Performance and Development Guidelines for Principal Class Employees

May 2014
Introduction

Successful leadership can play a highly significant – and frequently underestimated – role in improving student learning. Specifically, the available evidence about the size and nature of the effects of successful leadership on student learning justifies the claim that leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school (Leithwood et al. 2004, p. 5).

It is the role of the principal and leadership team to shape and influence the organisational conditions that support quality teaching and to build the capacity of their staff to positively influence student learning, as evidence confirms that excellent teaching is the single most powerful in-school determinant of student achievement (Hattie, 2003). This is why effective performance and development is critical to improving quality teaching and learning outcomes for all students and achieving Victoria’s goal of becoming a world leader in education.

Effective, evidence-based performance and development processes within schools lead to improved teaching and leadership practices and the enhancement of learning, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for students and staff alike.

The performance and development model for Victorian government schools (the model) promotes a consistent process and provides a common understanding and language against which the performance and development of all school-based staff can be assessed and supported. It is developmentally focused and designed to enable individual accountability and collective responsibility, to support collaborative professional learning and to improve the quality of teaching in every classroom, in every Victorian Government school.

Effective school leadership is critical to ensure meaningful and lasting performance and development. It is essential in creating a system of teacher appraisal and feedback (Jensen, 2011) and forging a culture of collaborative learning and professionalism.

The model supports the highly skilled and complex nature of the professional practice undertaken in schools each and every day. It encourages thriving school cultures where improving skills and continuous development are the norm. The model sets high expectations for performance and development to align with the best practices that already exist in Victorian schools.

The professional expectations of principal class employees are made explicit in this model. As school leaders, principal class employees are required to conduct evidence-based performance conversations about their leadership practice, reflect on their own performance, and assist in the process of self-reflection and self-assessment of their staff with the objective of enhancing school and student outcomes.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (the Department) is committed to effective performance and development for school-based employees, including differentiated, evidence-based performance assessments.

A balanced scorecard approach is used to document, measure and assess the performance and development of principal class employees. Performance is appraised across all elements of a principal class employee’s role – including school and student outcomes, leadership of quality teaching and life-long learning, strategic resources management, and strengthening community and system engagement.

The principal class performance and development dimensions within the model are strongly aligned to the Australian Professional Standard for Principals. It is also informed by the Department’s Developmental Learning Framework for School Leaders (2007) and current leading research on effective school leadership.

The model requires the performance and development goals of every principal class employee and teacher to be aligned with their school’s priorities.

Principal class employees will develop their performance and development goals in discussion with their reviewer, with reference to the school strategic plan and annual implementation plan.
This means that the performance and development process reflects the circumstances of individual schools and individual role responsibilities, while maintaining the core elements of the system-wide model.

Principals will be reviewed by their Senior Adviser Regional Performance and Planning (Senior Adviser) or the Regional Director's (RD) other nominee. Campus and assistant principals will be reviewed by the school principal.

The model requires reviewers to provide meaningful appraisal that focuses on development. It enables:

- individual performance and development to be aligned with the school strategic plan and annual implementation plan
- performance and development to reflect achievable school improvement and student learning growth
- all principals to implement effective performance and development in their schools and create the conditions for high quality practice by all staff
- all principal class employees to be provided with feedback on performance to support their ongoing learning and development, with a focus on improving school and student outcomes
- achievement of performance and development goals to be recognised and acknowledged, including through remuneration progression where applicable
- a supportive environment for improving performance and identifying opportunities for development
- more meaningful accountability to students, parents, and the community to be enacted through processes that explicitly link individual principal class employee performance and development with student achievement and school goals and priorities.

To complement the model, the Department will provide tools and resources to assist schools to advance their professional practice.

**How to use this document**

This document describes the model as it applies to all principal class employees’ performance and development. It explains the key features of the model based on national and international research on effective performance and development for school leaders.

The key components of the model and what principal class employees and reviewers need to do at each stage are described in this document. This includes advice on goal setting against performance and development dimensions, collecting evidence and providing effective feedback. For information on the performance and development process for teachers, including an overview of a principal’s role within it, please go to the Performance and Development Guidelines for Teachers.

All school-based staff are encouraged to access the papers, Professional Practice and Performance for Improved Learning: Performance and Development (2014) and Professional Practice and Performance for Improved Learning: Professional learning and support for school leaders and teachers (2014). The Performance and Development paper outlines the underlying concepts, structures and processes for a new performance and development model for school leaders and teachers. Drawing from national and international research and examples of current practice within Victorian schools, it describes what effective performance and development processes look like, why they are important and where they fit within the wider context of professional practice and professional learning.

A summary of available tools and resources is also included at page 25 to ensure that school practitioners are equipped with the necessary support to effectively implement the model.

