

BLUEPRINT FOR Government Schools

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR
EDUCATION IN THE VICTORIAN
GOVERNMENT SCHOOL SYSTEM



Minister's FOREWORD



This Government has made education the number one priority.

The commitment and effort we put into education is one of the most fundamental investments we can make towards securing the future wellbeing of Victorians.

Since coming to office in 1999, we have invested significant additional resources in education and training to undertake reforms and implement a range of initiatives. We have reduced class sizes in schools and tackled key issues of early and middle years development in schooling. Under this Government, Victoria is providing national leadership in the reform of the senior years of school and in pathways from schooling.

We have also invested heavily in strategic programs to achieve targeted improvement, which has clearly occurred. We have set targets to measure the performance across the whole system and the improvement has been considerable. The achievements of Victorian students in national and international tests have been impressive. The percentage of students that stay on to the final years of school has risen steadily every year and is now near the highest in Australia. Since 1999, literacy and numeracy data point to ongoing improvements in standards across year levels. Most importantly, the results of those students who have previously had low performance have improved.

Despite all that has been achieved over the past four years, we need to concentrate further upon improved learning outcomes for students. Some groups of students continue to have poor levels of literacy and other basic skills. These students can be concentrated in particular schools and particular areas of the state. They tend to have high rates of absenteeism from school and are more likely to leave school early. There are also high variations in outcomes between classes within schools and between schools with similar student populations.

The demands of our increasingly sophisticated economy and a more complex and rapidly changing society require us to address these poor outcomes and, indeed, to improve educational outcomes for all students.

Education and training underpin the development of a highly skilled, innovative workforce as a critical enabling factor for social, cultural and economic growth in Australia.

And it is a key to personal development and to a wide array of life opportunities.

Every Victorian is entitled to the benefits of a quality school education. In Victoria, the large majority of people are educated in our government schools. Therefore our state education system plays a central role in advancing their economic and social wellbeing.

In addition, the government school system has specific responsibility to serve all young people in the state. It guarantees an education for all children, irrespective of their location or background. Therefore, the quality of the government school system and all government schools is critical to the pledge of this Government to govern on behalf of, and in the interests of, all Victorians. As Minister for Education and Training in the Victorian Government, I have the primary responsibility for delivering this pledge in the field of education.

In this Statement, I provide our Government's *Blueprint* for continuing improvement and progress in the quality of the government school system. It outlines measures that will be taken to ensure that all schools actively pursue excellence in teaching and that learning outcomes for all students continue to improve.

The *Blueprint for Government Schools* has been carefully designed. It draws on extensive research into patterns of student outcomes, the factors that influence them and the performance of schools in delivering them. The initiatives detailed in the *Blueprint* have also been informed by a robust process of consultation. The directions that we are taking as a Government are laid on the fundamental principle that all young people and all communities in Victoria have a right to a quality education, and that it is the primary role of the government school system to deliver such an education.

The *Blueprint* is also informed by an understanding of the more complex world that students face when they

leave school. It further recognises that the learning needs of all students are not the same.

The capacities and commitment of teachers and principals are vital to the quality of educational outcomes and the Victorian government education system is fortunate to have high quality teachers and leaders working in its schools. A key emphasis of the *Blueprint* is the importance of maintaining and further enhancing this quality over the coming years.

The *Blueprint* provides that the administration of Government schools will continue to be based upon the principle of self-management, but with increased scope for cooperation with other schools. It recognises the importance of innovation in delivering improved results and of designing, implementing and evaluating programs to meet student needs and the centrality of the quality of the teaching-learning relationship. It also reflects the Government's determination to improve the quality and performance of schools, and to work with schools that have poor student outcomes.

The ultimate measure of the success of the *Blueprint for Government Schools* will depend on effective partnerships. The Government alone cannot deliver educational excellence for all students. Nor can schools. Such excellence can come only from joint initiatives between the Government and the Department, schools and their teachers, principals and other workers, parents and other school community members. This Statement identifies and outlines the critical challenges.

This Government is a government for all Victorians.

Through the initiatives in the *Blueprint for Government Schools* we look forward to developing the best solutions and building an even stronger learning culture in our schools, for the benefit of all Victorians.



Lynne Kosky, MP
Minister for Education and Training

Summary OF ACTIONS



The *Blueprint for Government Schools* outlines the Government's reform agenda for the government school system, which includes the implementation of the following strategies and initiatives.

Recognising and Responding to Diverse Student Needs

Flagship Strategy 1: Student Learning

- The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority will identify and develop a broad **framework of 'essential learnings'** for all Victorian students (*refer to page 14*).
- The Government will develop **new curriculum and reporting guidelines** to assist government schools in

deciding on curriculum development, improved teaching methods, assessment and reporting (*refer to page 14*).

- Improved reporting on student achievement will be provided for parents and employers through the development of **defined assessment measures of student progress** (*refer to page 15*).
- **Principles of learning and teaching from Prep to Year 12** will be developed to support teachers' professional development and provide advice in areas such as diversity of learning and thinking styles, student-teacher relationships and productive learning experiences (*refer to page 15*).
- The Government will develop a **knowledge bank** that documents and ensures best practice is shared across the system (*refer to page 15*).

Flagship Strategy 2: Developing a New Resource Allocation Model

- A **new resource allocation model** that is less complex and more transparent than the existing one, and which is flexible, equitable, efficient and student focused will be developed and implemented (*refer to page 16*).



Building the Skills of the Education Workforce to Enhance the Teaching–Learning Relationship

Flagship Strategy 3: Building Leadership Capacity

- An **improved principal selection process** will be developed that includes increasing principal representation on selection panels, tailoring selection criteria to reflect the school's needs, and encouraging contact between candidates and the employing school (refer to page 17).
- The Government will establish a **mentoring program for first time principals and a coaching support program for experienced principals** to develop principals' leadership capabilities (refer to page 18).
- The Government will introduce a **'balanced scorecard' approach to improve the performance management of principals**. This will link principal performance assessment to overall school performance (refer to page 18).
- The Government will implement an **accelerated development program for high potential leaders**. Participants will benefit from exposure to leadership responsibilities, tailored professional development, and mentoring (refer to page 18).
- The Government will also implement a **development program for high performing principals** that includes tailored professional development, placements in challenging schools, and mentoring other principals and aspiring principals (refer to page 18).
- The Government will expand **local administrative bureaus for networks of small schools** to help alleviate the administrative workload of small schools (refer to page 18).



Flagship Strategy 4: Creating and Supporting a Performance and Development Culture

- An **accreditation scheme for performance and development culture schools** will be introduced. Accredited schools will improve teacher effectiveness and therefore student outcomes (*refer to page 20*).

Flagship Strategy 5: Teacher Professional Development

- The Government will invest \$5m each year to enable **460 teachers to undertake focused teacher professional leave**, ranging from four to ten weeks. This will enhance teachers' classroom practice (*refer to page 20*).

- The Government will expand the **induction program for beginning teachers** and continue **mentoring programs** to ensure good induction and mentoring processes are spread across the school system (*refer to page 21*).

