NSW GOVERNMENT | **Education & Communities**

Public Schools NSW

School Excellence Framework

Introduction

NSW public schools are committed to the pursuit of excellence and the provision of high quality educational opportunities for each and every child. This in turn facilitates the consistent improvement of student outcomes and the narrowing of achievement gaps between students.

Our aim is to maximise learning in our schools, including that students achieve at least a year's worth of learning from every year's teaching.

The School Excellence Framework supports all NSW public schools in their pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of the key elements of high quality practice across the three domains of learning, teaching and leading.

The Framework describes 14 elements across these three domains which define the core business of excellent schools in three stages. Each year, schools will assess their practices against the Framework to inform their school plans and annual school reports. The description of excellence in the Framework supports schools as they engage their communities in the development of a shared vision, the identification of strategic priorities, and the ongoing tracking of progress towards them.

The focus is on students

All parents want the very best for their children. In education, this means teachers and schools with a commitment to nurture, guide, inspire and challenge students – to find the joy in learning, to build their skills and understanding, and to make sense of their world. In the early years, it means having confidence that each individual child will be known and understood, and their individual potential developed. As students progress, it means knowing that they are well supported as increasingly self-motivated learners – confident and creative individuals, with the personal resources for future success and wellbeing.

Excellence in learning

The journey to excellence for students in NSW public schools begins during the first important weeks of Kindergarten. Every child brings a different set of experiences, knowledge and skills to school with them, and understanding these is essential to planning their individual learning paths. From the earliest school days and throughout their time at school, teachers use information about individual students' capabilities and needs to plan for students' learning so as to engage them in rich learning experiences, developing the vital skills for flourishing – now and in future years. By sharing information about learning development, teachers engage parents as active participants in their children's education. At the other end of schooling, teachers and schools support students to make successful transitions to future learning and employment, with the skills to make informed contributions as citizens and leaders.

Excellence in teaching

Student learning is underpinned in excellent schools by high quality teaching and leadership. Teaching in these schools is distinguished by universally high levels of professionalism and commitment. Lessons and learning opportunities are engaging and teaching strategies are evidence-based. Individually and collaboratively, teachers evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching practices, including sophisticated analysis of student engagement, learning growth and outcomes, to plan for the ongoing learning of each student in their care. Teachers take shared responsibility for student improvement and contribute to a transparent learning culture, including through the observation of each other's practices.

Excellence in leading

Strong, strategic and effective leadership is the cornerstone of school excellence. Excellent leaders have a commitment to fostering a school-wide culture of high expectations and a shared sense of responsibility for student engagement, learning, development and success. Students benefit from the school's planned and proactive engagement with parents and the broader community. Leaders in excellent schools ensure that operational issues, such as resource allocation and accountability requirements, serve the overarching strategic vision of the school community. Ultimately, leaders in these schools enable a self-sustaining and self-improving community that will continue to support the highest levels of learning as a lasting legacy of their contributions.

LEARNING ELEMENTS:

LEARNING CULTURE

WELLBEING

CURRICULUM AND LEARNING

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

STUDENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

In schools that excel, school culture demonstrates the building of educational aspiration and ongoing performance improvement across its community. Students take responsibility for their ongoing learning.

DELIVERING	SUSTAINING AND GROWING	EXCELLING
• All teaching staff understand that student engagement and learning are related, with the school communicating priorities for strengthening both. • Expectations of behaviour are explicitly taught to students and relate to the variety of school settings such as classroom, playground, hallways, canteen and assemblies. • School programs address the needs of identified student groups (eg. Aboriginal students, gifted students, students with disability and students for whom English is a second language). • Attendance rates are regularly monitored and action is taken promptly to address issues with individual students.	• There is demonstrated commitment within the school community to strengthen and deliver on school learning priorities. • Positive, respectful relationships are evident among students and staff, promoting student wellbeing and ensuring good conditions for student learning. • Well-developed and current policies, programs and processes identify, address and monitor student learning needs.	• There is school-wide, collective responsibility for student learning and success, with high levels of student, staff and community engagement. • Positive and respectful relationships across the school community underpin a productive learning environment, and support students' development of strong identities as learners.