**Transition Advice for Implementation in 2014/15**

It is expected that all schools will fully implement the teacher performance and development model, by 2015. The Department has developed a self-assessment tool and transition guidance for schools to implement the new performance and development model in their school. See the Transition Advice for 2014 to 2015 and Self-Assessment Tool for Schools for further information.
The distinct role of principals

Research has shown that ‘powerful school leadership on the part of the principal has a positive effect on student achievement’ (Dufour and Marzano, 2011, p. 48). Viviane Robinson’s research into student centred leadership practices indicated that, ‘Leading teacher learning and development’ had the greatest impact on student outcomes (Robinson, 2009, pp. 95 -101).

In Victoria’s highly devolved education system principals are expected to be the leading force for improvements in teaching quality and performance: principals will lead the capability development of teachers and model the new performance and development process for their staff.

Robinson’s research demonstrated that based on teachers’ reports, school leaders in high-achieving schools participated more actively in teacher learning and development than leaders in low-achieving schools (Robinson, 2009, p.101).

The role of the principal is crucial in forging a professional and collaborative school culture that provides a rich variety of professional learning and development opportunities in order to raise teacher quality, increase motivation and maximise the potential of their staff (Day and Sammons, 2013, p. 17).

Schools share a professional commitment to continual, evidence-based improvement in teaching and learning to improve outcomes for all students. Principals have a key leadership role in this improvement and should:

- exercise strong management and leadership to drive improved performance in their schools
- align human, financial and intellectual resources with the school’s goals and priorities
- nurture staff self-efficacy and motivation
- monitor the performance and development of their staff and ensure it is aligned with school goals and priorities
- distribute leadership in ways that create a strong collective responsibility for teaching and learning and student engagement and wellbeing
- develop collaborative capacity building and inter-school learning
- review each other’s performance and hold each other to account for outcomes as part of major reforms to the school accountability process and their responsibility towards their communities.

Another key role of the principal is to model key values and practices for their staff to develop a professional culture and foster strong internal norms of accountability. By actively participating in the performance and development process, principals will set high expectations for professional practice in their school.

The model will support schools to cultivate and embed key professional practices that have been proven to lead to gains in student outcomes. These include:

- a shared view of high quality instructional practice and school-wide pedagogies
- ongoing collaborative professional learning and structure classroom observation and feedback
- collective responsibility for student outcomes enacted through collaborative planning, teacher and moderation of student work and assessment
- multiple sources of high quality feedback to teachers, including student voice.

To meet their professional expectations under the performance and development model, principals will be expected to:

- develop performance and development goals
- undertake self-reflection throughout the performance cycle
- perform a self-assessment at both mid-cycle and end-of-cycle
• discuss their formal performance and
development assessment at the end-cycle

• conduct or delegate performance and
development reviews of every staff member in
their school.

**Campus and assistant principals**
Campus and assistant principals play significant
leadership roles in their schools. Principals, campus
and assistant principals work collaboratively with their
broader leadership team and school community to
develop and implement the school’s annual
implementation plan. They may focus on different
aspects or share the same school improvement focus
in their respective performance and development
plans (PDP). The professional learning aspect of the
plans will differ based on individual areas of
responsibility and professional learning needs.
Overview of the model

As Jensen (2011, p. 7) states, ‘Meaningful appraisal is geared to teacher development and improvements in learning.’ The performance and development model is designed to support teachers and principal class employees to develop the professional practices that have the greatest impact on teaching and learning. The model facilitates professional growth and allows teachers and principal class employees to identify their own professional learning needs based on an analysis of their students’ learning needs, set goals, monitor their progress and provide evidence of the impact of their practice. The model achieves this through the key components in Figure 1 and highlighted in pages 9 - 18.

Figure 1: Components of the model
A balanced scorecard approach

At the beginning of each performance and development cycle, principals, in conjunction with their Senior Adviser (or RD's other nominee), will develop performance and development goals to form their personalised PDP using the balanced scorecard approach.

At the end of each cycle, the principal and Senior Adviser (or RD's other nominee) will evaluate the principal's performance and development. The principal will assume the role of the reviewer for campus and assistant principals.

The balanced scorecard approach takes into account the full range of professional practice and allows professional assessment across four performance and development dimensions (School and Student Outcomes, Leadership of Quality Teaching and Life-Long Learning, Strategic Resource Management and Strengthening Community and System Engagement).

The balanced scorecard approach to performance and development assists in promoting the following characteristics:

1. **Consistency** – by implementing a state-wide performance and development process across every Victorian Government school and ensuring all principal class employees have a meaningful plan and receive regular feedback on their performance.

2. **Transparency** – by documenting what is considered important in each school and providing the opportunity for open and substantive conversations between principal class employees and their reviewers about expectations for success and professional development needs.

3. **Professional agency** – by empowering principal class employees to devise their own annual performance and development goals, identify evidence, and identify their own professional development needs, aligned with the strategic goals and priorities of the school and student learning needs. Principal class employees will develop their goals in conversation with their reviewer. This process empowers schools to develop school-based professional learning with multiple sources of feedback, the use of a portfolio of evidence and flexibility through weightings, with Regional Directors having the final decision on performance and development outcomes for principals.

