School planning – a reflection resource
A resource for reflecting and providing feedback on a school plan

Purpose of this resource
This school planning resource is designed to support and promote professional conversations regarding the development and review of a three-year school plan. It is consistent with the School Excellence implementation guidelines – School planning and related policy documents.

Using this resource
This resource is suitable for:
- individual reflection by the principal
- feedback from the school executive or the broader school community
- critique from peer principals in a local community of schools
- coaching and professional development
- professional conversations
- framing conversations leading to school plan endorsement by the Director, Public Schools NSW.

The focus of the resource:
- encourages reflection on the published sections of the school plan.
- does not currently include advice on implementation and progress monitoring (milestones)

For each section of the school plan, the resource includes:
- a key question regarding the requirements of a school plan as set out in the School Excellence implementation guidelines – School planning
- sample prompt questions to consider.

Note – the sample prompt questions are not prescriptive nor exhaustive. They should be used as a guide only to initiate and promote deep discussion.

Prior to reflection
Pre-reading:
- School Excellence policy
- School Excellence implementation guidelines – External validation
- School Excellence implementation guidelines – School planning
- School Excellence implementation guidelines – Self-assessment
- School Excellence Framework
- Pre-reading also includes the current annual report, School Excellence Framework Self-assessment Survey (SEF S-aS), school plan and external validation submission (where applicable).

Aspects of the School Plan
School planning process / Context
Is the school plan informed by self-assessment, community consultation and the school context?
Consider:
- How has the evaluation of the 2015-2017 school plan informed the 2018-2020 iteration?
- How has the school’s most recent self-assessment informed the school plan?
- How did community consultation inform the school plan?

Vision statement
Does the vision statement represent the high-level goals for the school’s future, shared values and philosophy?
Consider:
- How clearly does the school vision statement describe the desired future?
- How is the vision statement evident throughout the school plan?
- How does the vision statement address the department’s priorities?
- How does the vision statement articulate the objectives for student learning?

Strategic directions
Are the strategic directions high-level drivers for transformational change?
Consider:
- How appropriate is the language of the purpose statements for the audience and school context?
- How do the strategic directions advance the school vision?
- How is literacy and numeracy explicitly reflected in the strategic directions and/or purpose statements?
Purpose

Does the purpose statement clearly explain why this strategic direction was chosen as a focus?
Consider:
• To what extent are the purpose statements written in plain English?
• How clearly does the purpose statement articulate the intent of the strategic direction?
• What evidence informed the development and purpose of the strategic direction?

Practices and products

Do the practices and products provide a clear statement of what will be done differently (practices) and what will be achieved (products)?
Consider:
• What data, research evidence and policy documents informed the practices and products?
• How does your data collection strategy monitor growth, identify gaps, or monitor program effectiveness?
• What change do you hope to see using these practices?
• To what extent are the practices and products measurable, observable and/or describable?
• In what ways are the practices and products linked to the improvement measures?
• How has each component of the purpose statements been addressed in the practices and products?

People

Do the people statements clearly identify the knowledge, capabilities, skills and mindsets that people in the school community need for transformational change?
Consider:
• What knowledge, skills and mindsets have been identified to ensure the products and practices are achieved?
• How is the whole school community supporting the delivery of learning priorities?
• What training and development is needed to support students, staff and community?

Process

Will the implementation of these 2-3 major processes achieve the improvement measures, practices and products for each strategic direction?
Note – each process has its own milestone page in SPaRO, which allows performance and implementation to be monitored
Consider:
• Is the wording of each process sufficiently clear and concise to enable effective implementation and progress monitoring (milestoning)?
• Are the processes comprehensive enough for the three-year cycle?
• What resources have been assigned to the processes?

Improvement Measures

Each strategic direction has 2-3 improvement measures. Are the improvement measures high-level statements against which the impact of the processes can be monitored and evaluated?
Consider:
• How do the improvement measures effectively capture the intent of the purpose statement?
• What data will demonstrate how well the plan is being implemented?
• What baselines data has informed the improvement measures?
• Will the improvement measures effectively capture what we set out to improve? How will we know?
• What does success for student learning look like?
• How have literacy and numeracy been included in the improvement measures?
• Are the improvement measures discrete and explicit?

Evaluation plan

Does the evaluation plan list relevant strategies and evidence sources that can be used to monitor progress and impact?
Consider:
• What qualitative and quantitative data sources will be used for evaluation? Why?
• Are there any other data sources that could be included to support evaluation?
• How will you report on the data collected through the evaluation plan?
• How will you act on feedback provided by staff, students and the community?

Considerations following reflection

Consider:
• How effectively aligned are the component parts for each strategic direction?
• In what ways do the strategic directions and purpose statements relate to each other and the school vision statement?
• What human, physical or financial resources are required for planned activities?
• How and when will the school monitor the implementation of the plan?

For further information to support the development of a school plan:
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