plan in SPOT on behalf of school council.

Before endorsing it, councillors should satisfy themselves that:
- 12-month targets are consistent with the four-year goals and targets in the SSP
- the identified outcomes are achievable given the likely available resources.

The plan should be endorsed by the school council at the first meeting of the year in February.
2.4 Implement and monitor

Schools monitor, review and evaluate the implementation of their chosen priorities and initiatives – including impact on student learning – to determine progress, any need for adjustment, and overall outcomes.

Monitoring the progress of the school’s improvement strategies, including a review of key risks to achievement, is one of the school council’s key roles.

The AIP includes a monitoring section in which schools record six and 12-month progress against the delivery of KIS and related actions. The council’s role should focus on monitoring progress against the outcomes and/or achievement of the 12-month targets featured in the AIP. Monitoring of progress provides an essential link between the written AIP and the daily operation of the school.

Through this process it may become apparent that the school’s circumstances have changed which may require the SSP to be updated. In this situation any change will require endorsement of both the SEIL and the school council.

The following table shows how councillors, the SEIL and the principal and leadership team would typically be involved in the AIP. As the table below shows, the principal and leadership team are responsible for managing, monitoring and reporting activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal will...</th>
<th>The Senior Education Improvement Leader will...</th>
<th>Councillors will typically...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• keep the school community informed about progress against the AIP</td>
<td>• monitor progress against the AIP, including a review of key risks to achievement</td>
<td>• monitor progress against the AIP, including a review of key risks to achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• undertake a mid-year review of the AIP to monitor progress, including a review of key risks to achievement</td>
<td>• discuss progress and evidence with the School Improvement Team and school leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Support to school councillors

The School Operations and Governance Unit (SOGU) of Schools and Regional Services provides advice and guidance to school councils on a range of governance issues. Councillors can contact SOGU directly on email at school.council@education.vic.gov.au or 03 7022 1343 or 03 7022 1345 for information and advice.

Councillors can also contact their regional office for information and advice.

The Department offers comprehensive face-to-face training free of cost to school councils of Victorian Government schools. The training is based on four modules of the Improving School Governance (ISG) materials; Governance, Strategic Planning, Finance and School Council President. Face-to-face training is accessed by contacting the provider, Synergistiq on 03 9946 6801 or email Synergistiq: sct@synergistiq.com

The ISG modules are also available online, on the Department’s website.
Resources and links

Further information, related policies and advice can be located on the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library for schools at www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal including:

School Council – Powers and Functions

Annual Implementation Plan
www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/annual-implementation-plan/policy

Child Safe Standards

Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)
www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/fiso/guidance/overview

Outside School Hours Care

School Performance Reporting and Data

School Strategic Plan

School Review
www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-review/policy

Annual Report to the School Community

Reporting Student Achievement and Progress Foundation to 10
www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/reporting-student-achievement/policy

Risk Management

Strategic Planning Online Tool (SPOT) (login required)
apps.edustar.vic.edu.au/spot

Other relevant resources

Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority and the National Quality Framework website
acecqa.gov.au

PROTECT website

VRQA Minimum standards and other requirements for schools
vrqa.vic.gov.au/schools/Pages/default.aspx
## Appendix 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Summary of contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy and Advisory Library for schools</strong></td>
<td>• A comprehensive online library for all Department policy and related operational guidance and resources applying to Victorian government schools</td>
<td>• The Department’s online library of all Department policy, advice and operational guidance and resources, including policy, advice, guidance and resources for school councils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panorama Dashboards</strong></td>
<td>• An interactive dashboard of various types of academic and non-academic data. Very user-friendly interface</td>
<td>• NAPLAN (bands, growth, transition from/to Primary/Secondary schools), Teacher Judgement and Comparison of Teacher Judgement and NAPLAN &lt;br&gt; • VCE/VET &lt;br&gt; • Absence &lt;br&gt; • Attitude to School Survey (from 2017), School Staff Survey and Parent Survey (from 2017) &lt;br&gt; • Similar School comparisons, a school summary One School – One view, and student demographics &lt;br&gt; Note: Where identification allows, the Dashboards can compare cohorts by Gender, Disadvantage, EAL, and Aboriginal status. NAPLAN, Teacher Judgement and Absence dashboards allow access to student level data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Information Portal</strong></td>
<td>• An interactive dashboard of various types of academic and non-academic data. Provides more data and more granular assessment of performance than Panorama. May be considered as less user friendly than Panorama and does not have student level data</td>
<td>• School profile and summaries &lt;br&gt; • Enrolment and projections &lt;br&gt; • School Entrant Health questionnaire and Victorian Student Health and Wellbeing questionnaire &lt;br&gt; • Attendance &lt;br&gt; • NAPLAN, (bands and growth), Teacher Judgement English Online Interviews and VCE/VET &lt;br&gt; • School Retention and Exit Destination &lt;br&gt; • Attitude to School Survey, School Staff Survey and Parent Survey &lt;br&gt; • Finance indicators such as Revenue, Expenses, Fiscal balances (e.g. net cash position) and staffing resource shares (e.g. comparing non-teaching budget to benchmarks) &lt;br&gt; Note: Some dashboards allow an additional layer of analysis by using the “go to detailed report”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Summary of contents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports</td>
<td>• PDF documents of Panorama supplementary school level report, School annual report and School performance report, among others.</td>
<td>There are a number of reports available: 1. The Panorama supplementary school level report is designed to demonstrate how the school is performing against the main Education State targets. Comparisons are made with ‘similar schools’ and the state average. See handout. 2. The School Performance Report provides a summary of the school’s overall performance and performance in a number of critical academic and non-academic areas. See handout. 3. Annual Report to the school community provides an overview of school performance, positioning school performance against the Victorian median and the middle 60% of performance. See handout.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| PRISM         | • A dashboard of a number of measures extracted from CASES21                | • Demographics such as country of birth and Indigenous status and languages spoken  
• A heat map of student home addresses  
• Disability, impairment and access alerts  
• Absence over the year and top reasons for absence |
| NAPLAN Data Service | • A NAPLAN specific set of reports to allow detailed analysis               | • Summary, trend and school comparison reports  
• Student achievement, response, and comparison reports  
• Assessment areas, writing criteria and item analysis  
• Relative growth and transitional relative growth |
| VCE Data Service | • VCE specific set of reports to allow detailed analysis                  | • Combined study reports  
• Single study reports  
• GAT score reports  
• Student level reports  
• Longitudinal reports (compared against NAPLAN and GAT) |
Sample School Performance Report

The School Performance Report provides a summary of the school's overall performance and performance in each domain (e.g. reading, numeracy, school climate, attitudes to school, engagement and participation).

Please note that due to significant changes in 2020 due to remote learning, the statewide achievement data (NAPLAN) in the School Performance Report will be based on 2019 results.
School Performance Report 2018

How to read your school performance report

September 2018
The Differentiated School Performance Groups (Figure 1) complement the revised approach to school review and differentiated approach to school improvement.

Five performance groups are identified.
To determine your school’s performance group, the ‘current level’ and ‘change level’ of all schools in the state are segmented into five performance levels to create a five-by-five table (25 segments) for each measure.

Your school’s placement within this table, based on your school’s ‘current level’ and ‘change level’ for each applicable measure, determines the performance group to which your school belongs.

Measures are aggregated to the domain level and an overall performance group level to provide an overall summary of your school’s performance.

The six domains and associated measures shown at left form the basis of the differentiation method.

These have been selected based on their alignment to FISO school improvement objectives and Education State targets.
The summary page provides a graphical summary of your school’s overall performance group and your performance in each applicable domain.

- Shows your school’s overall performance group.
- Shows your school’s performance group for each domain.
- Indicates the number of domains and measures that have been used to determine your school’s performance group.
- Provides an overview of what is measured in each domain.

Performance is static over time (including some cases where performance is moderate but on a declining trajectory) and requires renewed effort to be high performing. As an overall performance group, this indicates a mix of results at the domain and measure level.

Text describes your school’s overall performance.
How to read your school performance report: Detail pages

- **Shows the domain.**
- **Your school’s domain performance group, current level and change level for each domain.**
- **The measures that are used to determine your school’s performance in each domain.**
- **Your school’s performance group for each measure.**
- **Your school’s most recent performance result for each measure.**
- **The change in your school’s performance over the last 3 years* for each measure.**

### Table: Performance Measures

| Domain               | Measure                                               | Measure Performance Group | Current Result (Year) | Current Result (Latest Year) | Current Level (Last 3 years) | Change Level  
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------
| Achievement (Reading)| Transform (Up, Decreased)                              | Transform                 | 8%                        | 2018                         | Very Low                    | Decreased               |
|                      | Transform (Up, Decreased)                              | Transform                 | 36%                       | 2018                         | Very High                   | Maintained               |
|                      | Renew (Up, Decreased)                                 | Renew                     | 72%                       | 2018                         | Medium                      | Decreased               |
| Achievement          | % of students in top two bands (Year 9)                | Renew                     | 61%                       | 2018                         | Medium                      | Decreased               |
| (Numeracy)           | % of students in bottom two bands (Year 9)*            | Renew                     | 18%                       | 2018                         | Medium                      | Decreased               |
|                      | % of students with high or medium learning gain (Year 7 to 9) | Stetch                   | 72%                       | 2018                         | High                        | Decreased               |
| School Climate       | Renew (Medium, Maintained)                            | Renew                     | 47%                       | 2017                         | Medium                      | Maintained               |
|                      | % of positive endorsement in Collective Efficacy       | Renew                     | 47%                       | 2017                         | Medium                      | Maintained               |
|                      | % of positive endorsement in Academic Emphasis        | Renew                     | 46%                       | 2017                         | Medium                      | Maintained               |
| Student Attitude     | Stetch (Medium, Increased)                            | Stetch                    | 45%                       | 2018                         | Low                         | Increased                |
|                      | % of positive endorsement in Sense of Confidence (Year 7-12) | Stetch                   | 61%                       | 2018                         | Medium                      | Increased                |
|                      | % of positive endorsement in Managing Bullying (Year 7-12) | Influence                | 69%                       | 2018                         | High                        | Increased                |
| Engagement           | influence (High, Increased)                           | influence                 | 93%                       | 2017                         | High                        | Increased                |

*Two years of data is used to measure change in performance in the Student Attitude Domain.
Sample Panorama Report

The Panorama Report is designed to demonstrate how the school is performing against the four main Education State targets of:

- learning for life by improving student outcomes
- encouraging happy, healthy and resilient kids
- breaking the link of disadvantage
- building pride and confidence in our schools.

Comparisons are made with ‘similar schools’ and the state average.
Sample School
Supplementary school level report

2019 - Interim v1.0, November 2019
These school reports are designed to demonstrate how your school is performing against the Education State domains of Learning for Life, Happy Healthy and Resilient Kids, Breaking the Link, and Pride and Confidence. It presents measures over time, so improvement can be monitored. It compares your school to a group of ‘similar schools’ (schools of similar size, type and student demographics) and the state average.

This information should assist you to identify areas of focus in your annual and strategic plans.
In 2018:
Percentage of students in Semester 2 at or above the age expected level

Your school  Similar schools
Reading and viewing  83 %  83 %
Ranging from 62 % to 98 %
Speaking and listening  88 %  87 %
Ranging from 67 % to 100 %
Writing  83 %  78 %
Ranging from 57 % to 93 %

Relative to the similar schools group, your school's
• Reading and viewing your school’s result is similar to the
  results for primary schools with similar characteristics.
• Speaking and listening your school’s result is similar to the
  results for primary schools with similar characteristics.
• Writing your school’s result is above the results for primary
  schools with similar characteristics.
Year 3 NAPLAN Numeracy results are among the lead indicators for the Year 5 Education State target of 25% more students achieving the highest levels in Mathematics by 2020.

In 2019:

- Percentage of students in top two bands: 28% in 2019, 26% in 2018
- Similar schools: 26% in 2019, 23% in 2018
- Relative to the similar schools group, your school’s result is above the results for primary schools with similar characteristics.

Between 2017 and 2019:

- Percentage of students in top two bands: 29% in 2019, 26% in 2018
- Similar schools: 23% in 2019, 21% in 2018
- Relative to the similar schools group, your school’s result is above the results for primary schools with similar characteristics.

Across Victorian Government schools in 2019, 44% of Year 3 students achieved in the top two bands for NAPLAN Numeracy - this is a 1 percentage point decline on 2018 results. Students from a disadvantaged background performed 28 percentage points below their peers in this top 2 bands measure.

**State-wide patterns**

- NAPLAN Numeracy results are among the lead indicators for the Year 5 Education State target of 25% more students achieving the highest levels in Mathematics by 2020.

**In 2019:**

- Percentage of students in top two bands:
  - Your school: 26%
  - Similar schools: 23%
- Participation: 94% in 2019, 94% in 2018
- Absent: 14% in 2019, 2% in 2018
- Withdrawn: 3% in 2019, 3% in 2018

**Between 2017 and 2019:**

- Participation: 94% in 2019, 94% in 2018
- Absent: 14% in 2019, 2% in 2018
- Withdrawn: 3% in 2019, 3% in 2018

**Total Students**

- 2015: 32
- 2016: 38
- 2017: 30
- 2018: 44
- 2019: 29

**Average Scale Score**

- 2015: 405.4
- 2016: 362.9
- 2017: 380.0
- 2018: 409.7
- 2019: 389.7

**Exempt**

- 2015: 1
- 2016: 1
- 2017: 1
- 2018: 1
- 2019: 0

**Participation**

- 2015: 29
- 2016: 36
- 2017: 27
- 2018: 37
- 2019: 22

**Absent**

- 2015: 10
- 2016: 3
- 2017: 0
- 2018: 3
- 2019: 4

**Withdrawn**

- 2015: 6
- 2016: 5
- 2017: 3
- 2018: 4
- 2019: 4

**Top 2 Bands**

- 2015: 4%
- 2016: 3%
- 2017: 4%
- 2018: 4%
- 2019: 3%

**Middle 2 Bands**

- 2015: 15%
- 2016: 22%
- 2017: 19%
- 2018: 24%
- 2019: 20%

**Bottom 2 Bands and Exempt**

- 2015: 83%
- 2016: 75%
- 2017: 87%
- 2018: 72%
- 2019: 77%

**Percentage of students by NAPLAN bands**

- Band 6: 4%
- Band 5: 7%
- Band 4: 12%
- Band 3: 15%
- Band 2: 19%
- Band 1: 28%
- Exempt: 4%

**Count and percentage of students**

- Total Students: 29
**STUDENT ABSENCE: PREP - YEAR 6**

**In 2018:**
Percentage of students with 20 or more absence days

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Your school</th>
<th>Similar schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 or more</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ranging from 17% to 46%

Relative to the similar schools group, your school’s result is similar to the results for primary schools with similar characteristics.

**Between 2016 and 2018:**
Percentage of students with 20 or more absence days

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Your school</th>
<th>Similar schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ranging from 17% to 44%

Relative to the similar schools group, your school’s result is below the results for primary schools with similar characteristics.

**Average absence days between 2016 and 2018**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Your school</th>
<th>Similar schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ranging from 12 to 25 days

Relative to the similar schools group, your school’s result is below the results for primary schools with similar characteristics.
**ATTITUDES TO SCHOOL SURVEY: YEARS 4-6**

**HAPPY, HEALTHY AND RESILIENT KIDS**

**Positive:** the percentage of positive responses (strongly agree/agree) to the questions within the component/factor.

**Neutral:** the percentage of neutral responses (neither agree or disagree) to the questions within the component/factor.

**Not Positive:** the percentage of not positive responses (strongly disagree/disagree) to the questions within the component/factor.

---

By 2025, Victorian students reporting high resilience will grow by 20 per cent.

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‘Sense of confidence’ and ‘Sense of connectedness’ are among the lead indicators for the Education State reading and numeracy achievement targets.

‘Sense of connectedness’ is among the lead indicators for the Education State resilience target.

---

*Note: Factor percentile is the percent endorsement, relative to Years 4-6 in all Victorian government schools*
Positive: the percentage of positive responses (strongly agree/agree) to the questions within the component/factor.

Neutral: the percentage of neutral responses (neither agree or disagree) to the questions within the component/factor.

Not Positive: the percentage of not positive responses (disagree/strongly disagree) to the questions within the component/factor.

"Collective efficacy" is among the lead indicators for the Education State reading, numeracy and science achievement targets, as well as the critical and creative thinking and breaking the link targets.

State-wide patterns

Staff in Primary schools are generally more positive about school climate than staff from Secondary and Pri-sec schools.

In analysis commissioned by the Department, the School Staff Survey factors of 'academic emphasis' and 'collective efficacy' were found to be the top predictors of student achievement across both primary and secondary year levels.

In 2019, 'Collective efficacy' has improved slightly for Primary, Secondary and Pri/Sec Schools. Similarly, 'Academic emphasis' has also increased slightly for all school types.

Percentage of positive responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic emphasis</td>
<td>60 %</td>
<td>69 %</td>
<td>66 %</td>
<td>72 %</td>
<td>78 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective efficacy</td>
<td>65 %</td>
<td>72 %</td>
<td>67 %</td>
<td>73 %</td>
<td>75 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective focus on student learning</td>
<td>97 %</td>
<td>95 %</td>
<td>96 %</td>
<td>99 %</td>
<td>99 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective responsibility</td>
<td>82 %</td>
<td>92 %</td>
<td>94 %</td>
<td>96 %</td>
<td>98 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guaranteed and viable curriculum</td>
<td>89 %</td>
<td>90 %</td>
<td>81 %</td>
<td>93 %</td>
<td>97 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent and community involvement</td>
<td>55 %</td>
<td>59 %</td>
<td>58 %</td>
<td>67 %</td>
<td>86 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shielding/Buffering</td>
<td>73 %</td>
<td>79 %</td>
<td>71 %</td>
<td>90 %</td>
<td>88 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff trust in colleagues</td>
<td>85 %</td>
<td>92 %</td>
<td>91 %</td>
<td>91 %</td>
<td>98 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher collaboration</td>
<td>82 %</td>
<td>76 %</td>
<td>57 %</td>
<td>83 %</td>
<td>87 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in students and parents</td>
<td>59 %</td>
<td>58 %</td>
<td>48 %</td>
<td>60 %</td>
<td>73 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School climate</td>
<td>71 %</td>
<td>76 %</td>
<td>70 %</td>
<td>79 %</td>
<td>85 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of respondents</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Handout A3

Sample Annual Report
Performance Summary

The Government School Performance Summary provides an overview of how this school is contributing to the objectives of the Education State and how it compares to other Victorian Government schools.

All schools work in partnership with their school community to improve outcomes for children and young people. Sharing this information with parents and the wider school community helps to support community engagement in student learning, a key priority of the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes.

Members of the community can contact the school for an accessible version of these data tables if required.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Range of results for the middle 50% of Victorian Government Pri/Sec Schools</th>
<th>Median of all Victorian Government Pri/Sec Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

School Profile

Enrolment Profile

A total of 895 students were enrolled at this school in 2019, 444 female and 451 male.

1 percent were EAL (English as an Additional Language) students and 4 percent ATSI (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) students.

Overall Socio-Economic Profile

Based on the school's Student Family Occupation and Education index which takes into account parents’ occupations and education.

Parent Satisfaction Summary

Measures the percent endorsement by parents on their school satisfaction level, as reported in the annual Parent Opinion Survey. The percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree).

Data is suppressed for schools with three or less respondents to the survey for confidentiality reasons.

School Staff Survey

Measures the percent endorsement by staff on School Climate, as reported in the annual School Staff Survey. The percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree).

Data is suppressed for schools with three or less respondents to the survey for confidentiality reasons.
Sunnyside Hills College

### (Primary Year Levels) Performance Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Student Outcomes</th>
<th>Similar School Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Judgement of student achievement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of students in Years Prep to 6 working at or above age expected standards in:</td>
<td>Results: English</td>
<td>Below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• English</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Graph" /></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mathematics</td>
<td>Results: Mathematics</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Graph" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For further details refer to *How to read the Annual Report.*
(Primary Year Levels)  

**Performance Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Student Outcomes</th>
<th>Similar School Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NAPLAN Year 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The percentage of students in the top 3 bands of testing in NAPLAN at Year 3.</td>
<td>Results: Reading</td>
<td>Above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Results: Reading (4-year average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Results: Numeracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Results: Numeracy (4-year average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NAPLAN Year 5</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The percentage of students in the top 3 bands of testing in NAPLAN at Year 5.</td>
<td>Results: Reading</td>
<td>Below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Results: Reading (4-year average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Results: Numeracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Results: Numeracy (4-year average)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key:** Range of results for the middle 50% of Victorian Government Primary Schools: ○ Results for this school: ● Median of all Victorian Government Primary Schools: ♦
Sunnyside Hills College

(Primary Year Levels)

**Performance Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Student Outcomes</th>
<th>Similar School Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| NAPLAN Learning Gain  
Year 3 - Year 5 | |  |
| Learning gain of students from Year 3 to Year 5 in the following domains: Reading, Numeracy, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation. |
| NAPLAN learning gain is determined by comparing a student's current year result to the results of all 'similar' Victorian students (i.e. students in all sectors in the same year level who had the same score two years prior). If the current year result is in the Top 25 percent, their gain level is categorised as 'High'. Middle 50 percent, is 'Medium'. Bottom 25 percent, is 'Low'. |
| There are no Similar School Comparisons for Learning Gain. The statewide distribution of Learning Gain for all domains is 25% Low Gain, 50% Medium Gain, 25% High Gain. |
| Statewide Distribution of Learning Gain (all domains) | | |
### Performance Summary

#### Engagement

**Average Number of Student Absence Days**

Average days absent per full time equivalent (FTE) student per year. Common reasons for non-attendance include illness and extended family holidays.

Absence from school can impact on students’ learning

#### Similar School Comparison

A similar school comparison rating of ‘Above’ indicates this school records ‘less’ absences than expected, relative to the similar schools group with similar characteristics. A rating of ‘Below’ indicates this school records ‘more’ absences than expected.

#### Student Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results: 2019</th>
<th>Results: 2016 - 2019 (4-year average)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Few absences</td>
<td>Many absences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Average 2019 attendance rate by year level:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prep</th>
<th>Yr1</th>
<th>Yr2</th>
<th>Yr3</th>
<th>Yr4</th>
<th>Yr5</th>
<th>Yr6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94 %</td>
<td>93 %</td>
<td>94 %</td>
<td>93 %</td>
<td>92 %</td>
<td>90 %</td>
<td>93 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Similar school comparison not available**
Sunnyside Hills College

Performance Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wellbeing</th>
<th>Student Outcomes</th>
<th>Similar School Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Students Attitudes to School - Sense of Connectedness**  
  Measures the percent endorsement on Sense of Connectedness factor, as reported in the Attitudes to School Survey completed annually by Victorian Government school students in Years 4 to 12. The percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree). | Results 2019 | Above |
|                                             | Results 2017 - 2019 (3-year average)                    |                           |
| **Students Attitudes to School - Management of Bullying**  
  Measures the percent endorsement on Management of Bullying factor, as reported in the Attitudes to School Survey completed annually by Victorian Government school students in Years 4 to 12. The percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree). | Results 2019 | Above |
|                                             | Results 2017 - 2019 (3-year average)                    |                           |
### Performance Summary

#### Teacher Judgement of student achievement

Percentage of students in Years 7 to 10 working at or above age expected standards in:
- English
- Mathematics

For further details refer to *How to read the Annual Report.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Student Outcomes</th>
<th>Similar School Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Judgement of student achievement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of students in Years 7 to 10 working at or above age expected standards in:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td>Above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
<td>Similar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results: English</th>
<th>Results: Mathematics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Performance Summary

### Achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAPLAN Year 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The percentage of students in the top 3 bands of testing in NAPLAN at Year 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 7 assessments are reported on a scale from Bands 4 - 9.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAPLAN Year 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The percentage of students in the top 3 bands of testing in NAPLAN at Year 9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 9 assessments are reported on a scale from Bands 5 - 10.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Student Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results: Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median of all Victorian Government Secondary Schools:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median of all Victorian Government Secondary Schools:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results: Reading (4-year average)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median of all Victorian Government Secondary Schools:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median of all Victorian Government Secondary Schools:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results: Numeracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median of all Victorian Government Secondary Schools:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median of all Victorian Government Secondary Schools:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results: Numeracy (4-year average)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median of all Victorian Government Secondary Schools:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median of all Victorian Government Secondary Schools:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Similar School Comparison

- Being the first year of secondary school, Year 7 NAPLAN is not used for the School Comparison.
**Performance Summary**

### Achievement

#### NAPLAN Learning Gain Year 5 - Year 7

Learning gain of students from Year 5 to Year 7 in the following domains: Reading, Numeracy, Writing, Spelling & Grammar and Punctuation.