Continuously Improving Schools

Flagship Strategy 6: School Improvement

- The Government will implement a **differential model of school review** to reflect schools' different stages of development and to better target support and assistance (*refer to page 23*).



- Clear and widely understood **performance triggers** will be developed to drive **systemic intervention in under-performing schools** to ensure that the best possible improvements are made and that cycles of under-performance are addressed early (*refer to page 25*).
- To minimise the administrative burden on schools, a **single planning and accountability document** will be implemented (*refer to page 26*).
- **Parent, teacher and student opinion data will be provided** to all schools on a consistent basis to provide insight into school performance and information to support improvement (*refer to page 26*).

Flagship Strategy 7: Leading Schools Fund

- The Government will establish the **Leading Schools Fund** in order to drive whole school improvement. The initiative will build on the knowledge and good practice already existing in schools and provide them with the incentive and opportunity to reach beyond their current practice and performance. It will facilitate strategic partnerships and collaboration between schools so that schools can learn from each other, assist each other and strengthen the government school system (*refer to page 27*).



INTRODUCTION



Public and private expectations for education have risen greatly over the past decade. The role of education and training in the economic prosperity of nations and regions, and in social health and cohesion, is recognised by governments around the world, and has been validated by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The educational stakes for individuals are higher than ever before.

Young people need a high standard of education to underpin their economic and employment security, and to enable them to keep learning in an ever changing and more challenging world. Parents, therefore, rightfully expect that their children will be provided with an education of high quality.

The Victorian Government has made education the number one priority. To this end, goals and targets have been set. The targets are challenging. They require the achievement of levels of literacy, numeracy, participation in, and outcomes from, education across proportions of the population that have never before been achieved in Australia, or in most other countries.

The Government has already recognised that more resources are needed, and an extra \$3.69 billion has been invested in education and training and over 4000 additional teachers and staff have been employed in government schools since 1999. Highly effective programs have been implemented to address particular areas of education that research has shown are the most critical in influencing student success.

However, if the goals and targets are to be achieved, this substantial investment in resources needs to be complemented by other measures to lift quality outcomes for students.

The Role of Government Schooling

In this challenging context, government schools have a unique role. They accept all students, cater for all needs, and serve all communities. Governments have a key



responsibility for ensuring that government schools deliver an excellent education and achieve quality outcomes for all their students.

The Victorian Government believes that all government school students are entitled to an excellent education and a genuine opportunity to succeed, irrespective of the school they attend, where they live or their home background. The delivery of an excellent education to all students across all areas of the state is the challenge that the Victorian Government sets for our government school system. This Statement outlines the measures that the Government will take to help schools meet this challenge.

The Case for Reform

The Government has implemented a broad range of high-quality initiatives that have resulted in noteworthy improvement in student achievement and completion. These include *Access to Excellence*, *Restart*, *Early Years Numeracy Coordination*, *Reduction in P-2 Class Sizes*, *Managed Individual Pathways*, *VCAL*, *Schools for Innovation and Excellence*, *Welfare Support in Primary Schools*, and more. Excellent practice is clearly evident in many government schools.

In May 2003 the Minister for Education and Training outlined the case for further reform of the government school system. This case is based on the evidence of the current levels of participation in, and learning outcomes of, students from government schools. While these levels have improved significantly in recent years, and currently compare well with those in other Australian states, more can still be achieved.

There are still students who leave school early, with poor levels of literacy, numeracy and other core learnings. These poor student outcomes are concentrated in some schools and some regions. Data show high concentrations in some regions and schools of students who have poor outcomes in literacy and numeracy, high school absenteeism, poor VCE/Year 12 results and low school completion. There are high variations in student outcomes between classes within schools, which highlights the importance of quality teaching. Furthermore, there are many schools that achieve outstanding results, and others with similar student populations that do not.

Communities and schools need assistance to improve outcomes for students. This is a challenge that is becoming even more critical as we move towards a more knowledge-based economy; and the focus cannot just be on schools that have the poorest outcomes. There is an ongoing



challenge, within and beyond Australia, for all schools to maintain and improve their students' performance. This is central to the Victorian Government's core policy of *Growing Victoria Together* (2001).

Reform is necessary to help schools meet this challenge – to improve their practices and performances. Reform is also achievable. The challenge is to identify existing best practice, drive all schools to aspire to achieve it and support this with strategies and initiatives to spread best practice throughout the school system.

Strategies for Improvement

To identify and shape strategies for reform, the Government has undertaken two sets of activities.

First, there has been a series of major research activities and analysis of data on the patterns of student outcomes and student performances in Victoria, and on the factors that influence student outcomes in schooling.

Second, the Government has consulted widely with the school education community. It has received advice from four key Leadership Groups comprised of teachers, principals and academics; a 'Better Schools' website for

student and parent feedback; eight Ministerial forums with teachers and principals; nine regional forums held by Leadership Groups with teachers and principals; and eight parent forums.

The government has taken the first step in allocating additional resources through highly successful programs and initiatives, but further systemic change is needed to drive the next level of improvement.

Research evidence indicates three key features of our school system that need to be addressed.

1. **There is a high concentration of poor outcomes in some schools and some regions.** These schools and regions face the challenge of dealing with a diverse range of student needs. They need to address core learning areas, build cultures of high expectations, and attend to associated issues of absenteeism and student transitions.
2. **Within a given school there are frequently high variations in outcomes between classes. This points to the centrality of the teaching–learning relationship.** This relationship is influenced by the quality of teaching, school and team leadership, and the school culture and environment (including its relationship with its community).
3. **There are variations in outcomes between schools with similar student populations.** This shows that schools can improve, and there is a need to look towards the factors that build school performances and build a culture of continuous school improvement.

This evidence provides the foundation for the strategies and initiatives to reform the Victorian government school system that are outlined in this Statement. These initiatives and strategies have been informed by the consultation process. They are also directed by the approach that the Victorian Government has taken to the overall management of the government school system.

A Core Approach for the Management of the Government School System

Government schools are currently administered according to the philosophy and mechanisms of self-managing schools. Victoria has one of the most devolved school management approaches among OECD nations. The previous government used this model to encourage schools to compete with each other to attract students, as a means of improving their performance. The current government has modified the approach in order to remove the worst excesses of the model.

Competition that focuses on striving for new approaches to improve student learning is welcome. This type of competition needs to be maintained. Initiatives such as Schools for Innovation and Excellence are an example of schools working together to successfully challenge and engage students.

Unfettered competition, where the drive to be the best is at the expense of students' outcomes in other schools, has adverse consequences. Unfettered competition between schools may not be conducive to meeting the needs of all students and all communities, nor to the provision of a full range of programs for the more diverse range of students now staying on at school.

Schools which are competing against each other for mainstream enrolments and that are focused on high achievement data often do not pay due attention to those students requiring additional support. Unfettered competition is also counterproductive to the development of a learning and sharing culture between schools.

The Government's approach to the management of the government school system is built upon a recognition that students' learning needs are different, and that they change across schools and across the school experience of students. Therefore, while the basic principle of self-management will be maintained, it is matched with a recognition of different

learning needs and with an expectation that schools should work together to meet the needs of all students in their communities.

