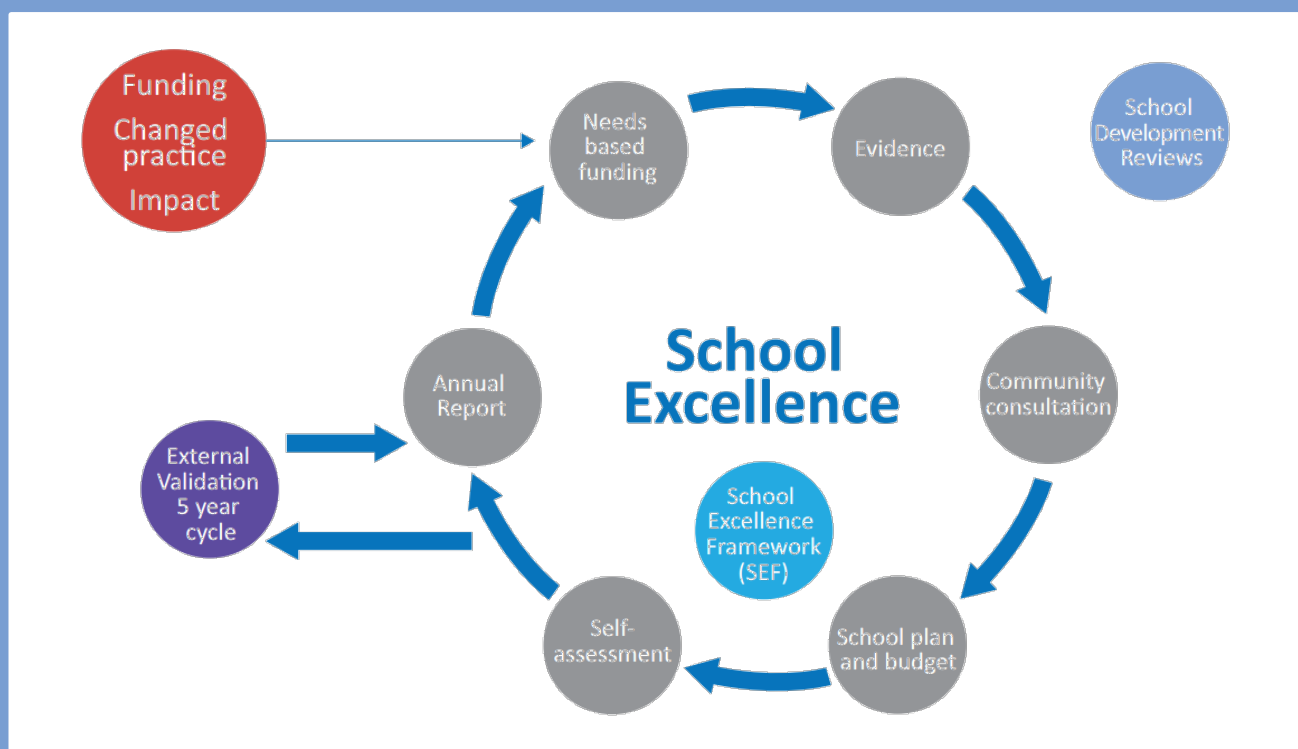


School Excellence

School development review procedures



Procedures document for School Excellence policy

Approval date: 18 July 2017

Updated: October 2018

Document history

Date	Description of update	Approved by
18/07/2017	Initial publication	Deputy Secretary, School Operations and Performance
19/10/2018	Minor updates	Executive Director, Leadership and High Performance

Contents

Document history	2
Contents	3
Preamble	4
Overview	4
Enquiries	4
Initiating a school development review	5
Determining the need for a school development review	5
School development review methodology	5
Outcome of the school development review	6
School development review process	6
In the five weeks before the school development review	6
In the two weeks before the school development review	7
No later than one week before the school development review	7
During the week of the school development review.....	7
In the two weeks following the school development review	8
In the 12 months following the school developmentreview	8

Preamble

A goal of public education is to provide effective schooling for all students regardless of background or circumstance. We are committed to promoting quality teaching and leadership and high expectations for every student in every school.