LEARNING ELEMENTS:

- LEARNING CULTURE
- **WELLBEING**
- CURRICULUM AND LEARNING
- ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING
- STUDENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

In schools that excel, there is a strategic and planned approach to support the cognitive, emotional, social, physical and spiritual wellbeing of all students.

DELIVERING	SUSTAINING AND GROWING	EXCELLING
• Students, staff and the broader school community understand the behaviours, attitudes and expectations that enhance wellbeing and lead to improved student outcomes. • The school has identified aspects of, and factors contributing to, wellbeing in the delivery of teaching and learning. • Students are taught to accept responsibility for their own behaviours as appropriate to their age and level of understanding, as expressed in the Behaviour Code. • The school encourages students to recognise and respect cultural identity and diversity. • School staff maintain currency of knowledge about requirements to meet obligations under Keeping Them Safe.	• The school consistently implements a whole-school approach to wellbeing that has clearly defined behavioural expectations and creates a positive teaching and learning environment. • Quality teaching and professional practice are evident in every learning environment, providing students with opportunities to connect, succeed and thrive that are relevant to their stages of learning and development. • Students care for self, and contribute to the wellbeing of others and the wider community.	• The school has in place a comprehensive and inclusive framework to support the cognitive, emotional, social, physical and spiritual wellbeing of students, which measurably improves individual and collective wellbeing. • Individual learning is supported by the effective use of school, system and community expertise and resources through contextual decision-making and planning. • Students are self-aware, build positive relationships and actively contribute to the school, the community and the society in which they live.

LEARNING ELEMENTS:

- LEARNING CULTURE
- WELLBEING
- **CURRICULUM AND LEARNING**
- ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING
- STUDENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

In schools that excel, an integrated approach to quality teaching, curriculum planning and delivery, and assessment promotes learning excellence and responsiveness in meeting the learning needs of all students.

DELIVERING

- Curriculum provision meets community needs and expectations and provides equitable academic opportunities.

- The school has an effective plan for student transitions in place.

- School plans elaborate on what all students are expected to know, understand and do.

- Curriculum delivery integrates technology, library and information services.

- The school provides a range of extra-curricular offerings for student development.

- Teachers differentiate curriculum delivery to meet the needs of individual students.

SUSTAINING AND GROWING

- Curriculum provision is enhanced by learning alliances with other schools and organisations.

- The school actively collects and uses information to support students' successful transitions.

- Teachers involve students and parents in planning to support students as they progress through the stages of education.

- There are systematic policies, programs and processes to identify and address student learning needs.

EXCELLING

- The school establishes active partnerships and works collaboratively to ensure continuity of learning for students.

- Curriculum programs and teaching practices effectively develop the knowledge, understanding and skills of all students, using evidence-based teaching practices and innovative delivery mechanisms where appropriate.

- Extra-curricular learning opportunities are significant, support student development, and are strongly aligned with the school's vision, values and priorities.

LEARNING ELEMENTS:

- LEARNING CULTURE
- WELLBEING
- CURRICULUM AND LEARNING
- **ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING**
- STUDENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

In schools that excel, consistent, school-wide practices for assessment and reporting are used to monitor, plan and report on student learning across the curriculum.

DELIVERING	SUSTAINING AND GROWING	EXCELLING
• The school analyses internal and external assessment data to monitor, track and report on student and school performance.	• The school has developed explicit processes to collect, analyse and report internal and external student and school performance data.	• The school has aligned staff processes and school systems for collecting, analysing and reporting local and external data on student and school performance.
• Individual student reports include descriptions of the student's strengths and areas of growth.	• Student reports contain detailed information about individual student learning achievement and areas for growth, which provide the basis for discussion with parents.	• Students use reflection on assessment and reporting processes and feedback to plan learning.
• Teachers set transparent criteria for student assessment and have in place principles of consistent assessment and moderation.	• Students use assessment and reporting processes to reflect on their learning.	• Assessment data to monitor achievements and gaps in student learning are used extensively to inform planning for particular student groups and individual students.
• Parents are updated on the progress of their children.	• The school has analysed school performance data and a range of other contextual information and is aware of trends in student achievement levels.	• Evaluating and reporting student performance data underpins the whole-school assessment strategy.
	• Parents have an understanding of what their children are learning and receive regular information to support progression to the next level.	• Practices are embedded for parents to be engaged and understand the learning progress of their children and how to effectively support them to learn.