The Government expects its school system to focus on the critical objective of government school education – that all students, irrespective of the school they attend, where they live or their social and economic status, have an entitlement to a high-quality school education and a genuine opportunity to succeed. The Government does not want to settle for a school system with some excellent schools in it – the vision is for an excellent government school system.

Therefore, the strategies detailed in this Statement are structured around the three key features of the government school system that need to be addressed:

- the concentration of poor outcomes in some schools and some regions
- high variations of outcomes between classes within schools, which highlights the importance of the teaching–learning relationship
- variations in outcomes between schools with similar student populations.

The strategies combine self-management with a recognition of a diversity in learning needs, and an expectation of shared responsibility and cooperation between schools, all within a context of a transparent and rigorous accountability framework. They emphasise the Government's belief that enhanced program delivery requires schools to plan together. The needs of all students cannot be met if schools work and plan in isolation.

The set of strategies and initiatives outlined in this Statement will drive this new approach.

The result will be a government school system that delivers on high expectations for all, clearly articulated responsibilities and rigorous accountability to deliver improved student outcomes. Significant improvement across the system and for particular schools and groups of students will follow. It will be developed through mutual trust between all members of the education community working together to support students to achieve their best.

Priorities for Reform

The Government believes that there is broad consensus on what needs to be done to lift student outcomes. The consultation and research process has demonstrated that many of the reforms needed are already established practice in some schools. The task is to ensure that best practice spreads across the system.

The Government has identified three priority areas for reform:

1. **Recognising and Responding to Diverse Student Needs**
2. **Building the Skills of the Education Workforce to Enhance the Teaching-learning Relationship**
3. **Continuously Improving Schools.**





Recognising & responding to DIVERSE STUDENT NEEDS

The Government aims to improve the learning outcomes for *all* students. This can only be achieved if we acknowledge the diversity of student needs in the development of local and system-wide responses. This applies obviously to curriculum and organisational arrangements, which must cater for different learning styles and challenge all students. It also applies to the manner in which the Government manages and funds the government school system. The funding model should reflect the fact that not all student cohorts in each school are the same.

> FLAGSHIP STRATEGY 1: Student Learning

The Government recognises that good reading, writing and numeracy skills are a key foundation of learning and increase students' ability to learn as they progress through school. The Government also recognises that students need a range of other skills to operate effectively in our changing society.

The needs of students will be central to the development of a new approach to the education and curriculum provided by schools. There is also a need to ensure that students are provided with a learning environment that promotes their health, safety and wellbeing. We want all students in the government school system – whatever their learning needs – to be active, life-long learners. Achieving this vision requires schools to be places where students develop:

- A positive attitude towards learning
- Fundamental skills in literacy, numeracy and self-expression, which will enable them to be successful across all areas of learning
- High level personal, communication and social competencies to work independently and within groups
- Experience in innovation, creativity and problem-solving
- Confidence to deal with technological and cultural change
- Skill sets in the wider community and changing workplace
- Ability to access information and reflect upon it.

The Government is committed to increasing the number of students who successfully complete Year 12 or its equivalent. To make this possible, schools need to increasingly be seen as places where students want to be – where they are happy, engaged, stimulated, intellectually challenged, secure and confident. To make this happen, students are being provided with multiple pathways in the post-compulsory years of education and with coherent links between programs providing these pathways, leading to improved completion rates.

The Government wants the community to be involved in key decisions about schooling. Partnerships will be encouraged between schools, community agencies and industry that place schools at the centre of a learning community. If the system is to ensure that students are provided with authentic and real-life learning and teaching experiences, community involvement will be essential.





“... essential learnings are not limited to specific disciplines and need to include skills and attributes such as problem-solving, teamwork skills, flexibility and social skills for all students as either superordinate or concurrent domains of personal development.” (Principal)

“I would like to learn more about the daily life that our parents do and what it is like in the workforce so we are ready for the big step.” (Student)

! CASE STUDY

Essendon North Primary School

Essendon North Primary School has introduced innovative teaching methods in several areas. In this school, parent–teacher evenings are structured as ‘portfolio presentations’, where students, with guidance from their teachers, explain how their learning has developed over time. Among these and other innovations, Essendon North runs a series of ‘learning to learn’ activities in the first term of every year, to enable students to determine their learning styles, preferences and objectives.

Teacher feedback regularly indicates the apparent inflexibility of the current Curriculum and Standards Framework and its perceived inability to cater for different learning styles. The pressures upon the curriculum are most apparent in the middle years (Years 5–9), where students record the highest levels of dissatisfaction and truancy is highest.

The challenge for the Curriculum and Standards Framework is to provide the clarity and focus necessary to ensure that all students have access to the essential learning areas, and at the same time allow sufficient flexibility for schools and teachers to innovate and adopt different program and teaching styles to address local need.

The Government has directed the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) to identify a broad **framework of ‘essential learnings’** for all students within

Victorian schools. This framework will include defined standards of learning at key points of schooling, while still providing schools the flexibility to develop school-based curriculum programs that support essential knowledge for students within a local context. Throughout 2004 the VCAA will conduct this study in conjunction with relevant stakeholders.

To complement the work of the VCAA, and to form the basis of a curriculum guarantee for government schools, the Government will develop **guidelines to assist government schools with school-based decision-making in areas of curriculum development, pedagogy, assessment and reporting**. This advice will be developed in 2004 and will promote greater consistency in the development of curriculum and learning and teaching programs in schools, while still allowing flexibility, innovation and local decision-

making at the school level. The guidelines will provide detailed advice to schools and enable teachers to modify and improve their practice in these areas.

In 2004, the Government will develop *principles of learning and teaching for Prep–Year 12* to support teachers in areas such as diversity of learning and thinking styles, student–teacher relationships and in authentic learning experiences. Teachers will use these principles to review their teaching practices. Self-assessment tools will be developed as part of this process to assist school-based professional learning teams in their discussions about learning and teaching within their school and other local schools. A renewed focus through these principles will enable the government school system to provide a consistent approach from Prep–Year 12, and continuity of learning and teaching experiences across the system.

! CASE STUDY

Middle Years Pedagogy Research and Development Project

Over 75 government schools are currently involved in the Middle Years Pedagogy Research and Development (MYPRAD) project across Victoria. These schools are working with Deakin University to analyse current pedagogical practices within middle years classrooms and to develop a process to assist teachers critically reflect on their classroom practices. The schools will also trial professional development materials which focus on effective pedagogical strategies for the middle years which will be made available to all schools after 2004.

“A common curriculum framework across the state gives guidelines as to what is accepted as core skills, knowledge and understandings at particular developmental stages. However, this framework needs to be flexible enough for locally based decisions on its implementation and interpretation.” (Teacher)

“The curriculum in government schools should be characterised by creative, flexible learning opportunities that meet the needs of every student and reflect a statewide curriculum framework.” (Teacher)

Improved reporting on student achievement needs to be delivered urgently to parents, employers and the community. This reporting will occur through a range of measures that are comprehensive, consistent and understandable. It is essential that school assessment and reporting provide parents with relevant and accessible information about what their child knows and can do and how their child's future learning will be supported and extended. To assist teachers and schools in this process, the Government will ask the VCAA to develop *broad assessment processes against which defined standards of learning at key points of schooling can be measured*. These processes will be used by schools to develop a broad picture of student performance across a range of experiences and areas. Parent opinion will be vital to this process.

