Guidelines for the 2010 Annual Report to the School Community
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Executive summary

The annual report to the school community (annual report) provides a means for the school council, leadership team, staff and students to reflect on and communicate to the whole school community the successes of their improvement strategies, the effectiveness of resource allocation and their future directions.

The 2010 annual reporting process builds on a strong base of transparency, openness and community engagement. The annual reporting process ensures high quality data is used and shared with the school community in order to monitor and drive school improvement.

The 2010 annual report is a further enhancement of the 2009 annual report which streamlined the annual reporting process, using the Government School Performance Summary (GSPS) and the What Our School is Doing statement (WOSID) as the core framework for reporting. These will again be used as key components in reporting to the school community.

The 2010 annual report will comprise:

• a cover page
• the WOSID statement which provides a concise summary of the school’s context, its performance throughout the year in the three student outcome areas, and future directions
• the GSPS which provides a record of the school’s performance on a range of mandatory performance indicators
• a financial report reflecting on the financial performance and position of the school
• a report on National Partnerships funding and activity for participating schools.

The 2010 annual report must be signed off by the Regional Network Leader and School Council before it is submitted by 31 March 2011, for publication on the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority’s (VRQA) State Register.

The school is required to hold a public meeting to present the annual report to the school community.

1. Introduction

The School Accountability and Improvement Framework is constructed around four main elements:

• evaluation of progress via an internal school self-evaluation and an external school reviewer
• planning for improvement via a school strategic plan and annual implementation plans
• reporting on progress via an annual report
• managing risk and compliance with legislation, regulation and policy via the school compliance checklist.

These elements are not discrete and independent but rather, in keeping with the intent and principles of good governance, are part of a coherent planning and reporting process for organising school improvement efforts. These guidelines outline the process for preparing the 2010 annual report to the school community.

2. Overview of annual reporting

Annual reporting is an important tool for effective governance within schools and the government school system. Reporting to the school community adds value in a number of ways:

• Keeping the school community informed

Schools are important to their local communities. Parents and families, students and school staff make considerable contributions to their school. The annual report provides a means of informing the school community of what has been achieved and how the school is performing. Providing information about schools helps the community hold schools, the system and Government accountable for improving student outcomes.

• Contributing to system accountability and meeting legislative requirements

Schools are part of the publicly funded government education system. The information contained in the annual report helps the Department account to government and parliament for the use of these funds. Public accountability for improving student outcomes and for the use of public money is mandated in the Education and Training Reform Act (2006), where School Councils are required to prepare and publish annual reports.

• Relationship between the planning and annual reporting processes

Schools need to analyse and reflect on achievements made during the past year to understand the impact of the strategies and
programs that were undertaken, and to identify where progress has exceeded expectations, met expectations or was less than anticipated. The annual report is a means to describe this process and to inform future plans and directions. Where progress is greater or less than anticipated, it may be necessary to adjust the school’s key improvement strategies as reflected in the school strategic plan and the annual implementation plan.

The content of the annual report:

- **Presents school performance**
  School performance outcomes are presented across the three student outcome areas: student learning, student engagement and wellbeing, and student pathways and transitions.
  Discussing both positive and negative aspects of the school’s progress, the annual report provides the community with a balanced and realistic picture of overall progress towards the school’s goals and targets.

- **Identifies future directions and areas for improvement**
  The annual report identifies the school’s future directions to support school improvement.

- **Avoids the use of technical language and jargon**
  The annual report is written in plain English, so it is clear and easy to understand.

- **Maintains professional standards**
  The annual report is presented to the school community in a professional manner reflecting the values and principles of the school and the Department.

### 3. Changes to the 2010 annual report

The revised approach to the annual reporting process in 2009 received a strongly positive response from schools and regions. As well as assisting schools to meet all national and state government reporting requirements, the revised process was seen as more streamlined and time-efficient.

To further enhance the annual report and respond to national partnerships reporting requirements, the following changes have been made to the 2010 annual report:

- **Schools will have the option of inserting their own photographs in the cover page. A generic cover page will be provided for schools that do not wish to take up this option.**

- **For participating schools, a National Partnerships Annual Activity and Accountability Statement will be provided which must be included as part of the annual report**

Further information to assist schools in completing the 2010 annual report is available in Circular S603-2010: 2010 School Annual Report – Supplementary Information for Schools.

