

Public School Council/Board Training

Module 5: Monitoring performance



In this module, you will learn about the role of the council/board in:

- monitoring school performance on academic and other measures;
- reporting on school performance; and
- school reviews.

Under the *School Education Act 1999*, every school must have a council/board unless exempted by the Minister for Education. The legislation provides this mechanism for parents, students, staff and the community to be involved with their local school. The Act provides specific functions for the council/board. For more information, see Module 1 Roles, responsibilities and decision making.

School performance

The council/board can take part in monitoring the school's performance, including:

- student performance – for example, monitoring state and national testing data through On-entry Assessment Program, National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy, Western Australian Certificate of Education, Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment;
- non-academic achievement – for example, monitoring school data on student attendance, student suspensions and exclusions, sporting achievements, community participation;
- staff, student and parent satisfaction – for example monitoring satisfaction survey results; and
- financial performance – for example monitoring financial reports when provided by the principal.

School performance checklist



Questions the council/board might consider when taking part in monitoring education performance:

Collecting data

- What information do we need to have access to?
- Do we have access to useful information?
- Do we have access to too much information or information that will never be used?

Interpreting data

- How has the school interpreted the data?
- Has the school identified trends?
- Are the trends significant?

What does the data tell us about performance?

- How do the outcomes achieved compare with those set or expected?
- Are we making appropriate progress against our focus area targets?
- Is any action needed to correct differences between achieved and expected outcomes?
- Do we need to review or change the outcomes on which we will focus? Do we need to update the school plan?

Inclusion and equity

- Who else may wish or need to see this information?
- What format will it take?
- What is the best way to present the information so our school community can understand it?

School annual report

Each school must publish an annual report that describes its performance. The report gives parents and other members of the community a clear sense of how students in the school are progressing and what is being done to maximise student achievement.

The council/board can contribute to the development of the school annual report through:

- taking part in the monitoring of the school's performance data;
- reviewing information to be included; and
- reviewing the draft annual report before publishing.

What are the annual report requirements?

The annual report must report on progress against school priorities and targets, and specific outcomes attached to funding for targeted initiatives and State and nationally agreed priorities.

The annual report for the previous school year must be completed by the end of Term 1.

It must be written clearly for a public audience and include at least the four following requirements:

- progress against identified priorities based on analysis of data produced through the school's cycle of self-assessment;
- contextualised information about student achievement, including those groups experiencing potential educational disadvantage;
- annual budget and accounts; and
- parent, student and teacher satisfaction.

It is useful for the annual report to include the names of the members of the council/board and their membership category.

Distributing the school annual report

School annual reports are published on the Department of Education's [Schools Online](#) and on the school's website.

The annual report should be readily available to all members of the school community. It is recommended that the annual report is also available:

- at the school reception; and
- in community resource centres like the local library and shire/council offices.

Financial performance and reporting

The school must produce a public, annual financial report as part of the school annual report. This report tells the story of the school's finances including where money and other resources have come from, the current state of the finances and how money is being managed and spent.

The principal oversees the development of financial reports for the council/board, funders and members of the school community.

Generally speaking, budget consideration is an annual review process linked directly to the school plan.

Council/board members should be able to:

- understand the overall financial situation as reported;
- ask questions so they understand the true state of the finances;
- understand any differences between the actual and budgeted income and expenditure; and
- understand decisions and adjustments that may be required from the principal.

Financial reports should be easy for the community to interpret and written in plain English.

Understanding financial reports

Schools present their financial reports in ways that make the most sense to each school community. This section describes some common aspects of school financial reports.

Income: Revenue (also known as income) is money coming in to the school. The school typically reports income from the following sources:

Type of income	What this means
Australian Government funding	Monies provided by the Australian Government
State Government funding	Monies provided by the Western Australian Government
Contributions, charges and fees	Fees paid by families including annual contributions and excursion costs
Other private sources	Donations, sponsorships, funds raised through events (such as fetes) and similar

Expenditure: Expenditure refers to money spent by the school. Commonly reported expenditure items include:

Type of expense	What this means
Consumables	Items such as stationery, printing and cleaning products
Leases	Monies spent to lease buildings or land for school activities
Utilities	Costs of electricity, water and gas
Repairs and maintenance	Maintenance of school facilities such as gardening and painting

What to look for when reviewing financial statements

When reviewing income and expenditure in the financial statements, council/board members can ask about the:

- Difference in expenditure between what was predicted (budgeted) and what was spent (actual).
- Income items and the different sources of income – the council/board may request the principal provides further information for clarification.

When seeking clarification or asking questions, council/board members should focus their interest on the strategic aspects of income and expenditure rather than questioning individual items in the budget.

Student centred funding model

In the past, schools have received resources through complicated staffing formulae, multitudes of funding lines, numerous multipliers and complex adjustments. Through the student centred funding model, since 2015 schools have been operating with one line budgets. This means all of a school's resources are provided in dollars.

Funding is provided to the school to meet industrial and operational obligations on audited February student enrolment census data through two main categories:

- per student funding based on year levels of students (Kindergarten; Pre-Primary to Year 3; Years 4 to 6; Years 7 to 10; and Years 11 to 12); and
- student and school characteristics funding (Aboriginality, social disadvantage, English as an additional language and disability allocations; and enrolment-linked base and locality allocations).