4. **Collective efficacy** – by aligning to accountability processes through the School Performance Framework (school strategic plan, annual implementation plan). This alignment promotes the collective responsibility among all staff for the achievement of school goals and priorities and the outcomes of all students.

The process is designed to ensure fair, evidence-based performance and development assessments.

The PDP comprises:

- four performance and development dimensions that are weighted according to individual and school priorities
- one to two performance and development goals in each dimension
- evidence that will be collected to demonstrate achievement of each goal
- documented outcomes against each performance and development dimension at the end-cycle
- an overall differentiated performance and development outcome.
Principal class employee performance and development dimensions

For principal class employees, the balanced scorecard will comprise four key performance dimensions:

1. School and Student Outcomes
2. Leadership of Quality Teaching and Life-Long Learning
3. Strategic Resource Management
4. Strengthening Community and System Engagement.

Principal class employees will develop one to two performance and development goals against each of these dimensions. Each goal should follow the SMART goal methodology (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) and align with priorities as articulated in the school strategic plan and annual implementation plan. A summary description of each dimension is shown in Figure 2.

The first performance and development dimension, School and Student Outcomes is an ‘output dimension’. School and Student Outcomes are defined by a wide and varied range of indicators, including improvements in individual student achievement, engagement, wellbeing, and productivity.

Student achievement refers to both the absolute levels of learning attainment and growth in learning that schools strive to ensure for each individual student. Student engagement refers to the extent to which every student feels connected to and engaged in their learning and with the broader school community. Student health, safety and wellbeing are essential to learning and development. An inclusive, safe, orderly and stimulating environment for learning is critical to achieving and sustaining all students’ positive learning experiences.

Productivity refers to the effective allocation and use of resources, supported by evidence and adapted to the unique contexts of each school. Successful productivity outcomes exist when a school uses its resources - people, time, space, funding, facilities, community expertise, professional learning, class structures, timetables, individual learning plans and facilities – to the best possible effect and in the best possible combination to support improved student outcomes and achieve its goals and targets. In line with the School Performance Framework, productivity is included in the School and Student Outcomes dimension.

The other three dimensions have been identified and developed based on research into effective school leadership practice. They have also been developed with reference to key leadership frameworks and are strongly aligned with the Australian Professional Standard for Principals and the Department’s Developmental Learning Framework for School Leaders.

Principal class employees have a broad range of expectations and responsibilities with which all principals must comply. The principal class employee performance and development process and documentation do not attempt to capture the fine detail of this complex leadership position. However, the core accountabilities are minimum expectations and therefore incorporated into the principal class employee PDP. Some accountabilities may be specifically included in the PDP if it is determined that they are areas for professional growth and achievement of outcomes.

To achieve a successful performance and development outcome, every principal class employee will need to provide documented evidence outlining their progress towards achieving their performance and development goals.
## 1. School and Student Outcomes

In line with their school strategic plan and annual implementation plan, principal class employees deliver improvements in student achievement, engagement, wellbeing and productivity outcomes at a whole of school level, as evidenced by a range of qualitative and quantitative data.

#### 2. Leadership of Quality Teaching and Life-long Learning

Principal class employees are the leaders of high quality teaching and learning in the school community. They set high expectations for all and develop students, self and others through a culture of life-long learning, challenge and support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal class employees:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. establish an integrated and whole-school, student centred approach to:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and reporting</td>
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<td>• engagement and wellbeing to drive continuous improvement and achievement for every student</td>
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<td>b. actively support and develop processes to improve student agency, voice and leadership to improve the quality of their educational experience and as partners in school improvement</td>
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<td>c. set high expectations for all and ensure agreed evidence-based teaching practices are used in all classrooms</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. develop a culture of effective teaching and provide structures which support staff to collaboratively improve the quality of their teaching practice, by ensuring opportunities for goal-setting and preparation, classroom observation and feedback, peer learning and collaboration</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. identify and develop sustainable leadership capability and a culture of leadership within the school</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. model and promote life-long learning through their own professional practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. reflect on the impact of their leadership on school, staff and student outcomes.</td>
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#### 3. Strategic Resource Management

Principal class employees effectively optimise resources, lead innovation and change to deliver high quality educational outcomes for all students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal class employees:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. lead evidence-based improvements in the effective and efficient use of school human, physical and financial resources to achieve the school’s priorities</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. use a range of data to monitor, evaluate and improve the effectiveness of resources, staff, and programs to ensure a high quality, safe learning environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. lead innovation and manage change to deliver improvements in student achievement, engagement, wellbeing and productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. establish high standards for professional practice, secure accountability and collective responsibility for high quality education provision</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. select appropriate interventions, innovations and technologies to achieve the school’s improvement priorities</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. lead performance and development, including effective professional learning and regular and multiple forms of feedback to support all staff to achieve high standards of practice and develop leadership capacity.</td>
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#### 4. Strengthening Community and System Engagement

