

## REVIEW INTO REPORTING TO FAMILIES: TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Background and overview

School reports are one of the primary ways by which families are informed of, and engaged in, the learning progress and achievement of their children. School reports also provide learners with a formal indication of their achievement at key points in the school year.

The current Tasmanian Government School arrangements for reporting to families have been in place since 2007. This consists of two written reports occurring at the end of Term 2 and Term 4. For Prep to Year 10, students are provided with A-E ratings against national standards for the learning areas or subjects they have undertaken as well as comments. For students in Years 11 and 12, they are provided with A-Z ratings for the subjects they have undertaken. This information is intended to demonstrate learning progress and achievement.

The writing and editing of school reports consumes a significant amount of teachers' and school leaders' time and energy. Whilst reports are a valued element of schooling, there is limited evidence that they impact on learning progress.

Over the last decade there have been advances in how we understand:

- the cognitive processes of learning
- the conditions that support learning
- the specific role of assessment in learning
- the impact of family engagement on learning.

In addition, innovations in technology are transforming the practice of assessment, and the ways that families can engage in and support the learning of their children. It is timely to consider whether Tasmania's current arrangements for reporting meet the needs of learners and families.

### Scope of the review

The principle aims of the Review are:

- to examine the purpose of reporting and whether current practice meets that purpose
- to ensure that learners and families are provided with **meaningful** information on **learning progress and achievement**. This will include specific investigation of what is reported, and the utility of A-E ratings against national standards for this purpose
- to ensure that learners and families are provided with **timely** information on **learning progress and achievement**. This will include specific investigation of the utility of twice-yearly reporting to families for this purpose
- to ensure clarity and consistency of approach across schools in relation to reporting to families
- to enable flexibility of approach for reporting to families, to suit local school contexts
- to ensure teacher's time is maximised for quality instruction and in class assessment practices that progress learning and reducing the reporting workload on Teachers.

## REVIEW INTO **REPORTING TO FAMILIES**

### Review outputs

Review Report, including recommendations on:

- Procedures for reporting student achievements and progress to students and families that are timely, efficient and manageable
- Measures of progress and achievement to be included in reports, both quantitative and qualitative
- Frequency of formal reports to families
- Format of formal reports to families
- Relationship between formal reports and other mechanisms for communication and engagement with families' e.g. online feedback.

Other relevant work that the Review will need to consider:

- Years 9-12 Review Project
- Refocus Teaching and Learning in the Early Years
- Strategic Systems Development.

### Review governance

The review will be overseen by a Steering Committee which will meet every six weeks.

The Chair of the Steering Committee will be the Deputy Secretary, Support and Development. Secretariat support/Project Manager will be provided by the Department of Education.

The Steering Committee will include the following members:

- Deputy Secretary, Support and Development (Chair)
- Deputy Secretary, Learning
- Director, Curriculum Services (Project Manager)
- AEU representative
- TASSO representative
- TPA representative
- Director, Education Performance and Review
- Principal Policy Analyst, Curriculum Services (Project Officer/Secretariat).

REFERENCE GROUPS WILL INCLUDE (SEE ATTACHMENT - ENGAGEMENT STRUCTURES):

Principal Reference Group - PAG

Kindergarten Teacher Reference Group

Primary Teacher Reference Group (Prep to Year 6)

Secondary Teacher Reference Group (Years 7 to 10)

Senior Secondary Teacher Reference Group (Years 11 and 12)

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The Department will call on expert Advisor – Dr Hillary Hollingsworth, Australian Council for Educational Research to present her research to the Steering Committee – *Communicating Student Learning Progress: A Review of Student Reporting in Australia*.

### Review process

The review period will be from July 2020 to March 2021. The Review Report will be submitted for consideration to the Minister for Education and Training by April 2021.

The review will include:

- Jurisdictional Scan
- Internal System Scan – current reporting practices, formats, timeframes and the use of technology
- Literature Review
- Consultation with
  - School Leaders
  - Teachers
  - Students
  - Parents/Families
  - Peak bodies TASSO, TPA
  - Australian Education Union
  - DoE business units.







## Review Timeline

Table 1 Review actions and indicative timeframe

ACTION	INDICATIVE TIMEFRAME
Announcement of Review and Publication of Terms of Reference	February 2020
Commencement of Jurisdictional Scan and Literature Review	June 2020
First Steering Committee meeting	August 2020
Commencement of Consultation	September 2020
Interviews – Principals	September 2020
Interviews –Senior Education Officials	October 2020
Meetings – Peak bodies TASSO, TPA	September 2020
Representative Reference Groups – Principals and Teachers	September 2020
Anonymous online survey – Families	October 2020
Anonymous online survey – Students Years 4 - 12	November 2020
Representative Focus Groups – Students K – Year 3	November 2020
Preliminary Recommendations and draft Report to Review Panel	February 2021
Report Submitted	March 2021
Implementation of approved recommendations	Term 1 2022

\*Commencement of review suspended in March 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19. Indicative timeframe amended accordingly. Recommencement of review process from August 2020.

Principles underpinning the Review

PRINCIPLE	WHAT IT MEANS
 <p>Purposeful</p>	<p>Engagement is <b>collaborative and purposeful</b>, developed through <b>understanding and sharing</b>.</p>
 <p>Timely &amp; responsive</p>	<p>Engagement occurs <b>regularly</b> and <b>acknowledges input</b> from all participants who are given <b>regular feedback</b>.</p>
 <p>Genuine &amp; authentic</p>	<p>DOE <b>values and promotes engagement</b> as part of its culture. <b>Trust is developed</b> and strengthened through <b>collaborative and sustainable relationships</b>.</p>
 <p>Inclusive</p>	<p>Everyone is <b>supported to take part</b> through the use of plain language in ways, places and times that are <b>inclusive and accessible</b>.</p>
 <p>Thoughtful or considerate</p>	<p>The knowledge, experience, expertise and skills of all participants are <b>valued and heard</b> to build on what is already known and what has been done before to develop new ideas.</p>
 <p>Accountable</p>	<p>Evidence is collected from all engagement work and carefully evaluated so that it effectively <b>informs our decisions and measures impact</b>.</p>