NAPLAN learning gain is determined by comparing a student’s current year result to the results of all ‘similar’ Victorian students (i.e. students in all sectors in the same year level who had the same score two year prior). If the current year result is in the Top 25 percent, their gain level is categorised as ‘High’. Middle 50 percent, is ‘Medium’. Bottom 25 percent, is ‘Low’.

#### NAPLAN Learning Gain Year 7 - Year 9

Learning gain of students from Year 7 to Year 9 in the following domains: Reading, Numeracy, Writing, Spelling & Grammar and Punctuation.

NAPLAN learning gain is determined by comparing a student’s current year result to the results of all ‘similar’ Victorian students (i.e. students in all sectors in the same year level who had the same score two years prior). If the current year result is in the Top 25 percent, their gain level is categorised as ‘High’. Middle 50 percent, is ‘Medium’. Bottom 25 percent, is ‘Low’.

### Student Outcomes

#### NAPLAN Learning Gain Year 5 - Year 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### NAPLAN Learning Gain Year 7 - Year 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Similar School Comparison

There are no Similar School Comparisons for Learning Gain. The statewide distribution of Learning Gain for all domains is 25% Low Gain, 50% Medium Gain, 25% High Gain.

### Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE)

Mean study score from all VCE subjects undertaken by students at this school.

This includes all Unit 3 and 4 studies (including those completed in Year 11) and any VCE VET studies awarded a study score. The maximum student study score is 50 and the state-wide mean (including government and non-government schools) is set at 30.

Students in 2019 who satisfactorily completed their VCE: 96%

Year 12 students in 2019 undertaking at least one Vocational Education and Training (VET) unit of competence: 68%

VET units of competence satisfactorily completed in 2019: 89%

Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) credits satisfactorily completed in 2019: 76%
## Sunnyside Hills College

### Performance Summary

#### Engagement

**Average Number of Student Absence Days**

Average days absent per full-time equivalent (FTE) student per year. Common reasons for non-attendance include illness and extended family holidays.

Absence from school can impact on students’ learning.

**Similar School Comparison**

A similar school comparison rating of ‘Above’ indicates this school records ‘less’ absences than expected, relative to the similar schools group with similar characteristics. A rating of ‘Below’ indicates this school records ‘more’ absences than expected.

#### Student Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement</th>
<th>Student Outcomes</th>
<th>Similar School Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Results: 2019</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Results: 2016 - 2019 (4-year average)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr7</td>
<td>Yr8</td>
<td>Yr9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92 %</td>
<td>90 %</td>
<td>89 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Similar School Comparison

- **Above**

#### Exit Destinations

Percentage of students from Years 10 to 12 going on to further studies or full-time employment.

Note: This measure uses data from the previous year. Data excludes exit destinations recorded as ‘Unknown’. 

- **Above**
Sunnyside Hills College

(Secondary Year Levels)

Performance Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wellbeing</th>
<th>Student Outcomes</th>
<th>Similar School Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students Attitudes to School - Sense of Connectedness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures the percent endorsement on Sense of Connectedness factor, as</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reported in the Attitudes to School Survey completed annually by</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victorian Government school students in Years 4 to 12. The percent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly agree).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results: 2019</td>
<td></td>
<td>Above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results: 2017 - 2019 (3-year average)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students Attitudes to School - Management of Bullying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures the percent endorsement on Management of Bullying factor, as</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reported in the Attitudes to School Survey completed annually by</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victorian Government school students in Years 4 to 12. The percent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly agree).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results: 2019</td>
<td></td>
<td>Above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results: 2017 - 2019 (3-year average)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Financial Performance and Position

*Commentary on the financial performance and position is included in the About Our School section at the start of this report.*

### Financial Performance - Operating Statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary for the year ending 31 December, 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Resource Package</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Provided DET Grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Grants Commonwealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Grants State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locally Raised Funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Operating Revenue</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Equity¹</strong></th>
<th><strong>Actual</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equity (Social Disadvantage)</td>
<td>$591,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity (Catch Up)</td>
<td>$46,604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equity Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$637,775</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Expenditure</strong></th>
<th><strong>Actual</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Resource Package²</td>
<td>$8,387,624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books &amp; Publications</td>
<td>$16,278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Costs</td>
<td>$31,324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumables</td>
<td>$284,073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Expense³</td>
<td>$648,991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>$61,516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property and Equipment Services</td>
<td>$568,839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries &amp; Allowances⁴</td>
<td>$728,595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trading &amp; Fundraising</td>
<td>$102,753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>$124,994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Operating Expenditure</strong></td>
<td><strong>$10,954,986</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit</strong></td>
<td><strong>$321,416</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asset Acquisitions</strong></td>
<td><strong>$231,200</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Financial Commitments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Funds Available</strong></th>
<th><strong>Actual</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Yield Investment Account</td>
<td>$46,041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official Account</td>
<td>$40,799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Accounts</td>
<td>$414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Funds Available</strong></td>
<td><strong>$87,254</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Financial Commitments</strong></th>
<th><strong>Actual</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating Reserve</td>
<td>$87,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Financial Commitments</strong></td>
<td><strong>$87,254</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1. The Equity funding reported above is a subset of overall revenue reported by the school.
2. Student Resource Package Expenditure figures are as of 22 January 2020 and are subject to change during the reconciliation process.
3. Misc Expenses may include bank charges, health and personal development, administration charges, camp/excursion costs and taxation charges.
4. Salaries and Allowances refers to school-level payroll.

All funds received from the Department, or raised by the school, have been expended, or committed to subsequent years, to support the achievement of educational outcomes and other operational needs of the school, consistent with Department policies, School Council approvals and the intent/purposes for which funding was provided or raised.
Sunnyside Hills College

How to read the Annual Report

What does the About Our School section refer to?
The About Our School page provides a brief background on the school, an outline of the school’s performance over the year and plans for the future.
The ‘School Context’ describes the school’s vision, values and purpose. Details include the school’s geographic location, size and structure, social characteristics, enrolment characteristics and special programs.
The ‘Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)’ section includes the improvement initiatives the school has selected and the progress they have made towards achieving them.

What does School Comparison refer to?
The School Comparison is a way of comparing this school’s performance to similar schools in Victoria.
The comparison measure takes into account the school’s socio-economic background of students, the number of non-English speaking students and the size and location of the school.
The Similar School Comparison will identify if a school’s result is ‘Similar’, ‘Above’, or ‘Below’ relative to the similar schools group with similar characteristics.

What does Data not available’ or ‘ND’ mean?
Some schools have too few students enrolled to provide data. There may be no students enrolled in some year levels so school comparisons are not possible.
New schools have only the latest year of data and no comparative data from previous years.
The Department also recognises unique circumstances in Specialist, Select Entry, English Language and Community Schools where school-to-school comparisons are not appropriate.

What is the Victorian Curriculum?
The Victorian Curriculum F–10 sets out what every student should learn during their first 11 years of schooling. The curriculum is the common set of knowledge and skills required by students for life-long learning, social development and active and informed citizenship.
The curriculum has been developed to ensure that school subjects and their achievement standards enable continuous learning for all students, including students with disabilities.
The ‘Towards Foundation Level Victorian Curriculum’ is integrated directly into the curriculum and is referred to as ‘Levels A to D’.
‘Levels A to D’ may be used for students with a disability or students who may have additional learning needs.
‘Levels A to D’ are not associated with any set age or year level that links chronological age to cognitive progress (i.e. there is no age expected standard of achievement for ‘Levels A to D’).
**Handout B**

**School Strategic Planning: quiz**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> Which of the following are councillors responsible for in the school Pre-review Self-evaluation process?</td>
<td><strong>(i) planning the Pre-review Self-evaluation</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>(ii) keeping everyone informed about the contents of the Pre-review Self-evaluation report</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>(iii) endorsement of the final Pre-review Self-evaluation report</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>(iv) forwarding the Pre-review Self-evaluation report to the Department</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>(v) participating in consultations with the community</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>(vi) reviewing the plan and timeline for the Pre-review Self-evaluation.</strong> <strong>Clue: only 3 are correct</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> School performance is measured against the student outcome areas, one of which is achievement. What is one of the other outcome areas?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong> What is the most effective way that councillors can become aware of the values and aspirations of their community?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What can you do if you want to comment on the review process?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. You may think a particular building or resource needs to be improved. On what grounds would you have the best chance of gaining funding for such an initiative?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. How might information from the attitudes to school survey impact on setting goals and targets?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. When does the school AIP need to be presented to school council and endorsed by the school council president in SPOT?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. What do you see as the most important part of your role as a school councillor?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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3.0
Introduction

Goals

The goals of this module are for school councillors to understand their governance responsibilities in relation to:
- internal controls
- budgeting
- investing and fundraising.

This module will also help councillors understand and interpret financial reports.

Overview

The school council is responsible for overseeing the school’s financial performance. It is a legal and Department of Education and Training (the Department) requirement that council makes sure funds coming into the school are being properly spent and authorised.

To ensure this happens, council is responsible for ensuring that the school has a functioning and effective system of internal controls. Internal controls are the procedures that make sure:
- all financial activity within the school is sound, accurate and legal
- the school’s assets are safe
- council can rely on the accuracy of the financial information it receives.

Council also helps develop the school’s program (non-staff) budget that shows how the school will allocate its resources to implement the key improvement strategies in the School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan. Council then monitors the school’s financial performance against the budget in conjunction with the school principal.

Finally, council is responsible for how the school raises income, over and above the funding provided by the government. It must manage any financial and reputational risks that could arise and ensure that all legal requirements are met.
Overview continued

It is recommended all school councils elect a treasurer each year. Most school councils have a finance subcommittee, which handles many of council’s routine financial responsibilities.

The treasurer is responsible for:
• convening the finance subcommittee, where applicable
• working closely with the principal, school council president and Business Manager to report to council on all financial reports.

The convenor/treasurer of the finance subcommittee, as elected from council members, is preferably a non-Department member. The Business Manager/bursar should not hold this position.

It is recommended the office bearer position of treasurer be elected at the council’s first meeting after declaration of the poll, in line with current practice.

School councillors are indemnified by the Crown against any liability in respect of any loss or damage suffered by the council or any other person in respect of anything necessarily or reasonably done or omitted to be done by the councillor in good faith in the:
• exercise of a power or performance of a member’s function, or
• reasonable belief that the member’s liability act or omission was in the exercise of the member’s function or power.

If any school councillors have queries or concerns regarding the school financial management, in the first instance they should speak with the principal. If school councillors wish to escalate concerns about financial practices at the school or irregularities in finance reporting, they can speak to the relevant regional office.

Or, if a school councillor has knowledge or reason to believe a departmental employee, contractor or service provider has been involved in fraudulent or corrupt conduct, they should report it as a complaint or public interest disclosure.

Make a complaint

Available avenues:
• Acting Executive Director, Integrity, Assurance and Executive Services Division on 03 7022 0120
• Manager, Fraud and Corruption Control Unit 03 7022 0121
• Speak Up Service on 1800 633 462

Make a public interest disclosure

If a councillor wishes to make a public interest disclosure about the Department or any of its employees or officers, they should contact:

The Department’s Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator (Coordinator), Executive Director, Integrity Assurance and Executive Services Division at the details listed above, or any of the Department’s Public Interest Disclosure Officers on 03 7022 0121 or by email to fraud.control@education.vic.gov.au

The Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC)
Level 1, North Tower 459 Collins Street Melbourne Vic 3000
GPO Box 24234, Melbourne VIC 3001
Phone: 1300 735 135
Website: Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission
3.1 Budgeting

Why is this topic important?

The budget is the school council’s main financial management tool. It is the ‘money plan’ that shows how the school will use its financial resources to support the goals and priorities in the School Strategic Plan. Proper and adequate oversight of the school’s finances, in line with Department guidelines, is one of council’s most important responsibilities.

On completing this unit, school councillors should understand the budget process and timeline and be able to:

- review program budget submissions against the School Strategic Plan
- recommend, approve and revise the school’s program budget
- monitor the performance of programs against the budget.

Programs include:

- the various curriculum programs (such as art, science and mathematics)
- administrative programs (such as staff development and school maintenance)
- trading activities (such as the school canteen)
- specific purpose programs (such as the library)

The principal develops the workforce plan and salary budget using the Department’s salary structures for teaching and administrative staff. Council is not involved in preparing this budget.

The following table shows the typical budgeting responsibilities of the principal and school council.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal ...</th>
<th>The school council ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>develops the budget timeline</td>
<td>approves the budget timeline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>develops program budgets with staff, and salary and revenue budgets</td>
<td>reviews budget submissions and program priority list (undertaken by the finance subcommittee if council has one)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evaluates program outcomes, prepares and prioritises budget submissions</td>
<td>reviews, approves and monitors the budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communicates the budget to staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is recommended all school councils elect a treasurer each year. Most schools have finance subcommittees and this unit is written as if your school has one. If it doesn’t, council will undertake the tasks described.
Budget process and timeline

At the outset of the budget process, the principal and finance subcommittee develop the budget timeline.

The diagram below shows an indicative timeline (actual timings depend on the school).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revisions made to previous year’s budget, as appropriate.</td>
<td>Work starts on budget for coming year.</td>
<td>Finance subcommittee reviews program budgets. Recommends budget to council for approval. Council approves budget.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the outset of the budget process, the principal and finance subcommittee develop the budget timeline. The diagram above shows an indicative timeline (actual timings depend on the school).

The principal, Business Manager and program leaders develop program budgets using estimates of revenue derived from:

- student funding received through the Student Resource Package (SRP)
- other government funding or special purpose grants
- locally raised funds left over from the current and previous years.

SRP funding is the major source of funding for schools and is provided by the Department. It is calculated using complex formulas, which take into account the number of students at each year of study and includes equity funding and other funding for special initiatives.

The funding is provided in two parts: credit and cash. Broadly speaking, the credit part of the funding (which accounts for approximately 90% of the SRP) is money allocated to the school but held by the Department and used to pay school salaries.

The remainder, which council oversees, is given as cash and held in the school’s bank accounts. It funds school running costs (such as electricity and phones) and the non-salary expenditure in program budgets approved by council.

If in any year the school overspends its SRP credit funding, it must repay the overspent amount in the next year. The budget must allow for this.

If the school decides to put money aside for large purchases (such as equipment) in a future year, it will have less to budget for programs in the coming year.

Council discusses priorities for the coming year with the principal and gives advice about these to the finance subcommittee. The principal and school staff consider and determine priority programs for the following year and prepare budget submissions for each program. They also rank programs by priority; that is, in order of their importance for funding.

The treasurer and finance subcommittee inform the review of the budget submissions with the priorities advised by council.
Reviewing budget submissions

Council is encouraged to have a finance subcommittee, convened by the school council treasurer, to review budget submissions in detail on behalf of council.

The finance subcommittee checks that each submission provides enough information for it to make a decision to recommend the submission for funding or not.

Each submission should include:
- an evaluation of the program’s current and previous outcomes
- the rationale for the program (how it meets the school’s strategic priorities)
- the program’s estimated revenue and expenditure, with expenditure split between the essential, unavoidable costs of the program and the non-essential costs (for extras which will enhance the program, in line with the school’s strategic priorities).

Guided by the strategic priorities decided by council, the finance subcommittee should be encouraged to ask:
- what did the last evaluation of the program reveal?
- how well will the program address the school’s strategic priorities?
- does the allocation of funding in the submissions reflect key strategic priorities?
- if the program is not explicitly part of the strategic plan, does it have merit?

The treasurer and finance subcommittee discuss expenditure estimates in the budget submissions with the Business Manager or principal to determine whether these estimates are reasonable. The Business Manager and principal will have reviewed all submissions, but councillors bring their own knowledge and perspectives to the task and, for good governance, must satisfy themselves that the proposals are sound, and the estimates are reasonable.

Subcommittee members and councillors are encouraged to ask questions, especially if they don’t have a financial background. The principal or Business Manager will clarify any aspect of the reports, with common-use language and explanations.
Economy, efficiency, effectiveness

When considering expenditure, it is important to consider value for money (VFM).

In basic terms VFM means ‘getting a good deal from school expenditure’. It is based not only on the minimum purchase price (economy) but also on the maximum efficiency and effectiveness of a purchase.

This means finding solutions that achieve the best mix of quality and effectiveness for the least outlay.

This may not always mean choosing the immediately cheapest option since, for instance, it may be more cost effective to buy a more reliable service or a better-quality asset with lower maintenance costs and a longer operating life.

The Three Es

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VFM Concept</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>Careful use of resources to minimise expense, time or effort</td>
<td>Was photocopy paper of the quality specified obtained at the lowest possible price?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>Delivering the same level of service for minimum input of cost, time or effort; or obtaining maximum benefit from a given level of input</td>
<td>Were canteen costs reduced while improving the nutritional content of food provided?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>Delivering a successful outcome and meeting objectives as fully as possible</td>
<td>Has the literacy program improved NAPLAN results?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A strategic approach to economy and efficiency

Develop a value for money culture
This means encouraging everyone to accept that value for money (VFM) is not only the responsibility of the school Business Manager, but rather it is a shared responsibility across the school. If strong leadership is provided by the principal, senior leaders and the school council, this will significantly enhance the importance of VFM in the wider school community.

Factors impacting on value for money
VFM is considered to be the achievement of a desired procurement outcome at the best possible cost over the life of the asset, not necessarily the lowest price. It should take both financial and non-financial factors over the total contract period into account.

Key factors to consider include (but are not limited to):

Financial factors
• up-front costs of the goods and services
• costs associated with transition in and transition out (if applicable)
• maintenance costs after the goods and services have been purchased
• costs associated with consumables (if applicable)
• costs for disposal.

Non-financial factors
• ensuring goods and services are fit for purpose and meet the school’s needs
• determining whether small/medium enterprises (SMEs) or local businesses and communities achieve benefits
• level of knowledge transfer from the supplier to the school
• level of risk associated with the purchase of the goods and services and engagement of the supplier
• availability of maintenance and support services.
Procurement Processes

Part 2.3 of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (the Act), states that the school council is responsible for arranging for the supply of goods, services, facilities, materials, equipment and other things or matters that are required for the conduct of a school. For the purpose of meeting this objective, council is the legal entity through which the school enters into contracts, agreements or other arrangements.

The incurring of expenditure by schools is strictly controlled and subject to approval by the school council or any officer who has been authorised by the school council to carry out this function (for example, a delegated officer). The names of people authorised for this function are to be recorded in the school council minutes.


Thresholds are in place, which must be followed as outlined below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procurement threshold (inc GST)</th>
<th>Minimum market approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>≤ $2,500</td>
<td>One quote (either verbal or written)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; $2,500 and ≤ $25,000</td>
<td>One written quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; $25,000 and ≤ $150,000</td>
<td>Three written quotes to be sought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; $150,000</td>
<td>Tender process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following table shows the typical responsibilities of the principal and the school council with regard to procurement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal ...</th>
<th>The school council ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• leads and manages procurement activity, or delegates management of the procurement activity to a Business Manager or other staff member</td>
<td>• approves justification for procurement expenditure, or authorises a delegated officer to carry out this function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ensures that all procurement activity complies with the Schools Procurement Policy and Procedure</td>
<td>• must ensure the school complies with the Department’s Finance Manual for Victorian Government Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• attests that those at the school undertaking procurement activities are capable of doing so (in conjunction with the annual financial accounts attestation)</td>
<td>• must ensure that the school complies with the Schools Procurement Policy and Procedure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommending, approving and revising the budget

The treasurer and finance subcommittee, after discussion with the principal, determine:

- the final prioritised list of programs to be funded, in light of available funding and if appropriate, by changing the priority order of submissions
- how the funded programs will be evaluated when the budget for the following year is developed.

The treasurer, on behalf of the finance subcommittee, then recommends the final prioritised list of submissions to council as the school’s program budget. Council reviews and approves the budget and the principal communicates the budget to school staff.

There may be more than one version of the budget during the year.

The finance subcommittee recommends changes to the budget, in line with the priority list, if:

- SRP funding increases or decreases (for example, the school may need to rely on its cash budget to fund salaries if the credit budget is not sufficient)
- funds left over from the last financial year are less (or more) than expected
- for another reason revenue increases or decreases
- estimates of expenditure change.
3.2 Financial reports

Why is this topic important?

Council is responsible for overseeing the school’s financial performance and for making sure that funds coming into the school are being spent as planned.

Council and its finance subcommittee monitor the school’s financial performance; the principal manages the school’s finances.

On completing this unit school councillors should understand the main financial reports and be able to:
• monitor the school’s financial position, including actual revenue and expenditure against the budget
• consider and decide on actions arising from the financial reports.

The following table shows the typical responsibilities of council and the principal in terms of financial reports.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal ...</th>
<th>The school council ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• prepares financial reports</td>
<td>• reviews all financial reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• explains financial reports to the finance subcommittee and council, and recommends action as appropriate</td>
<td>• monitors revenue and expenditure against the budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• implements council’s decisions</td>
<td>• approves action to address issues arising from the financial reports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most schools have a finance subcommittee and this unit is written as if your school has one. If it doesn’t, council will undertake all the responsibilities described.
The main financial reports

The Department provides CASES21 software to government schools to support their administration, finance and central reporting.

The software generates the reports using the table below. The principal would typically provide these reports to the finance subcommittee and council would usually see only the operating statement and balance sheet. Note that the cash flow forecast report is not generated through CASES21.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance sheet (GL21161)</td>
<td>Lists the value of the school’s assets and liabilities at a point in time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating statement (detail) (GL21150)</td>
<td>Compares actual to budgeted revenue and expenditure by category for the whole school for the month and year to date; and calculates variances (differences between actual and budget)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Receipts Report (GL21002)</td>
<td>Lists all receipts for the period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Payments Report (GL21003)</td>
<td>Lists all payments for the period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancelled receipts (GL21004)</td>
<td>Lists cancelled receipts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancelled payments (GL21005)</td>
<td>Lists cancelled payments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal Report (GL21006)</td>
<td>Lists transactions entered into the finance system; that is, it shows some of the data on which other reports are based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash flow statement (GL21151)</td>
<td>Shows the inflow and outflow of cash, and the closing balance, for each of the school’s bank accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash flow forecast (if applicable)</td>
<td>Shows estimated cash balances for coming months based on expected cash in and out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank account movement details (GL21152)</td>
<td>Shows every recorded transaction relating to the bank accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report</td>
<td>Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual sub-program budget (GL21157)</td>
<td>Compares year to date actual revenue and expenditure to the full year budget and shows last year’s actual and budgeted revenue and expenditure, for individual sub-programs. Calculates the percentage of the annual budget earned and spent to date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invoices awaiting payment (CR21118)</td>
<td>Lists invoices received but not yet paid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family credit notes (DF21309)</td>
<td>Provides details of any credit notes or reversed charges which have been issued for families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundry debtor credit notes (DR21309)</td>
<td>Gives details of credit notes generated for specified debtors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank reconciliation (copies)</td>
<td>Matches the bank statement to the school’s banking records and shows and explains any variances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchasing card statements (if the school has a facility)</td>
<td>Lists all transactions on any purchasing card attached to the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School budget management report – SRP – first page only</td>
<td>Calculates the likely surplus or deficit in SRP funding at the end of the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment register – No longer required</td>
<td>The Central Banking system (CBS) precludes schools from investing funds in the form of term deposits and/ or at call investment accounts. Therefore, schools are no longer required to maintain an investment register or policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Victorian government schools use accrual accounting. This means that the operating statement, annual program budget report and annual sub-program budget reports show revenue when it is earned, and costs when they are incurred. This will usually be before the school receives funds or pays bills. This is normal accounting practice.

Handout D, at the end of this module, provides descriptions and information on each of the CASES21 reports.
Reviewing reports and taking action

Generally speaking, the treasurer and finance subcommittee at each meeting receive copies of the main financial reports (as listed in the previous section) from the principal or Business Manager with advice concerning any issues that require council action.

They discuss the issues with the principal or Business Manager to achieve a shared understanding and make recommendations to council.

For example:
- if expenditure on a program is over budget, the subcommittee might recommend that non-essential expenditure on the program stops
- if the school is underspending its total budget, the subcommittee might recommend that council fund some programs that were not initially approved for funding, in line with the priority list.

Council makes decisions, which are then implemented by the principal.

For good governance, councillors must understand what the reports are saying and are encouraged to ask questions of the principal, president and Business Manager.
Reviewing and actioning each main report

Operating statement
When reviewing the operating statement, the finance subcommittee and council compare the actual financial result (the net operating surplus or deficit) to the budget for the month and year to date. This shows the extent to which the school has met its revenue and expenditure budgets.