Principal class employees develop and maintain positive and purposeful relationships with students, teachers, parents, and the local, broader and global communities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal class employees:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. model professional practices along with fair and transparent behaviours, based on what is in the best interests of the school community</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. build professional learning communities characterised by professional trust and collaboration</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. promote inclusion and develop and maintain positive and purposeful relationships with all students, parents and carers to create a student centred school</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. use multiple sources of feedback (including staff, student, community) as fundamental drivers of school improvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. ensure the cultural richness and diversity of the school and broader community are reflected in how the school operates</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. ensure that student transitions between stages of learning and into post-school pathways are managed effectively</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. contribute to the operation of a self-improving system by engaging with other schools, networks and educational research to share effective practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. forge partnerships with external organisations to access new ideas and share innovative and evidence-based practice.</td>
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**Figure 2** The principal class employee balanced scorecard approach
Goal-setting

‘While visions can be inspiring, productive action typically requires some agreement on the more immediate goals to be accomplished in order to move toward the vision’ (Leithwood 2012, p.15).

Goal-setting for principal class employees provides an opportunity to translate a shared vision for school improvement into practical, more immediate goals (Leithwood, 2012).

In terms of their own performance and development, goal-setting ensures that principal class employees are empowered to have significant input into decisions about how their performance and development will be appraised. Performance and development goals should be based on previous assessments, clear, evidence-based, and linked to school strategic priorities, and individual developmental needs.

Principal class employees' performance and development goals should ultimately be aimed at improving school and student outcomes through improved practice. Principal class employees should identify their learning needs with reference to the needs of their students and the school. Principal class employees will draw on a range of resources to inform their goal-setting, including:

- the Australian Professional Standard for Principals and relevant capability frameworks (for example, the Department’s Developmental Learning Framework for School Leaders) and related self-assessment and 360 degree surveys
- core accountabilities
- the school strategic plan and annual implementation plan
- evidence and research about effective teaching and leadership
- the school’s agreed approach to teaching
- school and student data.

Performance and development goals should be:

- SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound)
- evidence-based
- aligned to school priorities
- appropriate to the principal class employee’s role and responsibilities
- a ‘stretch goal’ – it should be developmental, and based on areas or skills that are yet to be achieved, rather than those already consolidated
- regularly reviewed and adjusted if required
- agreed with the reviewer.
**Weightings**

The weighting system is designed to enable principal class employees and teachers to place the greatest emphasis on areas they see as most important to achieving their school strategic priorities.

Performance and development dimensions will be weighted during the goal-setting stage. Principal class employees will discuss and come to an agreement with their reviewer as to the weighting of each dimension.

There is flexibility to determine the weightings for each of the four dimensions, based on individual goals and the local school context at the beginning of the cycle. However, the school and student outcomes dimension must be weighted, as a minimum, at 20% (shown in Figure 3).

A decision will be made at the local level on the distribution of the remaining 80% across the four dimensions in increments of 5%. Every dimension must be allocated a weighting, with an overall total of 100% across the four dimensions.

Where the principal class employee and their reviewer cannot reach agreement, the default weightings provided in Figure 3 will be used (25% in each of the four dimensions).

Weightings can be used to articulate where a principal class employee should focus their efforts based on school priorities and individual areas for development.

Weightings should reflect the extent to which that dimension is a priority for the principal and/or school.

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**Figure 3 Principal class employee weightings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension 1: School and Student Outcomes</th>
<th>Dimension 2: Leadership of Quality Teaching and Life-Long Learning</th>
<th>Dimension 3: Strategic Resource Management</th>
<th>Dimension 4: Strengthening Community and System Engagement</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum weighting</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discretionary weighting</td>
<td>Weightings are allocated across the four dimensions</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Default weighting</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Evidence

Evidence selected should be ‘adequate, authentic, appropriate and accurate’ (Griffin, 2008, p. 19).

Evidence is critical to effective performance and development processes. Principal class employees will provide evidence of their practice which demonstrates their progress towards and achievement of performance and development goals.

One source of evidence is insufficient to make judgements about principal class employee performance and development. The model emphasises the importance of using multiple sources of evidence.

Quality evidence is directly observable. It should be data collected as part of a principal class employee’s everyday practice, and it should not be considered as ‘extra’. The quality of evidence produced is critical to ensure specific and growth-oriented feedback is provided. In consultation with colleagues and the reviewer, principal class employees should select quality evidence that can be used to illustrate progress towards their goals. Selecting quality evidence and being able to demonstrate impact on the dimensions is integral to effective performance and development.

Documentation

Regular documentation of evidence allows principal class employees to be evaluators of their own practice and their impact on school and student outcomes. Principal class employees should seek feedback on their effectiveness and progress – from students, peers and colleagues – and use it to inform their practice.

Analysis

The discussions around evidence and analysis of its impact – Have I achieved my goal? What areas are there for further improvement? How do I use this evidence to guide further development goals? – lend meaning to the collection of evidence and ensure the pivotal link between developing one’s practice and its effect on school and student outcomes.