How schools receive funding through the student centered funding model

<p>Per student funding</p> <p>For all students based on their year levels.</p>	<p>Locality allocation</p> <p>To meet additional costs unique to schools in remote and outer regional areas of the State.</p>
<p>Aboriginal allocation</p> <p>To help schools address the learning needs of Aboriginal students and close the education achievement gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.</p>	<p>School disadvantage allocation</p> <p>To help schools address the higher and additional learning needs of students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds.</p>
<p>English as an additional language allocation</p> <p>To help schools address the learning needs of eligible students with English as an additional language.</p>	<p>Disability allocation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help schools address the learning needs of students with eligible disability. • Separate educational adjustment allocation to enable mainstream schools to implement programs and learning supports for students with additional learning needs.
<p>Targeted initiatives</p> <p>Funding for schools providing specific programs and services, for example Gifted and Talented Programs.</p> <p>Operational response allocations</p> <p>Funding for schools in response to operating requirements.</p> <p>Regional allocations</p> <p>Funding for schools through regional offices.</p>	

Most of a school's one-line budget is spent on salaries. Over time, as staff leave and retire, the principal can develop a staffing profile that best suits the circumstances of the school within the available budget. All legislative and industrial requirements, for example class sizes must be met. All salaries are charged to schools at a standard rate for each staff category regardless of the experience and salary level of individuals.

The remaining funds are transferred to the school bank account for the purchase of goods and services.

Budget and costs

One line budgets

- All schools operate with one line budgets.
- Budget for each school is a total dollar amount.
- Principal determines the proportion for salaries and proportion for cash.
- Majority of the budget is for employing staff.

School costs paid centrally

- Some school costs continue to be paid centrally for efficiency and effectiveness.
- Cost currently includes capital works, scheduled maintenance, staff leave, staff housing and workers compensation.

Funding agreement for schools

The Funding Agreement for Schools outlines the accountability expectations of the principal in relation to the management of funding to the school through the student-centred funding model and the operation of the one line budget.

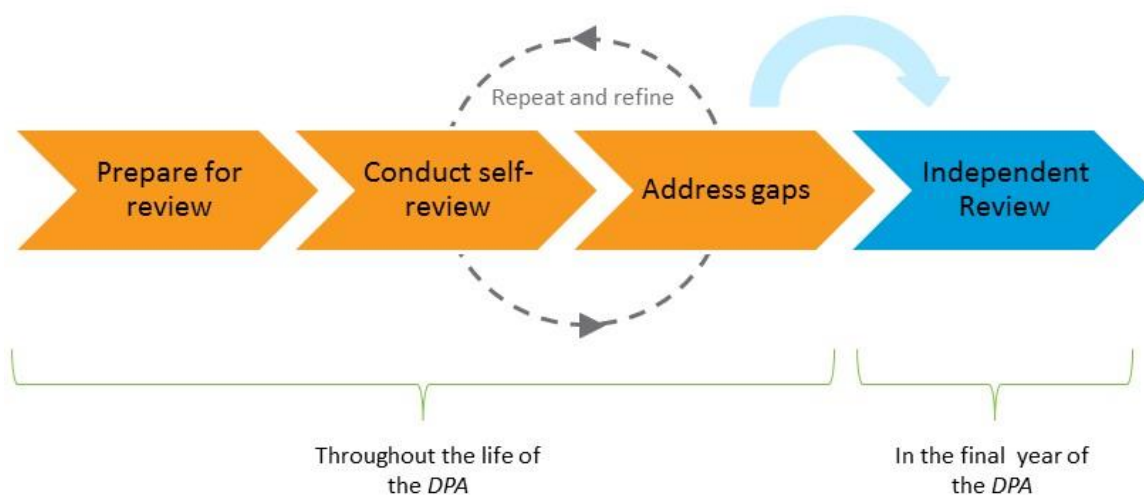
The funding agreement for each year sets a minimum percentage of the school's funding which is to be spent in that year to benefit the students enrolled in the school.

The funding agreement requires that resources (including staff time, expertise, funding, facilities and materials) should be applied in a targeted manner to meet the learning and wellbeing needs of all students in the school.

School reviews

A single approach to school reviews will be implemented from 2018. Under this approach there will be consistent and equitable access to a single system of review, feedback and improvement for all schools, including Independent Public Schools. The review process will incorporate rigorous self-assessment, appropriate analysis of data, and sound judgements about performance strengths and weaknesses. It will provide an opportunity for staff and the community to give feedback on their school's effectiveness.

To prepare for a school review, the school must conduct a self-assessment.



School self-assessment

School self-assessment processes are an essential part of school improvement. As the council/board participates in the school review, it is important for members to understand the process and outcomes of the school's self-assessment.

Principals work with school staff to undertake rigorous self-assessment that can result in judgements about the standards of student achievement and the effectiveness of school programs. This includes ensuring student improvement targets and priorities, as detailed in the school plan are assessed and reviewed annually.

The council/board can play an important role in ensuring that the school stays on track and is responsive to identified needs. The school council/board's knowledge of the school context and school data is an important factor in their ability to make a positive contribution to school self-assessment.