The VCAA, in conjunction with the Department, will work to identify best practice in areas of assessment and reporting. Government schools will use this information to improve their current practice and provide richer information on student progress to parents and the broader community.

In addition, the Government will develop a *knowledge bank* that documents exemplary practices in schools and provides a resource for school improvement to ensure best practice is shared across the system. The knowledge bank will give priority to documenting excellent practices of ‘performance and development culture schools’ (refer to Flagship Strategy 4 on page 20). It will also document case studies of existing school and local community partnerships, to enable all schools to build upon their experience.



> FLAGSHIP STRATEGY 2:

Developing a New Resource Allocation Model

Improving student outcomes requires funding to be more student focused.

It is recognised that there are problems with the way we currently fund schools. The School Global Budget:

- is time consuming for principals and teachers
- focuses on dollars spent rather than outputs achieved
- lacks flexibility and does not encourage innovation in schools.

A funding model is required that is less complex and more transparent than the existing one, and which is flexible, equitable, efficient and student focused.

As a result, the School Global Budget will be replaced with a **new resource allocation model**, to be implemented in

2005, that aims to give schools the flexibility to meet increasingly diverse student and community needs and encourage local solutions through innovation.

This strategy will include a move to a student-centred funding model that will be strongly linked to schools' planning, accountability and performance management mechanisms.

Current research by Professor Richard Teese from the University of Melbourne supports the principle of a reconceptualised funding model. Funding should more closely reflect the relative learning needs of students. Not all student cohorts in each school are the same. Therefore, the system should not fund all schools in the same way and needs to recognise the different learning needs of students according to their stage of schooling and their learning needs.

To inform the development of this new funding model, research is currently being conducted across a selection of Victorian government schools.

The new resource allocation model will more effectively target resources to schools, allowing for a focus on student outcomes, school improvement, and more effective management of the Government's investment.

Building the Skills of the EDUCATION WORKFORCE

to enhance the teaching– learning relationship

The school education community recognises the importance of leadership and a highly skilled workforce in maximising the teaching–learning relationship to achieve improved learning outcomes for students in the government school system.

Consultation, data and research have shown the Victorian government school workforce to be both highly skilled and dedicated.

Continuous development and improved student outcomes at both the school and system level has at its core an understanding of the need to continue to enhance the teaching–learning relationship. A strong teaching–learning relationship requires high-quality teaching and leadership that focuses on students' learning needs. The Government is committed to developing the teaching–learning relationship in all Victorian schools and is investing heavily in the development of school leaders and teachers to achieve this.

Excellent workforce development practices already exist in the Victorian government school system.

The challenge now is to ensure that these excellent practices are adopted and embraced across the whole system, a challenge that is the focus of the Government's workforce plan, to be implemented over the next 3–5 years. This plan includes strategies on ***Building Leadership Capacity, Creating and Supporting a Performance and Development Culture*** and ***Teacher Professional Development*** to assist teachers and principals at all career stages – beginning teachers, high-performing young teachers with leadership potential, experienced teachers, first-time and experienced principals.

> FLAGSHIP STRATEGY 3:

Building Leadership Capacity

The Government recognises the critical role and responsibilities of principals in improving the educational outcomes of students in their schools. As educational leaders in our communities, principals have a major influence on the capacity of their teachers and the quality of the teaching–learning relationship. Within the system we must provide principals with the support they need to develop a culture of high performance and continuous improvement in schools. By investing in leadership development, the Government will ensure that school leaders are equipped to meet the demands and challenges of their role within the system.

To ensure we have the best leaders in our schools who will rise to the challenging role of principal, we need to make certain that the process for selecting principals in Victorian government schools is rigorous. The current process has been criticised and may have discouraged potential applicants and inhibited the movement of school leaders across the school system.

To ensure we recruit the best possible candidates as school principals, this Government will develop, by 2005, an ***improved principal selection process***. The major elements of this initiative will include:

- modern recruitment practices rather than basing selection decisions largely on the results of interviews
- principal representation on selection panels
- tailoring of selection criteria to reflect the differing needs and characteristics of schools, including key goals and targets, and the expectations and requirements of the system
- proactively encouraging applicants with the required profile to participate in the selection process
- encouraging more contact between candidates and the employing school to facilitate two-way communication.

Effective and focused school leadership has a crucial role to play in developing teacher growth. Consequently the need for a well-resourced longitudinal leadership development program must be put in place urgently.” (Principal)

The capabilities of our current school leaders require continuous development. In some schools, mentors and coaches are successfully providing professional development services to government school principals. All principals would derive significant benefit if this support was made available across the system.

From 2004 the Government will establish a **mentoring program for first-time principals and a coaching support program for experienced principals**.

There is scope to improve leadership performance management procedures across the system. This must link to leadership development processes, performance appraisal, contract renewal, school performance data, improvement plans and student outcomes. The consultations and research strongly identified a need for consistency in approach and outcomes in order to improve the effectiveness of performance management and enhance the contribution of the principal's role.

To achieve this, the Government will **introduce a balanced scorecard approach to principal performance management** that reflects the multiple responsibilities of the role and functions of principals. Principals will receive a broad range of feedback on their performance, including feedback from parents and teachers. In addition to the measurement of student achievement, the new approach will measure other key components of school performance, such as staff development, parent relations, and educational leadership. Targeted coaching and mentoring will support leaders' skills in these areas. This balanced scorecard recognises that no one measure is sufficient and that measures such as student learning, teacher effectiveness and parent relations can be leading indicators of school performance.

We must ensure that the principals and leaders in our schools have the necessary skills and attributes to drive school development and improve student outcomes. To

ensure this, the Government will also introduce two initiatives to identify and develop teachers with high leadership potential and to develop the leadership capabilities of existing principals.

From 2004, the Government will implement an **accelerated development program for high potential leaders**. This initiative will cater for teachers with at least five years experience. Participants will benefit from exposure to leadership responsibilities, tailored professional development, and mentoring. Participants will move between schools during the program. The program will help address future leadership supply issues, improve succession management and promote mobility and learning across the system.

Additionally, the Government will implement a **development program for high performing principals**. This program will target the retention of outstanding leaders in the government school system by providing high performing experienced principals with a range of development opportunities. These include mentoring of existing principals and aspirant principals, placements in challenging schools or other settings, and tailored professional development.

Consultations with schools, principals and teachers have highlighted the ongoing need to reduce the administrative workload of schools and school leaders to allow them to focus on their core responsibilities of improving student learning. This is particularly an issue in smaller schools. To address this need, the Government will continue to work on streamlining administrative demands. This process will be informed by the findings of the principal workload study currently underway.

Small schools are particularly challenged by their lack of scale. We will work with small schools to expand **local administrative bureaus for networks of small schools**. This will occur from 2004 to 2005.