Principal class employees are expected to act as role models for all teachers by proactively seeking out a range of evidence. They are expected to document and include evidence collected from multiple sources, including, but not limited to:

Feedback from:
- school and students
- school community and parents.

Quantitative evidence:
- evidence of scope and sequence and documented curriculum planning
- class assessments against AusVELS
- portfolios of student work
- on-demand assessments
- VCE assessments and data
- moderated teacher assessments.

Other forms of evidence such as:
- evidence of system contribution, for example collegiate activity outside of the school.

The Department will provide tools and resources to assist with identifying and collecting appropriate evidence.
Differentiated assessment

‘Researchers have found that well designed performance-based assessments use rubrics that vividly describe performance standards at different levels of expertise to evaluate teachers’ practices, strategies and outcomes.’ (Darling-Hammond, 2013, p. 26).

Performance and development assessments require reviewers to make informed judgements about principal class employee practice and improvement using multiple sources of evidence. The school’s context, the principal class employee’s core accountabilities, career stage and their professional learning needs will all inform the nature of the evidence used and the expectations set for the level of performance required.

Differentiated assessment acknowledges that every principal class employee and teacher is different and that every school context is unique. It allows reviewers the opportunity to consider the circumstances surrounding a practitioner’s performance and development throughout the cycle.

Expectations for ‘success’ (desired practice and improvement) should be established between the reviewer and the principal class employee during the planning stage, so that every principal class employee clearly understands what is required of them and is committed to achieving these expectations. Every principal class employee should understand how their performance contributes to the school’s success in achieving its goals as outlined in the strategic plan and annual implementation plans.

Clearly defining success and setting expectations at the beginning of the cycle allows the principal class employee to track in their performance and development progress. It also allows reviewers to make an end-cycle assessment that is fair, authentic and appropriate.

Assessment process

As a minimum, the reviewer must be satisfied that the principal class employee has fulfilled their core accountabilities. The assessment of the principal class employee’s performance and development is then based on evidence of professional growth, improvement of practice and impact on school and student outcomes.

Figure 4 outlines the steps that will be undertaken to determine a principal class employee’s performance and development outcome.

The Department will provide guidance, and practice-based learning modules, in order to assist reviewers to make and communicate differentiated performance decisions, and ensure objective and evidence-based assessment outcomes for all principal class employees.
Figure 4 Assessment process

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Figure 5 Definitions of performance and development outcomes

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Exceeds Performance and Development Requirements</td>
<td>The performance of the principal class employee has been assessed as exceeding the requirements expected of a fully effective principal class employee and exceeding the professional growth and improvement of practice expected at this stage of career development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully Meets Performance and Development Requirements</td>
<td>The performance of the principal class employee has been assessed as meeting the requirements expected of a fully effective principal class employee and meeting the professional growth and improvement of practice expected at this stage of career development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partially Meets Performance and Development Requirements</td>
<td>The performance of the principal class employee has been assessed as partially meeting the requirements expected of a fully effective principal class employee and/or partially meeting the professional growth and improvement of practice expected at this stage of career development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fails to Meet Performance and Development Requirements</td>
<td>The performance of the principal class employee has been assessed as not meeting the requirements expected of a fully effective principal class employee and/or not demonstrating the professional growth and improvement of practice expected at this stage of career development.</td>
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Feedback, development and support

‘Feedback has no effect in a vacuum; to be powerful in its effect, there must be a learning context to which feedback is addressed’ (Hattie & Timperley, 2007, p. 82).

Performance and development processes are effective when they enable meaningful feedback on performance to be provided to principal class employees.

Research shows that appraisal and feedback significantly improves teachers’ understanding of their teaching methods, teaching practices and student learning (Jensen, 2011). The role of principals in the performance and development process is two-fold: principals should know how to give quality feedback to teachers, and know how to engage in constructive feedback sessions with their reviewers.

Professional learning and collaboration to support the achievement of performance and development goals will be an expectation for all principal class employees. Principal class employees and their reviewers can discuss opportunities for capability building and professional learning appropriate to their school’s context throughout all stages of the performance and development cycle.

Principal class employees and their reviewers will engage in open and constructive feedback sessions. This ensures that principal class employees have the opportunity to reflect to improve and develop their skills.

Feedback is an investment in improvement, and regular feedback enables principal class employees to improve their practice. For feedback to be constructive and effective, it is important that it is actionable, supported by examples, and provides substantial opportunities for improvement.

Both verbal and written feedback should be provided to principal class employees. Informal feedback is encouraged throughout the cycle, from the reviewer, a critical friend, colleagues, peers, parents and students, to encourage continual reflection and improvement from all lenses of the learning environment. There is an opportunity to gain additional insight into the principal’s performance through seeking feedback from the school council regarding the principal’s delivery of the strategic plan.

Effective feedback

Effective feedback must address three major questions (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Timperley, 2011):

- Where am I going?
- How am I going?
- Where to next?