If there are significant variations, or if the financial result raises other issues, the principal may advise the finance subcommittee to take action, and how the action proposed would affect the school's operations and implementation of the strategic plan.

The finance subcommittee discusses proposed actions with the principal to achieve a shared understanding, reviews the priority list of programs put together at budget time if necessary, and makes a recommendation to council. Council decides on the action to be taken and the principal implements the action.

Annual program and sub-program budget
The finance subcommittee reviews these reports in the same way as it does the operating statement, by:

• noting variations between actual and budgeted amounts
• receiving advice from the principal about reasons for variations and required actions (for example, if program expenditure is over budget, the principal might advise that non-essential expenditure on the program stops; and if a program is underspent, the finance subcommittee looks again at programs that were not initially recommended for funding with a view to funding some, in line with the priority list)
• confirming that the principal’s advice is in line with the priority list of budget submissions and the school’s overall financial results.

As with the review of the operating statement, council decides on the action to be taken.

Bank reconciliation
The bank reconciliation shows cheques issued but not yet presented (which will be in the school’s records but not in the bank’s) and money received by the school but not yet banked.

The finance subcommittee:
• makes sure that it receives the bank reconciliation regularly
• asks questions to understand the reconciliation and about any issues arising.

Journal
While the finance subcommittee is not expected to understand all the transactions in the journal report, it is provided in the spirit of full transparency; and the finance subcommittee might on occasions ask questions about a transaction in the report.

Cash flow statement
The finance subcommittee reviews the cash flow statement and receives advice from the principal and Business Manager to monitor whether the school has enough cash to pay its liabilities as they fall due.

Sundry debtor credit notes and family credit notes
The finance subcommittee uses these reports as an internal control, to verify that credit note transactions are valid.

Invoices awaiting payment
The finance subcommittee uses this report when approving invoices for payment.
Balance sheet

When reviewing the balance sheet, the finance subcommittee and council:

- ask questions about any items councillors do not understand and about any items which have changed greatly since the previous report
- monitor whether current assets are greater than current liabilities (indicating that the school should be able to pay its debts)
- monitor whether there is enough money in the official bank account to pay debts (these are in the accounts payable control account)
- discuss debtor amounts in the accounts receivable control account with the principal to monitor whether the school is collecting money owed to it
- monitor whether there is too much money in the official account, so that any surplus funds are held in the High Yield investment account.

Council makes sure that the school is solvent. Like every organisation, it must be able to pay its debts as they fall due.

Investment register

Schools are no longer permitted to establish new term deposits or extend existing term deposits. All term deposits must be rolled into the Centralised Banking System (CBS) linked High Yield investment account upon maturity.

Schools should retain their current investment policy and register until all investment accounts have been transferred to the Centralised Banking System. Once school investments have been transferred the school is no longer required to maintain an investment policy or register.

The investment register is not a CASES21 report but will be prepared for the finance subcommittee to show:

- the type or types of investment
- the amounts invested
- the terms of the investments (including interest rates) and maturity dates
- where amounts are invested (with which financial institutions).

The finance subcommittee uses the register to monitor compliance with the school’s approved investment policy and to monitor the funds available to meet future payments.

Cancelled payments and cancelled receipts

The finance subcommittee uses these reports as an internal control, to verify that cancelled transactions are valid.
3.3 Internal controls

Why is this topic important?

Government schools are required to have a functioning, effective system of internal controls.

**Internal controls are the procedures that the school implements to ensure that:**
- funds coming into the school are being spent as planned
- decision-making for procurement expenditure can be justified
- the school’s assets are safe
- council can rely on the accuracy of the financial information it receives.

**On completing this unit, school councillors should:**
- know about minimum internal controls
- be able to monitor the adequacy of the school’s internal controls.

The following table shows the typical responsibilities of school council and the principal in terms of internal controls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal ...</th>
<th>The school council ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>puts in place a system of internal controls</td>
<td>ensures the school has and uses a system of internal controls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conducts school financial business in line with the system of internal controls</td>
<td>adheres to internal controls such as:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- appointing one councillor (normally the president or a delegated councillor) to approve payments and sign cheques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- approving an investment policy if appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- approving trading operations and ensuring issues raised by the auditor are addressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- approving the purchase of goods and services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- monitoring and overseeing offers and provisions of gifts, benefits and hospitality within schools, and at least annually reviewing the school Register for compliance with the Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provides financial reports to council</td>
<td>considers financial reports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Minimum internal controls

The table below shows what most schools would have as a minimum system of internal controls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Common internal controls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Purchasing goods and services   | • using purchase orders for all purchases other than those using petty cash  
|                                 | • the principal or their delegate (as approved by school council) approving all orders  
|                                 | • not allowing the person who receives goods and services to approve the purchase order  
|                                 | • getting quotes or tenders for purchases over specified amounts as per the Schools Procurement Policy and Procedure  
|                                 | • identifying and appropriately removing or managing conflicts of interest for both lower value and higher value purchases  
|                                 | • applying fair and equitable evaluation of quote and tender submissions  
|                                 | • clearly documenting the procurement process and justifying and obtaining appropriate approval for the selection of a supplier |
| Paying for goods and services   | • not allowing cash payments (except for petty cash) and only allowing payment by cheque, direct debit, BPay or purchasing card  
|                                 | • requiring two signatories (the principal and a delegated councillor) for payments. The Business Manager must not be a signatory  
|                                 | • using a voucher system for internet banking to ensure the two approved signatories approve payments |
| Accounting for assets           | • recording all assets valued at $5,000 excluding GST or greater on an asset register  
|                                 | • tagging/engraving assets with identification matching that on the asset register  
|                                 | • conducting a stocktake of assets once every two years  
<p>|                                 | • having and following a process to dispose of assets |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Common internal controls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Receiving money | • following the receipting process as outlined in Section 10 Receivables Management and Cash Handling of the Finance manual – Internal Controls for Victorian Government Schools  
• storing cash in a safe and not leaving cash at school during term holidays  
• when fundraising, ensuring appropriate cash handling and management practices form part of the fundraising planning process  
• ensuring that all bank accounts and investments:  
  - are in council’s name (except for the CBS linked High Yield investment account)  
  - have a principal and a delegated councillor as signatories; the Business Manager must not be a signatory  
  - are used for all funds received  
  - are never overdrawn                                                                                      |
| Investing     | • ensure that any surplus funds are held within the CBS linked High Yield investment account and that any existing investments are moved to the High Yield investment account immediately                                        |
| Payroll       | • having procedures which comply with Australian Tax Office, superannuation and WorkCover requirements  
• having a process to authorise hours worked  
• reconciling payment summaries, which are now distributed through eduPay  
• requiring all non-teaching school-based employees to have a current Working with Children Clearance – the hiring process with eduPay cannot be completed unless this compliance requirement is met  
• requiring all employees who handle cash to have a criminal records check  
• ensuring all teachers, including casual relief teachers (CRTs), have a current Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration. The hiring process with eduPay cannot be completed unless this compliance requirement is met |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Common internal controls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Recording and reporting| • keeping up-to-date accounting records that are supported by documentation  
• reconciling bank accounts with bank statements  
• reconciling petty cash  
• reporting to each council meeting about receipts, payments and financial commitments  
• reporting to the finance subcommittee and council about financial performance, including comparing actual revenue and expenditure to budget |
| Budgeting               | • including in the budget:  
- all revenue sources and funds carried forward from the previous year  
- any committed funds  
- any deficit (to be repaid) or surplus from SRP funding in the previous year  
• approving a budget before the start of the new year  
• regularly reviewing actual financial performance against the budget |
| Trading operations      | • requiring all operations to be approved by council  
• requiring all costs to be covered by revenue  
• completing an annual profit and loss statement, financial reconciliation |
| Auditing                | • having the financial statements audited by an external auditor nominated and organised by the Department at least once every four years |
| School purchasing card  | • Department procurement procedures are followed, including a school purchase order being prepared for each purpose  
• an “Undertaking by the Card holder” is completed by each user after modifications by the principal  
• monthly purchasing card statement/s to be attached to the relevant reports (CASES21) and tabled at school council meetings  
• the principal should authorise all card holders’ expenditures except their own  
• where the principal is a card holder, the school council president should authorise their expenditure |
Monitoring the adequacy of internal controls

Council is itself responsible for some internal controls: for example, it reviews the financial reports and approves policies, and a councillor co-signs payments. The school council is also responsible for ensuring that any issues the auditor raises are addressed through changes to internal controls.

Council is also responsible for ensuring the school maintains and monitors a system of internal controls. It does this by regularly:

- confirming with the principal that the school has documented internal controls similar to the ones above and covering similar functions
- discussing with the principal the extent of compliance with the internal controls and any identified instances of non-compliance; and asking for evidence of compliance if councillors feel it is required.

School Council Financial Assurance (SCFA) program

What is the SCFA program?

Under the Act, school councils have the duty to ensure that all funds received by schools are used for proper school purposes. School councils are required to account for all money under their control and to prepare appropriate financial reports in accordance with the Department’s school Finance manual.

Under the SCFA program, the Department’s Assurance Branch conducts Agreed-Upon Procedures (AUPs) and Schools Internal Audits (SiAs). The Assurance Branch also conducts ad-hoc audits at Victorian government schools at the request of schools, Department and/or external bodies and corporate internal audits with school components.

The Department engages external auditors to perform AUPs in schools. The AUPs are intended to assess and improve the financial internal controls at schools.

Schools are selected for the AUPs based on the following methods:

- **standard** – based on random sampling methodology (this is the primary selection method which gives each school an equal opportunity to be selected each cycle)
- **follow-up** – school selections is based on the AUP results from the prior year (focusing on ‘Needs Improvement’ and ‘Unsatisfactory’ rated schools)
- **targeted** – school selections are based on a number of factors (results of data analytics, value/volume transactions, schools not audited in prior years or any other basis determined by the Department).
Schools rated ‘Good’ in the AUPs for two consecutive years are exempt from being selected in the following year unless a request is made to Assurance Branch to include it in the Program by the school, the Financial Services Division or the regional offices.

The business cycles and/or processes generally covered under the AUPs include:

- locally raised funds
- expenses
- asset management – cash and bank
- school council governance.

AUPs are conducted across the whole financial year. Schools are notified of the selection via the School Update e-newsletter.

Fieldwork may take between two to three working days depending on the size of the school and/or volume and complexity of the transactions.

The AUP report to schools includes factual findings resulting from each procedure performed. Schools are requested to comment on the factual accuracy of the findings and suggested actions to rectify the findings in the final report. Schools are expected to present and discuss the final AUP report at a council meeting.

Findings from individual schools are compiled by the Assurance Branch and assessed for potential impacts at the Department level. The Assurance Branch assigns individual ratings to each individual finding based on the nature of procedures, findings and the schools’ comments. Based on the risk ratings, each school is assigned an overall conclusion of good, acceptable, needs improvement or unsatisfactory.

A state-wide report is prepared based on the consolidated results of the AUPs and SIAs. The state-wide report is circulated to all the schools, regional offices and the Department’s Financial Services Division in order to ensure that corrective measures are taken to rectify the findings at the school level.

**Schools Internal Audits (SIA)**

In addition to the AUPs, each year, the Department identifies a number of SIAs to be carried out at schools. SIAs are undertaken during Term 1 and Term 2 of the school calendar year. Fieldwork visits may take between three to eight working days depending on the audit topic, size of the school and/or volume and complexity of the transactions.

**Examples of SIAs are:**

- review of key financial management and controls at schools (KFMC)
- expenses and payments at schools (EP)
- review collection processes at the schools including for locally raised funds (LRF) and parent payments policy.

**Ad-hoc audits/reviews**

Ad-hoc audits/reviews may occur outside the Internal Audit Plan based on requests from schools, the regions, Department business areas and the Audit and Risk Committee, or are self-initiated by the Assurance Branch based on risk assessments.

**Schools follow-up process**

Schools rated ‘Unsatisfactory’ and ‘Needs improvement’ are required to put in place an action plan to rectify the findings identified. Schools may contact School Finance Liaison Officers for any clarification or advice on the requirements as outlined in the Finance Manual for Victorian Government Schools available on the Department’s website.
The school follow-up process is briefly defined below:

1. Internal Audit provides the Program results to the School Financial Management Support Unit and the Regional Area Directors (RADs). Internal Audit will conduct follow-up audits.

2. RADs send letters to schools regarding their Program results. Regional Finance Managers and Senior Education Improvement Leaders (SEILs) discuss the letters with the schools and the inclusion of the Program results in the principal's PDP process if school's audit results do not improve in future years.

3. Schools declare their action plans and obtain approval from the school council with a notification to the SEILs. Schools implement the plan and report the status in the School's Internal Certification checklist.

4. Principal, school council president and treasurer are strongly recommended to attend the Improving School Governance training. Key school staff are strongly recommended to attend financial management training.

Role of schools

Schools are expected to:

- cooperate and provide auditors with access to all information reasonably required to perform the AUPs/SIAs/ad-hoc audits/corporate internal audits with school components
- ensure the principal and Business Manager are available to answer questions and discuss the preliminary findings (auditors may also ask the school council president to attend)
- be professional in their approach to the audits and cooperate with auditors in the discussion of any findings
- provide management comments to auditors within the specified time frame, to be included in the audit report.
The school follow-up process is briefly defined below:

The following table shows the typical responsibilities of the principal and the school council with regard to the SCFA program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal ...</th>
<th>The school council ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• understands and complies with the requirements of the Finance Manual for Victorian Government Schools and other guidelines/instructions relevant to the school’s financial reporting</td>
<td>• understands the school financial requirements as outlined in the finance module of the Improving School Governance training package for school councils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• is available during the AUP/audit fieldwork to answer questions and discuss the preliminary findings</td>
<td>• president attends the meeting with the auditor, if requested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• organises for the final SCFA reports of the school to be tabled at a school council meeting</td>
<td>• reviews the SCFA reports of the school and discuss how the non-compliances (if any) will be rectified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ensures that the school develops an action plan and implements it</td>
<td>• endorses action plan and tracks its implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• rectifies any non-compliances reported in the final SCFA reports</td>
<td>• reviews past SCFA reports of the school and discusses whether the non-compliances (if any) have been rectified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• reviews past SCFA reports of the school and discusses whether the non-compliances (if any) have been rectified</td>
<td>• discusses the SCFA state-wide report as a school council and identifies opportunities for improving the school’s processes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further information

If you require more information on the School Council Financial Assurance program email: scfa@education.vic.gov.au
3.4 School Generated Funds

Why is this topic important?

Councils are responsible for how schools raise revenue (over and above the funding provided by the government) to fund improvements to the learning environment.

It is part of council’s role to consider and manage any financial and reputation risks that could arise from school generated funding activities and ensure that all legal requirements are met.

On completing this unit councillors should be able to:
- develop parent payment arrangements, in line with the Department’s Parent Payments Policy
- assess and decide on proposals from clubs and groups to raise funds for the school, including identifying potential conflicts of interest.

Councillors should also be aware of the possibility of using trust funds and cooperative loans in raising funds.

The following table shows the typical responsibilities of council and the principal in terms of school generated funds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal ...</th>
<th>The school council ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• develops the school's parent payment arrangements</td>
<td>• contributes to and approves the school's parent payment arrangements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• implements the Department’s Parent Payments Policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• assists with the review of fundraising proposals</td>
<td>• approves fundraising activity on the school’s behalf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• reports back to school council the profit and loss of any major fundraising over $2,000</td>
<td>• reviews approved fundraising profit and loss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• advises council about available cash</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parent payments

The school may request parent payments for Essential Student Learning Items such as text books and personal stationery, offer optional educational items and activities on a user-pays basis (for example, items or activities offered in addition to the standard curriculum such as optional camps or excursions or the school magazine), and may invite voluntary contributions from parents to fund buildings or specific equipment or services.

The school must apply the principle that no student will be denied access to the standard curriculum, refused instruction or disadvantaged in any way on the basis of payments not being made for educational items or activities.

School councils and principals set and approve parent payment arrangements. Costs must be kept to a minimum and be affordable for most families at the school.

School councils must also:
- have strategies to ensure they understand the needs of their school communities when determining parent payment arrangements
- review the impact of their parent payment arrangements on parents and students.

School council must adopt the Department’s Parent Payments Policy. This outlines key school requirements, including the timing of providing parent payment information to the parent community. School council must also outline their parent payment arrangements, addressing the requirements listed in the Parent Payment Arrangements Template, and ensuring these are compliant with the Department’s Parent Payments Policy.

Voluntary contributions

Councils often ask parents/guardians for voluntary contributions for things such as:
- funding a building or a library
- paying for specific equipment, materials or services (such as additional computers over and above those funded by the SRP or other government grants)
- any other purposes to be determined by the school (including an invitation for a general contribution or donation).

Parents may be invited to donate to the school but cannot be required to do so. Parents are more likely to make voluntary contributions when the school describes how the money will enhance the school programs or facilities.
Fundraising

Members of parent clubs or other members of the school community may wish to raise funds for the school, for example, to buy playground equipment. Council must approve any fundraising activity on the school’s behalf, well before it happens.

When considering whether to approve a fundraising activity, council should find out:

- the type of fundraising activity planned
- what, if any, risks the fundraising activity exposes the school or public to; for example, does the activity involve physical risks or risks to the school’s reputation?
- what legal requirements apply; for example, a permit to run a raffle might be needed
- whether reliable estimates of revenue and expenditure have been prepared to ensure that the funds raised will be greater than the costs of running the activity
- what the funds raised will be spent on and how students will benefit.

Council can approve the activity if it is comfortable with the answers to these questions. If it is not, it must establish a committee to recommend whether the proposed activity should be approved.

This committee must consist of:

- the president or president’s nominee (who will chair the committee)
- one other councillor
- two representatives of the club or group who have proposed the fundraising activity
- the principal.

The Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 require that:

- council, the parents’ club or group discuss how funds raised will be spent, to determine what is in the best interests of the school
- funds raised for a particular purpose are used for that purpose
- funds raised for the school are held in trust (separately identified and accounted for) by council.
Support to school councillors

The School Operations and Governance Unit (SOGU) of Schools and Regional Services provides advice and guidance to school councils on a range of governance issues. Councillors can contact SOGU directly via email at school.council@education.vic.gov.au or 03 7022 1345 for information and advice.

Principals and school personnel can direct parent payment enquiries to School Education Programs and Support via email at parent.payments@education.vic.gov.au

Councillors can also contact their regional office for information and advice.

The Department offers comprehensive face-to-face training free of cost to school councils of Victorian Government schools. The training is based on four modules of the Improving School Governance (ISG) materials; Governance, Strategic Planning, Finance and School Council President. Face-to-face training is accessed by contacting the provider, Synergistiq on 03 9946 6801 or email Synergistiq: sct@synergistiq.com

The ISG modules are also available online, on the Department’s website.

Further information, related policies and advice can be located on the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library for schools at www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal including:

- School Administration Systems (CASES21)
  www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-administration-systems/policy
- Report Fraud or Corruption
  www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/report-fraud-or-corruption/overview
- Finance Manual – Financial Management for Schools
- Fundraising Activities (including fetes)
  www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/fundraising-activities-including-fetes/policy
- Parent Payments
  www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/parent-payment/policy
- School Council – Subcommittees
- Procurement – Schools
- School Strategic Plan
- Student Resource Package - Overview
- School Council - Composition and Office Bearers
- School Council – Conduct and Conflict of Interest
  www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-conduct/policy

If you require more information on the School Council Financial Assurance program, please email the SCFA: scfa@education.vic.gov.au
3.5 Financial reports
### General Ledger (GL21150)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GL Code</th>
<th>Account Title</th>
<th>Current Month Actual</th>
<th>Current Month Budget</th>
<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
<th>Year to Date Budget</th>
<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
<th>% of Budget Received</th>
<th>Last Year Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70001</td>
<td>SRP Cash Funding</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>946,771</td>
<td>241,420</td>
<td>705,352</td>
<td>241,420</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>622,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70007</td>
<td>Camp Sport Excursion Fund-CSEF</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10,980</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10,980</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6,673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70020</td>
<td>ECD Department Grants</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70080</td>
<td>Department Funding</td>
<td>1,260</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,260</td>
<td>15,902</td>
<td>14,642</td>
<td>1,260</td>
<td>14,642</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>7,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70085</td>
<td>Targeted program reimbursement</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>34,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1,281</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,281</td>
<td>1,013,653</td>
<td>276,062</td>
<td>737,591</td>
<td>276,062</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>671,563</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GL Code</th>
<th>Account Title</th>
<th>Current Month Actual</th>
<th>Current Month Budget</th>
<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
<th>Year to Date Budget</th>
<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
<th>% of Budget Received</th>
<th>Last Year Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>71080</td>
<td>Commonwealth Gov't Grants</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3,600</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3,600</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3,709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,600</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,600</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3,709</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GL Code</th>
<th>Account Title</th>
<th>Current Month Actual</th>
<th>Current Month Budget</th>
<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
<th>Year to Date Budget</th>
<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
<th>% of Budget Received</th>
<th>Last Year Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>72080</td>
<td>State Government Grants</td>
<td>6,703</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6,703</td>
<td>39,796</td>
<td>33,093</td>
<td>6,703</td>
<td>33,093</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>6,703</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6,703</td>
<td>39,796</td>
<td>33,093</td>
<td>6,703</td>
<td>33,093</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Year to date is the total for all months from 1 January to the date of the report.
2. This report shows revenue by category (e.g. Department grants, locally raised funds and the type of revenue within each category).
### General Ledger (GL21150)

#### Operating Statement – Detail for the period ending 31 December 20XX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GL Code</th>
<th>Account Title</th>
<th>Current Month Actual</th>
<th>Current Month Budget</th>
<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
<th>Year to Date Budget</th>
<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
<th>% of Budget Received</th>
<th>Last Year Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>73001</td>
<td>Reimbursements</td>
<td>11,541</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11,541</td>
<td>40,443</td>
<td>62,598</td>
<td>-22,155</td>
<td>62,598</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>83,511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73002</td>
<td>Interest Received</td>
<td>-31</td>
<td>-3¹</td>
<td>-31</td>
<td>5,595</td>
<td>2,304</td>
<td>3,291</td>
<td>2,304</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>12,173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73541</td>
<td>Transfers FROM other schools</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8,589</td>
<td>8,589</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8,589</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>11,509</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>11,509</strong></td>
<td><strong>54,627</strong></td>
<td><strong>73,491</strong></td>
<td><strong>-18,864</strong></td>
<td><strong>73,491</strong></td>
<td><strong>74</strong></td>
<td><strong>95,684</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GL Code</th>
<th>Account Title</th>
<th>Current Month Actual</th>
<th>Current Month Budget</th>
<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
<th>Year to Date Budget</th>
<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
<th>% of Budget Received</th>
<th>Last Year Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>74101</td>
<td>Fundraising Activities</td>
<td>7,938</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7,938</td>
<td>8,792</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>8,250</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>1622</td>
<td>7,429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74102</td>
<td>Donations</td>
<td>1,138</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,138</td>
<td>16,778</td>
<td>12,200</td>
<td>4,578</td>
<td>12,200</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>71,962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74301</td>
<td>Camps/Excursions/Activities</td>
<td>47,423</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>47,423</td>
<td>232,411</td>
<td>225,693</td>
<td>6,717</td>
<td>225,693</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>235,816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74403</td>
<td>Charities and Collections</td>
<td>-95</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-95</td>
<td>4,435</td>
<td>1,842</td>
<td>2,593</td>
<td>1,842</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>3,812</td>
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<td><strong>643,789</strong></td>
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3. If the number were negative it would generally mean that more revenue has been removed (e.g. via credit notes) than has been earned. This should be explained by the principal or Business Manager.
4. Actual revenue earned for the month. Don’t confuse revenue earned with cash received – money in and out is shown in the cash flow statement.
5. Budgeted revenue for the month.
6. Difference between revenue earned in the month and the budget. A positive number shows that more income was earned than budgeted – a negative number would mean that less income was earned than budgeted.
7. Actual revenue earned for the year to date.
8. Budget revenue for the year to date.
9. More income has been earned than expected.
10. This year’s approved revenue budget for the full year.
11. Last year’s revenue for the full year.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GL Code</th>
<th>Account Title</th>
<th>Current Month Actual</th>
<th>Current Month Budget</th>
<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
<th>Year to Date Budget</th>
<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
<th>% of Budget Expended</th>
<th>Last Year Actual</th>
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<th>Current Month Budget</th>
<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
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<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
<th>% of Budget Expended</th>
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<th>Current Month Budget</th>
<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
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<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
<th>% of Budget Expended</th>
<th>Last Year Actual</th>
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<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
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<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
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(A). Expenditure is shown by category e.g. consumables, equipment/maintenance/hire and utilities, and then by the type of expenditure within each category.
### General Ledger (GL21150)

