

Non-Government Reform Support Strategic Plan

2019-2022

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS TASMANIA (IST)

Non – Government Reform Support Fund
Independent Schools Tasmania (IST) – Strategic Plan

Executive Summary

IST Vision

Our vision is to serve the independent schools of Tasmania through representation, advocacy and support. We will utilise the Reform Support Fund to assist us to achieve our vision to support schools.

Our Values

This plan has been developed based upon IST's key underpinning values. The specific values included in this plan are:

- Equal opportunities for all Tasmanian students
- Diversity in education to support the needs of each individual student
- *Excellence* – providing *quality* services to members
- Equity – serving all students and schools equally well
- Passion and commitment to supporting independent schools
- Efficiency in delivering services
- Commitment to local, national and global collaboration in education

Strategic Pillars

This strategic plan will focus on continuing to build and enhance upon the work already undertaken in previous years in order to now meet the new targets of the national and bilateral agreements for 2019-2022. Our strategic plan will be based upon the four key pillars, as identified:

Improvement Direction A: Quality Teaching – curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and differentiation

Improvement Direction B: Effective Leadership – school culture, educational leadership, building teacher capacity, building leadership capacity

Improvement Direction C: School Improvement and support – review, data, planning and resourcing, monitoring and evaluation

Improvement Direction D: School community partnerships – local and community partnerships

The values of **quality** and **excellence**, as defined in the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* will also form the foundation to determine the effective fulfilment of each pillar.

Current context

IST provides state wide support to all 31 independent schools across a total of 39 campuses in Tasmania. Independent schools are spread across the state, with the entire region classified as regional. The independent schools we serve range in size from a total enrolment of 48 students through to a school with a total of 1232 enrolments. Across the sector we currently have 370 indigenous students and our schools cover a range of religious, philosophical and cultural backgrounds, as described in the summary below.

The Schools

There are a variety of schools within the Association with differing philosophies and aims. Nine independent schools have a Principal/Headmaster who is a member of the Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia (AHISA).

- 9 schools are affiliated to the Christian Education Network (CEN)
- 3 schools are affiliated to the Anglican Church
- 2 schools are affiliated to the Seventh Day Adventist Church
- 2 schools are affiliated Rudolph Steiner School Education
- One school is affiliated to each of the following: Christian Schools Australia, The Society of Friends (Quaker), the Lutheran Church, the Free Reformed Church, Uniting Church and the Baptist Church.
- One school is a Special School and one a Special Assistance School. An additional Special School is due to open in 2019.
- Six independent schools are member schools but not affiliated to any other organisation.

Executive Summary of Current Census Data (2018)

The following additional information gleaned from our 2018 census data may provide a useful source of information that pertains to the schools we service:

- 2 schools are currently identified as special needs
- 3 schools are single sex
- 8 primary schools

- 2 secondary campuses
- 25 combined K-12 campuses
- In a P-6 context, school enrolment numbers range from 8 student enrolments through to 382 student enrolments
- In Years 7-10, school enrolment numbers range from 8 through to 585 students
- In Years 11-12, school enrolment numbers range from 9 through to 305 students
- Students identified as ATSI range from 1 student in a school through to 69 students in a school
- Kindergarten (Year 1 minus 2) students – we represent Kindergartens with enrolments of 5 students through to 54 students

The diversity of our sector results in the need for our support to be flexible and bespoke, in order to best meet the needs of each school. Our State lies within a range of long-standing, inter-generational economic and social challenges that are inextricably linked. Therefore, the average SES of Tasmanian schools is lower than other states and territories (excluding Northern Territory). Similarly, Tasmania has a relatively low retention rate of students into Years 11 and 12. Tasmania's relative isolation, both geographically and economically, and the dispersed communities, all combine to create a range of social, economic and logistical difficulties for many students in our school. Some of our schools requiring intensive support include schools with limited student and staff numbers, schools with a high number of indigenous students and schools with high numbers of students who have identified needs (or have been classified at-risk).

In developing this strategic plan, IST acknowledges the research evidence that demonstrates the importance of contextual, school based professional learning (PL) and whole-school commitment to change and growth. We represent a small but geographically spread, varied and unique sector, with all of our regions within Tasmania classified as regional. As such, our resources are often stretched to the limits, over a large span of geographical locations. Given that we are not part of an educational system, we do not have access to collective data that specifically outlines how each school differs. Rather, each school must be reviewed independently and supported as such. In recent years, our funding has decreased significantly and this, in turn, has impacted our ability to support the many initiatives we have hoped to embark upon.

