

## The purpose and use of data in Queensland schools

The Department of Education (DoE) and the Queensland Teachers' Union (QTU) are committed to the purposeful use of a range of evidence-based sources to inform the decision making of teachers, heads of program and school leaders in their professional practice.

The intent of this joint statement is to provide school leaders and teachers with guidance about the purpose and use of data within schools to ensure that the work arising from the use of data represents an effective use of teachers', heads of programs', school leaders' and other school staff time in terms of its impact on student outcomes to support every student succeeding.

DoE and QTU support adopting a purposeful, collaborative, solution-focused, ethical and inclusive approach towards the use of data to inform practice. The data literacy framework provides specific guidance for teachers and leaders about data-informed practice and developing data literacy.

Data is used in schools to make positive, evidence-informed decisions around student learning and wellbeing and school improvement. Evidence-informed decision-making is vital to inform classroom practice and is not new, however, it is important to take a considered approach to why data is collected, what data will be of use to collect, and how that data is ethically represented, interpreted, and used within our schools to enhance teacher practice.

### School data plans

Schools are required to maintain a variety of data according to the Schedule of collections which identifies data that is gathered as a specific legislative or regulatory requirement. The School Performance Policy indicates that schools develop an annual data plan, in collaboration with the Local Consultative Committee (LCC)<sup>1</sup>, which indicates how data will be used to inform practice aligned with student learning and wellbeing; school improvement and strategic planning. The department provides resources to support schools to develop their data plan. These resources include advice about data sets to include in a data plan and templates to be used, or replaced by a school designed equivalent.

It is the view of DoE and QTU that the most important data pertaining to student learning is that relating to the curriculum being taught within the classroom. The collection and analysis of this data should align with P-12 Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Framework (P-12 CARF), be the subject of consultation through the school's LCC<sup>1</sup>, and reflected in a schools' data plan.

A school's data plan recognises the professionalism of teachers and school leaders and manages workload demands associated with generating, accessing, entering, interpreting, communicating and responding to data. As determined by the *Teaching in State Education*

*Award – State 2016*, non-contact time is to be used for preparation and correction.

The school's data plan will be reviewed annually (in consultation with teachers and the LCC<sup>1</sup>) so that it is an accurate reflection of the intended use of data within the school for that year. To assist with the review and monitoring of the data plan, schools will be provided with advice detailing the mandatory data sets associated with teaching and learning required by the system and the date on which these are to be provided.

An effective and collaboratively-developed data plan allows teachers and school leaders to have a common understanding of the school targets for improvement and to communicate to parents, staff and the wider school community.

At a minimum the school data plan will include reference to the mandatory data sets associated with teaching and learning and outline the ethical use of the data sets within the plan. It will outline:

- what data is necessary
- the purpose of using this data and how this data will inform teaching practice and school improvement
- what data is to be collected, when and who enters the data
- roles and responsibilities of teachers and other staff
- how the data is managed and secured, where the data is stored, when it is available, how it is accessed
- when the data is used and how often, including how this data will be represented, tracked and monitored (including visibility of data)
- targets, desired outcomes, measures of the data
- the audience for the data and how this will be reported to the school community and the frequency of this reporting
- what resources will be allocated to the priorities identified by the data.

School leaders and teachers should access existing data sets, understand and use what is already available, where possible. Any data included in the school's data plan that is additional to the mandatory data sets associated with teaching and learning will be subject to consultation and agreement at the local level. This consultation will include consideration of any workload impact of the generation and use of these additional data sets and how they are linked to school improvement.

When a school's data plan is being developed, it should identify the relevant time or resources that build in opportunities for teachers to collect and compile evidence to inform teaching practice. Development of school data plans should also be informed by local considerations relevant to the school size and context.

<sup>1</sup> In schools required to have one. Where a school is not required to have an LCC, consultation will occur in accordance with other agreed processes.

## Visual representation of data

Visual representation of data can take a variety of forms including data displays, interactive dashboards and data walls<sup>2</sup>. These can be a legitimate planning and monitoring tool for schools and teachers to identify areas of focus for student learning and wellbeing and for school improvement. They must be both purposeful and ethical, and a range of available options must be considered to ensure the chosen approach effectively manages potential workload and privacy concerns.

Use of data displays will be determined at the local level following consultation with the LCC<sup>3</sup>. During consultation, consideration of adequate preparation and planning time for the creation and maintenance of the displays, must be considered. In particular consideration must be made to ensure that the information is not displayed in a location accessible to members of the wider school community.

## Workload considerations

Requests to schools to produce data should be linked to improvement in student learning and wellbeing and the school's priorities as outlined in the school's data plan. It is the expectation of DoE and the QTU that workload considerations will be assessed at each school and addressed through the school data plan. Additionally, systemic and regional initiatives will also take into consideration workload and resourcing implications for schools.

The parties agree that accessing and using existing data sets will minimise requirements for multiple data entry points and assist all teachers to focus on their teaching practice.

Teachers and other school staff should be provided professional development to access, understand, reflect and respond to evidence of student learning, including data. School leaders should work with their staff to clearly articulate what data literacy is required to support teachers to do their work and should provide professional development, training and support as needed.

<sup>2</sup>These can be fixed, temporary, digital, and interactive.

## School reviews

School reviews conducted by the DoE Education Improvement Branch may provide information that assists a school understand how its current data use aligns with school decision-making and practice, and is consistent with the school's provision of the curriculum and frameworks for effective pedagogical practices. A school review should be conducted in accordance with the Joint Statement on school reviews.

DoE and the QTU acknowledge that there are many forms of evidence used when determining the overall performance of a school and that student achievement is one contributing factor. It is important that school leaders, heads of programs and teachers focus on relevant data that informs everyday teaching practice, wellbeing, and the next steps for learning for all students.