> FLAGSHIP STRATEGY 4: Creating and Supporting a Performance and Development Culture

This Government believes that the pursuit of continuous improvement and learning is essential for teachers and students to reach their potential. Continuous improvement already drives our best schools and it is our expectation that all schools will embrace this concept.

Research shows that a good performance and development system in schools improves student learning outcomes by identifying the specific areas where a teacher's performance can be improved and by providing targeted professional development to do so.

In 2004 the Government will introduce an **accreditation scheme for performance and development culture schools**, with the objective of having all schools accredited by 2008. Schools with a focus on a performance and development culture will improve teacher effectiveness and therefore student outcomes by emphasising better performance management and creating an environment of continuous improvement.

Accreditation for a performance and development culture will be a key performance objective for all principals. The proportion of schools in their region that have achieved accreditation will be a key performance measure for Regional Directors and Senior Education Officers. The accreditation criteria will include:

- Multiple sources of feedback for teachers, including feedback from parents and students on the quality of the teaching–learning relationship
- Customised plans to meet individual teacher development needs
- Quality professional development to address those needs
- Induction and mentoring for beginning teachers.

The accreditation process will be largely internal and then be externally verified by teams or panels of expert educational practitioners.

! CASE STUDY

Leadership feedback at Glen Waverley Secondary College

Glen Waverley College has what is regarded as a 'world's best practice' example of managing effective leadership feedback. A feedback group is selected for each leadership team member, comprising their closest colleagues. The group convenes at year-end to review the leadership team-member's performance. Using an external facilitator, the group highlights the leader's strengths and areas for development. The facilitator documents the outcome and presents it to the leadership team member and the principal. The materials are fed directly into the leadership team member's annual review and their performance plan for the following year.

> FLAGSHIP STRATEGY 5: Teacher Professional Development

There are many excellent professional development practices for teachers across the system. However, there are not enough opportunities to share these between teachers. The Government considers teacher professional development to be central to improving student learning, and is committed to providing teachers with significant opportunities for professional renewal and development. To achieve this, the Government will invest \$5m each year from 2004 to enable **460 teachers to undertake teacher professional leave**, for periods ranging from four to ten weeks. Regional offices will convene panels and select teachers to undertake this professional learning leave.



“Teaching is not a job just anyone can do. It demands a high level of training and skill, and a knowledge of quality performance.” (Teacher)

The professional leave will provide teachers with flexible opportunities to enhance their classroom practice. Teachers, in consultation with their principals and Regional Offices, will be able to submit proposals for their professional development which must be linked to improved teaching performance – for example, they may choose to undertake an intensive short course, participate in mentoring, or shadow a colleague working in an education or related professional field.

This leave will provide the means for teachers to further develop high-order skills and expertise. This will help them become more creative, innovative and flexible classroom teachers. It will allow teachers to learn from one another. A key requirement of participants will be that they bring their learning back to their school and also to other schools so that the benefits can be shared across the system.

Teachers need support at the start of their careers. Research has shown that induction and mentoring processes that provide beginning teachers with effective, collegial professional development improve teacher retention in Victorian government schools. These are already working well in a number of schools. From 2004 the Government will adopt a systematic approach to ensure good practice in teacher induction through the introduction of an **induction program for beginning teachers**. Existing **mentoring programs** for beginning teachers that ensure individuals are supported by a trained teacher mentor will complement the induction program.

! CASE STUDY

Mentoring of new teachers at The Grange P-12 Primary Campus

Each new teacher is assigned a mentor who has three to four years experience. Using larger classrooms, the mentor and the new teacher ‘team teach’ in both classes at Years 1 and 2. Jointly responsible for the teaching, learning and assessment of these students, they prepare teaching plans together and form a professional learning team for all professional development. The model is well supported by both the new and experienced teachers in the school.



Continuously IMPROVING SCHOOLS

The Government believes that strong teaching–learning relationships at the classroom level are dependent upon strong individual and system-wide accountability arrangements.

However, in order to be effective and deliver improved student outcomes, accountability arrangements must be flexible in acknowledging and accommodating the differing requirements of schools. While many government schools are achieving excellent outcomes, the system should intervene when schools are not able to deliver an excellent education for all students. As such, accountability processes must be streamlined and targeted differentially.

Accountability arrangements must also be sufficiently flexible to allow innovation in schools. The objective of striving for excellence for all students also requires greater levels of cooperation and planning between schools and the sharing of specialisation, expertise and facilities. Innovation is usually initiated at a school or local community level. The Government's role is to support and promote best practice and facilitate sharing across the system within a transparent, flexible and accountable framework.

> FLAGSHIP STRATEGY 6: School Improvement

A strong accountability system dedicated to student improvement is the hallmark of any healthy education organisation. The improved Reporting and Accountability Framework announced by the Minister for Education and Training in October 2002 has already led to significant reform, such as the publication of post-Year 12 destination data, and extending literacy and numeracy testing to all Year 7 students in government schools. However, there is a need to further address the level of variation in student outcomes in our schools. While there are clearly many excellent schools, there is still work to be done so that the system can deliver on its objective of delivering excellent outcomes for all students.

School planning, accountability and review arrangements have a vital role to play in improving student outcomes. These processes provide precise information on student, school and system performance and highlight the performance of particular groups and cohorts of students. But they are a means to an end, not an end in themselves.

Excellence in the Victorian public education system should be driven by a relentless focus on improving...student learning."

They must be used as a starting point for improvement. The existing Accountability Framework works effectively for schools and is well accepted. However, changes are needed to make it even more responsive to immediate and future school needs in terms of planning and achievement. Changes are also required to streamline and target the arrangements.

As the basis of a new approach to school improvement, the Government will implement a **differential model of school review**. Schools will undertake a review that reflects their current level of performance. The Regional Offices will have a strengthened role in assisting schools to determine the appropriate model of review for their situation, based on student outcomes and trend data. Regional Directors and Senior Education Officers will be jointly accountable with the School Systems Development Division for implementing successful differential school reviews that focus on and deliver improvement.

School Councils and the broader school community need to be more actively involved in the differentiated review process. School performance should not be a mystery to parents. There needs to be transparent reporting of individual school development, including any areas of difficulty.

The Government recognises that our schools have differing needs and are at different stages in their development. There is therefore a need to modify the traditional practice of reviewing every school using the same process.

The review methodology will allow **schools with student performance outcomes above expected levels** to indicate their plans to improve or expand their horizons. They will be able to propose alternative models of review, such as the use of peers and education experts to examine particular areas of the school that the community wants to explore and improve. They will also be asked to act as mentor schools to ensure that their good practice is recognised and shared across the system. The system must

identify its successes and learn from those schools that have worked long and hard and seem to have got it right.

Those ***schools where student performance is satisfactory but indicators would suggest there is scope for continuous improvement*** will be supported in obtaining expert advice and implementing enhancement programs. Again, sharing good practice will be important in lifting performance from satisfactory to excellent.

Those ***schools where student performance outcomes are below the expected levels*** will be examined to pinpoint the issues and identify the underlying causes. A planned and documented approach to improvement will

then be worked through to tackle the causes. This will clearly expose the areas of concern, indicate the precise steps and timelines to be followed in providing the solutions and make clear the responsibilities of the school, the Region and the central office of the Department.