Our schools have already been involved in the roll-out of the *National Education Reform Agreement* and we have been focusing upon the roll-out of learning progressions and data analysis. We endeavour to attract as many educators as possible to attend our focused Professional Learning (PL) opportunities and closely monitor attendance levels.

National Policy Initiatives:

Each National Policy will be addressed, as indicated in Table 1.0 below. We will continue to support our Members through a focussed Professional learning (PL) Program and will seek to enhance teacher understanding of the Australian Curriculum. This will involve support for teachers around the areas of assessment of student attainment and growth against clear descriptors. We will also assist teachers to monitor individual student progress and identify student learning needs through the use of student learning assessment tools with links to student learning resources, prioritising early years foundation skills. Alongside this we will continue to review senior secondary pathways into work, further education and training and unpack this with our school communities. National online testing (NAPLAN) and school governance will continue to be aspects of focus, as they were in 2018.

State-based Reforms:

Our Tasmanian state-based reforms will be addressed, as indicated in Table 1.0 below. Specific state-based reforms have been identified under 4 key improvement directions, namely:

Improvement Direction A: Quality Teaching – curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and differentiation

Improvement Direction B: Effective Leadership – school culture, educational leadership, building teacher capacity, building leadership capacity

Improvement Direction C: School Improvement and support – review, data, planning and resourcing, monitoring and evaluation

Improvement Direction D: School community partnerships – local and community partnerships

IST will continue to work with the Government and Catholic sectors through numerous cross-sectoral meetings that are scheduled regularly throughout this year and through collaborative PL and policy development. At this stage, IST have 1.8 staff members to attend the numerous meetings that require state representation.

Table 1.0 Key aspects of the National School Reform Agreement and the Tasmanian bilateral system and school improvement plan that we will address:

Improvement Activity	Actions		Timing
National Policy Initiative A – Supporting students, student learning and student achievement			
<i>Enhancing the Australian Curriculum to support teacher assessment of student attainment and growth against clear descriptors</i>			
<i>Assisting teachers monitor individual student progress and identify student learning needs through opt-in online and on demand student learning assessment tools with links to student learning resources, prioritising early years foundation skills</i>			
<i>Reviewing senior secondary pathways into work, further education and training</i>			
Tasmanian Improvement Direction A – Quality Teaching – curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and differentiation			
<p><i>Contribute to national effort and discussions and effort regarding learning progressions, formative assessment and the review of senior secondary education.</i></p> <p>To do this, in 2019-2022 we will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enable teachers to effectively engage in and benefit from Professional learning (PL) on use of the Australian Curriculum learning progressions, the new online formative assessment tool alongside tailoring support to teachers to ensure teaching practice maximises students learning growth. 2. Contribute to the national effort and discussions regarding learning progressions. 3. Provide quality assurance and support for use in schools of the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) on School Students with Disability 4. Implement ongoing PL around the learning progressions for literacy and numeracy to support teacher planning for learning and curriculum delivery targeting Prep to Year 6 			Ongoing
<i>Meet the needs of students at risk of educational disadvantage (including students with disability, Aboriginal students, students with low English proficiency and students in rural and regional areas) through the delivery of PL around evidence-based pedagogy, quality teaching and leadership and innovation.</i>			Ongoing

Improvement Activity	Actions		Timing
<p><i>Implement recommendations from Tasmania's Years 9-12 Review</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Development of a curriculum framework</i> • <i>Revise accreditation and certification standards for completion of Year 12</i> • <i>Develop a strategic response to gaps in workforce</i> • <i>Review of the use of senior secondary data.</i> <p>To do this in 2019-2022 we will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contribute to the national effort and discussion on the review of senior secondary education. 2. Progress recommendations from the Years 9-12 Review in the areas of curriculum and assessment, accreditation and certification, workforce development and data usage. 3. Review work being currently undertaken in relation to Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Vocational Learning (VL) and provide feedback on current practice to assist as we build an inclusive Years 9-12 curriculum. 			From 2019
<p><i>Implement learning progressions for literacy and numeracy to support curriculum delivery, including in the early years of schooling.</i></p> <p>To do this in 2019 we will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote and disseminate evidence-based tools, resources and information in schools to assist early childhood education providers, primary and secondary independent schools to implement best practice approaches to supporting parents to engage in their children's learning throughout their education. 2. Prioritise support through PL and school visits around the implementation of learning progressions for literacy and numeracy in Curriculum delivery in the early years of schooling to ensure the core foundations for learning are developed by age eight. 			2019