An effective school is one that is pro-active and constantly striving for excellence through a process of school planning, self-assessment and reporting. This is achieved through the effective implementation of each component of the School Excellence cycle.

Overview

The School Excellence policy recognises that some schools may require targeted assistance at any point in the school planning and reporting cycle. In instances where the Director, Educational Leadership in consultation with the principal, identifies that a school requires significant assistance in its pursuit of excellence, a school development review may be undertaken. Similarly, circumstances may exist in which a principal may request that a review takes place.

A school development review provides an opportunity to support the school to undertake a more in-depth critique of an element or elements of the School Excellence cycle than the annual process of school self-assessment.

Informal program or faculty reviews conducted internally or through negotiations among colleague principals do not constitute a school development review. They are strategies that schools may choose to engage in as part of regular school improvement initiatives.

Recommendations from school development reviews will inform school planning and annual reporting and focus on supporting the principal in developing a sustainable path of performance and improvement.

Enquiries

Contact Leadership and High Performance

T: 02 9244 5713

E: sdr@det.nsw.edu.au

Initiating a school development review

Following consultation with the principal, the Deputy Secretary, School Operations and Performance, Executive Director, School Performance or the Director, Educational Leadership may identify that a school development review is needed for a particular school. Alternatively, a principal may request the initiation of a school development review.

The Director, Educational Leadership must provide a written application to the Executive Director, School Performance for approval to conduct the review including:

- details of the school context
- a reflection on the quality and nature of the school's self-assessment
- the reasons for nomination or request for the school development review
- information outlining the strategies already used to support the school, including the outcomes of those strategies, which clearly states the way in which a school development review is expected to benefit the school.

Directors, Educational Leadership will provide assurance that:

- the director and principal have consulted on the need for the application
- the application for a school development review is based on criteria appropriate to sustainable school improvement for achieving school excellence
- a comprehensive support strategy has been implemented for the school previously, but that the desired outcome or changes in practice have not been achieved
- the principal of a school being considered for a school development review is not the subject of a performance management process
- a performance management process is not warranted at the school, in order to affect the desired impact of the school development review
- for Connected Community schools, the Local School Reference Group has been consulted.

Determining the need for a school development review

School development reviews will be determined to be an appropriate course of action, in cases where a school exhibits dysfunction and/or has not achieved sustainable improvement, following significant support and that such a review would be advantageous for the school's future planning processes. This decision will also take into consideration the school's self-assessment and/or external validation and/or other information made available. This information will be fully analysed to ensure it is of a substantial nature.

The Executive Director, School Performance in consultation with the Director, Educational Leadership will determine whether the application provides sufficient evidence to initiate a school development review and whether such an approach is likely to deliver a strategy that will lead to sustainable improvement of the school.

School development review methodology

School development reviews will be conducted through a team approach. The Director, Educational Leadership with line management responsibility for the principal of the school

identified for a school development review, in consultation with the Executive Director, School Performance, will:

- determine the size of the review team based on the school's size and the complexity of the issues
- determine the composition of the review team regarding the expertise required to address the terms of reference
- lead the review team, unless the Executive Director, School Performance determines otherwise.

The school development review team will consist of three to five members.

The school development review team will spend up to five days at the school to determine the issues impacting the school's ability to achieve sustained improvement and determine appropriate strategies to address the identified issues.

In consideration of the assurances provided by the Director, Educational Leadership in initiating a school development review as identified above, in the unlikely event that a performance management issue emerges during the course of a school development review, the school development review process will discontinue.

Outcome of the school development review

The school development review team will provide a report to the school, including time-specific, explicit actions and strategies for mandatory implementation. A variety of support mechanisms will be considered to assist schools to implement the actions and strategies arising from the review process. The review report will be provided to the school for internal use, to the Executive Director, School Performance and the Deputy Secretary, School Operations and Performance.