**Operating Statement – Detail for the period ending 31 December 20XX**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GL Code</th>
<th>Account Title</th>
<th>Current Month Actual</th>
<th>Current Month Budget</th>
<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
<th>Year to Date Budget</th>
<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
<th>% of Budget Expended</th>
<th>Last Year Actual</th>
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<td>55,555</td>
<td>-23,633</td>
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### General Ledger (GL21150)

#### Operating Statement – Detail for the period ending 31 December 20XX

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<th>Current Month Budget</th>
<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
<th>Year to Date Budget</th>
<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
<th>% of Budget Expended</th>
<th>Last Year Actual</th>
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<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
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<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
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<th>% of Budget Expended</th>
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<th>Current Month Budget</th>
<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
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<th>Current Month Actual</th>
<th>Current Month Budget</th>
<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
<th>Year to Date Budget</th>
<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
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<th>Current Month Variance</th>
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<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
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<td>Current Month Budget</td>
<td>Current Month Variance</td>
<td>Year to Date Actual</td>
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<td>Last Year Actual</td>
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### General Ledger (GL21150)

#### Operating Statement – Detail for the period ending 31 December 20XX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GL Code</th>
<th>Account Title</th>
<th>Current Month Actual</th>
<th>Current Month Budget</th>
<th>Current Month Variance</th>
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<th>Year to Date Budget</th>
<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
<th>% of Budget Expended</th>
<th>Last Year Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>89301</td>
<td>Remunerations</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-1,228,800</td>
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<td>-353,905</td>
<td>-15,837</td>
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<td>89309</td>
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#### GL Code EXPENDITURE

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<th>Current Month Budget</th>
<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
<th>Year to Date Budget</th>
<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
<th>% of Budget Expended</th>
<th>Last Year Actual</th>
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<tr>
<td>89301</td>
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<td>1,582,705</td>
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<tr>
<td>89309</td>
<td>ATO Charges/Payments</td>
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#### Total Operating Expenditure

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<th>Account Title</th>
<th>Current Month Actual</th>
<th>Current Month Budget</th>
<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
<th>Year to Date Budget</th>
<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
<th>% of Budget Expended</th>
<th>Last Year Actual</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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#### Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit

<table>
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<th>GL Code</th>
<th>Account Title</th>
<th>Current Month Actual</th>
<th>Current Month Budget</th>
<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
<th>Year to Date Budget</th>
<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
<th>% of Budget Expended</th>
<th>Last Year Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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#### Outstanding Orders

<table>
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<th>Account Title</th>
<th>Current Month Actual</th>
<th>Current Month Budget</th>
<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
<th>Year to Date Budget</th>
<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
<th>% of Budget Expended</th>
<th>Last Year Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(B). Actual expenditure for the month. Not the same as payments made – these are in the cash flow statement.
(C). Expenditure budget for the month.
(D). Difference between actual expenditure incurred and the budget, in the month of August. A positive number means that more expenditure was incurred than budgeted. A negative number means that less expenditure was incurred than budgeted.
(E). Actual expenditure for the year to date (in this example, for the 12 months from Jan to Dec).
(F). Budgeted expenditure for the year to date (i.e. for the 12 months from Jan to Dec).
(G). Difference between actual expenditure for the year to date and the year to date budget. A positive variance shows that more expenditure was incurred than budgeted.
(H). This year’s approved expenditure for the full year.
(I). Total spent last year for the full year.
(J). Actual financial result for the month: revenue less expenditure.
(K). Budgeted financial result for the month: revenue less expenditure.
(L). Difference between the actual and budgeted financial result – surplus/deficit – for the month. A positive variance means that the result for the month is better than budgeted; a negative variance shows that the result is not as good as budgeted.
(M). Actual financial result for the year to date: revenue less expenditure.
(N). Budgeted financial result for the year to date: revenue less expenditure.
(O). Difference between the actual and budgeted financial result – surplus/deficit for the year. A positive variance means that the result for the month is better than budgeted; a negative variance shows that the result is not as good as budgeted.
(P). This year’s approved budgeted financial result – a surplus or a deficit for the full year.
(Q). Last year’s financial result – surplus/deficit for the full year.
(R). The value of goods or services, which have been ordered but not yet invoiced – will be in the financial statement in a later month.
### General Ledger (GL21150)

#### Operating Statement – Detail for the period ending 31 December 20XX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GL Code</th>
<th>Account Title</th>
<th>Current Month Actual</th>
<th>Current Month Budget</th>
<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
<th>Year to Date Budget</th>
<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
<th>% of Budget Received</th>
<th>Last Year Actual</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Motor Vehicles &gt;$5,000</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>26205</td>
<td>Computers/IT equip &gt;$5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>26210</td>
<td>Furniture and Fittings &gt;$5,000</td>
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<td>Musical Equipment &gt;$5,000</td>
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<td>Communication Equip &gt;$5,000</td>
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<tr>
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**Outstanding Orders:**

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<th>Current Month Variance</th>
<th>Year to Date Actual</th>
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<th>Year to Date Variance</th>
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<th>Last Year Actual</th>
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<td>Asset Write-Downs</td>
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<td>Asset Sale Proceeds</td>
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<td>82,140</td>
<td>-82,140</td>
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</table>

13. The amount spent on assets which cost more than $5,000 each.
14. Equipment ordered but no invoice received yet.
15. The original cost of assets disposed of e.g. sold, discarded.
16. Amount received for sold assets.
17. Net profit/(loss) on assets disposed of – difference between original sale cost and sale proceeds.
## General Ledger (GL21157)

### Annual Sub-Program Budget Report from Program 1001 to 9799 Recurrent and Capital

### Revenue

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<th>Sub Prog.18</th>
<th>Title</th>
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### Annual Sub-Program Budget Report from Program 1001 to 9799 Recurrent and Capital

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**Revenue Totals**

| Last year actual | 1,115,107 | 1,045,362 | 643,789 | 1,407,179 | 218.58 |

---

18. Each sub-program with revenue at the school this year (or last).
19. Although income has been earned this shows as 0% budget received as there wasn’t a budget for this program.
20. This year’s approved revenue budget for the full year. Will agree to the operating statement.
21. Year to date revenue for each program – total revenue will agree to the operating statement.
22. The percentage share of full year budgeted revenue actually earned so far this year.
## General Ledger (GL21157)

### Annual Sub-Program Budget Report from Program 100 to 960 Recurrent and Capital Expenditure

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Sub Program</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<th>Annual budget</th>
<th>YTD</th>
<th>% Budget Expended</th>
<th>Outstanding Orders</th>
<th>Uncommitted Balance</th>
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<td>-11,867</td>
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### Expenditure continued.

<table>
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<th>Sub Program</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<th>Last year budget</th>
<th>Annual budget</th>
<th>YTD</th>
<th>% Budget Expended</th>
<th>Outstanding Orders</th>
<th>Uncommitted Balance</th>
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## Expenditure continued.

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<th>Last year budget</th>
<th>Annual budget</th>
<th>YTD Expended</th>
<th>% Budget Expended</th>
<th>Outstanding Orders</th>
<th>Uncommitted Balance</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

23. Each sub-program with expenditure at the school this year (or last).
24. This year’s approved expenditure budget for the full year. This figure should equal the capital expenditure budget plus the operating budget.
25. The percentage share for full year budgeted expenditure actually incurred so far this year.
26. Unspent and uncommitted budget available.
## Bank Reconciliation

**Date** | **Ref** | **Detail** | **Amount** | **Balance**
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---

**Bank statement closing balance as at 31/12/20XX**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Detail</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Balance</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30/08/20XX</td>
<td>Parent Payment</td>
<td></td>
<td>$250.00</td>
<td><strong>$13,013.00</strong></td>
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**Plus outstanding deposits**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Detail</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30/08/20XX</td>
<td>Parent Payment</td>
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<td>$250.00</td>
<td><strong>$13,013.00</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Subtotal (outstanding deposits)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Detail</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14/05/20XX</td>
<td>12229</td>
<td>Transpacific Waste Management</td>
<td>-$232.00</td>
<td><strong>$10,851.51</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14/08/20XX</td>
<td>12356</td>
<td>Australia Post</td>
<td>-$220.00</td>
<td><strong>$10,851.51</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29/10/20XX</td>
<td>12357</td>
<td>Macmillan Education</td>
<td>-$31.99</td>
<td><strong>$10,851.51</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29/10/20XX</td>
<td>12358</td>
<td>TRUenergy Pty Ltd</td>
<td>-$1,677.50</td>
<td><strong>$10,851.51</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Less unpresented cheques**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Detail</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14/05/20XX</td>
<td>12229</td>
<td>Transpacific Waste Management</td>
<td>-$232.00</td>
<td><strong>$10,851.51</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14/08/20XX</td>
<td>12356</td>
<td>Australia Post</td>
<td>-$220.00</td>
<td><strong>$10,851.51</strong></td>
</tr>
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<td>29/10/20XX</td>
<td>12357</td>
<td>Macmillan Education</td>
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<td><strong>$10,851.51</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>29/10/20XX</td>
<td>12358</td>
<td>TRUenergy Pty Ltd</td>
<td>-$1,677.50</td>
<td><strong>$10,851.51</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Subtotal (unpresented cheques)**

<table>
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<th>Detail</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Balance</th>
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<td>Australia Post</td>
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<td>29/10/20XX</td>
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<td>Macmillan Education</td>
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<td><strong>$10,851.51</strong></td>
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**Adjusted bank statement balance**

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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>(C) -$2,161.49</strong></td>
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**G/L bank account balance as at 31/12/20XX**

<table>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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**Difference**

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This report matches the bank statement to the school's records and explains the differences.

(A). The amount in the bank at the end of the month according to the bank statement.

(B). Outstanding deposits are funds not yet in the bank (at the time of the statement) but which are in the school’s records.

(C). Unpresented cheques are cheques issued by the school which have not yet been presented.

(D). This is the bank statement after unpresented cheques have been deducted and outstanding deposits added – it should now match the school’s financial records.

(E). This is the bank statement according to the school’s financial records and should match the amount shown in the balance sheet.

(F). The difference between the bank statement and the school’s records has been explained. The reconciliation should always result in a ‘nil’ difference. However, if it doesn't there must be a written explanation (e.g. bank error).

Prepared By: ____________________________

Approved By: ____________________________

Date: ____________________________
Journal Report\textsuperscript{27} for the period 01/01/20XX to 30/12/20XX

<table>
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</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{27}. This report lists financial transactions entered into the finance system by the Business Manager for the year to date (which then form part of the school’s finance records). This report is presented to the subcommittee as an internal control, giving greater transparency to the financial records. The finance subcommittee may ask questions about the transactions in this report.
Cash Flow Statement as at 31/12/20XX Bank Accounts 10001 to 10099


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Receipts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,121,542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$ (in thousands)</td>
<td>$103,632</td>
<td>$456</td>
<td>$70,910</td>
<td>$116,836</td>
<td>$2,526</td>
<td>$23,861</td>
<td>$360,375</td>
<td>$58,963</td>
<td>$382</td>
<td>$363,864</td>
<td>$494</td>
<td>$19,242</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Payments</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,036,832</td>
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<tr>
<td>$ (in thousands)</td>
<td>$110,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$108,657</td>
<td>$110,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$98,175</td>
<td>$110,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surplus/ (Deficit)</strong></td>
<td>($6,368)</td>
<td>($59,544)</td>
<td>($37,747)</td>
<td>$6,836</td>
<td>($47,474)</td>
<td>($176,139)</td>
<td>$360,375</td>
<td>($39,212)</td>
<td>($109,618)</td>
<td>$313,864</td>
<td>($69,506)</td>
<td>($50,758)</td>
<td>$84,710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Closing Balance</strong></td>
<td>$463,452</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Receipts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,980,491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$ (in thousands)</td>
<td>$230,159</td>
<td>$136,445</td>
<td>$108,186</td>
<td>$130,511</td>
<td>$91,311</td>
<td>$292,386</td>
<td>$39,842</td>
<td>$81,389</td>
<td>$140,756</td>
<td>$419,313</td>
<td>$121,496</td>
<td>$188,697</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Payments</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,925,975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$ (in thousands)</td>
<td>$123,824</td>
<td>$169,456</td>
<td>$133,943</td>
<td>$104,079</td>
<td>$117,681</td>
<td>$232,799</td>
<td>$100,346</td>
<td>$97,696</td>
<td>$99,103</td>
<td>$441,911</td>
<td>$132,011</td>
<td>$173,126</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surplus/ (Deficit)</strong></td>
<td>$106,335</td>
<td>($33,011)</td>
<td>($25,757)</td>
<td>$26,432</td>
<td>($26,371)</td>
<td>($60,504)</td>
<td>($16,307)</td>
<td>$41,653</td>
<td>($22,598)</td>
<td>($10,514)</td>
<td>$15,572</td>
<td>$54,516</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Closing Balance</strong></td>
<td>$67,279</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

28. Note: this report shows the bank balances in the school's financial records for each of the school's bank accounts. These are reconciled to the bank statement in the bank reconciliation.
29. Bank account to which the information in the table below applies.
30. The opening balance of the account at the beginning of the year.
31. How much cash has come into the bank account each month and for the year to date.
32. How much cash has gone out of the account each month and for the year to date.
33. The net increase/ (decrease) in the account balance each month.
34. The closing balance of the account at the date of the report.
### Sundry Debtor Credit Notes Report

Sundry debtors from 00001 to SFYAT\(^{35}\) (DR21309)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sundry Debtor</th>
<th>Credit Note No</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Detail</th>
<th>GST Amount</th>
<th>Credit Note Amount (Incl GST)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SFJOH</td>
<td>Mary Johnson</td>
<td>DRI0000446</td>
<td>26/01/20XX Reversal of Charge</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$4,005.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Debtor Total $4,005.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFSMI</td>
<td>Luke Smith</td>
<td>DRI0000447</td>
<td>26/01/20XX Reversal of Charge</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$3,327.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Debtor Total $3,327.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFWIN</td>
<td>Gladys Winter</td>
<td>DRI0000448</td>
<td>26/01/20XX Reversal of Charge</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$3,600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Debtor Total $3,600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFYAK</td>
<td>Pedro Yak</td>
<td>DRI0000449</td>
<td>26/01/20XX Reversal of Charge</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$2,580.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Debtor Total $2,580.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Grand total $13,512.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

35. This report shows credit notes issued to debtors (other than families). This report is presented to the subcommittee as an internal control, to verify that credit note transactions are valid.
### Family Credit Notes Report From family ABS0050 to ZUC0050 (DF21309)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Credit Note No</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Detail</th>
<th>GST Amount</th>
<th>Credit Note Amount (Incl GST)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BRO00008</td>
<td>Ms BROWN</td>
<td>DFI0001575</td>
<td>21/05/20XX</td>
<td>Overseas Camp</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Family Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAM00001</td>
<td>Mr P &amp; Mrs S Campbell</td>
<td>DFI0001716</td>
<td>28/01/20XX</td>
<td>Uniform Sales</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DFI0001717</td>
<td>15/03/20XX</td>
<td>Overseas Camp</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DFI0001718</td>
<td>30/09/20XX</td>
<td>Adventure Playground</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DFI0001719</td>
<td>31/12/20XX</td>
<td>Voluntary Contributions</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Family Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAM00001</td>
<td>Mr S Sample</td>
<td>DFI0001729</td>
<td>15/03/20XX</td>
<td>Overseas Camp</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DFI0001730</td>
<td>01/08/20XX</td>
<td>Science Excursion</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DFI0001731</td>
<td>31/12/20XX</td>
<td>Voluntary Contributions</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DFI0001732</td>
<td>28/01/20XX</td>
<td>Uniform Sales</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Family Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMI00034</td>
<td>Ms L Smith</td>
<td>DFI0001744</td>
<td>15/03/20XX</td>
<td>Overseas Camp</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DFI0001745</td>
<td>01/08/20XX</td>
<td>Science Excursion</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DFI0001746</td>
<td>31/12/20XX</td>
<td>Voluntary Contributions</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DFI0001747</td>
<td>28/01/20XX</td>
<td>Uniform Sales</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Family Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOU00012</td>
<td>Mr A &amp; Mrs J Young</td>
<td>DFI0001781</td>
<td>28/01/20XX</td>
<td>Uniform Sales</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DFI0001782</td>
<td>15/03/20XX</td>
<td>Overseas Camp</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Family Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Grand total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

36. This report shows credit notes (usually refunds) given to families. This report is presented to the subcommittee as an internal control, to verify that credit note transactions are valid.
**Invoices Awaiting Payment – Detailed (CR21118)**

From creditor 2FORTHHERD to ZZZZZZFTC | From Sub-program 1301 to 9601 | From Program 1301 to 9601 | From Initiative 000 to 000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Invoice Number</th>
<th>Invoice Date</th>
<th>Invoice Due Date</th>
<th>PSW</th>
<th>Invoice GST Type</th>
<th>Invoice GST Amount</th>
<th>Outstanding GST Amount (incl GST)</th>
<th>Credit Note #</th>
<th>Credit GST Amount (incl GST)</th>
<th>WH Tax Amount</th>
<th>WH Tax Rate</th>
<th>WH Tax Type</th>
<th>Order #</th>
<th>GL Code</th>
<th>Sub-program</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>WOOLIES – WOOLWORTHS LTD 38</td>
<td>3115089</td>
<td>12/12/20XX</td>
<td>10/12/20XX</td>
<td>G14</td>
<td>13.80</td>
<td>13.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>3115089</td>
<td>12/12/20XX</td>
<td>10/12/20XX</td>
<td>G11</td>
<td>7.97</td>
<td>8768</td>
<td>8768</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>7.97</td>
<td>101.48</td>
<td>101.48</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

37. The program/s which has/have incurred the expenditure.
38. To whom payment is owed (for example, the creditor).
39. When payment is due.
40. The amount owing (before any payments have been made or credit notes applied).
41. Total amount owing.

Nett amount outstanding: 101.48
Total Nett Amount Outstanding for All Creditors: 101.48

---

**IMPROVING SCHOOL GOVERNANCE**

**FINANCE**

178
### General Ledger

#### Balance Sheet As at 31 December 20XX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accumulated Funds</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Last year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accumulated Funds</td>
<td>-854,208.86</td>
<td>-795,944.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Funds</td>
<td><strong>-854,208.86</strong></td>
<td><strong>795,944.35</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Represented by: Non Current Assets</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Last year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asset Clearing Account</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor Vehicles &gt;$5,000</td>
<td>42,920.71</td>
<td>42,920.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers/IT equip &gt;$5,000</td>
<td>146,979.70</td>
<td>159,160.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture and Fittings &gt;$5,000</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>13,675.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Equipment &gt;$5,000</td>
<td>5,400.00</td>
<td>5,400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Equipment &gt;$5,000</td>
<td>23,250.00</td>
<td>61,692.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Equip &gt;$5,000</td>
<td>21,060.91</td>
<td>21,060.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant &amp; Equipment &gt;$5,000</td>
<td>12,932.30</td>
<td>12,932.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Assets &gt;$5,000</td>
<td>12,888.00</td>
<td>12,888.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Non Current Assets</td>
<td><strong>265,431.62</strong></td>
<td><strong>329,730.30</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Assets</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Last year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Yield Investment Account</td>
<td>463,452.19</td>
<td>378,742.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official Account</td>
<td>10,851.51</td>
<td>12,763.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts Receivable Control</td>
<td>8,945.67</td>
<td>10,917.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundry Debtors</td>
<td>93,920.30</td>
<td>54,171.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GST Purchases (Reclaimable)</td>
<td>11,758.48</td>
<td>10,268.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Current Assets</td>
<td><strong>588,928.15</strong></td>
<td><strong>466,863.02</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total Assets                    | **854,359.77** | **796,593.32** |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Liabilities</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Last year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounts Payable Control</td>
<td>-101.48</td>
<td>-590.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GST on Sales</td>
<td>-49.43</td>
<td>-58.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Current Liabilities</td>
<td><strong>-150.91</strong></td>
<td><strong>-648.97</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non Current Liabilities</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Last year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Liabilities</td>
<td><strong>-150.91</strong></td>
<td><strong>-648.97</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Net Assets                      | **854,208.86** | **795,944.35** |

42. Accumulated funds: Equal to net assets. Should always be a negative number.
43. Total non-current assets: this is the purchase cost of all equipment, and furniture, for items valued over $5,000.
44. Amount invested to earn interest.
45. Money held to pay bills over the next few months.
46. Total current assets: total amount of cash held + money owed to the school.
47. Total assets: what the school owns.
49. Net assets: amount the school owns less the amount it owes. Should always be a positive number.
## Cancelled Receipts Report From 01/01/20XX to 31/12/20XX

### From Bank Account: 10001 | To Bank Account: 10002

#### From Bank Account: 10001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Receipt Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>GL code</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Sub-Program</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29/03/20XX</td>
<td>GLP0002069</td>
<td>#CAN Westpac IA238375</td>
<td>73001</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>9499</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>481.75</td>
<td>481.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/08/20XX</td>
<td>GLP0002115</td>
<td>#CAN Rev Batch 18029</td>
<td>73001</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>9499</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>48,175.00</td>
<td>48,175.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Cancellations for Bank Account 10001 HYIA**

48,656.75

#### From Bank Account: 10002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Receipt Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>GL code</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Sub-Program</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30/01/20XX</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mr &amp; Mrs SMITH #CAN Refund of overpayment</td>
<td>73001</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>4262</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>150.00</td>
<td>150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/06/20XX</td>
<td></td>
<td>#CAN #Camps/Excursions/Activities</td>
<td>74301</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>9499</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>5,203.04</td>
<td>5,203.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/08/20XX</td>
<td></td>
<td>#CAN #Duplication of Batch</td>
<td>73001</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>4262</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/08/20XX</td>
<td></td>
<td>#CAN #Duplication of Batch</td>
<td>73001</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>4262</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/11/20XX</td>
<td></td>
<td>#CAN #Incorrect Bank Account</td>
<td>73001</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>9499</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Unallocated Cancellations for 30/01/20XX**

150.00

**Total Unallocated Cancellations for 30/06/20XX**

5,203.04

**Total Unallocated Cancellations for 15/08/20XX**

30,000

**Total Unallocated Cancellations for 30/11/20XX**

500,000

**Total Cancellations for Bank Account 10002 Official Account**

535,353.04

---

50. This report shows each cancelled receipt for the year to date. This report is presented to the subcommittee as an internal control, to verify that cancelled transactions are valid.
### Cancelled Payments Report From 01/01/20XX to 31/12/20XX

**From Bank Account: 10001 | To Bank Account: 10002**

#### From Bank Account: 10001 (High Yield)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Cheque Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>GL code</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Sub-Program</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09/08/20XX</td>
<td>GLP543845</td>
<td>#CAN #REV Batch 18707</td>
<td>89301</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>9499</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>48,175.00</td>
<td>48,175.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total Cancellations for 09/08/20XX**

| Total cancellations Bank Account 10001 High Yield | 48,175.00  |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Cheque Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>GL code</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Sub-Program</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25/05/20XX</td>
<td>CRP00004141</td>
<td>#CAN# TRUenergy Pty Ltd – Overpmt – Cheq 12318 (1500.64)</td>
<td>205.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>205.82</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total Cancellations for 25/05/20XX**

| Total cancellations Bank Account 10001 Official Account | 205.82     |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Cheque Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>GL code</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Sub-Program</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28/07/20XX</td>
<td>CRP00004297</td>
<td>#CAN# Calculated Industries – Reverse Payment Cheque 12328</td>
<td>9,000.00</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CRP00004298</td>
<td>#CAN# Nice Neighbours Systems Group Pty Ltd – CRP0004283 Reversed</td>
<td>300.00</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>300.00</td>
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</table>

**Total Cancellations for 28/07/20XX**

| Total cancellations Bank Account 10002 Official Account | 9,300.00   |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Cheque Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>GL code</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Sub-Program</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Unallocated Cancellations for the period**

| Total Cancellations for Bank Account 10002 Official Account | 9,505.82   |

---

51. This report shows each cancelled payment for the year to date. This report is presented to the subcommittee as an internal control, to verify that cancelled transactions are valid.
Budgeting:
excerpt from School Strategic Plan

A primary school’s strategic plan includes these goals:
• to improve learning outcomes for all students in literacy and numeracy
• to ensure that students feel safe, secure and stimulated in their learning
• to ensure smooth transitions and learning pathways for all students.