Schools that wish to convey in greater detail their performance and achievements to their school community can do so through the school council’s public meeting to present the annual report, the school newsletter or annual school magazine.

### 4. The structure for the 2010 annual report

The annual report will be comprised of the following components:

- **Cover page**
- ‘What Our School Is Doing’ statement
- Government School Performance Summary
- Financial Performance and Position Statement
- National Partnerships Funding and Activity Report for participating schools

Figure 1 outlines the components of the revised annual report structure. These components are described in greater detail below.

### 5. Cover page

The cover page template for the 2010 annual report will be automatically generated by the Department, in a style consistent with departmental corporate branding. Schools will have the option of substituting two of their own photos for the standard photos provided on the cover page template.

A cover page template for each school will be available on the School Performance Reports website in November. Schools wishing to have their own photographs on the front cover of their annual report will be required to download the template, substitute their own photographs and email their revised cover page to the Regional Network Leader. Instructions to assist schools in this process are provided in Circular S603-2010.

**ACTION (optional)**

**Schools:**

- ✔️ download the cover page and substitute their photographs for the generic photographs
- ✔️ email the revised cover page to the Regional Network Leader
COMPONENTS OF THE 2010 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

COVER PAGE

WHAT OUR SCHOOL IS DOING STATEMENT

GOVERNMENT SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

FINANCIAL REPORTING

NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS REPORTING (for participating schools)

DEECD automatically generates the cover page template. Schools have option to insert own photograph.

Schools will complete the WOSID statement prior to Annual Report due date.

DEECD automatically generates the GSPS with the ‘How to read’ advice.

Schools complete the Financial Performance and Position template.

DEECD automatically generates the National Partnerships Activity and Accountability Statement for participating schools.
6. ‘What Our School Is Doing’ Statement (WOSID)

The WOSID is prepared by the school and provides succinct contextual information about the school and a brief discussion of the school’s performance and future directions. This section of the report enables the school to make connections between performance outcomes over the past year and how these translate into plans for improvement in the coming 12 months. The WOSID consists of:

- the school context
- commentary on the school’s progress and what the school is doing to improve student outcomes in each of the three student outcome areas: student learning, student engagement and wellbeing, and student pathways and transitions
- the school’s website (recommended).

Schools will be required to include in their WOSID information in relation to:

- workforce composition
- students participating in the Program for Students with a Disability (where there are more than 10 students in the program)
- how non-attendance is being addressed by the school.

The WOSID template is available in February 2011 on the School Performance Reports website.

ACTIONS

Schools download and complete the WOSID template by 31 March 2011.

The following criteria should be considered when writing this section of the report:

Checklist

☑ The WOSID provides succinct contextual information about the school.

☑ The WOSID presents a summary analysis of the school’s performance and future directions in relation to the three student outcome areas: student learning, student engagement and wellbeing and student pathways and transitions. Comments will cover both achievements and areas for improvement.

☑ Commonwealth and State mandatory requirements are included as outlined in the circular in November 2010

☑ Statements included in the WOSID are couched in a professional manner, reflecting the values and principles of the school and Department.

☑ The WOSID has been carefully proofread

7. Government School Performance Summary (GSPS)

The GSPS includes:

- absolute scores for key performance indicators for the year and across four years (where data are available) for the three student outcome areas:
  - Student learning
  - Student engagement and wellbeing
  - Student pathways and transitions

- intake-adjusted school performance measures, which indicate how the school’s performance compares with other Victorian government schools, taking into account the characteristics of the school and its students.

Information in the GSPS includes for all schools:

- enrolments
- the socio-economic background of students
- the proportion of students with English as a second language
- teacher standards and qualifications
- data related to teacher satisfaction
- data related to parent satisfaction.

Information in the GSPS for schools with primary students includes:

- overall measures in the three student outcome areas, both in terms of school means and in comparison with schools with students from similar backgrounds
- teacher judgements of student outcomes against the VELS in:
  - English
  - Mathematics
  - all other subjects.
- Year 3 and Year 5 NAPLAN data
- student attendance
- student attitudes to school survey data.