Each school with performance issues is different and solutions likewise must be tailored to the realities identified by the analysis.

The education system must be able to respond directly to the evidence that school data provides. It is not acceptable that schools that are demonstrably under-performing both

! CASE STUDY

Springvale South Primary School

This school's performance on a variety of indicators continues to be above expected standards. It demonstrates the effect of a relentless pursuit of excellence by the Principal and staff in the face of what many would view as significant challenges.

Springvale South Primary School is situated in one of the least affluent and most highly multicultural areas of urban Melbourne with high percentages of students with a language background other than English and a high proportion in receipt of the Educational Maintenance Allowance. These two factors place the school in Category 9 on the Like Schools index.

Student performance in English and Mathematics is currently above that of schools in its Like School Group. AIM data for students in years 3 and 5 indicate that the student performance has been above the State benchmark for several years. Previously the school was below both benchmarks.

Student absence rates have been brought down to a consistently low level. This is due to a variety of factors characteristic of an effective school such as high levels of student engagement, strong parent-school partnerships focused on student learning, and a highly committed and professional staff dedicated to the concept of developing the student as a whole person.

The key factors in the school's success are:

- Passionate and committed leadership
- High expectations that every child can succeed
- Putting in place strategies to ensure that every student is engaged and that attendance at school is a positive experience
- Strong teamwork
- Team-based professional development focused on responding to student learning styles.

The school has actively encouraged community involvement in all aspects of school life through the provision of interpreters, translations, and the use of multicultural aides to achieve the high rates of participation of non-English speaking backgrounds.

The school has forged strong links with local secondary colleges and preschools. In 2003 Springvale South preschool relocated to the school site.

in student outcomes, and on other indicators such as parent and student opinion, are left to analyse and address development issues without external assistance. The Government **will intervene** in schools to ensure that the best opportunities are explored and to address identified problems. Intervention will be commensurate in dimension and impact to the extent of the needs. Schools and their communities will understand the **performance triggers** that will lead to intervention. School Councils will be directly involved in considering the problems and the proposed solutions.

A broad range of **interventions and support strategies** will be available to schools and regional offices. Regional Directors and Senior Education Officers, as key change agents dedicated to school improvement, will have a key leadership role in all cases.

The scope of intervention will depend upon a school's circumstances. It will range from minimal to more far-reaching activities, and to major actions in serious instances or where the desirable improvement is not being achieved.

Regional offices will be expected to utilise actions including:

- the use of coaching, mentoring and cooperative exchanges of expert administrators or teacher experts
- the strategic use of expert consultants to work with the school leadership or the whole staff
- the development of local area solutions to problems of education provision and uneven outcomes
- partnership arrangements with tertiary providers to work on improvement projects
- cooperative arrangements between schools to exchange successful practice through mentoring at the individual or whole school level and through teacher exchange
- the use of principals with a strong performance record to work alongside other principals or to be seconded as replacements where appropriate
- the strengthening of school governance through the appointment of additional school councillors with specific expertise.

A combination of these strategies will commonly be used in a planned and strategic way with clear expectations of roles, responsibilities and outcomes. Milestones will be accepted and progress checked at all stages. A reduction in the level of management autonomy in a school or changes to senior leadership in a school will occur if improvement is not evident following a process of intervention and support.

“Intervention and support needs to occur early before schools are having severe problems.”

“There is a need to streamline accountability to avoid overlapping and repetition.” (Regional forum)

Further modifications will also be made to accountability processes so that the administrative burden on schools can be minimised, allowing schools to maximise the time and energy spent on the essential focus for schools – enhanced

! CASE STUDY

Orbost Secondary College

This school has tackled an environment seen as challenging with a variety of concerted efforts and has lifted and maintained performance as a result.

Located in far-east Gippsland, the Orbost community has suffered extensive floods, drought, and a reduction in employment.

The College has an enrolment of 364 and is classified in Like School Group 7. Approximately 50 per cent of the students are eligible for Education Maintenance Allowance payments.

Flexible learning arrangements, Individual Learning Plans and an extensive Transition program have made significant inroads in the areas of student performance. The College has moved from being below Like School Group and State benchmarks in 1999 to above in both in English and Mathematics in years 8 and 10.

Improved retention rates reflect the school's efforts to provide a range of programs to support all students.



Strengthening the ability of schools to use student achievement and opinion data for internal purposes has the potential to improve all schools' performances." (Principal)

I wish that the school would let kids give ideas into the school about how we can work. We could have different ideas and maybe the school could work on these ideas." (Student)

teaching and learning. From 2004, schools will be required to prepare a **single planning and accountability document**. This will replace the current charter, compact the individual planning documents and implementation plans often required around specific programs.

We have over time become more sophisticated in our measurement and assessment. All schools will be provided with **parent, teacher and student opinion data** on a consistent basis. This data will be collected independently to ensure its integrity. Such data provides significant insights into school performance and will provide key information to inform the development of performance cultures as outlined under **Flagship Strategy 4: Creating and Supporting a Performance and Development Culture**.



Further work will be done to ensure that whole school communities are aware of what data is available on their school's performance and are skilled in using and interpreting this information. For example, school data that allows a School Council to observe trends over time on a range of indicators is a powerful tool in planning, prioritising and allocating resources.

> FLAGSHIP STRATEGY 7:

Leading Schools Fund

The Government believes that all students must have access to an excellent education that delivers the best possible outcomes. If this is to be realised, it requires those working within the education sector to challenge themselves to provide innovative solutions to best meet the diverse needs of individual students.

This means acknowledging that 'one size does not fit all' and devising and delivering education at the local level through innovative programs and approaches that are diverse and flexible.



To achieve this we need to:

- explore new approaches to teaching
- seek out the best practice already happening and share it
- pool resources in communities to achieve more for students.

The **Leading Schools Fund** will be implemented in 2004 and will deliver on the Government's 2003–04 budget commitment of \$82 million for an extra 450 teachers in government secondary schools (Investing in Teachers to Support Excellence) and \$80 million in capital for new specialist facilities (Investing in Facilities to Support Excellence).

To achieve the Government's target of 90 per cent of young people successfully completing Year 12 or its equivalent by 2010, the Government recognises that large-scale transformation is required for secondary schools to enhance the successes in Years 5–9 that have come from the Government's middle years initiatives.

The **Leading Schools Fund** builds on the knowledge and good practice which already exist in schools and it provides schools with the incentive and opportunity to reach beyond their current practice and performance.

It provides a framework which:

- focuses on whole school development and enhancement
- facilitates strategic partnerships and collaboration between schools so that schools can learn from each other, assist each other and strengthen the public school system.

Under the **Leading Schools Fund** participating schools will define a distinctive focus or theme which will facilitate innovation and excellence and lead to improved student outcomes. The funds will be provided to schools or groups of schools on a case-by-case basis and packaged according to submissions for proposals that meet the above objectives. Proposals must demonstrate an element of sharing resources and/or expertise to improve student options and system improvement. Furthermore, secondary schools that are funded for innovative practice will be required to be a teaching school and provide leadership to other schools seeking development.