Some of the key improvement strategies to achieve these goals are:
• enhancing teaching practice across the school
• embedding the use of information technology to drive learning across the curriculum
• developing facilities and learning spaces to support effective teaching and learning
• developing a whole school approach to student management.

School budget submissions
The following submissions are among the program budgets submitted to the finance subcommittee for review against the school’s strategic priorities.

PROGRAM BUDGET 20XX
PROGRAM TITLE: MATHEMATICS
BUDGET ALLOCATION: $5,550

Objectives:
• to maintain and update mathematics resources and equipment across the school
• to support teacher professional learning to guide the implementation of an effective school-wide numeracy teaching program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>86101</td>
<td>Non-Curriculum Consumables</td>
<td>$350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86407</td>
<td>Plant and Equipment &lt;$5,000</td>
<td>$4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86910</td>
<td>Conferences/ Courses/ Seminars</td>
<td>$700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PROGRAM BUDGET 20XX
PROGRAM TITLE: ADMINISTRATION SERVICES
BUDGET ALLOCATION: $35,000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80081</td>
<td>WorkCover</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86101</td>
<td>Non-Curriculum Consumables</td>
<td>$22,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86301</td>
<td>Postage</td>
<td>$750</td>
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<tr>
<td>86802</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86407</td>
<td>Plant and Equipment</td>
<td>$4,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86402</td>
<td>Repairs/Maintenance</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86910</td>
<td>Conferences/Courses</td>
<td>$800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86920</td>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PROGRAM BUDGET 20XX
PROGRAM TITLE: LITERACY
BUDGET ALLOCATION: $12,700

Objectives:
- continued support for the literacy program, with emphasis on supplementing guided reading resources
- provision of classroom libraries for all classrooms
- subsidy of the program for literacy events for the school such as author visits during the Premiers’ Literacy Challenge
- provision of professional learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>86101</td>
<td>Non-Curriculum Consumables</td>
<td>$700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86102</td>
<td>Photocopying</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86104</td>
<td>Curriculum Consumables</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>86407</td>
<td>Plant and Equipment</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86910</td>
<td>Conferences/Courses</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PROGRAM BUDGET 20XX
PROGRAM TITLE: IT (INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY)
BUDGET ALLOCATION: $24,500

Objectives:
- to renew and replace equipment
- to give all students access to up-to-date technology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>86403</td>
<td>Leased Equipment</td>
<td>$17,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86407</td>
<td>Plant and Equipment</td>
<td>$4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89204</td>
<td>Service provider</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Imagine that you are a councillor on the finance subcommittee for this school and consider:

a) which budget submissions would you see as a priority for the coming year’s budget?

b) what questions would you have for the principal?

c) what information would you need to be able to evaluate these submissions?
Handout B1

Financial reports:
sample annual sub-program budget report

REVENUE

General Ledger
Annual Sub-Program Budget Report from Program 1001 to 9635
Recurrent and Capital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub Prog.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Last year actual</th>
<th>Last year budget</th>
<th>Annual budget</th>
<th>YTD received</th>
<th>% Budget received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1254</td>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4051</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>2,775</td>
<td>2,775</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4152</td>
<td>Sensory</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4200</td>
<td>Health and Physical Education</td>
<td>3,273</td>
<td>3,273</td>
<td>8,720</td>
<td>8,720</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4266</td>
<td>Swimming – Whole School</td>
<td>1,980</td>
<td>1,980</td>
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<td>-50</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Inclusive Education</td>
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<td>5254</td>
<td>S.W.P.B.S.</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>5551</td>
<td>Occupational Therapist</td>
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<td>6050</td>
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<td>257</td>
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<tr>
<td>6201</td>
<td>Maintenance &amp; Minor Works</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6552</td>
<td>BLACK OEC Grounds</td>
<td>52,061</td>
<td>52,061</td>
<td>34,024</td>
<td>41,110</td>
<td>120.82</td>
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<tr>
<td>6553</td>
<td>Grounds</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22,570</td>
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<tr>
<td>7001</td>
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<td>75</td>
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<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
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<tr>
<td>7051</td>
<td>Profess Develop Admin</td>
<td>1,891</td>
<td>1,891</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>7058</td>
<td>BLACK OEC – Administration</td>
<td>207,009</td>
<td>207,009</td>
<td>164,300</td>
<td>175,323</td>
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<tr>
<td>7302</td>
<td>Uniform Sales – New</td>
<td>3,894</td>
<td>1,611</td>
<td>1,837</td>
<td>4,696</td>
<td>255.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>7350</td>
<td>Staff Uniforms</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8321</td>
<td>Camp – Melbourne Discovery</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8322</td>
<td>Camp – Garfield</td>
<td>1,355</td>
<td>1,586</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1,345</td>
<td>269.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8323</td>
<td>Camp – Alpine Ride</td>
<td>1,680</td>
<td>3,360</td>
<td>979</td>
<td>929</td>
<td>94.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8324</td>
<td>Camp – City Graduates</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub Prog.</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Last year actual</td>
<td>Last year budget</td>
<td>Annual budget</td>
<td>YTD</td>
<td>% Budget received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8325</td>
<td>Camp – Phillip Island</td>
<td>1,650</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-150</td>
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<tr>
<td>8326</td>
<td>Camp – Super Ride</td>
<td>3,190</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>580</td>
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<tr>
<td>8327</td>
<td>Camp – Blackwood Outdoor Ed Ctre</td>
<td>2,400</td>
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<td>2,238</td>
<td>4,117</td>
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<tr>
<td>8328</td>
<td>Camp – Queensland</td>
<td>2,255</td>
<td>2,255</td>
<td>6,600</td>
<td>5,598</td>
<td>84.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8346</td>
<td>Camp Wilsons Prom</td>
<td>1,614</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>8401</td>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>9,336</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7,372</td>
<td>6,719</td>
<td>91.14</td>
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<tr>
<td>8420</td>
<td>Riding For The Disabled</td>
<td>1,739</td>
<td>1,110</td>
<td>1,296</td>
<td>1,149</td>
<td>88.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8421</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>970</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>89.47</td>
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<tr>
<td>8426</td>
<td>Bowling – Room 12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>542</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8520</td>
<td>Graduation</td>
<td>3,372</td>
<td>3,162</td>
<td>4,810</td>
<td>4,810</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8521</td>
<td>Debutante Ball 2018</td>
<td>9,331</td>
<td>9,159</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>8522</td>
<td>School Concert</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>4,896</td>
<td>4,986</td>
<td>1,604</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8601</td>
<td>Casual Relief Teachers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>101.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8650</td>
<td>Casual Relief Teacher Asst</td>
<td>30,791</td>
<td>30,791</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8750</td>
<td>Parents Club</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8751</td>
<td>Peninsula Principals Con 2020</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>44,469</td>
<td>45,119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8955</td>
<td>Kefford Grant – School</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9051</td>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>4,449</td>
<td>4,449</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9301</td>
<td>Book Club</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>609</td>
<td>609</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9362</td>
<td>Staff Functions</td>
<td>1,716</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3,730</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9367</td>
<td>Work Preparation Lunches</td>
<td>3,039</td>
<td>2,295</td>
<td>2,511</td>
<td>2,511</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9370</td>
<td>Staff Association</td>
<td>1,423</td>
<td>898</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>89.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9374</td>
<td>2018 Payments Pd 2019</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9499</td>
<td>Revenue Control</td>
<td>729,681</td>
<td>695,003</td>
<td>322,070</td>
<td>1,015,778</td>
<td>315.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,115,107</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,045,362</strong></td>
<td><strong>643,789</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,407,179</strong></td>
<td><strong>218.58</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Handout B1

## Financial reports:
sample annual sub-program budget report

### EXPENDITURE

**General Ledger**

*Annual Sub-Program Budget Report from Program 100 to 960 Recurrent & Capital*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub Prog. Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Last year actual</th>
<th>Last year budget</th>
<th>Annual budget</th>
<th>YTD Budget expended</th>
<th>% Budget standing committed Orders</th>
<th>Un-committed Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1254</td>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>66,569</td>
<td>90,331</td>
<td>56,279</td>
<td>47,504</td>
<td>84.40</td>
<td>8,775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4003</td>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>7,395</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>4,964</td>
<td>49.63</td>
<td>5,036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4009</td>
<td>Music Performance</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4050</td>
<td>Art/craft</td>
<td>3,073</td>
<td>3,300</td>
<td>3,300</td>
<td>2,680</td>
<td>81.20</td>
<td>620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4051</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>3,163</td>
<td>4,775</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,124</td>
<td>112.36</td>
<td>-124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4151</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>3,038</td>
<td>3,300</td>
<td>5,359</td>
<td>4,008</td>
<td>74.79</td>
<td>1,351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4152</td>
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**Expenditure Totals**

1,496,446 1,677,334 1,600,546 1,246,641 77.88 49,995 303,967
Financial reports: questions

Use the annual sub-program budget report provided to answer these questions:

a) how much revenue have the Health and Physical Education and the Book Club sub-programs each earned so far this year?

b) how does revenue for each of these two programs compare to this year’s budget?

c) how does revenue for each of these two programs compare to what was earned last year?

d) how much has been spent so far this year by the Health and Physical Education sub-program?

e) what questions would you ask the principal about both of these sub-programs?

f) what other questions would you have about the financial performance of this school?
## Handout C1
### Internal controls: quiz

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<th>Statement</th>
<th>Is this statement true or false?</th>
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<td>1. If there is no one else available, it is okay for the person who approved the order of goods to record them as received in the finance system.</td>
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<td>2. Even though it is known that 10 purchases will be required for a product (valued at $3,000 each), it is okay for one written quote to be sought on each occasion.</td>
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<td>3. Both the finance subcommittee and the school council are responsible for reviewing the financial reports.</td>
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<td>4. An annual stocktake of all assets on the asset register must be conducted.</td>
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<td>5. It is okay for the chair of the finance subcommittee to be the school Business Manager, as long as they are not an employee of the Department.</td>
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<td>6. The school council approves a budget every three years.</td>
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<td>7. All payments require two signatories: the principal and a nominated councillor.</td>
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<td>8. A school councillor who has a question about compliance with an internal control can't ask the question unless they are the school council chair.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Handout C2
Internal controls: answer sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Is this statement true or false?</th>
<th>Is this statement true or false?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. If there is no one else available, it is okay for the person who approved the order of goods to record them as received in the finance system.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>Separating the approval and receipt of goods or services is an important internal control for purchasing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Even though it is known that 10 purchases will be required for a product (valued at $3,000 each), it is okay for one written quote to be sought on each occasion.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>The procurement process should take the total cost of goods and services into account. This purchase should therefore consider the total value as $30,000 (i.e. 10 purchases of $3,000 each) and seek three written quotes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Both the finance subcommittee and the school council are responsible for reviewing the financial reports.</td>
<td>True</td>
<td>Most school councils have a finance subcommittee. Both the finance subcommittee (where it exists) and school council review financial reports, and the finance subcommittee recommends action to be taken to the council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. An annual stocktake of all assets on the asset register must be conducted.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>In line with annual reporting of the school’s financial accounts, a stocktake of assets must be conducted once every two years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. It is okay for the chair of the finance subcommittee to be the school Business Manager, as long as they are not an employee of the Department.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>The chair of the finance subcommittee cannot be the Business Manager.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The school council approves a budget every three years.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>Council approves the budget before the start of each new year. An external auditor must audit the school’s financial statements at least once every four years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. All payments require two signatories: the principal and a nominated councillor.</td>
<td>True</td>
<td>Payments, including those made online, must be approved by two signatories. The Business Manager cannot be a signatory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. A school councillor who has a question about compliance with an internal control can’t ask the question unless they are the school council chair.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>Council is responsible for ensuring that the school maintains and monitors a system of internal controls. All councillors can and should ask questions when they have them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Handout D

Financial reports: reports typically provided to finance subcommittee

- GL21150 – Operating Statement (detail)
- GL21157 – Annual Sub-program Budget
- Bank reconciliation
- GL210006 – Journal Report
- GL21151 – Cash Flow Statement
- CR21118 – Invoices Awaiting Payment
- GL21161 – Balance Sheet
- GL21005 – Cancelled Payments
- GL21004 – Cancelled Receipts
- GL21002 – Cash Receipts Report
- GL21003 – Cash Payments Report
- GL21152 – Bank Account Movements Details
- Purchasing Card Statements (if applicable)
- School Budget Management Report.

Financial reports provided to council

- Operating Statement (detail)
- Balance Sheet.

Reviewing reports

Operating statement (detail)

This report:
- compares actual to budgeted revenue and expenditure by category for the whole school for the month and year to date
- calculates variances (difference between actual and budget).

Review this report to:
- compare actual financial result (the net operating surplus or deficit) to the budget for the month and year to date. If there are significant variations the principal may advise action to take. The finance subcommittee evaluates how the action proposed would affect the school’s operations and School Strategic Plan.

Annual program budget

This report:
- compares year to date actual revenue and expenditure to the full year budget and shows last year’s actual and budgeted revenue and expenditure, for whole programs. Programs include trading operations, and curriculum programs.

Review this report to:
- compare actual financial result for each program with the budget. If there are significant variations the principal may advise on action to take. The finance subcommittee evaluates how the action proposed would affect the school’s operations and School Strategic Plan.
Annual sub-program budget

This report:
• compares year to date actual revenue and expenditure to the full year budget and shows last year’s actual and budgeted revenue and expenditure, for individual sub-programs.

Review this report to:
• compare actual financial results for each sub-program with the budget. If there are significant variations the principal may advise on action to take. The finance subcommittee evaluates how the action proposed would affect the school’s operations and School Strategic Plan.

Bank reconciliation

This report:
• matches the bank statement to the school’s banking records and shows and explains any variance
• shows cheques issued but not yet presented and funds received by the school but not yet banked.

Review this report to:
• ask questions to understand the reconciliation and any issues arising.

Journal

This report:
• lists transactions entered into the finance system – shows some of the data on which other reports are based.

Review this report to:
• ask questions about any transactions in the report. Finance subcommittee members are not expected to understand all the transactions in the journal report: it is provided in the spirit of full transparency.

Cash flow statement

This report:
• shows the inflow and outflow of cash and the closing balance for each of the school’s bank accounts.

Review this report to:
• to monitor whether the school has enough cash to pay its liabilities as they fall due. The principal or Business Manager will provide this advice.

Sundry debtor credit notes

This report:
• gives details of credit notes generated for specified debtors.

Review this report to:
• verify that credit note transactions are valid: this is an internal control.

Family credit notes

This report:
• gives details of credit notes issued for families.

Review this report to:
• verify that credit note transactions are valid: this is an internal control.
Invoices awaiting payment

This report:
• lists invoices received but not yet paid.

Review this report to:
• approve invoices for payment.

Balance sheet

This report:
• lists the value of the school’s assets and liabilities at a point in time.

Review this report to:
• ask questions about any items not understood and any items which have changed greatly since previous report
• monitor whether current assets are greater than current liabilities – indicates that the school should be able to pay its debts
• monitor whether there is enough money in the official bank account to pay debts and whether the school is collecting money owed to it
• monitor whether there is too much money in the official account, so that surplus funds can be invested in the high yield investment account.

Investment register

The Central Banking System (CBS) precludes schools from investing funds in the form of term deposits and/or at call investment accounts. Therefore, schools are no longer required to maintain an investment register or policy.

Cancelled payments

This report:
• lists cancelled cheques.

Review this report to:
• verify that cancelled payments are valid; this is an internal control.

Cancelled receipts

This report:
• lists cancelled receipts.

Review this report to:
• verify that cancelled receipts are valid; this is an internal control.
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4.0 Introduction

Goal

The goal of this module is for school councillors to understand the role of school councils in the development, review and approval of local school policies.

Overview

The vast majority of policies that schools are required to comply with are Department policies, available on the Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) at www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal.

A number of local school policies will be required by law, including the Minimum Standards for School Registration or by the Department. Where the topics covered by these local policies fall within the scope of the functions and responsibilities of a school council, the council will have a role in the development, review and approval of these policies. A council may also develop other policies on topics that are within the scope of their functions and responsibilities to address local needs.

While principals are responsible for developing, reviewing and approving most day-to-day operational policies and procedures in schools, the principal may choose to consult with or seek school council approval of these policies, even where there is no legal or other requirement to do so.

Many policies are published on school websites and are made available to the school community as a means to:
- communicate important information
- clarify functions and responsibilities
- manage change
- promote consistency of practice
- meet legal or Department requirements
- ensure decision-making is transparent.

Policy development offers council the opportunity to engage with the school community on matters of importance to the community.

Councils should regularly review their policies to ensure that they remain relevant and current. As a result of this review, they may decide to update a policy, consolidate a number of policies into a single policy or decide that a particular policy is no longer required. A limited number of key policies are preferable to many.
School Policy Templates Portal

The School Policy Templates Portal (login required) contains templates of all the local policies schools and school councils are required to have by law or by Department policy, as well as templates for policies that are not mandatory, but which schools or school councils may wish to adopt. The School Policy Templates Portal also provides information about each policy topic, including:

- the legal basis for the topic
- whether or not school council needs to approve the policy
- recommended consultation
- the required or recommended review cycles
- implementation tips.

Department staff and school council presidents can access the portal on the Department’s intranet site and can share any relevant information or documents with other school council members as required.

The following table shows what the principal and school leadership team, and the school council are responsible for in terms of developing and approving policies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principal ...</th>
<th>The school council...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>advises council about the requirement for certain local school policies to meet Department policy or legislation and guidelines</td>
<td>responds to the advice for certain local policies on issues within its powers and functions; for example, the school council is the legal entity (approved provider) under the Education and Care Services National Law for outside school hours care (OSHC) where the school council manages the OSHC service. The council is responsible for ensuring the service meets minimum requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contributes to policy development, review and approval as a member of council and also as the principal</td>
<td>develops policy in accordance with any relevant Department policy requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>develops, reviews and applies policy in accordance with the Victorian Public Sector Values</td>
<td>develops, reviews and applies policy in accordance with the Victorian Public Sector Values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consults with the school community as required</td>
<td>consults with the school community as required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implements policy in conjunction with staff and other relevant professionals</td>
<td>regularly reviews existing policies which fall within its functions and responsibilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1 Determining the need for policy

Why is this topic important?

Documented policies are the means by which the school and school council communicate their position on a particular topic.

Policies are important tools that reflect the school’s values and/or support the school’s compliance with legal and Department requirement’s, such as the Minimum Standards for School Registration.

**Policies are important for good governance because they provide the means for the school council to:**
- set out the school’s position on certain topics
- comply with Department and legal requirements expected of schools
- engage with and inform the school community on matters of importance to the school.

Effective policies facilitate action, and are written in clear, concise language. The policies are well communicated to relevant members of the school community and where applicable take into account the views of the school community. They assist school councils to influence actions and behaviours on the school’s improvement journey.

**On completing this unit, school councillors should understand:**
- the reasons why the school council might need a policy on a particular topic
- which policies councils must develop
- that the principal and staff establish policies and procedures for school operational matters or other matters falling outside the scope of the functions and responsibilities of school councils.
Why the school council develops policy

A school council will develop a policy because the topic falls within the scope of school council functions and responsibilities and:

- Department policy, the Minimum Standards for School Registration or other legislation requires a school to have a local policy on that a particular topic, or
- council decides to issue guidance about an aspect of how the School Strategic Plan is to be implemented, where this is not in conflict with or overlapping with any whole-of-Department policies
- council decides to set out the school's position on a specific topic, where this is not in conflict with or overlapping with any whole-of-Department policies.

Department requirements

The Department requires schools to have policies about certain topics, some of which are the responsibility of council to develop or approve, for example those included in the following table.

The requirement may be prescribed through the Minimum Standards for School Registration, legislation or the Department's policies.
Examples of polices to be developed, reviewed and/or approved by school council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student dress code</td>
<td>School councils have the authority to develop and approve dress codes for their students. The development of, or amendment to, a dress code is the responsibility of the school council in consultation with its school community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent payments</td>
<td>School councils must adopt the Department’s parent payments policy, using the Department’s template. This outlines key school requirements. School councils must also outline school-level parent payment arrangements, addressing the requirements listed in the template, and ensuring these are compliant with the Department’s parent payments policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Safe Standards</td>
<td>School councils are responsible for approving a Child Safety Policy or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Child Safety Code of Conduct, in accordance with Ministerial Order 870 – Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools, to the extent it applies to school council employees and members, unless delegated to the principal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>School councils are responsible for approving a range of finance policies such as: Cash handling, Electronic funds management, Petty cash and School purchasing card.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Investments

Schools are no longer permitted to establish new term deposits or extend existing term deposits. All term deposits must be rolled into the Centralised Banking System (CBS) linked High Yield investment account upon maturity.

Schools should retain their current investment policy and register until all investment accounts have been transferred to the Centralised Banking System. Once school investments have been transferred the school and school council is no longer required to maintain an investment policy or register.

Typically, school councils also develop, or are consulted on, policies on a small number of other topics common to most schools, such as:

- fundraising
- canteen and other school food services
- school philosophy and statement of values
- use of social media
- visitors to schools
- emergency management plan for OSHC and kindergarten programs.

In developing all policies school councils must refer to Department policies and guidelines to ensure locally developed policies are consistent with them.

All Department policies are available on the Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) for schools on the Department’s website www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal. PAL is a public facing website that provides Victorian schools and school councils with quick and easy access to all Department policy and related operational guidance and resource.

The School Policy Templates Portal is also an important and useful resource for schools and school councils and includes information and templates for the policies school councils are required to develop and approve, as well as other policies and procedures developed by the school. Schools and school councils may use the templates on the School Policy Templates Portal when they need to develop or review a local school policy. The link for this site can also be found under the ‘Resources and links’ section. A Department login is required to access the Policy Template Portal.
Outside School Hours Care

Where a school has an education and care service, such as an outside school hours care (OSHC) or kindergarten service, there are policies required under the National Quality Framework (NQF) for the service to be compliant.

For a school council managed OSHC service, the service’s policies will need to be developed and reviewed as part of the policy cycle.

For a third party provided OSHC service, it is important that relevant policy information is shared between the school and the service to support quality provision, for example: the anaphylaxis management policy, child safety policy, and emergency management plan. The third-party provider should report regularly to school council as specified in the requirements of the licence agreement.

The NQF provides a national approach to the regulation and quality assessment of early childhood education and care services, which includes OSHC and kindergarten. The NQF includes:

- the National Law and National Regulations (the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011)
- the National Quality Standard
- the assessment and rating process
- national approved learning framework – My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Aged Care in Australia and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework.

In Victoria, the Quality Assessment and Regulation Division (QARD) is responsible for regulating OSHC and kindergarten services.

Other policy topics

From time to time, the school council or principal might identify the need for the school to develop a policy about a school or community issue, for example, a SunSmart policy or a policy on dogs on school grounds. Most often, this will arise from the need to set out the school’s position in relation to a specific topic. For matters outside the scope and functions of school councils, the principal can still choose, and is strongly encouraged, to seek the views of the school council and the broader school community where appropriate to inform any new or changed policy.

Such an approach can be useful to:

- promote fairness, consistency and transparency across the school
- provide the means to engage the community in achieving an agreed approach in response to a specific topic
- manage or prevent controversy
- inform the school community about the school’s position in relation to a particular matter.

Depending on the topic, the Department may have issued advice, which must be used as a guide for policy development by the school.
Minimum Standards for School Registration

The Annual Report to the school community is required to be endorsed by school council and noted in the meeting minutes. The principal and the school council president are required to attest that the school has met the minimum standards for registration in the Annual Report. The attestation is made in the Strategic Planning Online Tool (SPOT).

Schools must have the following policies and procedures in place to meet the minimum standards for school registration requirements. Note: not all the policies listed below are the responsibility of school council to develop as many are operational, or otherwise outside the scope of the powers and functions of school council:

- School philosophy policy or statement
- Complaints policy
- Student enrolment policy: for Specialist and specific purpose schools only
- Curriculum framework policy, plan or statement
- Student engagement policy: sometimes called Student wellbeing and engagement policy or Student engagement and inclusion policy
- Bullying and harassment policy and procedures, including cyber bullying. This can be included in the Student engagement policy or can be a standalone document
- Supervision policy
- Duty of care policy
- Camps and excursions policy and procedures: to cover requirements relating to offsite supervision, and ensuring safety of students learning with external providers
- Visitors policy, including the Child Safe Standards screening requirements
- Administration of medication policy and care arrangements for ill students: for example, Medication policy, First aid policy and procedures
- Anaphylaxis management policy and procedures
- Internet use policy: for example, Digital Learning policy
- Emergency Management Plan – although consultation with school council is not required for this policy as it is operational, principals may choose to present it to school council for noting. Also, principals and school councils should know if the school is listed on the Bushfire At-Risk Register (BARR)
- Working with Children Clearances: for employees, consistent with whole-of-Department requirements and covered, for example, in Visitors and Volunteers policies at the local level
- Procedures to maintain staff registers: for example, Working with Children Clearances, First aid policy and procedures and Victorian Institute of Teaching registration
- Policies and procedures to support compliance with the Child Safe Standards, including:
  - Child Safety Policy/Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
  - Child Safety Code of Conduct
  - Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
  - Child Safety Risk Assessment Register or another document that demonstrates that the school assesses, monitors and evaluates risk.