Information in the GSPS for schools with secondary students includes:

- overall measures in the three student outcome areas, both in terms of school means and in comparison with schools with students from similar backgrounds
- teacher judgements of student outcomes against the VELS in:
  - English
  - Mathematics
  - all other subjects.
- Year 7 and Year 9 NAPLAN data
- 2010 VCE data
• student attendance
• student attitudes to school survey data
• retention
• students exiting to further studies or full-time employment

The Department recognises the unique circumstances of specialist, select entry, camp, community and English Language schools and work is underway to design appropriate School Comparison measures for these schools.

8. Financial Performance and Position Statement

As part of the publicly funded education system, and mandated through the Financial Management Act (1994) and the Education and Training Reform Act (2006), schools are accountable to the public and government for the efficient and effective use of those funds. The annual report must include:

• a summary of the school council’s financial performance (revenue/expenditure) for the school year
• a summary of the school council’s position for the school year (funds available/financial commitments).

This summary is required to be consistent with the school’s Operating Statement, Balance Sheet and Financial Commitments Summary, as certified by the Principal and School Council President at 31 December 2010. Certification of these statements by the Principal and School Council President is compulsory at year end as part of the school audit framework. Please note that Total Financial Commitments of the school should equal the Total Funds Available.

School Resource Package (SRP) funding and expenditure for centrally paid salaries are not included in this summary.

Appendix B provides advice on how schools can access financial information needed to complete this section through CASES21 Finance.

A commentary relating to the school’s financial performance is also required as part of the annual report. This commentary has a limit of 300 words and should include the following:

• an outline of the reasons why the annual result was a surplus or deficit
• an explanation of any extraordinary revenue or expenditure items
• any new sources of funding the school received during the year; for example, special grants or fundraising initiatives
• any additional funding the school received (State/Commonwealth) beyond the School Resource Package, including the purpose of that funding and its link to improvements to teaching and learning e.g. National Partnerships funding.

Please note that a school’s financial commitments will include both its legal obligations to pay creditors (Accounts Payable) as well as commitments the School Council has made in relation to future projects or programs.

The Financial Performance and Position Statement template will be available in February 2011.

ACTIONS

Checklist
The following criteria should be considered when writing this section of the report:

☐ The report provides a summary of School Council’s financial performance (revenue/expenditure) for the school year — Operating Statement Summary
☐ The report provides a summary of the School Council’s financial position (funds available/financial commitments) for the school year — Financial Commitment Summary
☐ The financial report is consistent with the audited financial statements of the school
☐ The Total Financial Commitments of the school should equal the Total Funds Available — Financial Commitment Summary
☐ A written commentary is included in the Financial Performance and Position Statement
9. National Partnerships Activity and Accountability Statement

Schools participating in national partnerships will be provided with an annual activity and accountability statement. This statement will be attached to the annual report and will include:

- the national partnership name
- the 2010 funding allocation
- the 2011 notional funding allocation
- a school co-investment statement
- the 2010 and 2011 participation in national partnership initiatives

The annual activity and accountability statement template will be pre-populated with the above information by central office and will be available for downloading from the School Performance Reports website in February 2011.

ACTION

Schools download the National Partnerships Activity and Accountability Statement for inclusion in the 2010 Annual Report.

10. Endorsement

School governance arrangements require the annual report to be tabled at a school council meeting for ratification and endorsement. Schools should submit their annual report to their regional network leader for approval before taking it to school council.

It is the responsibility of the school and school council to ensure that the WOSID statement and Financial Performance and Position Statement are accurate and meet the expectations identified within the guidelines.

11. Communication

An important part of engaging the school community in the annual reporting process is ensuring that the annual report is made available to every member of the school community. Each year, school councils are required under legislation to conduct a public meeting. The school’s annual report is presented by the school council at this meeting.

Under the Commonwealth’s National Education Agreement, the annual report is required to be published on the internet. In order to ensure Victoria’s compliance with these regulations, the VRQA State Register provides a means for all government schools to publish their annual report online to parents.

Schools are required to provide parents with the annual report either online or via a means they can access.

12. Which schools should submit an annual report?

All schools are required to complete the annual report each year. This includes schools in their year of self-evaluation, review and planning. However, the following variations apply for the 2010 annual report:

- Closed, new or newly merged and de-merged schools
- Hub/Annex schools

Only schools which have been operating for the entire 2010 school year are required to complete a 2010 annual report. Therefore:

- schools that closed in 2010 are not required to produce a 2010 annual report
- new schools, including those formed as a result of either a merger or de-merger, will not be required to produce an annual report until they have been open for a full school year, regardless of whether or not the school number changes
- the previous entities that formed part of merged or de-merged schools are considered as closed and do not have to provide a 2010 annual report.