Where strategy implementation and timeframes are not met by the school, further action or support will be considered by the Executive Director, School Performance in consultation with the Deputy Secretary, School Operations and Performance.

School development review process

Once the Executive Director, School Performance approves a school development review the process to be followed, as far as practicable, is:

In the five weeks before the school development review

- The Executive Director, School Performance advises that a school development review has been approved and confirms the Review team leader.
- The Director, Educational Leadership advises the principal that a school development review has been approved and the name of the Review team leader if that person is not the school's director.
- The Review team leader consults with the principal to determine the terms of reference, the processes to be used, suggested dates for the review, membership of the review team and nomination of a school contact person. With regard to suitable dates for the review,

adequate time for planning (4-5 weeks) and time for validation and report writing immediately following the review (10 days) should be considered.

- The Review team leader enlists appropriate team members.
- A letter of understanding, confirming the agreed terms of reference, processes to be used, membership of the review team and dates for the review is signed by the principal and Review team leader.
- The Review team leader provides a copy of the above signed letter to the Executive Director, School Performance.
- The Executive Director, School Performance provides advice (including a copy of the signed letter of understanding) to the Deputy Secretary, School Operations and Performance.
- The Deputy Secretary, School Operations and Performance advises the General Secretary of the NSW Teachers Federation of the approval to proceed with a school development review in the identified school.
- The school community is informed that a school development review will take place and the purpose of the review.

In the two weeks before the school development review

The Review team leader:

- negotiates appropriate time to train the review team according to the materials provided by the Leadership and High Performance directorate
- invites the school principal to the team training if appropriate and relevant
- provides guidelines to the principal regarding what should be included in the briefing to the school staff and community
- provides the principal with a pro forma for parent consent for student interviews.

No later than one week before the school development review

The Review team leader meets with the principal to ensure organisational logistics are adequate and that the following requirements have been considered:

- interview spaces are checked for access, suitability and confidentiality
- an additional, appropriate and confidential place is available as a team meeting room and for debriefing throughout the review
- an appropriate introduction of review team members to the school community
- support services are able to be accessed by staff at short notice
- requested documents are available and accessible
- a formal briefing is provided to staff members about the purpose and implications of the school development review process. This will include the terms of reference, a timeframe for the review, the methodology to be observed and membership of the review team
- an opportunity for school community members to attend a formal briefing about the school development review process
- advice regarding the number of interviews and specific personnel to be interviewed
- a timetable of interviews and actions across the review period is provided.

During the week of the school development review

The review team will spend up to five days at the school.

The timetable will:

- allocate time at the start for the briefing to the review team by the principal
- remain responsive and flexible to need
- include interviews with relevant staff and school community members including parents and students
- include observations of lessons and other school activities, as relevant
- include time for analysis of performance data, other evidence and relevant school documentation
- allow for individual reflection, synthesis time, review team discussion and flexibility
- include time to meet separately with the principal each day to discuss emerging issues
- include time for team reflection before debriefing
- allocate time at the end of the review for validation, synthesis and the writing of draft findings, recommendations and strategies
- allocate time for an exit presentation with the principal of draft findings, draft recommendations and possible strategies, and advise that monitoring visits will be conducted over a twelve month period.

In the two weeks following the school development review

The review team provides a final report to the school which will include time-specific, explicit actions and strategies for mandatory implementation by the school. The report is classified for department 'staff only' which is defined as staff of the school, the Director, Educational Leadership, the Executive Director, School Performance and Deputy Secretary, School Operations and Performance.

Other business units within the department should be accessed to support the recommendations of the school development review for further action, where appropriate.

In the 12 months following the school development review

The Director, Educational Leadership (unless otherwise determined by the Executive Director, School Performance) will conduct monitoring visits to the school each term for a year, to assess the effectiveness of implementation of the strategies.

An implementation update will be provided each term by the Director, Educational Leadership to the Executive Director, School Performance and to the Deputy Secretary, School Operations and Performance.