The minimum standards also require schools to have evidence on how they communicate policies and procedures relating to:

- the care, safety and welfare of students
- the school's policies relating to student engagement, behaviour and discipline
- the school's Statement of Philosophy/Statement of Values and School Philosophy.

While evidence of this can be shown in a variety of ways, some schools and school councils choose to have a Communications policy or register outlining how they communicate each policy.
Guidance about implementing the School Strategic Plan

The School Strategic Plan (SSP) sets out the school’s strategic direction for the following four years and drives the school’s programs and processes.

The strategic plan’s goals and targets set a clear course of action for the school, giving the school community a clear sense of the learning outcomes the school is striving to achieve, how they intend to achieve them and how they will know when they have been successful.

School council can be consulted and included in the development of a policy about a particular topic to provide guidance about how the school will meet its goals and targets. For example, the school principal, leadership team and council could develop a policy to set out the school’s expectations about environmental sustainability and how those expectations support student learning, as part of the SSP.

Further information on strategic planning can be found in the Improving School Governance (ISG) module – Strategic Planning.
Procedural or operational matters

As noted earlier in this module, councils develop policies for particular reasons, and so it is important that they also understand in which areas a policy is not required.

Procedural or operational matters at the school are managed by the principal and staff. The Department’s Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) for schools contains policies, guidelines and advice about school operations such as arrangements for:

- school hours and term dates
- health support planning
- child safety
- managing family disputes
- attendance
- enrolment
- excursions
- a vast number of other topics relevant to school operations.

The principal and staff are responsible for implementing Department policies and acting in accordance with relevant policies, guidelines and procedures set by the Department, where applicable.

Policies direct school operational matters, however most routine matters are best dealt with through procedures and do not require a policy. It is also very important to check if the PAL already sets a policy that schools are required to follow. The school can simply follow the policy as it applies across government schools, rather than developing a local policy which may be inconsistent with the Department’s policy and procedures.
Do we need a policy?

As noted earlier in this module, councils develop policies for particular reasons, and so it is important that they also understand in which areas a policy is not required.

Policies can be an important tool in directing and communicating school operational matters. However, many routine matters do not necessarily need to be recorded in a document or are otherwise best dealt with through procedures. It is also very important to check if the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) for schools already sets a policy that schools are required to follow. The school can simply follow the Department’s policy on the matter, rather than developing a local policy which can quickly become inconsistent with the Department’s policy and procedures.

Generally, a school council should only develop a local school policy when the topic falls within the scope of their powers and functions and one or more of the following apply:

- the Department/legislation requires schools to have a local policy on the topic
- the policy will assist in implementing an aspect of the strategic plan
- the policy will inform the community of the school’s position on a particular issue, in the absence of any other Department policy or guidance that applies to all Victorian government schools
- the school is required to develop a policy for school registration requirements?

This flow chart shows the sequence of questions to ask, and steps to take, to determine whether it is the council’s responsibility to develop the policy on a particular topic.
4.2 Developing and reviewing policy

Why is this topic important?

The process of developing and reviewing policy provides the opportunity for a school council to engage with the school community about matters of importance to the school. It demonstrates council’s commitment to representing the views of the community and consulting widely where appropriate.

On completing this unit, school councillors should:
- understand what is usually in a policy
- understand the characteristics of a good policy
- be able to contribute to developing or reviewing a policy and determine the level of consultation required within this process.
What is in a policy?

The table below suggests what might be included in a policy. When developing policies, in the first instance, the council must refer to Department policies, guidelines and templates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Purpose or rationale        | • briefly explains why the policy is required  
                              • may also explain the educational, environmental, legal, regulatory or other factors that led to the development of the policy                                                                                               |
| Scope                       | • states who the policy applies to (for example, to school staff, school staff and students, all members of the school community)                                                                                                                                   |
| Policy (main details of the policy) | • provides information relevant to understanding the policy  
                              • provides the school’s position on the topic such as the broad guidelines about the actions/information required to implement the policy and where appropriate, exemptions and discretion  
                              • may also set out differing requirements for various groups within the school community: students, staff or parents/guardians  
                              • outlines who will be responsible for various parts of the implementation process                                                                                                                |
| Review cycle                | • explains when the policy will next be reviewed                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Definitions                 | • only included if the use of words or concepts unfamiliar to the general public is unavoidable                                                                                                                                                                          |
| References (further information and resources) | • references to relevant resources, documents, Department policy or legislation are included with extracts of relevant text where appropriate  
                              • only include if the policy cannot be adequately understood and implemented without this additional information.                                                                                       |
Policy characteristics

A school policy should be accessible to the school community where it applies to more than just staff, and:

- be consistent with legislation
- be consistent with Department policy, values and guidelines
- focus on a single topic
- be based on a clear statement of purpose
- reflect the views of the school community where possible and appropriate
- clearly indicate what actions are required by relevant groups within the school community
- acknowledge and take account of the rights of relevant groups where relevant and appropriate
- contain guidelines for how the stated purpose will be achieved
- indicate what the school expects of those who are subject to the policy
- be written in a style that can be easily understood by the general public
- outline a proposed date for review
- may need to be provided in a range of community languages.
Developing a policy

Approaches to developing school policies will vary according to the topic, the size of the school and the school council’s committee structures.

For example, a policy might be developed:
- by the council itself, where the council considers it is appropriately informed
- by an existing subcommittee of the council which may be delegated this responsibility, such as a policy already being handled by that subcommittee
- by a working party established for the purpose of developing the policy, such as a policy that needs considerable research, consultation and small group discussion.

From a governance perspective, the most important thing is that councillors consider the impact on all stakeholders when developing or changing a policy. This does not mean that everyone in the school community needs to be consulted about every policy as it is being developed. Council should determine when consultation with stakeholders is appropriate.

The Department’s School Policy Templates Portal, accessible to school staff and school council presidents, includes recommendations and requirements in relation to the level of consultation required for each policy topic.
To develop a policy, a council typically takes the following steps.

1. The issue or topic to be addressed by the policy, and the reason for the policy, is identified. For example, it might be a requirement of the Department, or a local issue that requires clarification or guidelines to inform or influence action by the school. The School Policy Templates Portal available on the Department’s intranet is a good starting point.

2. The purpose or rationale for the policy is identified.

3. The policy falls within the scope of the council’s powers and functions.

4. The council decides whether a special working party needs to be established for the purpose of developing the policy or whether the council itself, or an existing subcommittee of the council, will develop the policy.

5. If council considers it appropriate, the school community is consulted about some or all aspects of the policy. Consultative activity may include:
   - consultations through a community meeting or through focus groups
   - distributing a survey to gather views about the topic to determine key points that need clarification and actions which should occur in the implementation of the policy
   - distributing a draft policy via the school newsletter for comment.

6. The policy, including the policy statement, action guidelines and monitoring, reporting and review arrangements, is drafted.

7. If council considers it appropriate, feedback on the draft policy is sought from those previously consulted.

8. Any feedback is considered, and the policy finalised and recommended to council for approval.

9. Council approves as amended or does not approve the draft policy.

10. If council approves a policy, the policy should be published on the school’s website or other communication channels for parents/carers or be available in hard copy upon request to the school.
The flow chart below shows the steps to take if school council decided to develop a new policy.

Depending on the complexity of the policy and the extent of council agreement with it, the development process may follow each step in this flow chart, or take a different sequence.

For example, if the topic or issue is complex, consultations might show the need for further research, which may require further consultation.

If it is contentious, it may need to go through several drafts, each of which council may decide to circulate for feedback.
Reviewing a policy

Councils should regularly review policies on a cyclic basis to ensure that the school remains compliant with relevant legislation and the Department’s requirements, and to ensure that each policy remains relevant and valid, for example: all finance policies are to be reviewed annually.

As part of this review process, a council may decide to develop a new policy, update a policy, combine a number of policies into a single policy or withdraw a policy that is no longer required.

To ensure it reviews policies regularly, council are encourage to maintain a register of its existing policies noting the date that each policy was approved and the scheduled date to review it. At the beginning of each new council term, school council may consider developing an annual work plan that includes policies to be reviewed that year and a timeline to schedule the work.

As with the policy development process, and depending on the policy topic, the size of the school and the structure of the school council, a review might be conducted by the council as a whole or by an existing subcommittee or a subcommittee established for the purpose of reviewing a particular policy.

Similarly, depending on the policy topic, the review process may be an internal process involving the school council members and a subcommittee. Alternatively, an extensive review may be undertaken involving a formal consultation process with stakeholders including parents, families, staff and students.

Aside from the regular cycle of review, a policy may need to be reviewed where the circumstances that led to the original policy being established have changed. Reasons for policy review may include:

- the policy is no longer followed as a matter of course during school operations
- the policy is no longer effective or having the desired impact
- individuals or groups within the school community view elements of the policy as contentious
- new issues that have arisen that the policy needs to address
- changes to Department policy or legislation make the existing policy redundant or non-compliant.
The flow chart below shows the steps in reviewing a policy.

1. Policy is scheduled for review
2. Is the policy still required in its current form? (Yes/No)
3. Do we need to consult with the school community? (Yes/No)
4. Will the council review the policy itself? (Yes/No)
5. Terms of reference for subcommittee are established? (Yes/No)
6. Is a special working party required? (Yes/No)
7. Special working party established
8. Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee
9. Research and/or stakeholder consultations
10. Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed
11. Revised policy draft
12. School council reflects on draft
13. Any additional considerations? (Yes/No)
14. Does the policy meet department guidelines and comply with legislation? (Yes/No)
15. Policy approved by school council
16. Policy finalised
Support to school councillors

The School Operations and Governance Unit (SOGU) of Schools and Regional Services provides advice and guidance to school councils on a range of governance issues. Councillors can contact SOGU directly via email at school.council@education.vic.gov.au or 03 7022 1343 or 03 7022 1345 for information and advice.

Councillors can also contact their regional office for information and advice.

The Department offers comprehensive face-to-face training free of cost to school councils of Victorian Government schools. The training is based on four modules of the Improving School Governance (ISG) materials; Governance, Strategic Planning, Finance and School Council President. Face-to-face training is accessed by contacting the provider, Synergistiq on 03 9946 6801 or email Synergistiq: sct@synergistiq.com

The ISG modules are also available online, on the Department’s website. To access the online training, see: Policy and Advisory Library (PAL): School Councils on the Department’s website.
Student Dress Code policy review: example

The school’s student dress code (uniform) policy is due for review. The council will need to determine the nature and extent of school community consultation, which will be undertaken as part of the review process.

The school council expects that a draft of the revised policy will be presented at the meeting after next, that is, in two months’ time.

The review of the student dress code (uniform) policy is timely as three issues have arisen which the policy does not cover.

Firstly, the school’s student demographics have changed significantly in recent years. An increasing proportion of students are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Some of these families find that the uniform in its current form presents difficulties with their cultural beliefs about appropriate attire.

Secondly, the school’s supplier has sold the business to a larger outlet that has informed the school that some items will no longer be available.

Thirdly, the Student Representative Council (SRC) has asked the school council for a special school ‘jacket’ to be included as a uniform item for students in their final year at the school (VCE or Year 6).

Councillors should consider the following questions:

1. What process will the committee establish to review the student dress code policy? Who in the school community will they consult? How will such consultation take place? What recommendations will the committee make to the school council about communicating the revised policy to the school community?

2. Of the issues listed above, are there distinctions between council governance and school day-to-day operational considerations?

3. Drawing on their individual experiences as a school councillor, how do they think each of the three issues above should be addressed?

4. What would be some suitable statements to include in the policy that would address the three issues?
Dress code guidelines: policy development and review

Student dress code

School councils have the authority to develop and implement dress codes for their school’s students. A dress code is a detailed written statement of the expectations that a school council has regarding student appearance. The code applies during school hours, while travelling to and from school, and when students are engaged in school activities out of school hours. The dress code may require students to wear a school uniform and may define specifications for garment design, material and colour, and standards for the general presentation of students. Alternatively, the dress code may set out broad guidelines about student appearance.

The development of, or amendment to, a student dress code is the responsibility of the school council in consultation with its school community. To enable a dress code to be fully workable, it should reflect the values of its school community. The school council should inform itself and take into account any views of the school community through collaboration with students, parents or carers and teachers.

The purposes of a dress code should be clearly identified prior to its development. These purposes may include:

- promoting students’ sense of identity with and pride in the school
- allowing all students to feel equal
- promoting cohesion and good order in the school
- ensuring that students’ appearance reflects the expectations of their community
- preventing bullying and reducing competition between students on the basis of clothing
- strengthening the spirit of community within the school
- enhancing the profile, image or identity of the school and its students within the wider community
- enhancing individual student safety and group security
- ensuring students are dressed safely and appropriately for school activities
- preparing students for the expectations of workplaces
- encouraging students to present themselves appropriately for a particular role and develop pride in their appearance.

Some examples of good practice with regard to student dress code issues can be found on the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) under Student Dress Code, available at www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-dress-code/policy.
The legislative basis for dress codes

All school councils have the authority to develop and implement student dress codes at their schools. This authority arises from Ministerial Order (Constitution of Government School Councils) 2020 (Ministerial Order 1280) that constitutes all school council, under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006. The dress code may cover any matters a school council considers appropriate in relation to clothing and other items worn, carried or used by students, grooming, physical appearance and the general presentation of students.

The Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017, provide the principal of a government school may determine the consequences to be imposed on a student for not wearing the school uniform in accordance with any determination on school uniforms made by the school council and any Ministerial Order in relation to student discipline.

However, the principal must be satisfied that:

• a student’s failure to wear a uniform was because of the student’s disobedience

• that the consequences are reasonable; and the dress code policy has been brought to the attention of the student and their parents or carers.

The Equal Opportunity Act 2010 provides that an educational authority may set and enforce reasonable standards of dress and appearance for students. Under this Act a standard of dress and appearance for students is considered reasonable when the views of the school community have been taken into account in setting the standard.

Human rights and anti-discrimination requirements

By complying with human rights and anti-discrimination legislation through their dress codes, schools can:

• support a safe and inclusive school environment where the school community feels welcome, supported and physically and emotionally secure

• ensure that their dress code enables all students to participate fully in school life

• increase the sense of belonging to, and engagement with, schools for students from all backgrounds, such as cultural, linguistic, religious etc., and regardless of personal characteristics, such as disability, health condition, gender identity etc.

• model appropriate behaviour for resolving issues and promote mutual respect for all members of the school community

• build effective relationships with parents or carers, students and staff from diverse cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds.
Human rights and anti-discrimination legislation require schools to ensure that no student is treated less favourably because of personal characteristics, such as age, disability, gender identity, physical features, race, religious belief, sex or sexual orientation. A full list of personal characteristics protected under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 is available at the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission site – Obligations to your students.

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 requires schools and their councils, as public authorities, to act and make decisions consistent with human rights. For more information on the Charter, including training modules and policy guidance, refer to the Human Rights Charter.

Under Victorian legislation, schools have the right to set and enforce reasonable standards of dress and appearance for students. A standard is considered reasonable if the school has taken into account the views of the school community in setting it. The more extensive, engaging and collaborative the consultation process, the more likely it is to be considered reasonable.

In addition, under the Charter, when developing and implementing dress codes, schools need to balance the rights of individual students against the best interests of the school community as a whole. Rights may be subject to reasonable limits that can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.

A school should consider ways of accommodating individuals’ rights while maintaining a suitable standard of dress and appearance, for example, through an exemption process, or through providing suitable options within the dress code.

Discrimination

Under federal laws it is unlawful to discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, age and race. This applies regardless of whether the views of the school community have been taken into account.

Direct discrimination may occur where a school has different dress code requirements for students with different personal characteristics and this difference results in one group being treated less favourably than another.

Indirect discrimination occurs when treating everybody the same way disadvantages someone because of a personal characteristic. For example, a school’s physical education uniform could discriminate indirectly against female Muslim students, if by wearing it they are not able to conform to their cultural or religious requirement to dress modestly.

Dress codes with gender specific requirements are not necessarily discriminatory under the law. However, schools and their councils are expected to develop, as far as practicable, dress code requirements that are similar for both sexes. Where options are available, they should be available to all students. In particular, all schools must allow girls the option of pants or shorts in their dress code.
Health and safety considerations

Sun and UV protection
A school’s dress code must address issues of sun protection and promote sun safe practices. When UV levels are 3 and above, generally from September to April in Victoria, sun protection should be used when outdoors.

This protection includes hats, sunscreen, sun-protective clothing, shade and sunglasses. Schools with a uniform must ensure a sun protective hat which protects the face, neck, and ears is included, at least as an option, as part of the uniform. Schools without a uniform must permit sun protective hats in their dress code.

School uniforms or dress codes should also include sun-protective clothing using loose closely woven fabrics and include shirts with a collar and/or higher necklines, tops with elbow or long sleeves, longer style shorts, skirts and rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming activities.

A combination of sun protection measures should be put in place from September to the end of April and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

For further information about skin protection and developing sun protection policy see the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) for schools under Sun and UV Protection, available at www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/sun-protection/policy.

Cords, chinstraps, drawstrings or jewellery
Hat cords, chinstraps and drawstrings on clothing or jewellery worn by students, may present risks of strangulation or other injury. This is of particular concern for primary students engaged in active outdoor play if they are wearing hats with cords or chinstraps, garments with drawstrings or cords in the head and neck area or items of jewellery. Schools should consider these risks when deciding on the design of school uniform items or the jewellery that students are allowed to wear. In particular, schools should consider selecting hats without cords or chinstraps, or with safety cords that are designed to release if caught.

School bags
Carrying school bags may pose risks to students of back pain or damage due to poorly designed school bags, or students carrying bags incorrectly or loads that are too heavy. Schools should consider selecting school bags that minimise the risk of back injury to students.

It is recommended that schools select school bags that are endorsed by an Australian professional organisation such as the Australian Physiotherapy Association or the Chiropractors’ Association of Australia. Schools should also consider developing strategies to ensure students are not carrying loads that are too heavy.
Support for families

Schools should investigate options for supporting families who may have difficulty meeting the cost of uniform items. Schools should include information about support options or strategies in their dress code and communicate this information to the school community.

State Schools’ Relief provides assistance with school clothing and footwear via the school principal. The principal is a representative of State Schools’ Relief and uses professional judgement to decide on the appropriateness of individual requests for assistance.

State Schools’ Relief either provides items for students directly to the school or through an authorisation to the school clothing shop or local supplier. For further information see the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) for schools under State Schools’ Relief, available at www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/state-schools-relief/advice.

Developing and reviewing a dress code

The following advice should be read in conjunction with the other sections of the dress code guidelines.

It should be noted that legislative requirements, the Department’s advice and individual school student dress code policies are used by bodies such as the Victorian Ombudsman in resolving disputes referred to them by aggrieved parties.

Introducing a student dress code or undertaking a full review of a dress code is a major decision for the school and for the parents or carers of children attending the school. The school council should give careful consideration to the form of consultation that will be undertaken for example, letters to parents and carers, surveys, information in newsletters, public meetings, student meetings, focus groups, information on the school website.

The development and review of a student dress code policy is the responsibility of the school council in consultation with its school community.
The school council should ensure its consultative process:

- explains the purposes of the dress code and the reason for any changes
- guarantees opportunity for the viewpoints of students, parents or carers, and teachers to be expressed. The mechanism for consultation should be identified in the student dress code policy or, alternatively, be recorded in school council minutes
- provides for careful consideration of any information and viewpoints collected in the consultation process before finalising its decision
- seeks out and considers the views of different groups within the school community: such as those from different cultural, religious or ethnic backgrounds or other groups that may have special needs
- where appropriate, translates material into community languages and employs an interpreter for meetings
- allows for careful consideration of the practicality and cost implications of garment design and materials used in construction
- provides a realistic timeline for implementation of the dress code.

The school council must be able to demonstrate to its school community that it has considered the cost implications of its selected school uniform and taken into account the ability of its parent population to afford it.

Schools should be aware that some students may wish to observe particular religious and cultural requirements while also complying with the school dress code. These could include, but are not limited to, head coverings, facial hair, clothing lengths and certain adornments, such as jewellery. Schools should discuss these requirements with students and parents or carers to ascertain their cultural and religious significance and how they might be accommodated within the school’s dress code policy.
The requirements of the school’s dress code take precedence over a student’s individual preference in matters of dress. Consequently, in determining a student dress code policy, a school council should consider the following criteria:

- is the dress code compatible with both state and federal human rights and anti-discrimination legislation?
- is it respectful of the cultural norms of the school community?
- does it ensure that any gender specific requirements accord with school community standards and anti-discrimination legislation?
- are the rights and responsibilities of parents and carers, students and the school clearly outlined?
- is it reasonable by contemporary standards and does it avoid unnecessarily intruding on students’ rights in matters of personal appearance?
- does it allow for individual expression through alternatives within overall garment requirements?
- is it suitable to the role of being a student and the tasks and functions they perform?
- have appropriate health and safety issues been considered?
- does the dress code policy ensure that students will be able to dress comfortably for all weather conditions?
- is the required clothing for sports or physical education practical and will all students feel comfortable wearing it?
- does the dress code policy support informal or incidental physical activity, such as lunchtime sporting activities, walking or cycling to school?
- has the dress code policy been communicated to parents or carers and students prior to enrolment, providing a basis for agreement?
- are the requirements of the dress code able to be met by all students? The range and choice of specified garments, their cost and availability must reflect the capacity of parents and carers to provide them
- have strategies been developed to support families who may have difficulty meeting the cost of uniform items?
- have the rights and responsibilities of parents and carers, students and the school been made clear in the dress code policy?
- does the policy outline what parents, carers or students should do if they have a concern or complaint relating to the dress code?
- does it outline the consultation and decision-making processes for reviews and amendments?
- does the policy include provision for review if circumstances change significantly?

School councils are strongly advised to document their dress code consultation and development process as evidence that they have adequately consulted with their school community. Each year school councils should consider their dress code to determine if either a full review of the dress code or minor amendments are required. It is recommended that the dress code policy outlines the consultation and decision-making processes for review and amendment.
Dress code exemptions

The dress code should provide grounds for exemption to ensure that school councils comply with their obligations under human rights and anti-discrimination legislation. Allowing for exemptions means that a school can impose uniform standards on all students, but still recognise cases in which the application of those standards affects some students unequally. The exemption process should only be necessary in exceptional circumstances. In general, the school dress code should accommodate the needs of all students.

Schools should ensure that students and parents and carers are aware that they can apply to the principal for an exemption from the dress code.

The principal is responsible for managing and conducting the exemption process. In exceptional circumstances another staff member at the school or regional office may be appointed to consider an exemption request.

Legal requirements necessitate that grounds of exemption must be provided where:

- an aspect of the dress code prevents students with any of the personal characteristics referred to in human rights and anti-discrimination legislation from being able to attend school or participate in school activities on the same basis as other students
- an aspect of the dress code offends a religious belief held by the student, parents or carers
- an aspect of the dress code prevents the student from complying with a requirement of their religious, ethnic or cultural background
- the student has a particular disability or health condition that requires a departure from the dress code
- the student or the parents or carers can demonstrate particular economic hardship that prevents them from complying with the dress code.

Additional grounds for exemption should be allowed at the discretion of the principal.

Where there are issues of a very personal nature: such as health, domestic, financial, and/or cultural, that need to be revealed to substantiate the request for exemption, strict confidentiality must be guaranteed.

If an exemption is sought, the principal should consider what kind of exemption is required and explain the process to the applicant. The applicant should be encouraged to support their case with evidence, so that an informed decision can be made by the principal. Where possible, a resolution acceptable to all parties should be negotiated. In some cases, a slight modification of the dress requirements may be all that is needed, rather than a full exemption.

When considering whether an exemption on the grounds of economic hardship should be made, the principal will need to decide whether or not to grant assistance to the parent or carer to enable the student to comply with the dress code without stigma or undue embarrassment. This may be appropriate where the school wishes to uphold a sense of school identity through the dress code.

If an exemption is not granted, the applicant must be provided with the reasons for the rejection in writing. The principal should keep a written record of all decisions and the reasoning behind each decision in case a decision is questioned.