Principal class employees should seek feedback from a range of sources (colleagues, leadership team, students, parents, self-reflection) in order to answer the above questions.

When providing feedback to principal class employees, reviewers should support them to become self-regulators – evaluators of their own practice and its impact on school and student outcomes. Feedback should be aimed at motivating effort and empowering principal class employees to identify where their practice could be more effective and to make the necessary adjustments.

Equally as important, principal class employees must enter feedback sessions with an open mind, and be willing and receptive to meaningful and constructive feedback.

Jensen (2011) recommends that schools use at least four to eight methods found to be the most effective in assessing and developing teaching and learning:

- student performance and assessments
- peer observation and collaboration
- direct observation of classroom teaching and learning
- student surveys
- parent surveys
- 360-degree assessment
- self-assessment and external observation.

Critical friend

A critical friend is a trusted person who asks challenging questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers critiques of a person’s work as a friend.

A critical friend takes the time to fully understand the context of the work presented and the outcomes.

Performance and Development Guidelines for Principal Class Employees
that the person or group is working toward. The friend is an advocate for the success of that work (Costa & Kallick, 1993). A critical friend role is a strategic one and provides both support and challenge for principal class employees. A critical friend may be a:

- mentor
- coach
- colleague in a local school or similar setting
- retired principal class employee
- School Council President
- teacher
- leader from another organisation or business.

A principal class employee may invite a critical friend to be involved in the development of their PDP and provide regular support and advice throughout the year. A principal class employee may also invite a critical friend to participate in discussions about their performance and development.

Principals are encouraged to seek critical and timely feedback from their peers.

**Professional learning**

Principals have a responsibility to support performance and development by establishing a culture that values highly effective professional learning that is developmentally focused, supports improved teacher practice and ultimately, improved school and student outcomes.

Professional learning can have a demonstrable impact on a staff member’s development, as well as student learning, engagement and wellbeing. For professional learning to be effective, it must be relevant, collaborative and future-focused. A principal class employee should choose appropriate professional learning that is related to their annual performance goals and developmental needs.

The Australian Charter for the Professional Learning of Teachers and School Leaders (AITSL, 2012) states that a high quality professional learning culture is characterised by:

- a high degree of leadership support for ongoing adult learning and risk-taking
- collective responsibility for improving practice
- disciplined collaboration focused on student learning needs
- high levels of trust, interaction and interdependence
- support through school structures, explicit planning and the allocation of time
- coaching and mentoring, and teacher-led action research, which are strategies that commonly feature in effective school-based staff development.

More information on the significance of professional learning for effective performance and development processes please see the Professional Practice and Performance for Improved Learning: Performance and Development paper and Professional Practice and Performance for Improved Learning: Professional learning and support for school leaders and teachers.
The process

The following section highlights roles and responsibilities and provides a step-by-step guide through each stage of the performance and development cycle. See Figure 6 for a diagram of the cycle.

Regional Director

The Regional Director is the line manager for all principals. It is important to note that while the Regional Director may delegate each stage of the performance and development process to the Senior Adviser (or other nominee); the Regional Director is ultimately responsible for approving all principal performance and development outcomes in their region. Where a Senior Adviser (or RD’s other nominee) and principal cannot come to agreement at any stage of the cycle, the matter must be referred to the Regional Director for a decision.

Senior Adviser

The Senior Adviser (or RD’s other nominee) is responsible for coordinating all components of the performance and development process for principals. They will make recommendations about a principal’s performance and development to the Regional Director and the Regional Director must make the final decision.

Principal

In the case of the performance and development of campus and assistant principals, the school principal has the ultimate responsibility for decisions about an employee’s performance and development.

Key dates

The yearly performance and development cycle commences on 1 May each year and concludes on 30 April in the following year.

A principal class employee with less than 6 months eligible service by 30 April at a particular salary subdivision will not be eligible for salary progression for that cycle.

Figure 6: Performance and development cycle for principal class employees
Start-cycle: reflection and goal setting

**Figure 7 Stage 1 roles and responsibilities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal class employee</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Regional Director (for principal process only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Reflect on practice and past performance and development</td>
<td>Provide support where required</td>
<td>Provide support where required. If a decision between the reviewer and principal cannot be reached, the matter should be referred to the Regional Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Develop annual performance and development goals, strategies, and evidence required to demonstrate goal achievement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Develop draft PDP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Meet with reviewer to discuss and agree to PDP</td>
<td>Assist principal class employee with creation of PDP (where required)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Obtain reviewer approval of PDP</td>
<td>Review and approve principal class employee’s PDP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Principals will discuss their performance and development with their reviewer (Senior Adviser or RD’s other nominee) at the beginning of each cycle – campus and assistant principals will meet with their principal. Principal class employees should come to this meeting having reflected on the previous year, their role and performance as school leader and school and student performance. Principal class employees should be clear about what they hope to achieve in the coming year in line with the strategic priorities of their school and school community.