Improvement Activity	Actions		Timing
	<i>Provide opportunities and encourage access to professional learning (PL) and networking for school leaders to improve performance and capabilities in alignment with AITSL standards.</i>		Ongoing
National Policy Initiative B - Supporting teaching, school leadership and school improvement			
<i>Reviewing teacher workforce needs of the future to attract and retain the best and brightest to the teaching profession and attract teachers to areas of need</i>			
<i>Strengthening the initial teacher education accreditation system</i>			
Tasmanian Improvement Direction B – Effective Leadership – school culture, educational leadership, building teacher capacity, building leadership capacity			
	<p><i>Contribute to national discussion and effort with regard to initial teacher education and national teacher workforce strategy and review of teacher registration, including consideration of legislative amendments.</i></p> <p>To do this in 2019 we will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contribute to the national discussion and effort regarding initial teacher education and induction, transition of teachers from graduate to proficient standard. 2. Contribute to the national discussion and effort regarding educational leadership. 3. Inform and encourage school leaders to access a variety of professional learning (PL) opportunities and provide opportunities for high performing principals to share their expertise 		2019

Improvement Activity	Actions		Timing
	4. Inform and encourage school leaders to access a variety of professional learning (PL) opportunities appropriate to their career stage and development needs and recognise and harness the skills and experience of high performing principals by enabling them to share their expertise across and throughout the sector.		
National Policy Initiative C: Enhancing the national evidence base			
<i>Implementing a national unique student identifier (USI) that meets national privacy requirements in order to support better understanding of student progression and improve the national evidence base</i> <i>Establishing an independent national evidence institute to inform teacher practice, system improvement and policy development</i> <i>Improving national data quality, consistency and collection to improve the national evidence base and inform policy development.</i>			
Tasmanian Improvement Direction C – School Improvement and support – review, data, planning and resourcing, monitoring and evaluation			

Improvement Activity	Actions		Timing
To do this in 2019-2022 we will:			Ongoing
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work alongside educational leaders in schools to support them to conduct internal self-review and external quality assurance processes for the purpose of monitoring and reviewing student learning gain. 2. Assist with the roll-out of the online delivery of the National Assessment Program NAPLAN online 			
Improvement Direction D – School community partnerships – local and community partnerships			
<i>Consult with the Aboriginal Education Reference Group on relevant initiatives.</i>			Ongoing
<i>Recognise, acknowledge and further utilise the existing high levels of parent engagement in our schools.</i> To do this in 2019 we will: Improve governance and financial management practices in the non-government school sector			Ongoing

Objectives

The ongoing objective of IST is to enable all young Tasmanians to become successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens. All Tasmanian independent schools are unique entities requiring differing and bespoke levels of support. We support the belief that that all Australian children should have access to a high quality and equitable education and as such, we will ensure that the support we offer matches the unique needs of each school we serve. We will work alongside our school communities, focusing on each aspect of our four agreed key improvement directions and vary our approach to match the needs of each context. All objectives (as identified in the annual work plans) will be annually measured and recorded against. An overarching list of activities have been recorded in Table 1.0 and will be continually updated over the duration of the plan.

Measurement and Evaluation

Throughout the roll-out of this strategic plan, we will conduct an annual audit of all action items, as indicated in Table 1.0. This audit will be recorded on the template below:

National and State Based Policy Initiative	Milestone	Timing	Has the milestone been met? Y/N	If no, the reason is:

Assessment tools will include, but not limited to:

1. Attendance registers
2. Feedback surveys from Professional learning (PL) sessions
3. Survey reflections incorporating qualitative and quantitative data
4. Collated email feedback
5. Ongoing comparison of annual membership numbers
6. Review of available annual census data
7. Review of annual National testing data for individual schools (where possible)
8. Regular school visits to determine level of school success in relation to new initiatives
9. Analysis of annual NAPLAN data
10. Analysis of annual senior secondary attainment data

All evaluation of projects in this plan will meet the specified requirements of the National and State mandates.