If the principal is consistently granting exemptions for the same issue, the school should review its dress code to see how these needs can be met within it. This will also help to increase the engagement of the affected students with the school.
Enforcement of dress codes

The measures used to enforce a school council dress code must be consistent with the Department’s Student Engagement Guidance and with the school’s student engagement policy.

Ministerial Order 1280 Constitution of Government School Councils states that the methods of enforcement must be consistent with the school’s student code of conduct, section 2.2.19 of the Education and Training Reform Act, and any Order made for the purposes of that section (e.g. Ministerial Order 1125 – Procedures for Suspension and Expulsion of Students in Government Schools).

The Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance supports schools to create a positive school culture, clearly articulating school-wide expectations and consistent processes to address areas of concern.

Any non-compliance with a dress code is not usually linked to interference with the rights of other students or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class, and therefore withdrawal from classroom instruction or other school activities should not normally apply. Students should not normally be excluded from class for minor non-compliance with the student dress code. Exceptions to this might include issues of safety or a possible danger being posed, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the wellbeing of any person or where students are representing the school.

Communication about the dress code

Information about the student dress code, including any changes in dress requirements, should be communicated widely throughout the school community. All prospective students and parents or carers should be notified of the dress code requirements prior to enrolment at the school and be provided with a copy of the dress code policy. Where appropriate, information regarding the dress code should be provided in community languages, or conveyed through an interpreter, for example, at an information night.

When changes are proposed to the dress code, school councils should:

- consult with parents and carers, teachers and students, where applicable, about the proposed changes, and maintain records of the consultation
- communicate widely the procedures to be used for consultation and decision-making
- publish details of the implementation strategy and timeline for a new or amended dress code to be implemented
- devise a means of acknowledging and supporting any significant financial costs to parents or carers that may be brought about through changes in the dress code
- make prior contact with any suppliers with whom the school has a contract to negotiate a timeline for implementing the changes to the dress code.

School councils should maintain records of consultation on dress code changes.
Dress code concerns and complaints

Parents, carers or students with a specific complaint about the school dress code should, in the first instance, raise the matter with the school. For further information on this process refer to the Parent Complaints website. In some cases, it may be possible to apply to the principal for an exemption.

Parents, carers or students who would like to see the school dress code policy changed should be advised that they can bring these concerns to the attention of the school council for consideration in the next review of the dress code.

Uniform supply arrangements

When making arrangements to allow parents or carers to purchase uniforms, schools should consider the following:

- cost
- quality of items
- quality control of the supplier
- reliability, continuity and lead time of supply
- ability of manufacturers to meet required delivery deadlines
- selecting Australian-made items or using local businesses
- selecting manufacturers that can provide evidence that they meet ethical manufacturing standards
- sustainable production of items
- how and where parents or carers can purchase items
- cleaning requirements and costs
- returns policy for faulty stock
- re-use or recycling of items.

Schools are encouraged to make arrangements promoting Australian-made uniform items, the use of local businesses, and the selection of manufacturers that can provide evidence that they meet ethical manufacturing standards.

School councils are strongly advised to enter into a written contract with their chosen supplier. Both the school council and their chosen supplier must comply with written contracts. The school council must not make any misrepresentations while making agreements, for example, misrepresenting the number of students at the school.

This enables the council to enforce the terms of its agreement and ensures that all parties are clear about their obligations. Schools should use one of the Department’s three approved agreement templates. Principals can access the templates from the Department’s Legal Division intranet site.

The three agreement templates for ensuring parents or carers can purchase the school uniform are:

1. School Council Uniform Business Licence. The school council licenses a supplier to sell the uniform from a designated area on the school premises.

2. School Council Agreement for the Appointment of School Uniform Supplier. The school council appoints a supplier to sell the uniforms from the supplier’s retail premises.

3. School Council Agreement for the purchase of school uniforms for sale by the school. The school council purchases school uniforms from a supplier and then sells the uniforms directly to students and their families.
Resources and links

Further information, related policies and advice can be found on the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) for schools www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal including:

**Child Safe Standards**

**Risk Management**

**Emergency and Critical Incident Management Planning**

**Financial Management**
– Finance Manual for Victorian Government Schools

**Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality**

**Outside School Hours Care – Decision Making Regarding the Provision of OSHC**

**Parent Payments**
www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/parent-payment/policy

**Procurement – Schools**

**Minimum Standards and School Registration**

**School Council – Powers and Functions**

**School Council – Subcommittees**

**State Schools’ Relief**

**Student Dress Code**

**Sun and UV Protection**

**Values — Department and VPS Values for School Employees**
www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/values-department-vps-school-employees/overview

Further information

**Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority and the National Quality Framework website**
acecqa.gov.au

**PROTECT website**
education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/default.aspx

**Safety, Health and Wellbeing page on the Department’s website**
education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/safetyhw/Pages/default.aspx

**School Policy Templates Portal – on the edugate portal – Login required**
edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/cp/Pages/home.aspx

**SunSmart website**
sunsmart.com.au

**Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority website**
vrqa.vic.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx
**Policy review and redevelopment: flow chart**

1. **Policy is scheduled for review**
   - **Yes**
     - **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**
     - **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**
     - **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**
   - **No**
     - **Special working party established**

2. **Is the policy still required in its current form?**
   - **Yes**
     - **Policy approved by school council**
   - **No**
     - **Is the policy still required in its current form?**
       - **Yes**
         - **Policy finalised**
       - **No**
         - **Do we need to consult with the school community?**
           - **Yes**
             - **Policy finalised**
           - **No**
             - **Any additional considerations?**
               - **Yes**
                 - **Policy finalised**
               - **No**
                 - **Metadata guidelines and complies with legislation?**
                   - **Yes**
                     - **Policy finalised**
                   - **No**
                     - **Policy is removed from school council schedule or consolidated with another policy**

3. **Policy is removed from school council schedule or consolidated with another policy**
   - **Yes**
     - **Policy finalised**
   - **No**
     - **Policy is scheduled for review**

4. **Do we need to consult with the school community?**
   - **Yes**
     - **Policy finalised**
   - **No**
     - **Will the council review the policy itself?**
       - **Yes**
         - **Policy finalised**
       - **No**
         - **Terms of reference for subcommittee are established**

5. **Is the policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee?**
   - **Yes**
     - **Policy finalised**
   - **No**
     - **Terms of reference for subcommittee are established**

6. **Special working party established**
   - **Yes**
     - **Policy finalised**
   - **No**
     - **Policy is scheduled for review**

7. **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**
   - **Yes**
     - **Policy finalised**
   - **No**
     - **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**

8. **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**
   - **Yes**
     - **Policy finalised**
   - **No**
     - **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**

9. **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**
   - **Yes**
     - **Policy finalised**
   - **No**
     - **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**

10. **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**

11. **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**

12. **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**

13. **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**

14. **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**

15. **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**

16. **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**

17. **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**

18. **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**

19. **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**

20. **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**

21. **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**

22. **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**

23. **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**

24. **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**

25. **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**

26. **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**

27. **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**

28. **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**

29. **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**

30. **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**

31. **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**

32. **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**

33. **Policy reviewed by an existing subcommittee**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**

34. **Research and/or stakeholder consultations**
    - **Yes**
      - **Policy finalised**
    - **No**
      - **Information gathered through research and consultations is analysed**
Primary and secondary school student dress code: examples

West Lake Primary School – Student Dress Code Policy

Rationale
School council has approved compulsory wearing of school uniform for all children attending West Lake Primary School. A uniform reinforces in students a pride in their appearance, instils recognition of themselves as an integral part of the school community and assists in developing pride in representing their school. Issues of equality, health and safety and expense are also factors that contribute to the establishment of this uniform policy.

The school believes the following are the benefits derived from the wearing of school uniform by all children:

• families have the opportunity to purchase economical, durable, functional and practical clothing items
• wearing a uniform improves school tone and atmosphere and helps develop a sense of pride and identification with the school
• compulsory uniforms assist to eliminate peer group pressure to wear less appropriate clothing, reduces competition among children and removes pressure on families to provide ‘fashionable’ items for daily wear
• prepares children for the expectations and uniform policies of secondary schools which West Lake children will attend in future years
• promotes equality among all students
• assists with student identification and safety in public places
• maintains the high public and community regard for the school and its students.

Implementation
Summer and winter uniforms as well as sports uniforms will be prescribed and are required to be worn during school hours, while travelling to and from school and when students are representing the school during outside school hours occasions.

Providing items are in a clean and good condition, uniform items bearing either the ‘new’ or ‘old’ logo may be worn.

All children representing the school for any event or activity may only do so when wearing full school uniform.

For safety reasons, jewellery, with the exception of watches and plain stud or small ‘sleeper’ earrings, is not permitted.

Obvious hair colouring and extreme or attention-seeking hairstyles are not permitted. For safety and health reasons it is recommended that children with shoulder length or longer hair should have it tied back.

Other than clear nail polish, coloured nail polish and other cosmetics are not permitted.
SunSmart policy

In line with this policy, from the beginning of September to the end of April, and on days of UV level 3 and above, all children will be required to wear a school sun protective hat when outside. This includes lunchtime, recess, and Physical Education classes and sports sessions. Hats should not be worn inside.

The Student Dress Code, including details of uniform items and places of purchase, will be published in the school newsletter.

Sports uniform and runners are prescribed for participation in Physical Education or sporting activities.

The principal is responsible for the implementation of the Dress Code.

Parents seeking an exemption from the Dress Code, for example, due to religious beliefs, ethnic or cultural background, student disability, health conditions or economic hardship should apply to the principal.

A uniform reinforces in students a pride in their appearance, instils recognition of themselves as an integral part of the school community and assists in developing pride in representing their school.

Principal’s Responsibilities

The principal is responsible for:

- prescribing alternative clothing to be worn for special occasions or camps, excursions
- excusing a student from wearing school uniform in exceptional circumstances
- assisting students in financial need to acquire uniform items.

Uniform

The uniform will consist of the following items:

Summer Uniform

Red monogrammed polo shirt, navy long shorts, school dress, red, navy or white socks, navy monogrammed windcheater or bomber jacket, school sun protective hat.

Winter Uniform

Red monogrammed polo shirt, red skivvy, navy track pants, navy monogrammed windcheater or bomber jacket, navy pinafore.

Footwear

Black school shoes or runners are preferred. For safety reasons no thongs or surf style sandals or heeled shoes are to be worn at school.

Year 6

Red polo shirt, red windcheater with names of students printed in white on the back.
Sports Uniform (for Years 5–6 only)
Red monogrammed polo shirt, navy long shorts, navy netball skirt and school sun protective hat.
All children will wear a rash vest or t-shirt over bathers for outdoor swimming activities.

House Sport Uniform (Years 3–6)
House-coloured polo shirt with collar or high neckline.
Sports footwear.

School bags
Monogrammed school bag is not compulsory but highly encouraged.

School hats
From the beginning of September to the end of April, and on days of UV level 3 and above, all children will be required to wear a SunSmart school hat, legionnaire or broad brimmed style, navy with school logo when outside. This includes lunchtime, recess, and Physical Education classes, sports sessions and other outside class activities.

Extreme Weather
On very cold days, children may wear coats, hats or scarves to and from school.
Greenvale Secondary College – Uniform Policy

Rationale

The wearing of school uniform promotes equality among students at Greenvale Secondary College, a sense of belonging to the school and helps to ensure that students are safe within the school environment. The school uniform policy also states items that are specifically banned including some jewellery.

Aims

• that students at Greenvale Secondary College are identifiable while at school, attending school activities and travelling to and from school
• that the school uniform meets the requirements of Occupational Health and Safety
• that parents are provided with an affordable, durable range of clothing for their children to wear while at school
• that the school accommodates religious and cultural requirements of our students in relation to clothing.

Implementation

• the Uniform Committee is a subcommittee of Greenvale Secondary College School Council. This committee is open to all parents with students enrolled at the College. Meetings are held as needed and advertised in ‘Greenvale News’
• any recommendations of the Uniform Committee are voted on by the college’s council
• information relating to the details of the school uniform is available in the school handbooks and the Student Planner on the school’s website
• all members of the teaching staff are responsible for ensuring that students are wearing the correct school uniform
• students who are out of uniform are expected to provide a note stating the reason for this
• students who are out of uniform without a valid reason will face sanctions.
Definition

A school uniform consists of a limited range of clothing, including footwear and headwear. It identifies students as belonging to a particular school. Greenvale Secondary College students are expected to wear the uniform during school hours, while travelling to and from school and when engaged in school activities out of school hours. This policy also covers the Greenvale’s Secondary College sports uniform, which students are required to wear while participating in all Physical Education and sports activities.

The school uniform items include a range of sun-protective clothing using loose closely woven fabrics and includes shirts with a collar and/or higher necklines, tops with elbow or long sleeves, longer style shorts and skirts.

A combination of sun protection measures will be in place from September to the end of April and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

Evaluation

As part of the College review cycle the Uniform Committee will review this policy every three years.

Date policy ratified: 2020.
Date of next review: 2023.
Improving School Governance
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Scenarios for presidents
5.0 Introduction

Goal

This module serves to provide school council presidents with a better understanding of:

- their roles and responsibilities as a school council president
- what makes a school council effective
- how to lead school council meetings
- how to engage the community in the school and its objectives.

Overview

The school council president (president) is a parent or community member (not a Department of Education and Training employee) of school council, who presides over, or chairs, school council meetings. The president is elected annually by all school council members, usually at the first school council meeting after the annual school council elections.

The president must be able to run effective meetings, and work effectively with all council members and with the principal, with the aim of playing a leadership role on the council, which sets the broad direction and vision of the school.

An effective president is a key component of a cohesive and effective school council. The president needs to understand the responsibilities of the role and the overall governance structure of government schools. This governance structure consists of the Minister for Education, the Department of Education and Training (DET), school councils and teaching staff, including the principal. The president should also have a constructive working relationship with the principal, other school councillors and the community.

Being president is an important and prestigious responsibility. The president represents the school in the wider community and must be prepared to champion the school, its students and its staff. The role can be time consuming but very rewarding.

This training module will help those people elected president of their school’s council and those aspiring to the role of president to understand the nature and extent of the role and to develop the skills and knowledge to perform their responsibilities successfully.
5.1 Roles and responsibilities

Why is this topic important?

All school council members should know and understand their roles and responsibilities, and the functions and objectives of the council, particularly the president.

The president, with the principal, provides leadership, establishing the environment in which the council can operate effectively.

On completing this unit, the participant should be able to:

- understand the skills required of an effective president
- understand the roles and responsibilities of a president.
The effective president

The role of president requires leadership and management skills.

An effective president is decisive, fair, open-minded, task-focused, consultative, respects the views of others and is aware of the big picture. A good president knows the boundary of their authority and the authority of the school council as a whole, understands and respects privacy and confidentiality obligations and knows how and when to delegate.

A good president is available to the school community and to the other members of school council when needed. The president should have a strong and successful working relationship with the principal, and maintain the continued support of all school council members.

Before nominating for president, a candidate should consider what skills and experience they could bring to the position. Do they have an understanding of the school and school council, including the school’s direction and needs, or the time and willingness to learn this? Do they have the patience and commitment to develop good working relationships? Are they prepared to be a role model in the school community for professionalism, integrity and sound judgement?

Code of Conduct

School councils in Victoria are public entities for the purposes of the Public Administration Act 2004. School councillors are directors of public entities and must abide by the Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities (Code of Conduct) issued by the Victorian Public Sector Commission. The Code of Conduct sets the standard of behaviour and requires all councillors to:

- **act with honesty and integrity** – be truthful, open and clear about their motives and declare any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest and report improper conduct
- **act in good faith in the best interests of the school** – work cooperatively with other councillors and the school community, be reasonable, and make all decisions with the best interests of students in mind
- **act fairly and impartially** – consider all relevant facts of an issue before making a decision, seek to have a balanced view, never give special treatment to a person or group and do not act from self-interest
- **use information appropriately** – respect confidentiality and use information for the purpose for which it was made available
- **use their position appropriately** – not use their position as a councillor to gain an advantage
- **act in a financially responsible manner** – observe all the above principles when making financial decisions
- **exercise due care, diligence and skill** – accept responsibility for decisions and do what is best for the school
- **act consistently with legislative and policy requirements when making decisions**
- **notify the school council if they become a candidate for an election in any state, local or federal election and not use the council’s resources in connection with their candidature**
- **demonstrate leadership and stewardship** – set a good example, encourage a culture of accountability and child safety, manage risks effectively and responsibly to keep the school strong and sustainable.
Public Sector Values

School councillors must also abide by and demonstrate the Victorian Public Sector Values set out in the Code of Conduct. These values are Responsiveness, Integrity, Impartiality, Accountability, Respect, Leadership and Human Rights.

The Values underpin the behaviours that the government and community expect of all directors of public entities, including school council members.

The Values set out the way that school councillors, as directors of public entities, should think and act. These behaviours increase trust and confidence in our work. The public expect employees and school council members to act in accordance with the Values. Doing so is central to building and sustaining trust in the important work we do.

When school council members act in accordance with the Code of Conduct and the Values, it strengthens the school’s capacity to operate effectively and achieve its objectives.

The Values have been adopted by the Department as the DET Values and complement each school’s values and teachers’ professional standards, such as the Codes of Conduct and Ethics issued by the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

For all school staff and school council members, behaving with integrity and respect in everyday decisions and actions goes to the heart of the community’s trust in the school and the public education system.
Role of the president

The president has a strategic role to play in representing the vision, mission and purpose of the school.

As the chair of school council meetings, the president ensures relevant matters are discussed openly and that there is full participation of all school councillors at meetings. Collaborative discussions will lead to more effective and efficient decision making.

The president’s duties include:
- developing and working with the community towards a shared vision for the school
- actively participating in the core review panel in the school’s four-year review cycle
- endorsing key school planning and reporting documents on behalf of the council
- being an effective spokesperson and advocate for the school council
- chairing meetings of school council
- representing the school council in public forums with the principal
- promoting the school and its principal to the community.

Following the election of the president and other office-bearers, the principal will inform the school community and the Department of the names of the school council members and office-bearers. The president will be provided with a Department email address to receive regular communications from the Department and should speak to the principal, who is responsible for setting up this account.

It is expected the president will access this account each week to be informed of Department communications, especially those relevant to school council business. Relevant information should be provided to other school council members by the president. This account will also be used to access the Strategic Planning Online Tool (SPOT). This is important for endorsement of the School Strategic Plan, Annual Implementation Plan and Annual Report.
The president and the principal have distinct responsibilities as outlined below.

The principal ...

- provides school council with timely advice about educational and other matters
- prepares the council’s agenda in consultation with the president
- reports regularly to school council about the school’s performance against School Strategic Plan
- ensures school council decisions are acted on
- provides adequate support and resources for the conduct of school council meetings
- ensures the vice-president or a member of the council that is not an employee of the Department presides at a council meeting, in the absence of the president
- communicates with the president about school council business
- ensures that new school council members are inducted
- ensures that the school council president’s details are recorded against the school council president Department account
- provides the president with information on how to access the Department account
- reports suspected improper conduct
- other responsibilities as set out in legislation and the Ministerial Order 1280 Constitution of Government School Councils.

The school council president ...

- chairs council meetings in an effective and efficient way
- ensures everyone has a say in meetings and decisions are understood and recorded
- is a signatory to school council contracts, the School Strategic Plan, school council delegations and financial accounts and statements
- participates in the four-year school review as an active member of the core review panel
- endorses the school Pre-review Self-evaluation, terms of reference for school review, the school Annual Implementation Plan and Annual Report, and communicates the Plan and Report to the school community
- attests to school compliance with the registration requirements in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 and Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017, to the extent that they are within the scope and powers and functions of school council
- presides at the annual public reporting meeting
- ensures school council and council members remain focused on improving student outcomes
- with the principal, is school council’s spokesperson and official representative on public occasions
- casts a second and casting vote when school council votes are tied
- accesses email communications each week from the Department through the president’s Department account, and communicates relevant information to school council members
- provides their details for the school registration process
- witnesses the affixing of school’s common seal on relevant documentation.
School council is generally also involved in the school principal selection process. When principal selection occurs, a panel is formed to review applications, interview shortlisted applicants and recommend one or more applicants to the Secretary of the Department to employ.

The selection panel includes councillors and Department staff. The school council president, or their nominee, is a member of the principal selection panel. The president is appointed by the school council, to represent the council. Principal selection panel members are provided with principal selection panel training.

The school council president, on request from the Regional Director, provides input to principal contract renewal discussions. The president advises the school council of that input at the next school council meeting.
**Building relationships**

The president needs to build strong working relationships with the principal, other school councillors and the school community. The president and the principal support each other in their respective roles.

**To build the relationship with the principal, the president can:**
- upon being elected, meet the principal to discuss key aspects of school council business
- develop a shared understanding of the school’s direction and its priorities, as stated in the School Strategic Plan
- arrange to meet the principal on a regular basis ahead of every school council meeting to discuss the agenda, issues to be tabled and any background information that needs to be circulated
- keep up to date with school matters that may affect school council and the community
- inform the principal of community matters that may be relevant to the school
- introduce the principal to key members of the school community as necessary, particularly if the principal is new to the school
- be available if the principal needs to discuss matters relevant to the school
- understand the role of the principal and those matters of the school that are operational and therefore not the responsibility of the school council
- respect the privacy and confidentiality obligations of school council matters.

**To build relationships with school councillors, the president can:**
- be a good listener and ensure all school councillors have the opportunity to be heard
- be willing to meet individual school councillors to understand their particular perspectives
- welcome and encourage new school councillors to be active participants at meetings
- delegate and share council tasks between members as appropriate.

**The president can build relationships with the wider school community by:**
- attending school events such as music concerts, art exhibitions and athletic sports and speaking with staff, students and families
- considering meeting local government officers and the local Member of Parliament, with the principal.
New school councillors are briefed on existing school issues and processes. The principal will provide new school councillors with a background information package, which may include:

- Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities
- School Strategic Plan
- Annual Implementation Plan
- Annual Report to the school community
- school council Standing Orders (if any)
- information about the Department’s Values and ethical decision-making
- current school policies and whole of Department policies applying to schools or where to access them
- sample agenda
- list of common education acronyms
- council members phone numbers and email addresses with consent of the members
- folder or binder in which to file council paperwork
- details of training and support available from the Department.
5.2 Characteristics of an effective school council

Why is this topic important?

A strong, united school council with a clear vision and a willingness to contribute positively is a feature of a successful school.

On completing this unit, the participant should be able to:
• understand what makes a school council successful
• understand the role the president plays in an effective school council.

The importance of good governance

Good governance enables the school council to perform efficiently and effectively and to respond strategically to changing demands and educational challenges.

Good governance relies on the professional leadership of the principal, the president and individual school council members and is supported by effective meeting and decision-making procedures.

Effective school councils are characterised by a mutual and respectful sharing of information, knowledge and ideas. There is a focus on open communication where all members are able to exchange information, share experiences, express different perspectives, pose questions, clarify viewpoints, explore relevant research and develop a shared vision and way forward.

Good governance also involves ensuring decisions are made and implemented appropriately.
What makes a school council effective?

An effective school council is one that:

- focuses on improving student learning outcomes and educational opportunities from a governance perspective
- involves the community in conversations about key educational issues and challenges
- is actively involved in the development of the School Strategic Plan
- promotes meaningful parent and community participation and actively seeks the views of its community
- has a clear understanding of its roles and responsibilities
- includes members who represent the diverse views of the school community
- has a clear and consistent process for decision-making
- maintains high ethical standards
- has members who trust and respect one another
- evaluates and communicates with the school community about its activities
- regularly reviews and evaluates its own performance
- appropriately delegates to individual members and subcommittees
- devotes time to its own growth and development, through induction and training.

An effective school council should support the development of strategic partnerships to assist the school achieve the goals in the School Strategic Plan. For example, school council members should consider and discuss opportunities to work with organisations outside the school in areas such as fundraising and facilities development.

The Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 set out certain legal requirements in relation to the operation of school council meetings. These requirements cannot be overridden by the Standing Orders determined by a school council. See the Governance module for a list of these legal requirements and the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library, School Council – Meetings policy at: www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-meetings/policy.

It is good practice for a school council to establish Standing Orders to assist the council to operate effectively and efficiently. Standing Orders should be reviewed each year following completion of the election process. In addition to the legal requirements, school councils are encouraged to provide additional guidelines, which might cover agendas, meeting etiquette and length of meetings.
Roles of school council members

It is the responsibility of the principal and the president to ensure school council members understand their role.

There is no legal requirement for a school council to have a vice-president, but many do. The vice-president will chair meetings when the president is absent. The vice-president must not be a Department employee or a student member of the council.