It is important that principal class employees and their reviewers have a sound understanding of the principal performance and development dimensions and expectations.

This initial meeting will be used to discuss and refine the principal class employee’s draft PDP which will incorporate the principal class employee’s proposed goals, strategies and supporting evidence as well as clear expectations for performance and development. During this discussion, the PDP should be agreed and finalised.

Principal class employees will develop one or two individual, meaningful and measurable performance and development goals for each of the four dimensions. These goals should follow the SMART goal methodology (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound).

Principal class employees can document strategies that will directly support them to achieve their performance and development goals over the course of the performance cycle. This may include capacity building, collaboration and/or professional learning.

Principal class employees will also need to clearly nominate a range of evidence that will demonstrate achievement of their performance and development goals. An agreement will be reached between the principal class employee and their reviewer about what will constitute success (and what the evidence will look like to demonstrate impact) at the end-cycle. Weighting for each of the dimensions will be determined at this stage.

Principal class officers, in conjunction with their reviewer, can document school support/resources
and/or development that can assist them to achieve their performance and development goals.

Expectations for performance and development must be established during the planning stage so every principal class employee clearly understands what is required to receive a successful performance and development outcome. See page 15 for further information about differentiation and setting expectations at the beginning of the cycle.

Principals will require approval of their PDP from their Senior Adviser (or RD’s other nominee). Campus and assistant principals will require approval from their principal.

If a decision between the reviewer and principal cannot be reached about the content of the PDP, the matter should be referred to the Regional Director. Figure 7 describes the roles and responsibilities of the teacher and reviewer. See Figure 8 for an example of an annotated PDP.

For the 2014/15 cycle, principal class employees and their reviewers can delay their PDP sign off dates until the end of Term 2 to allow for transition.
Individual performance and development goals should be aligned to school goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension title</th>
<th>Description of your first SMART goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dimension 1: School and Student Outcomes</td>
<td>Weighting: (insert weighting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SMART goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School support, resources and/or development</td>
<td>End-cycle outcome: (insert outcome)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension 2: Leadership of Quality Teaching and Life-Long Learning</th>
<th>Weighting: (insert weighting)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SMART goal</td>
<td>Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School support, resources and/or development</td>
<td>End-cycle outcome: (insert outcome)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continues to subsequent dimensions: Strategic Resource Management and Strengthening Community and System Engagement.

Performance and development outcomes given for each dimension:
- Exceeds Requirements
- Fully Meets Requirements
- Partially Meets Requirements
- Fails to Meet Requirements
Mid-cycle: feedback and review

Figure 9 Stage 2 roles and responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal class employee</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Regional Director (for principal process only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Reflect on practice and discuss progress towards achieving performance and development goals with reviewer</td>
<td>Provide quality feedback to principal class employee, indicating progress to date and identifying support options (if required)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Refine PDP (if required)</td>
<td>Assist principal class employee in refining PDP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A mid-cycle discussion should be scheduled between a principal class employee and their reviewer about progress against agreed performance and development goals. A face-to-face meeting is not required, although may be advisable, depending on the circumstances. The mid-cycle discussion provides an opportunity for principal class employees to receive feedback and, where required, support to ensure performance and development goals can be achieved by the end-cycle. However, feedback and support can be provided at any stage of the performance and development cycle.

Principal class employees should monitor progress against their performance and development goals and focus on collecting evidence of their practice and impact on school and student outcomes throughout the year. See page 14 for further information.

Ongoing analysis and discussion about principal practice with colleagues is encouraged. Principal class employees should undertake a self-assessment against their performance and development goals to prepare for the mid-cycle performance discussion.

Discussion at this stage of the cycle enables both the principal class employee and their reviewers to refine goals, professional learning and development opportunities, and evidence identified in the PDP. Any changes should be agreed between the principal class employee and the reviewer.

The formal mid-cycle review is also an opportunity for concerns about performance to be raised, and expectations for improvement prior to end-cycle assessment to be discussed. This may include identifying further opportunities for collaboration, capacity building and/or professional learning. It is important to note, however, that concerns about performance should be raised as soon as they have been identified.

The primary purpose of the mid-cycle discussion is for principal class employees to receive quality feedback on their performance and development. Figure 9 describes the roles and responsibilities of the principal class employee and reviewer.
End-cycle: review and evaluation

Figure 10 Stage 3 roles and responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal class employee</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Regional Director (for principal process only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Consider the evidence collected. Evaluate performance and development against goals</td>
<td>Provide support where required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Meet with reviewer for performance and development assessment</td>
<td>Meet with the principal class employee for their performance and development assessment. Consider evidence presented</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A formal end-cycle performance and development assessment will be undertaken annually. Performance and development reviews will be based upon principal class employees meeting their core accountabilities and evidence of improved practice and impact on school and student outcomes.

Expectations for performance and development must be established during the planning stage, so that every principal class employee clearly understands what they are required to demonstrate and are committed to achieving these expectations. This will assist reviewers to differentiate performance and provide an outcome at the end-cycle review that is fair and expected.