The extra resources will be made available for the employment of additional teachers and new facilities.

CONCLUSION



This *Blueprint for Government Schools* has been designed to reflect the Government's belief that every student is entitled to a quality education, and that it is the responsibility of government to establish the framework and settings which will deliver this.

It is also driven by the principle that the government school system has an obligation to respond to the diverse learning needs of all students.

The Government's case for further reform has been built on the understanding that current inequities across the system are unacceptable. Every government school student, irrespective of the school they attend, where they live or their social or economic status, is entitled to a high-quality school education and a genuine opportunity to succeed. The initiatives and strategies outlined here are designed to tackle three key features of our school system:

- the concentration of poor outcomes in some schools and some regions
- high variations of outcomes within schools, which

highlight the importance of the teaching–learning relationship

- variations in outcomes between schools with similar student populations.

While there are many Victorian government schools that already achieve outstanding results for their students, the Government does not want to settle for a government school system with some excellent schools in it – the Government's vision is for an excellent government school system that delivers improved outcomes for all students.

The strategies contained in this Blueprint are achievable – however, their success is dependent upon cooperation across the government school system. The school self-management framework has been strengthened to reflect the Government's expectation of shared responsibility, planning and cooperation between schools.

The Government is committed to supporting schools throughout the implementation process, and to working alongside our schools to build a government school system that delivers excellent outcomes for all students.

APPENDIX 1:

Consultation and Research

In the lead-up to the *Blueprint for Government Schools*, the Government has sought advice on reform. The consultation and research process has been extensive and has included:

- A series of Ministerial Roundtable discussions, which brought together key education practitioners and experts to identify and scope the major challenges facing the education system, and inform the work of the Leadership Groups;

School Improvement Roundtable on 16 April 2003

Lynne Kosky, Minister for Education and Training (Chair)
 Jacinta Allan, Minister for Education Services
 Jennifer Westacott, Secretary, DE&T
 Kim Bannikoff, Director, Office of School Education
 Andrew Blair, Victorian Association of State Secondary Principals
 Tony Bugden, General Manager, Human Resources Division
 Wayne Craig, Box Hill Senior SC
 Alf Galea, Brighton SC
 Professor Jack Keating, RMIT University
 Marg Lacey, Moreland City College
 Robin Lockington, Erinbank SC
 Cecilia Meehan, Footscray North PS
 Alex Panayiotou, Gippsland Region
 Neil Pryor, Yarrunga PS
 Professor Richard Teese, University of Melbourne

Curriculum Reform Roundtable on 9 May 2003

Lynne Kosky, Minister for Education and Training (Chair)
 Grant Hehir, Secretary, DE&T
 Kim Bannikoff, Director, Office of School Education
 Rob Blachford, Regional Director, Western Metropolitan Region
 Lesley Boston, Mac.Robertson Girls' HS
 Viv Coad, Albert Park College
 Sue Knight, St Kilda Park PS
 Ros Mancer, Pascoe Vale South PS
 Nicola Park, Lyndhurst SC
 Dianne Peck, Glen Waverley SC
 Nicole Richards, Bacchus Marsh PS
 Maureen Ryan, Victoria University
 Paul Sedunary, St Pius X School, Heidelberg
 Michael White, Chief Executive Officer, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority

Professional Development and Workforce Development Roundtable on 15 May 2003

Lynne Kosky, Minister for Education and Training (Chair)
 Grant Hehir, Secretary, DE&T
 Tony Bugden, General Manager, Human Resources Division
 Pam Dowling, Warrnambool West PS
 Lea Gill, Apollo Parkways PS
 Michael Giulieri, Essendon North PS

Larry Kamener, Consultant, Boston Consulting Group
 Stephen Lyon, Wembley PS
 Karen Moore, St Albans SC
 Lisa Richardson, Forest Street PS
 David Rothstadt, Glenhuntly PS
 Margaret Scott, Horsham College
 Morris Sleep, Wanganui Park SC
 Julie Small, Glendal PS
 Chris Williams, Belmont HS

Excellence and Innovation Roundtable on 23 May 2003

Lynne Kosky, Minister for Education and Training (Chair)
 Grant Hehir, Secretary, DE&T
 Margaret Bainbridge, Craigieburn South PS
 Robert Biggs, Irymple SC
 Karen Cain, Traralgon SC
 Tony Cook, Assistant General Manager,
 Student Programs Division
 Wayne Craig, Box Hill Senior SC
 Christopher Dower, Western Heights SC
 Michael Gin, Balwyn HS
 Julie Goodwin, Pascoe Vale Girls SC
 Peter Mildenhall, Northern Metropolitan Region
 Russell Polson, Mitchell SC Wodonga
 Lenore Thornton, Preston Girls' SC
 Cheryl Van Deursen, Kilberry Valley PS
 Viv White, Chief Executive Officer,
 Victorian Schools Innovation Commission

- Four key Leadership Groups comprised of teachers, principals and academics. Leadership Groups visited over 50 schools across the state to inform their thinking;

School Improvement Leadership Group

Mario Abela (convenor), Assistant Director,
 Student Outcomes Division, Office of School Education
 Tina Barnett, Corio South PS
 Alan Clifford, Castlemaine SC
 John Cortese, Red Cliffs SC
 John Fleming, Bellfield PS
 Pauline Fry, Paynesville PS
 Professor Shirley Grundy, Dean,
 Faculty of Education, Deakin University
 Marg Lacey, Moreland City College
 Janine Laurence, Preston Girls SC
 David Mildenhall, Mirboo North SC
 Malcolm Millar, Central Highlands-Wimmera Region,
 Office of School Education
 Susan Dennett (executive officer),
 Student Outcomes Division, Office of School Education

Curriculum in Government Schools Leadership Group

Sue Christophers (convenor), Assistant Director,
 Student Programs Division, Office of School Education
 Maria Bawden, Footscray City College
 Jill Chin, Eastern Metropolitan Region, Office of School Education
 Viv Coad, Albert Park College
 Geoff Lacey, Myrree PS
 David Lee, Buckley Park College
 Ross Miller, Narre Warren South P-12 College
 Dianne Peck, Glen Waverley SC
 Kerry Robertson, Mullum PS
 Jenny Stevenson, Wedge Park PS
 Professor Sue Willis, Dean of Education, Monash University
 Claire Bolster (executive officer),
 Student Programs Division, Office of School Education

Teacher Learning Leadership Group

Tony Bugden (convenor), General Manager,
 Human Resources Division, Office of School Education
 Robyn Buckeridge, Warragul Regional College
 Kerry Graham, Seaford North PS
 Lisa Hayman, Bendigo Senior SC
 Diane Joseph, Geelong HS
 Kerry Nicholson, Buninyong PS
 Alex Panayiotou, Gippsland Region, Office of School Education
 Joanne Ryan, Galvin Park SC
 Professor Maureen Ryan,
 Faculty of Human Development, Victoria University
 Morris Sleep, Wanganui Park SC
 Rachael Thomas, Ascot Vale PS
 Alan McLean (executive officer),
 Human Resources Division, Office of School Education

