

Standards Monitoring in Schools

A Guide to School Planning

Final Draft

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STANDARDS MONITORING IN SCHOOLS

A GUIDE TO SCHOOL PLANNING

School planning for improvement is a natural consequence of school self-assessment and provides the focus for the direction of the school.

The Purpose of School Planning

The school plan articulates the school vision and connects the school community to the same goals and agreed actions. It identifies focus areas in response to a changing environment and provides a significant mechanism by which schools demonstrate their capacity to use resources responsibly and strategically.

The school plan provides a transparent mechanism for schools to think through and document what they are doing and why they are doing it. The process must include an assessment of the effectiveness of established directions and strategies.

In implementing school and operational plans the staff must have the confidence, flexibility and authority to be creative and responsive to new developments; to respond in a positive way to managing the risks that are identified through careful and purposeful monitoring of school operations and to ensure that the needs of students can be best met at all times.

The Process of School Planning

1 Planning Framework

Schools should use a planning framework that covers all the dimensions of school operations so that planning for improvement can be done in a cohesive and comprehensive manner.

The planning framework will vary according to the needs of individual schools and should remain flexible to accommodate future changes. The planning framework outlined below provides simple headings under which all planning consideration can be accommodated:

- The things we are doing well and will continue to do.
- The things that need to be improved.
- New things that need to be introduced.

The school planning framework needs longitudinal consistency to ensure that critical self-assessment and review of student achievement and school operations is progressing in a confident and controlled manner.

The selection of an appropriate planning framework enables a school to respond to system plans and policy, and to manage the demand for changes that arise during the year.

Good planning frameworks allow schools to adopt new projects, funding and system directives in a timely and cohesive way. The planning framework should allow judgements to be made about what is currently happening and where new initiatives fit. Knowing where new initiatives fit provides the school community with a starting point in deciding what changes have to be made to current operations and when.

2 The School Plan

The school plan should respond to identified focus areas and express whole school targets and strategies for improvement. It should also ensure sustainability of good practice. The school might have a two, three or five-year planning horizon, with a particular set of

initiatives planned for the first year. The two, three or five-year plan is then reviewed and updated annually in consultation with stakeholders.

The school plan should be guided by:

- the articulation of the core purpose of schools; the holistic approach to student learning and the standards to be achieved, and the support needed for quality teaching and learning programs to achieve this.
- information generated and analysed through the school self–assessment process.
- a focus on improvement that builds the capacity of the whole school and aspects of a professional culture.
- Ministry of Education, school and local community contexts.
- an awareness of international and local trends and how Government and Ministry of Education policy and direction will impact on students.

The school plan should be succinct and include:

- focus areas for improvement.
- improvement targets
- non–focus areas to be sustained.
- financial requirements.
- measures for evaluating progress.
- timeframe including annual review.

3 Operational Plans

The operational plan guides the day to day business of the school. It is generated annually in response to the general direction established by the school plan and provides specific targets that are linked to the targets in the school plan. Operational plans should inform classroom planning and set the context for school procedures and management processes.

The operational plan should be guided by:

- information generated and analysed through the school self–assessment process.
- the school plan.
- a review of previous planning.

Operational plans should:

- identify the major strategies to address areas in need of improvement
- set specific targets for each area of school operations.
- identify the resources that are required to implement the strategies.
- identify the performance measures and data collection processes to inform judgements about the success of the plan.
- specify the role of key staff, timelines and review points.

It should be noted that in many schools where the improvement required is simple, particularly small schools, the school plan and operational plan may be combined as one plan. In more complex situations or in larger schools the school plan and operational plan may need to be different documents.

4 Classroom Planning

Classroom planning caters for groups and individual students and should ensure learning programs and school activities support the directions set by the school and operational plans.

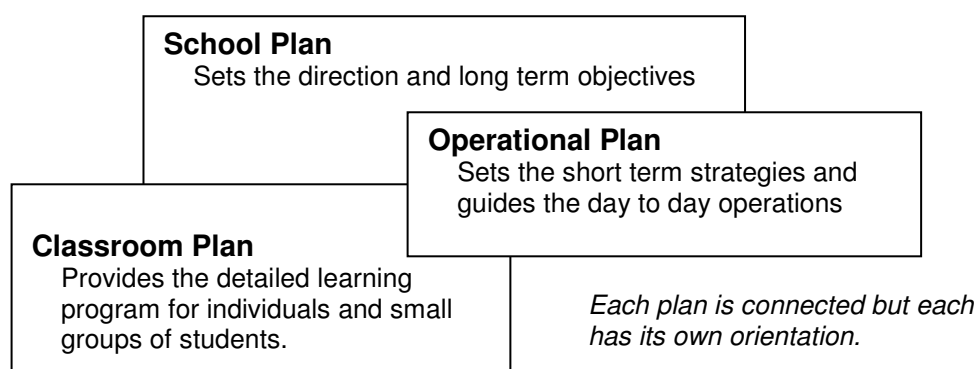
Teachers are expected to monitor students' progress, to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and to provide an educational program that is appropriate to their needs.

Classroom planning should be guided by:

- a child centred approach that recognises the different needs of individuals and of students.
- evidence-based best teaching and learning practice.
- targets set through school and operational planning process.
- the strategies in the operational plan.

Classroom planning should include:

- input from students
- appropriate targets for identified groups and individuals.
- the relevant achievement standards to monitor student progress and make judgements about student achievement.
- the resources required.
- review points to monitor and assess student progress.



Target Setting:

The school plan is a public statement about school intent and should include whole school targets. The targets should be expressed in plain language that the school community readily understands. They should also be considered in the context of the aspirations of the community and current Government and Ministry of Education reform requirements.

Operational plans set more specific targets that articulate the contribution to the whole-of-school targets expressed in the school plan. These should reflect the professional directions established through the *National Curriculum Framework* and Ministry of Education policies.

Classroom planning sets targets for groups and individuals within the class. These should be developed in direct response to the needs of the students and as the classroom contribution to the collective responsibility of the operational targets. In the key learning areas this involves monitoring student progress towards meeting required standards. Where appropriate students should provide feedback on their own progress.

Appendix 1

A PLAN FOR PLANNING

The following table can be used to organize ideas in readiness for formal planning at the school, operational and classroom level.

Areas for Improvement	Strategies for Improvement	Date and Team to Implement

Care should be taken not to attempt improvements in too many areas at anyone time. Consideration must be given to staff and community skills, time demands and financial resources.