Hub/Annex schools

One annual report will be developed to reflect the performance of both hub and annex schools. However, as individual entities with unique school numbers and school councils, an individual GSPS is automatically generated for both hub and annex schools. It is expected that separate WOSID statements and Financial Performance and Position statement templates will be completed for hub and annex schools and submitted to the RNL for approval before sign-off by school council. Once regions have uploaded the annual reports for each of the hub and annexe school to the Department, these will be collated into one document.

13. Summary of roles in school annual reporting

How is the school council involved in school annual reporting?

The school council is an integral part of the governance structure of the school and its role includes:

- monitoring the progress of the development of the annual report
• providing feedback to the leadership team on draft versions of the annual report
• endorsing the annual report
• holding a public meeting and inviting the school community to discuss the content of the annual report.

How are the school principal and the school leadership team involved in annual reporting?
The school principal plays a central role in annual reporting, both in the role of principal and as executive officer of the school council. The Principal, supported by the school leadership team, is responsible for:

• keeping the school community, including staff, students, council and parents, informed of school performance and future directions
• development of the annual report for consideration by the school council
• ensuring the school community is provided with access to the annual report
• organising a public reporting meeting to communicate the annual report to the school community.

How are the regions involved in annual reporting?
RNLs are accountable for the performance of schools within their networks and oversee a range of school support services. RNLs and regional office personnel are responsible for:

• providing training, support and advice to schools in the annual reporting process
• helping schools to ensure that annual reports are consistent with the School Accountability and Improvement Framework guidelines and departmental policy
• approving the WOSID statements and Financial Performance and Position Statements prior to schools taking their annual reports to school council for endorsement
• once signed-off by School Council, forwarding the cover page, WOSID and Financial Performance and Position Statement components of the annual report to the Department.

What is the role of the Department’s central office?
The School Improvement Division is responsible for:

• developing the Department’s policy framework for annual reporting, including guidelines and templates to be completed by schools
• providing the Government School Performance Summary for each school and the National Partnership Annual Activity and Accountability Statement for participating schools
• electronically merging the components of the annual report
• providing the annual reports to the VRQA to be published online on the State Register.

How are parents involved in annual reporting?
Parents are a key part of the school community and should attend the public reporting meeting to discuss the annual report.

14. Further support and information
Overview of the Accountability and Improvement Framework for Victorian Government Schools:

2010 Annual Report to the School Community - Supplementary Information for Schools:

School performance reports:

Regional Network Leaders and regional accountability and improvement personnel can provide further assistance to schools. A list of regional accountability and improvement personnel is located at:

To contact the School Improvement Division regarding the School Accountability and Improvement Framework, please email:
schoolaccountability@edumail.vic.gov.au
Appendix: Working with CASES21 finance reports

Financial Performance

Schools should use their Operating Statement — Detailed (GL21150) as the basis for the Financial Performance component of their annual report. Schools should ensure that all relevant family charges have been written off, or adjusted via balance day adjustment journal, prior to end of year.

For more information on the CASES21 Finance Operating Statement schools should refer to Operating Statement a practical example and explanation that can be found on the School Financial Management website: www.education.vic.gov.au/management/financial/cases21.htm

For more information on processing balance day adjustments and write-offs in C21F, schools should refer to the C21F Process Guide — Section 11 End of Year Procedures.

Financial Position

In developing the Summary of Financial Position component of their annual report schools should use their CASES21 Finance Balance Sheet (GL21160S) and the Financial Commitment Summary for the Year Ended 31 December 2010 (GLBANK21002).

It should be noted that the descriptions provided in the financial commitments section of the table replicate some of the descriptions in GLBANK21002. Schools may change these descriptions to suit their reporting requirements as required so long as the total commitments reported remains equal to the total funds available amount.

For more information on the CASES21 Finance Balance Sheet schools should refer to The Balance Sheet a practical example and explanation, which can be found on the School Financial Management website: www.education.vic.gov.au/management/financial/cases21.htm

For more information on the Financial Commitments Summary schools should refer to Circular 556-2010.

For more information on School Operating Reserves schools should refer to Circular 436-2008, New School Cash Reserves Benchmarks.