Excellence and Innovation Leadership Group

Rob Blachford (convenor), Regional Director,
 Western Metropolitan Region, Office of School Education
 Karen Cain, Traralgon SC
 Wayne Craig, Box Hill Senior SC
 Sue Harrap, Yarram SC
 Sharron Hollis, Kennington PS
 Anne Kotsiakos, Echuca East PS
 Gabrielle Leigh, The Brookside School
 Professor Simon Marginson,
 Centre for Research in International Education, Monash University
 Scott Phillips, Ballarat SC (East Campus)
 Joanne Roberts, The Grange P-12 College
 Paul Rose, Eltham HS
 Viv White, CEO, Victorian Schools Innovation Commission
 Carol Kelly (executive officer),
 Student Outcomes Division, Office of School Education

- The Better Schools Website, which provided students and parents with an opportunity to share their views via an online survey. Over 3000 survey responses were submitted from students and parents across Victoria;
- Formal consultation with key education stakeholder groups, including:
 - Association of School Councils in Victoria
 - Australian Education Union – Victorian Branch
 - Parents Victoria
 - Principals' Association of Specialist Schools
 - Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc.
 - Victorian Council of School Organisations Inc.
 - Victorian Association of State Secondary Principals
 - Victorian Primary Principals' Association
- A dedicated mailbox for teacher feedback, which received over 180 responses from teachers, principals, schools and other members of the education community. In addition to these, submissions were received from the following organisations:
 - Association of School Councils in Victoria
 - Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (Victorian Branch)
 - Australian Literacy Educators' Association (Victorian Branch)
 - Career Education Association of Victoria
 - Centre for Adolescent Health together with the University of Melbourne Department of Paediatrics and the Murdoch Children's Research Institute
 - Council of Professional Teaching Associations of Victoria
 - Department of Sustainability & Environment and Department of Primary Industries Educators Network
 - Education Foundation
 - Education School Programs National Gallery of Victoria
 - Environmental Education Network
 - Inner Northern Local Learning and Employment Network
 - Parents Victoria
 - Principals' Association of Special Schools
 - Science Teachers' Association of Victoria
 - Technology Education Association of Victoria
 - Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc.
 - Victorian Association for the Teaching of English
 - Victorian Association of State Secondary Principals
 - Victorian Commercial Teachers' Association
 - Victorian Council of School Organisations Inc.
 - Victorian Primary Principals' Association
 - Victoria University, School of Education
- A series of 27 teacher, principal and parent forums around Victoria:

Leadership Groups consulted with teachers, principals and regional staff at the following regional forums.

School Improvement Leadership Group

- Southern Metropolitan Region on 6 August 2003
- Gippsland Region on 7 August 2003

Curriculum in Government Schools Leadership Group

- Eastern Metropolitan Region on 7 August 2003
- Barwon South Western Region on 8 August 2003

Teacher Learning Leadership Group

- Northern Metropolitan Region on 7 August 2003
- Central Highlands-Wimmera Region on 8 August 2003

Excellence and Innovation Leadership Group

- Western Metropolitan Region on 6 August 2003
- Goulburn North Eastern Region on 7 August 2003
- Loddon Campaspe Mallee Region on August 2003

Minister Kosky and Minister Allan consulted with principals, teachers and school councillors at the following regional forums:

- Central Highlands-Wimmera Region at Alfredton PS, on 15 July 2003
 - Goulburn North Eastern Region at Benalla College (Dunlop Campus) on 24 July 2003
 - Barwon South Western Region at Corio Bay Senior College, on 30 July 2003
 - Eastern Metropolitan Region at Koonung SC, on 5 August 2003
 - Gippsland Region at Sale College (Guthridge Campus), on 7 August 2003
 - Southern Metropolitan Region at Kambrya College on 12 August 2003
 - Loddon Campaspe Mallee Region at LCM Regional Office, on 19 August 2003*
 - Northern Metropolitan Region at Centre Ivanhoe, on 20 August 2003
 - Western Metropolitan Region at Keilor Heights PS, on 10 September 2003*
- *Minister unable to attend

Regional Directors consulted with parents at the following regional forums:

- Barwon South Western Region on 16 September (by phone)
- Central Highlands-Wimmera Region in Ballarat on 11 September 2003
- Eastern Metropolitan Region in Burwood East on 16 September 2003
- Gippsland Region in Moe on 11 September 2003

- Goulburn North Eastern Region in Benalla on 17 September 2003
 - Loddon Campaspe Mallee Region in Bendigo on 11 September 2003
 - Northern Metropolitan Region in Ivanhoe on 15 September 2003
 - Southern Metropolitan Region in Berwick on 12 August 2003*
 - Western Metropolitan Region in Keilor Heights on 10 September 2003
- *Hosted by Minister Kosky

(Additional forums for principal and teacher feedback were also held in some regions.)

- An ICT Think Tank, established by Minister Allan to provide advice on information and communications technologies (ICT) to support the work already undertaken by the four Leadership Groups. The Think Tank comprised teachers, principals and industry representatives across the state, including:

- Ethel McAlpine (co-convenor), Acting Deputy Director, School Operations, Office of School Education
- Ian Paton (co-convenor), General Manager, Information Technology Division, Office of Finance Strategy and Resources
- Greg Bowen, Strathfieldsaye PS
- Stephanie Campbell, Footscray City SC
- Gail Casey, Bellarine SC
- Dr Dianne Chambers, Senior Lecturer, University of Melbourne
- Huw Derwentsmith, Chiltern PS
- Greg Gebhart, Lowanna SC
- Daniel Ingvarson, My Internet
- James Morrison, DMR Consulting
- Michael Phillips, Ringwood SC
- Katrina Reynen, Information Technology Division, Office of Finance Strategy and Resources
- Ross Kimber, Regional Director, Eastern Metropolitan
- Pam Toose, Bendigo Senior SC
- Linda Wilkinson (executive officer), Resource Management Division, Office of School Education
- Cecile Murray (executive officer), Student Programs Division, Office of School Education

- A report from the Boston Consulting Group on a Workforce Development Strategy;

- A report from the Nous Group on a Future Leaders Strategy.

The consultation and review process concluded in September 2003.

APPENDIX 2:

the GOALS and TARGETS

for Education and Training

> Goals

- Improve the standards of literacy and numeracy in primary schooling
- Increase the percentage of young people successfully completing Year 12 or its equivalent
- Increase the percentage of adults taking up education and training and so increase the overall level of educational attainment and literacy levels in Victoria
- Increase the level of participation and achievement in education and training in rural and regional Victoria and among groups where it is presently low
- Make near-universal participation in post-school education and training the norm in our society.

> Targets

- By 2005, Victoria will be at or above national benchmark levels for reading, writing and numeracy as they apply to primary students
- By 2010, 90 per cent of young people in Victoria will successfully complete Year 12 or its equivalent
- By 2005, the percentage of young people aged 15–19 years in rural and regional Victoria engaged in education and training will increase by 6 per cent.

> Growing Victoria Together

– Priority Actions

- Improve participation and achievement in education and training
- Provide better links between schools, business and communities
- Expand opportunities for training and learning all through life.