It is the responsibility of the principal class employee to present evidence that they have fully met the performance and development goals outlined in their PDP.

In early March each year, principal class employees will have an end-cycle performance and development conversation with their reviewer. The principal class employee, together with their reviewer may decide if and how peers can be involved in the assessment process.

When assessing a principal class employee’s performance and development, data will not be considered in isolation and no single piece of evidence will determine the performance and development outcome. See pages 15 for a full description of the assessment process.

Feedback sessions will focus on specific areas for improvement, and will assist principal class employees in developing appropriate performance and development goals for the next performance cycle. This feedback should be incorporated in the development of the PDP for the following year, including appropriate professional development actions.

Performance and development assessment outcomes must be recorded for every principal class employee. Principal class employees will be advised of the outcome by 30 April.

The Regional Director or Deputy Regional Director will meet with all principals who have not achieved a successful outcome to discuss the identified areas for development. A support plan and associated strategies will be included in the next performance and development cycle. Figure 10 describes the roles and responsibilities of the teacher and reviewer.
Support and resources

System-wide support is essential in building a positive performance and development culture in a school.

The Department is currently developing the Victorian Professional Practice Framework to assist schools to support and develop quality professional practice by providing tools and resources.

The Department will also provide:

- PDP templates
- PDP examples for teachers and principal class employees
- SMART goal tips
- PDP writing advice
- possible sources of evidence lists
- activity check lists
- observational tools
- feedback tools and protocols
- validated instructional models, as well as criteria to assist schools to select their own model
- support and training for principal class employees.

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership’s (AITSL) website hosts national guidelines to assist principals and schools with performance and development and professional learning, and offers a range of tools and resources including the application of standards, self-assessments and illustrations of practice: www.aitsl.edu.au.

Modelling lifelong learning

When leaders engage in continuous professional learning it sends a very powerful message that a professional learning culture is an essential element of an effective school.

Principals are asked to reflect on their school improvement strategies and their own professional learning needs, and to undertake actions that will build on and further enhance their leadership skills and behaviours. When planning professional learning actions it may also be helpful to consider them as:

- independent action — undertaken alone, such as professional reading
- supported action — supported by a coach, mentor or critical friend
- collective action — shared through teams or collegiate groups
- formal programs — provided by the Department and other organisations.
Remuneration progression

Consistent with Ministerial Order 199, principal class remuneration progression is not automatic, but is subject to demonstrated achievement against school priorities and Departmental criteria.

In order to achieve remuneration progression (where eligible) a principal class employee must demonstrate that they have achieved an overall performance and development outcome of Exceeds or Fully Meets Performance and Development Requirements.

Where a principal class employee is eligible but has not met the requirements for remuneration progression in that year, the principal will not receive remuneration progression for that cycle.

Eligible service for remuneration progression

Consistent with the VGSA 2013, a principal class employee with less than six months eligible service at a particular remuneration level in any particular progression cycle will not be eligible for remuneration progression.

Non-participation

Where a principal class employee does not participate in the performance and development process (i.e. does not have a PDP), his or her performance will be assessed against each of the dimensions, with consideration of the school strategic plan and annual implementation plan, and the school’s performance.

Unsatisfactory performance

The performance and development process is not designed to manage unsatisfactory performance.

Where it is considered that a principal class employee’s performance is unsatisfactory, the unsatisfactory performance procedures (set out in Schedule 5 of the VGSA 2013) should be implemented.

Alignment with principal contract renewal processes

The principal performance and development process is a core component of the principal contract renewal process. On appointment to a principal position the Regional Director (or nominee) will meet with the principal to set expectations for the life of the contract, including advice on the specific qualities and capabilities they should focus on developing. These expectations will be reflected in the principal’s PDP.

The principal and their reviewer will design and implement processes that support improved principal performance and development for the duration of the contract. They will develop and approve a PDP that takes account of the relevant school context and the implications this has for the principal’s performance goals. Outcomes of the performance and development cycles over the period of the contract will be included in the process of contract review.

Grievances

Principal class employees may be eligible to lodge a grievance in accordance with the relevant Ministerial Order under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 in relation to the performance and development assessment.

Information on grievance procedures can be obtained from the Registrar of the Merit Protection Board at www.mpb.vic.gov.au.
Useful links

The Australian Institute of School Leadership
www.aitsl.edu.au

The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
www.teacherstandards.aitsl.edu.au/

The Australian Professional Standard for Principals
www.aitsl.edu.au/australian-professional-standard-for-principals#

Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership
www.bastow.vic.edu.au

School Performance Framework

Curriculum

The Developmental Learning Framework for School Leaders

e5 Instructional model

Evidence-Based Professional Learning Cycle

iLead 360° Survey

Merit Protection Board
www.mpb.vic.gov.au

Professional Development

Professional Practice and Performance for Improved Learning – Performance and Development

Unsatisfactory procedures

HR Web
Bibliography


