



Department of  
Education

Public education  
A world of opportunities

**DIRECTIONS FOR SCHOOLS**

# FOCUS 2017

AN INITIATIVE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL'S CLASSROOM FIRST STRATEGY

## FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

Focus 2017 maintains the momentum and progress we have already made in the four priorities in our strategic plan, [High Performance – High Care](#).

These priorities are:

- Success for all students
- High quality teaching
- Effective leadership
- Strong governance and support.

Consistent with [Classroom First](#), the areas of emphasis in Focus 2017 are all about finding ways to accelerate learning success for every student.

The directions in Focus 2017 are built on the understanding that the most powerful lever we have to achieve this acceleration is to have highly performing school leaders bringing forward exceptional teaching in every single classroom.

This embodies a culture of high performance and high care in our schools as there is nothing more caring than to ensure a child's success in their future life.

I commend staff for their whole-hearted commitment to this enterprise and ask, once again, for your efforts in 2017.



**Sharyn O'Neill**

30 August 2016

Front cover photo:  
Kerry Mather, Principal, Manjimup Senior High School  
2015 WA Secondary School of the Year

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“  
My goal is  
for every  
school to be  
characterised  
by an ethos  
of high  
performance  
and high  
care.  
”

## SUCCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS

**High expectations of success for every student in every school.**

### Schools

- Set improvement targets against achievement standards and comparative data of like-schools, all WA public schools and all Australian schools.
- Intervene to accelerate progress for students in Years 7, 8 and 9 at risk of not achieving Year 9 NAPLAN standards as the pre-qualification for Year 10 OLNA.
- Focus on STEM in the early years, particularly numeracy, creative problem solving and coding skills.
- Increase the percentage of senior secondary students studying challenging levels of mathematics and science.
- Target skills in online writing in the primary years in preparation for NAPLAN Online.
- Plan in and across schools for the new languages curriculum commencing in Year 3 from 2018.
- Make use of the new attendance tool kit.

### Institute for Professional Learning, Statewide Services and regions

- Deliver professional learning in differentiated mathematics instruction and multiplication concepts.
- Explore online delivery options to support schools implement the new languages curriculum.
- Establish new autism specialist programs to expand options for students with ASD and their families.
- Support schools to develop a code of conduct that sets expectations for how each child will be shown respect, be safe and be treated with care.
- Partner with adolescent and mental health services to co-deliver support for schools, students and families through engagement centres.

### Central

- Provide funding for a broader range of students with disability and/or learning difficulties.
- Monitor early years progress using the new performance and monitoring framework.
- Develop Connect to integrate with other Department e-learning services and respond to user needs.
- Consider alternative models of delivering gifted and talented education in the primary years.



## HIGH QUALITY TEACHING

**A renewed and relentless focus on the best possible teaching practices.**

### Schools

- Build practices to ensure routine use of relevant data, and analysis and diagnosis of the impact of teaching.
- Self-assess teacher practice against national standards and student achievement to improve performance.
- Plan professional development to specifically address weakness in teacher performance.
- Strengthen use of student surveys for feedback to teachers on their performance and on classroom climate.
- Teach specific content of the WA Curriculum in phase 2 learning areas.
- Prepare for implementation in 2018 of the WA Curriculum phase 3 learning areas.

### Institute for Professional Learning, Statewide Services and regions

- Provide professional development on giving feedback to staff that improves instructional practice and performance.
- Maintain and expand support to implement the WA Curriculum.
- Strengthen teacher development school support for STEM education including increased online support.
- Work with school leaders to develop a school-wide approach to lift system performance in writing.

### Central

- Investigate tools to support the implementation of student perception surveys of teacher performance and classroom climate.
- Provide direct support to school leaders who are tackling staff underperformance.
- Work with universities to ensure an adequate supply of high quality STEM teachers.
- Expand investment in Teach for Australia associates to provide high calibre teaching staff in low socio-economic schools.



## EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

**Strong and empowering leadership in every school and across the whole system.**

### Schools

- Make informed local decisions to drive high performance in teaching practice and student outcomes.
- Provide productive feedback to staff that results in improved practice, taking targeted action where standards are not met.
- Conduct capability assessments to prepare for the introduction of online student testing.
- Develop leadership competencies of allied leadership roles including managers corporate services.
- Use self-assessment against the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework in school improvement planning.
- Maintain momentum among staff in supporting positive wellbeing and health for staff and students.

### Institute for Professional Learning, Statewide Services and regions

- Deliver high quality programs to support the focus on staff and student health and wellbeing.
- Provide advice and guidance on leading implementation of the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework.
- Increase access to professional learning by expanding use of ICT and online delivery.

### Central

- Consider recommendations from the comprehensive school leadership strategy report.
- Explore ways to effectively identify high potential school leaders and support their progression.
- Evaluate leadership program effectiveness against system objectives and resultant improvement.
- Build further ways to develop system leadership capacity as part of a connected system.
- Conduct a second Independent Public School Principals' Fellowship Program.

## STRONG GOVERNANCE AND SUPPORT

**A capable and responsive organisation for now and into the future.**

### Schools

- Participate in the new cyclic school review to assess school performance.
- Link funding to planning and priorities to demonstrate effective use of resources.
- Implement revised child protection policies to further develop schools as child safe organisations consistent with the work of the Royal Commission.
- Review, with community input, success of current family-school engagement and partnerships.
- Consider using optional templates for reporting to parents of Kindergarten students.
- Use online reporting to parents of students in Pre-primary to Year 12.

### Institute for Professional Learning, Statewide Services and regions

- Strengthen alignment between system reform, data and networks.
- Implement the new Independent Public School board training program to strengthen governance capability.
- Review delivery of vocational education and training for students at educational risk.
- Support to schools identified through the Expert Review Group as needing targeted assistance.
- Review funding arrangements for students with disability to ensure consistency between contexts.

### Central

- Transition a further 50 schools to become Independent Public Schools.
- Create a network of residential colleges and partner schools to improve student outcomes and care.
- Audit student enrolments in identified schools to ensure equity and compliance with legislation and policy.
- Explore options to further increase bandwidth in schools.
- Implement a new audit approach that minimises burden and maximises information for improvement.
- Enhance corporate and administrative capabilities of school leaders and managers corporate services.