It is recommended that a school council elect a treasurer who is not an employee of the Department.

All school council members have a responsibility to:

- come prepared and ready to contribute at school council meetings
- attend school events and seek to understand the school’s operations
- support the president and the principal
- actively promote the school to the community
- comply with the Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities and behavioural expectations set out in the Department’s Values.

Delegations

The Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 allow school councils to delegate their powers and duties, however a school council cannot delegate any of its functions or powers in relation to the approval of the school budget or Annual Report.

There are a number of powers or functions a council may delegate to the principal, usually from the beginning of a school year, to assist in the efficient running of the school. A school council must generally obtain written approval from the Minister for Education to delegate a power or duty to a person or body other than the principal.

The delegation must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting of school council and a register of delegations which must be kept by the school council. A delegations fact sheet and template are located on the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library, School Council – Powers and Functions at: www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-powers-and-functions/policy. The delegation document (including terms and conditions of the delegation) must be signed by the president of the school council, or a council member (other than an employee of the Department) appointed for this purpose, and delivered to the delegate (usually the principal).

The school council may revoke or amend a delegation in writing at any time.

A person or body to whom a delegation has been made must provide a written report about any activities performed by the delegate, at each ordinary meeting of the school council.
Annual planning for school council business

Just as schools benefit from strategic and annual planning, so too do school councils.

The school council president can take a leadership role in planning the school council business for the year ahead. This begins with discussing school priorities with the principal and new council, following annual elections and appointment of office bearers.

From the discussion, an annual work plan can be developed, a month-by-month schedule of the business of council for that year. The schedule may include:

- known tasks that are required to be completed each year, such as the endorsement of the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) in the Strategic Planning Online Tool (SPOT)
- endorsement of the Annual Report, and providing a copy to the Secretary of the Department, by 30 April and presentation of the Annual Report to the school community at the annual public reporting meeting
- significant events including reviews or the development of the School Strategic Plan (SSP)
- a schedule of policies due for review and a timeline that allows for community consultation and additional research if required
- discussion and completion of the school council self-assessment tool annually, which can guide the identification of strengths and opportunities for support, development and training for councillors
- discussion and consideration of the Skills and Expertise Guide, with respect to recruitment and development of the council.
## Additional features of an effective school council are included in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An effective school council works together</td>
<td>The school council should be seen by all school council members as being greater than the sum of the individuals of which it is comprised. Discussions may be lively, however the council’s decision overrides individual opinion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members set aside their own special interests</td>
<td>Members add value through personal skills and experience, but must be prepared to set personal interests aside for the good of the overall situation and to prevent any potential, perceived or actual, pecuniary or non-pecuniary conflicts of interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School council offers strong support to the principal and school</td>
<td>School council members should ask searching questions and provide relevant, constructive criticism; however, they should avoid sharing negative opinions outside of school council meetings and gossip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School council stays focused on its objectives and functions</td>
<td>School council members understand their responsibilities, as distinct from those of the principal, the teaching staff and the Department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School council is led by a strong president</td>
<td>School council elects a strong and capable individual to be its president, one who will have the respect of and who respects, the principal, the council and the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An effective school council thinks strategically</td>
<td>School council decisions and actions reflect and support the future directions of the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real discussions are followed by real decisions</td>
<td>School council members attend meetings, having prepared carefully and are ready to contribute. Differences are left at the discussion table and decisions are acted upon promptly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School council builds trust in its community</td>
<td>School council develops and maintains a record of trust through its responsible actions and good communication.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School council annual self-assessment

Self-assessments are an important process for reflecting on school council effectiveness. All councils, as boards of public entities, must have adequate procedures in place for assessing their own performance under the Public Administration Act 2004.

School council members will operate effectively when they have a clear understanding of governance roles, responsibilities and a clear and consistent process for decision-making. The school council president can take a leadership role in leading council to review and reflect on their effectiveness as a group. The annual self-assessment process will identify areas of strength and areas for improvement.

A school council self-assessment tool has been designed by the Department of Education and Training to assist school council presidents, principals and all council members to reflect on their roles and the effectiveness of the school council as a whole. The council as a group, can undertake the annual self-assessment, then discuss the results in small groups or as a whole team and develop an improvement plan.

Most school councils will identify some areas of focus. For example, they may agree that some council operational practices could be refined or improved, or they may wish to build particular knowledge and capabilities by undertaking training.

As a result of the annual self-assessment, councils may review and revise their Standing Orders, their subcommittees and the effectiveness of their meetings. It is important that school councils and individual councillors work collaboratively and with purpose.

The Department’s self-assessment tool can be located on the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library under School Councils – Training and Good Governance available at www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-training/policy.
5.3 How to run effective school council meetings

Why is this topic important?

Well-conducted meetings are critical to an effective and properly functioning school council. There must be at least eight meetings a year and at least one every term. The president, as the presiding officer or chair, is responsible for the conduct of the meetings.

At the end of this unit, participants should be able to:

- recognise the features of an effective meeting
- confidently chair successful school council meetings.
Features of an effective meeting

Meetings are held to allow school council to make decisions related to its functions. Meeting dates should be set at the start of the year by the principal and the president to suit the school’s calendar. They should not be scheduled at the same time as other important school events.

Effective and accountable decision-making in meetings requires:

- a clear definition of how the school council conducts its business, which could be outlined in Standing Orders
- a carefully prepared agenda
- papers relevant to specific agenda items circulated in advance
- all members preparing adequately for the meeting
- frank and open discussion
- accurate and timely records of decisions and meeting minutes
- the ability and willingness to seek independent and external professional advice when necessary
- a subcommittee structure or working groups that meet regularly to support and enable the work of school council.

Who presides at a meeting?

The school council president must preside at school council meetings. If the president is unable to preside, the meeting must be conducted in the following manner:

- if a vice-president has been appointed by the school council, the vice-president must preside at the meeting if available
- if the school council has not appointed a vice-president, or the vice-president is unable to preside, the school council must decide on a member of the council, other than an employee of the Department, or a student member, to preside.

A Department employee, including the principal, is ineligible to be school council president or chair a school council meeting.
Decision-making

School council decisions are made by a majority of the members eligible to vote and present at the meeting, provided the majority are not Department employees and not less than one half of the members currently holding office are present. This represents a quorum, which must be in place for each school council meeting.

All decisions of school council are voted upon. The numbers for and against should be recorded in the minutes. The principal is a voting member. Where votes are tied, the presiding member has a second and casting vote.

All motions must be recorded. The motion mover and seconder, and the outcome must be minuted.

There is no provision for proxies to vote on school council matters at a meeting. However, a school councillor may be present, and therefore vote, at a meeting by video conferencing or teleconferencing.
Setting the agenda

The principal, in consultation with the president, should set the council meeting agenda with enough time to distribute it to all members prior to the school council, along with meeting papers, which may include any reports or background material.

As executive officer of school council, it is the principal’s responsibility to ensure school council members are suitably resourced and supported to adequately participate at school council meetings.

The agenda lists business that council will discuss during the meeting.

A simple agenda may include:

- welcome and apologies
- possible conflict of interest
- minutes of the previous meeting (voted upon)
- business arising from the minutes
- principal’s report
- president’s report
- reports from subcommittees including finance subcommittee
- general business
- correspondence (incoming and outgoing)
- close.

If a school council does not have subcommittees, the principal may introduce the finance and other reports.

Usually, principals ask members to submit items for general business ahead of the meeting so they can be included on the agenda. It is for the president to determine if other general business matters raised at the meeting, that are within a function of the school council, will be discussed. There may not be sufficient time for the discussion. The president should decline to discuss any matters unrelated to a function of the school council.

When discussing the proposed next meeting agenda with the principal, the president should ask:

- Does the item fit within a function of the school council?
- Is the item operational (and thus a responsibility of the principal)?
- Should the item be dealt with elsewhere?
- Does the item warrant school council’s time?
Chairing the meeting

As chair, the president should open the meeting on time and call council members to order. To ensure an effective meeting, the president should:

- have a good understanding of Ministerial Order 1280 Constitution of Government School Councils, the Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities and the Standing Orders of council (if any)
- have sought a briefing with the principal ahead of the meeting on any complex or sensitive issues
- manage the discussions during the meetings to ensure business is expeditiously addressed. For this to occur, the chair needs to understand the powers of the chair and be willing to use them judiciously to ensure that debate and discussions are focussed and to the point. Presidents have the authority to bring discussions to a conclusion and bring on a vote when they feel all members who have a view have had the opportunity to present their view
- ensure that no school councillor dominates a discussion and encourage all councillors to express an opinion
- before calling for a vote, summarise points made in the discussion objectively and impartially
- be prepared to delegate contentious or complicated matters to individuals or subcommittees for more research or discussion
- keep an eye on the scheduled closing time of the meeting and try to pace the discussion to complete the business by that time
- call for a specified extension of time if that is required
- ensure that councillors know the date, time and venue of the next meeting before officially declaring the current meeting closed
- ensure that the decisions of the council are correctly recorded. When council approves the minutes, the chair presiding at that meeting signs the minutes.

Stages of the meeting

School council meetings should follow a consistent format. An agenda should be prepared and distributed, together with draft minutes from the previous meeting and any reports from the principal, president, finance or other subcommittees, to council members, ideally, no less than five business days before the meeting.
Minutes of the meeting

Accurate minutes should be made of every meeting of school council, and of its subcommittees. Minutes form a record of the council’s activities and decisions and actions that need to be taken.

Minutes should be accepted by the council as a fair and accurate record. Although they serve as a record of all decisions, they are not public documents. A person does not have a right to access the minutes of a school council meeting or other documents or records of a school council under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

School councils should appoint a minute-taker at the beginning of each year. If this person is not a member of school council, they must act as a silent observer without voting rights. It is expected the minute-taker maintains confidentiality of meeting discussions.

When school council minutes are submitted for confirmation, only questions regarding their accuracy are to be raised. The chair of that meeting must sign the minutes once council has accepted them as being a true and accurate record of the meeting.

The minutes should be sent to the principal and president as soon as possible after a meeting for comment, and then distributed, by the principal, to all members of school council before the next school council meeting, where they are considered and confirmed.

The school council should keep the community informed about its operations by publishing a report following each meeting in the school newsletter and/or on the school website.
Managing conflict and the conduct of meetings

At times, some school councils may experience members expressing strong conflicting views. There may be occasions where individual members are not working cooperatively with other school councillors. It is the president’s responsibility, as chairperson, to manage any conflict or conduct issues that arise during the course of a meeting.

The principal is responsible for managing any matters that extend beyond the meeting.

Some strategies for the chairperson dealing with difficult situations include:

- dealing respectfully with all comments and contributions
- using clearly understood protocols to ensure all views are represented
- stopping one individual dominating the meeting
- bringing the discussion back to school council’s core objectives, which include: assisting in the efficient governance of the school; ensuring that decisions affecting students of the school are made having regard to students’ best interests as a primary consideration; enhancing the educational opportunities of students at the school; and ensuring the school and the school council complies with its legal obligations
- delegating the discussion to a subcommittee, or to a future school council meeting
- anticipating matters that might result in conflict between members and introducing them in a way which seeks to minimise tension
- being prepared to let an aggrieved member express their view, but then being prepared to close the debate
- reminding members of their obligations under the Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities
- not taking sides and treating an individual’s grievance as legitimate.

The president should be mindful of school council members acting contrary to the Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities, which includes the Public Sector Values, or speaking against council decisions to members of the community, as this may bring the council or its decisions into disrepute. The principal and the president may need to meet the individual separately and remind them of their obligations under the Code of Conduct.

Department policy and guidance on school council meetings can be located on the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library under School Councils – Meetings available at www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-meetings/policy.
5.4 Engaging the school community and beyond

Why is this topic important?

The work of the school council needs to be known and understood by the school community, including families, students, staff and other stakeholders. If the community shares and has input into the vision and values of the school council, and has participated in the process, then the community is likely to offer greater support.

Sharing information and duty of confidentiality

School council members are drawn from the key stakeholders of the school: parents, staff, students and the wider community. Confidentiality and the proper use of information is an important component of the Code of Conduct for school councillors.

School council should establish effective mechanisms for communicating its decisions to the community, to enable consultation and to receive feedback.

At the end of this unit, the participant will understand:

- the importance of community consultation and engagement
- how to establish two-way communication with the school community.

As individuals, council members bring diverse views to the council for working together to develop a shared vision for the improvement of student outcomes. School council decisions can affect the school and its stakeholders, and they generally need to be communicated to, and understood, by the community. This does not mean that the deliberations and different points of view expressed by individual council members should be communicated to the community. If council members are not confident that their views will be treated confidentially by other council members, they may not feel comfortable to express them, which is detrimental to the decision-making process.
Council members must feel assured their discussions and views are treated confidentially by other members. All councillors must respect privacy and use their discretion and good judgement when dealing with school council information. For example: council members should not discuss who said what or what the different views of councillors may have outside of the council meeting. Private information from council meetings that could identify a staff member, student or their family must not be discussed, such as, information that could identify applicants in a principal selection process. The school council president and principal can provide guidance on any matter and the need for confidentiality, if required.

School councillors are expected to use the information they gain in the course of their council responsibilities for its intended purpose only. Members will use the information at council meetings to guide their discussions and decision-making. They will not use the information, including privileged or sensitive information, to obtain an advantage for themselves or another person or to cause concern or loss of the community’s trust.

Minutes should be taken at every school council meeting and accepted by the council as a fair and accurate record. Although they serve as a record of all decisions, they are not public documents, and therefore are not subject to Freedom of Information laws.

The principal, as executive officer of the school council, should keep the community informed about the operations of the school council by publishing a report following each meeting.

There are various channels the principal can use to report to the community about the operations of the school council, including:

- the school website
- the school newsletter
- digital communications
- direct mail to families
- emails to families and students.

School councils should be wary of “word-of-mouth” communication or using third parties to broadcast decisions. At times, school council may consider the local media as an appropriate channel for their news and information.

Another key opportunity for the community to be informed of the school council activities is at the public reporting meeting a council must hold at least once each year. At this meeting the school council reports on the proceedings of council since the date of the previous public meeting. The school council must present the Annual Report and, if council accounts have been audited, a copy of the audited accounts at the meeting.

Some school councils use this public meeting as a celebration and recognition of the school’s achievements as well as an acknowledgement of those who have contributed to the school over the previous year.

Interpreters and translators may need to be provided at these meetings to ensure that all families can understand the information being presented and engage in the discussions.
The president as spokesperson

The president is spokesperson for the school council, and not the school. The principal has the dual responsibility to represent the school and the school council to the community.

The president should be prepared to explain school council policies, plans, priorities and activities. Some presidents, in consultation with the principal, write articles for the school newsletter to explain school council actions, or attend parent meetings.

There are occasions when the president may be required to speak to the community, such as:

• at information nights for prospective students and their families. The president may be called upon to explain the role of school council and its activities – and to seek expressions of interest from parents willing to join council
• at graduation ceremonies or major fundraising events. The president may take this opportunity to thank staff and families for their support of the school and the students
• at special ceremonies, such as the opening of new school buildings or the dedication of new facilities.

In this role, the president is a key asset for the school in engaging with the community.

Consultation with the community

School council is required to gather information and consider the views of the school community for the purpose of making significant decisions related to the school and its students.

School council should be prepared to consult with the school community and, as needed, with the local community. There are some issues, such as the student dress code, on which the school community must be consulted.

However, consultation with the community does not mean the community makes the decision. School council seeks the opinion, advice and views of the community and then makes its decision.

Consultation shows the community that:

• opinions, ideas and contributions of others are valued
• the matters discussed are not always straightforward
• assistance is sought and welcomed
• people have different points of view about the best way forward.

Community forums or focus meetings or other mechanisms for providing feedback and ideas allow interested community members to contribute to the school council’s decision-making.
In planning a forum or focus meeting, ensure all voices can be heard, and consider use of interpreters/translators and protocols for enabling all to participate.

**Other ways of consulting the community may include:**

- inviting specific individuals to a council meeting to provide information or expertise to assist the school council
- online surveys or requests for input, feedback or ideas via email.

Where school councils have subcommittees, or establishes working groups, members of the wider community should be invited to participate. This can be an excellent introduction to the work of the school council. Subcommittees make recommendations to council, so it is an opportunity for opinions and ideas to be heard. Subcommittees must have at least three members including at least one school council member.

School council meetings are normally open to the school community and conducted according to standard meeting requirements as described in the Standing Orders. Visitors or observers can be present at school council meetings with the agreement of the principal and a decision of council. Visitors have a right to speak but must do so through the person chairing the meeting (usually the president).
Engaging the community

Consultation provides members of the school community with an opportunity to provide input into the decision-making process of school council. However, it can sometimes mean that only the vocal few have their ideas and opinions heard. On key issues, school council should seek direct input and engagement from its community in addition to consultation.

This approach to community engagement can be extended to the president and principal regularly conducting small invitee community forums.

The aim is to engage the community in school council work and to also reflect the school community’s input through the decision-making process. The result of such actions is a greater belief and confidence by the community in its school council.

Addressing concerns and complaints

A president is likely, from time to time, to receive a complaint about the school, either verbally or in writing.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, the following steps can be taken:

- if the complaint relates to a function of the school council, then the matter should be brought to the attention of the school council. Ask the complainant to put their concern in writing and address it to the school council. The complaint should be discussed at a council meeting. The principal as the executive officer should contact the complainant advising how the matter has been or is proposed to be resolved
- if the matter relates to the operation of the school, for example, a complaint regarding a teacher, class structure, subject timetable, or similar, the complainant should be advised the matter is not a school council matter and should be directed to contact the principal to discuss their concerns. The principal would then manage the complaint. A written complaint should be noted on the council meeting agenda as incoming correspondence with no further action required from the council
  - if the complaint is about the principal, the complainant should be advised to contact the regional office
  - for complex complaints advice may be sought from the School Operations and Governance Unit or the relevant regional office. Contact details are provided under ‘Support to school councillors’
  - for allegations of improper or corrupt conduct contact the Fraud and Corruption Control Unit on 03 7022 0135 or email fraud.control@education.vic.gov.au
  - for independent reporting of allegations of improper conduct or corrupt contact the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission on 1300 735 135 or email info@ibac.vic.gov.au.

Many complaints arise from miscommunication or lack of communication. A culture of respectful and appropriate communication from the school council may reduce complaints.

Some concerns raised by parents are complex. However in all cases an open, consistent approach that is courteous, efficient and fair best addresses parent concerns. Such an approach provides opportunities to build partnerships between schools and families.

When dealing with complaints, the principal and the president must ensure confidentiality and privacy of the matter.

The Department requires schools to develop a policy and procedure to address parent complaints. This policy should be developed by the principal in collaboration with parents and the school community and be consistent with the Department’s parent complaints policy located in PAL at Complaints – Parents www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/complaints/policy.
Managing conflict on council

School councillors must abide by the Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities and work together in the best interests of the school, including:

• assisting in the efficient governance of the school
• ensuring that the council’s decisions affecting students are made having regard to the best interests of the students as a primary consideration
• enhancing the educational opportunities of students at the school and
• ensuring the school council adheres to all legal requirements.

The PAL policy School council – Conduct and conflict of interest provides information and advice on the Code of Conduct and managing conflict on council should it arise.

In an environment where mutual trust and respect prevail, conflict can be a positive force. It can encourage people to find creative solutions, clarify an issue, increase the involvement of members, encourage growth, and strengthen relationships. However, conflict or misconduct can divert energy from the group, compromise morale and create suspicion and disharmony.

Department policy and guidance on managing conflict on council can be located on the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library under School Councils – Conduct and Conflict of Interest available at www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-conduct/policy.

Support to school councillors

The School Operations and Governance Unit (SOGU) of Schools and Regional Services provides advice and guidance to school councils on a range of governance issues. Councillors can contact SOGU directly via email at school.council@education.vic.gov.au or by phone on 03 7022 1343 or 03 7022 1345 for information and advice.

Councillors can also contact their regional office for information and advice.

The Department offers comprehensive face-to-face and virtual training free of cost to school councils of Victorian Government schools. The training is based on four modules of the Improving School Governance (ISG) materials; Governance, Strategic Planning, Finance and School Council President. Face-to-face training is accessed by contacting the provider, Synergistiq on 03 9946 6801 or email Synergistiq: sct@synergistiq.com

The ISG modules are also available online, on the Department’s website.
Resources and links

Further information, related policies and advice can be located on the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library for schools at www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal including:

- School Council – Composition and Office Bearers

- School Council – Meetings
  www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-meetings/policy

- School Council – Subcommittees

- School Council – Powers and Functions

- School Council – Training and Good Governance
  www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-training/policy

- School Council – Conduct and Conflict of Interest
  www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-conduct/policy

- School Council – Liability and Legal Proceedings

- School Strategic Plan

- Annual Implementation Plan (AIP)
  www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/annual-implementation-plan/policy

- Principal Selection

- Values – Department and VPS Values for School Employees
  www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/values-department-vps-school-employees/overview

- Complaints – Parents
  www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/complaints/policy
Further information

School Council President Education Mail – Login required
edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/Services/IT/ITServices/edumail/Pages/default.aspx

Education and Training Reform Act 2006 on the Victorian Current Acts website

Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 on the Department’s website

School Policy Templates Portal – at the edugate portal – Login required
edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/cp/Pages/home.aspx

Strategic Planning Online Tool (SPOT) – Login required
apps.edustar.vic.edu.au/spot

Victorian Public Sector Commission Codes and Standards website –
Code of Conduct for Directors
vpsc.vic.gov.au/resources/code-of-conduct-for-directors
**Handout A1**

**How effective is your leadership**

As president you have a responsibility for the effectiveness of your council. You help set the agenda for council meetings, chair the meetings and act as a spokesperson for school council. Use this chart to assess your effectiveness and that of your council.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never (Mark with an X)</th>
<th>1 (Mark with an X)</th>
<th>2 (Mark with an X)</th>
<th>3 (Mark with an X)</th>
<th>4 (Mark with an X)</th>
<th>5 (Mark with an X)</th>
<th>Always (Mark with an X)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I meet the principal before every school council meeting to discuss the agenda and any issues of concern.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>I make myself available to the principal and the school whenever needed.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>I am open, fair and candid in my dealings with all school council colleagues.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>I support all school council colleagues and ensure they are heard at council meetings.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>I look for opportunities to build relationships with others in the local community, particularly influential individuals and groups.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>I understand and refer to the school council Code of Conduct and council Standing Orders at every meeting.</td>
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### Handout A1

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<th>Never</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Our school council meetings are conducted according to Standing Orders and always run to time.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Our school council minutes are a true and accurate record of our meetings.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Three things I might do to increase the effectiveness of my leadership are:</td>
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**IMPROVING SCHOOL GOVERNANCE**

**SCHOOL COUNCIL PRESIDENT**
## Scenarios for presidents

### As president, how do you handle these situations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Your school council meeting is about to start. Your membership according to the council Ministerial Order 1280 Constitution of Government School Councils is 14 (seven parent members, four school employee members including the principal, and three community members). Two of your parent members are Department employees at other schools and one community position remains unfilled. Present at tonight's meeting are the principal, three teachers, two community members (including the president) and four parents, one of whom is a Department employee. Do you have a quorum?</td>
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<td>2. One school council member continually dominates school council meetings no matter what agenda item is being discussed. You are aware that some other members hardly speak at meetings. What should you do?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. You receive a letter from a parent upset at how the principal has handled a situation that resulted in her son being suspended for three days. The parent believes the suspension was not warranted and the principal was victimising her son. The parent wants this matter raised at school council and plans to attend the next council meeting to see that it is.</td>
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<td>4. You are about to close the school council meeting when a school council member indicates he wishes to have a matter discussed. He starts by saying some parents are concerned about the behaviour of a teacher outside school hours.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Situation</td>
<td>Response</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Your school council has been considering a contentious issue for several meetings. Finally, a motion has been put and the voting sees five votes for and five votes against. As president and chair, your vote went for the affirmative. Now what do you do?</td>
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<td>6. The finance subcommittee has recommended that school council not renew the school council’s contract with the current cleaners. It recommends the school should hire a new cleaner, who is the brother-in-law of the principal. <strong>Note:</strong> this scenario relates to a rural or regional school council only as metropolitan school councils are no longer responsible for contracting school cleaners.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. School council decides it is time to review the student dress code and sets up a working party to consider this. Department policy states the community must be consulted on changes to the school’s dress code. How should you proceed?</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. As president of the school council, you are approached by a small group of staff members who would like to have a discussion with you about the school. You feel this is positive and agree to meet with them. At the meeting the group begins to make direct comments about their dissatisfaction with some teacher colleagues and the principal.</td>
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