LEARNING ELEMENTS:

- LEARNING CULTURE
- WELLBEING
- CURRICULUM AND LEARNING
- ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING
- **STUDENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

In schools that excel, students consistently perform at high levels on external and internal school performance measures.

DELIVERING	SUSTAINING AND GROWING	EXCELLING

• The school achieves value-added results.
 	
• Students are at or above national minimum standards on external performance measures.
 	
• Students are showing expected growth on internal school performance measures.
	• The school:
	
	  - achieves good value-added results, and/or
	
	  - around 20 per cent of students achieve at high levels of performance on external performance measures.
	
	• Students are showing higher than expected growth on internal school performance measures.
		• The school:
		
		  - achieves excellent value-added results, and/or
		
		  - most of its students achieve at high levels of performance on external performance measures.
		
		• Performance for equity groups within a school is comparable to the performance of all students in the school.

Key quantitative measures will include, where relevant:

- Value-added results
- [Primary] Proportion at/above national minimum standard in Year 5 NAPLAN Reading and Numeracy
- [Primary] Proportion of tracked students in top two NAPLAN bands at Year 7
- [Secondary] Proportion at/above national minimum standard in Year 9 NAPLAN Reading and Numeracy
- [Secondary] Proportion of students with 2+ Band 5-6 results at HSC
- [Primary and Secondary] Internal school performance measures.

TEACHING ELEMENTS:

In schools that excel, all teachers are committed to identifying, understanding and implementing the most effective teaching methods, with a high priority given to evidence-based teaching strategies.

EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM PRACTICE	DELIVERING	SUSTAINING AND GROWING	EXCELLING
DATA SKILLS AND USE / COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE / LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT / PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS	• Teachers regularly review and revise teaching and learning programs. • Teachers routinely review previous content and preview the learning planned for students in class. • All classrooms are well managed, with well planned teaching taking place, so that students can engage in learning productively, with minimal disruption.	• Teachers regularly use student performance data and other student feedback to evaluate the effectiveness of their own teaching practices. • Teachers provide explicit, specific and timely formative feedback to students on how to improve.	• The school leadership team demonstrates instructional leadership, promoting and modelling effective, evidence-based practice. • Teachers regularly review learning with each student, ensuring all students have a clear understanding of how to improve their learning.

TEACHING ELEMENTS:

- EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM PRACTICE
- **DATA SKILLS AND USE**
- COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE
- LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT
- PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

In schools that excel, student assessment data are regularly used school-wide to identify student achievements and progress, in order to inform future school directions.

DELIVERING	SUSTAINING AND GROWING	EXCELLING
• Teachers analyse and use student assessment data to understand the learning needs of students. • The school's professional learning builds teacher skills in the analysis, interpretation and use of student performance data. • Data analysis informs the school's learning goals and monitors progress towards them. • School analysis of student performance data is provided to the community on a regular basis. • The school leadership team regularly uses data to inform key decisions.	• Teachers incorporate data analysis in their planning for learning. • Assessment instruments are used regularly to help monitor student learning progress and to identify skill gaps for improvement. • The school leadership team engages the school community in reflecting on student performance data.	• Teachers demonstrate a sophisticated understanding and use of student assessment and data literacy concepts (eg. value-added, growth, improvement, statistical significance). • Teachers clearly understand and utilise assessment for learning, assessment as learning and assessment of learning in determining teaching directions, school performance levels and effectiveness. • Teachers take responsibility for changes in practice required to achieve improved school performance and are using data on a regular basis to monitor the effectiveness of their own efforts. • The school leadership team builds the collective capacity of the staff and school community to use data to inform strategic school improvement efforts.

TEACHING ELEMENTS:

In schools that excel, there are explicit systems for collaboration and feedback to sustain quality teaching practice.

EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM PRACTICE
DATA SKILLS AND USE
COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE
LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

DELIVERING	SUSTAINING AND GROWING	EXCELLING
• Executive, staff, faculty/stage, team and other meetings are used to review the curriculum and to revise teaching and learning programs. • Staff regularly evaluate teaching and learning programs including the assessment of student outcomes.	• Teachers work together to improve teaching and learning in their year groups, stages, faculties, or for particular student groups. • Teachers provide and receive planned constructive feedback from peers, school leaders and students to improve teaching practice. • Processes are in place to provide formal mentoring or coaching support to improve teaching and leadership practice. • The school identifies expertise within its staff and draws on this to further develop its professional community.	• Teachers collaborate within and across stages and faculties to ensure consistency of curriculum delivery, including strategies for differentiation and consistency of teacher judgement. • The school has embedded and explicit systems for collaboration, classroom observation, the modelling of effective practice and feedback to drive and sustain ongoing, school-wide improvement in teaching practice and student outcomes. • School-wide and/or inter-school relationships provide mentoring and coaching support to ensure the ongoing development of all staff.

TEACHING ELEMENTS:

- EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM PRACTICE
- DATA SKILLS AND USE
- COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE
- **LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**
- PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

In schools that excel, professional learning is aligned with the school plan, and its impact on the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes is evaluated.

DELIVERING	SUSTAINING AND GROWING	EXCELLING
• Teachers participate in professional learning targeted to school priorities and their professional needs. • The school has effective professional learning for induction, teaching quality, leadership preparation and leadership development. • The school has processes in place for teachers' performance and development. • Beginning and early-career teachers are provided with targeted support in areas of identified need. • Analysis of the teaching team identifies strengths and gaps, with succession planning in place to build staff capabilities and recruit staff with particular expertise to deliver school improvement targets.	• Teachers actively share learning from targeted professional development with others. • There is a particular focus on improved teaching methods in literacy and numeracy, with professional learning activities focused on building teachers' understandings of effective teaching strategies in these areas. • Teachers are actively engaged in planning their own professional development to improve their performance.	• The school evaluates professional learning activities to identify and systemically promote the most effective strategies. • Teachers draw on and implement evidence-based research to improve their performance and development. • The school is recognised as expert in the provision of support to beginning and early career teachers.

TEACHING ELEMENTS:

- EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM PRACTICE
- DATA SKILLS AND USE
- COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE
- LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT
- **PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

In schools that excel, all staff demonstrate personal responsibility for maintaining and developing their professional standards.

DELIVERING	SUSTAINING AND GROWING	EXCELLING
• Teachers understand and implement professional standards and curriculum requirements. • Staff attainment of professional learning goals and teaching requirements are part of the school's performance and development processes. • The school has a culture of supporting teachers to pursue higher-level accreditation. • Teachers are committed to their ongoing development as members of the teaching profession. • Teachers demonstrate currency of content knowledge and teaching practice in all their teaching areas.	• Teachers demonstrate responsibility, adaptability and ethical practice in working towards the school's goals. • Teachers work beyond their classrooms to contribute to broader school programs.	• The teaching staff of the school demonstrate and share expertise, have very high levels of contemporary content knowledge and teaching practices, and rely on evidence-based teaching strategies.

LEADING ELEMENTS:

LEADERSHIP			
SCHOOL PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING			
SCHOOL RESOURCES			
MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND PROCESSES			

In schools that excel, the school leadership team supports a culture of high expectations and community engagement, resulting in sustained and measurable whole-school improvement.

DELIVERING	SUSTAINING AND GROWING	EXCELLING
• Parents and community members have the opportunity to engage in a wide range of school-related activities. • The school community is positive about educational provision. • The school is committed to the development of leadership skills in staff and students. • Links exist with communities of schools, other educational providers and other organisations to support the school's programs. • The school's leadership strategy promotes succession planning, distributed leadership and organisational best practice.	• The school solicits and addresses feedback on school performance. • Leadership development is central to school capacity building. • The school has productive relationships with external agencies such as universities, business, industry and community organisations to improve educational opportunities for students.	• Staff have purposeful leadership roles based on professional expertise. • The school community is committed to the school's strategic directions and practices to achieve educational priorities. • The school is recognised as excellent and responsive by its community as a result of its effective engagement with members of the local community such as parents, families, local media and business organisations. • The school leadership team makes deliberate and strategic use of its partnerships and relationships to access resources for the purpose of enriching the school's standing within the local community and improving student outcomes.

LEADING ELEMENTS:

LEADERSHIP

SCHOOL PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING

SCHOOL RESOURCES

MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND PROCESSES

In schools that excel, the school plan is at the core of continuous improvement efforts, with the school's vision and strategic directions evident in its main activity.

DELIVERING	SUSTAINING AND GROWING	EXCELLING
• Staff, students, parents and the broader school community are welcomed and engaged, when possible, in the development of the vision, values and purpose for the school. • The three-year school plan has annual iterations focused on achieving identified improvements. • The school articulates a commitment to equity and high expectations for learning for each student and is responsive to changing needs. • The school plan aligns to local and system priorities and ensures responsiveness to emerging needs. • An evidence base, drawn from the collection and analysis of learning and development data, is used to review performance annually. • Planning and implementation includes processes for resource allocation, professional learning, performance monitoring and reporting. • The school acknowledges and celebrates a wide diversity of student, staff and community achievements.	• There is broad understanding of, and support for, school expectations and aspirations for improving student learning across the school community. • Staff are committed to, and can articulate the purpose of, each strategic direction in the school plan. • Monitoring, evaluation and review processes are embedded and undertaken routinely. • Clear processes, with accompanying timelines and milestones, direct school activity towards effective implementation of the school plan.	• The school uses evidence-based strategy and innovative thinking in designing a school plan that delivers ongoing improvements in student outcomes. • The school successfully fosters collaboration with key stakeholders in the development of the school vision, strategic directions and annual plans. • Established processes build the capacity of the school community to use data and evidence for strategic school improvement. • Shared school-wide responsibility is evident through leadership, teaching, learning, and community evaluations to review learning improvements. • The school uses collaborative feedback and reflection to promote and generate learning and innovation.

LEADING ELEMENTS:

LEADERSHIP

SCHOOL PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING

SCHOOL RESOURCES

MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND PROCESSES

In schools that excel, resources are strategically used to achieve improved student outcomes.

DELIVERING	SUSTAINING AND GROWING	EXCELLING
• School staffing ensures that full curriculum implementation and delivery requirements are met. • Systematic annual staff performance and development reviews are conducted. • The school's financial and physical resources and facilities are well maintained, within the constraints of the school budget, and provide a safe environment that supports learning. • School and other facilities are used creatively to meet a broad range of student learning interests and needs.	• Workforce planning supports curriculum provision and the recruitment of high quality staff. • Strategic financial management is used to gain efficiencies and to maximise resources available to implement the school plan. • Physical learning spaces are used flexibly, and technology is accessible to staff and students.	• Succession planning, leadership development and workforce planning are designed to drive whole-school improvement. • Longer-term financial planning is integrated with school planning and implementation processes. • The use of school facilities is optimised within the local community, to best meet the needs of students and the local community.

LEADING ELEMENTS:

| LEADERSHIP |
| SCHOOL PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING |
| SCHOOL RESOURCES |
| **MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND PROCESSES** |

In schools that excel, management systems, structures and processes underpin ongoing school improvement and the professional effectiveness of all school members.

DELIVERING	SUSTAINING AND GROWING	EXCELLING
• The school leadership team communicates clearly about school priorities and practices. • Administrative practices effectively support school operations and the teaching and learning activity of the school. • Accountability practices are tied to school development and include open reporting to the community. • The school leadership team creates an organisational structure that enables management systems, structures and processes to work effectively and in line with legislative requirements and obligations. • All school staff are supported to develop skills for the successful operation of administrative systems.	• There are opportunities for students and the community to provide constructive feedback on school practices and procedures. • Streamlined, flexible processes exist to deliver services and information and strengthen parental engagement.	• Practices and processes are responsive to school community feedback. • Administrative practices provide explicit information about the school's functioning to promote ongoing improvement.