

For discussion on 28 April 2003

Legislative Council Panel on Education

Enhanced School Development and Accountability

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on an enhanced school development and accountability framework for improved student learning outcomes. The key processes focus on strengthening schools' capacity for continuous development through school self-evaluation (SSE) and external school review (ESR).

Background

2. The Education Department (ED)¹ introduced a quality assurance (QA) framework in September 1997 to give impetus to the school improvement process and to accentuate accountability in the school system. In this framework, QA inspection (QAI) serves as an external QA mechanism while schools are required to conduct SSE as an internal QA process.

3. While there have been major achievements made in school accountability since 1997, notably a rigorous external school inspection methodology generally welcomed by schools as a value-added process and performance indicators in four domains² of the QA Framework for internal and external evaluation, there remain two key issues to be addressed:

- wide divergence of school involvement in systematic internal school evaluation processes; and
- a lack of common performance standards for internal and external school evaluation.

4. Continuous school improvement emphasizes the critical role that robust SSE processes play in improving student learning outcomes. Under school-based management (SBM), schools are to be held accountable for the provision of quality education through evaluative activities and the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) is to conduct ESR to validate SSE and report on school performance. The ultimate aim of these processes is to achieve sustainable school development and improvement of student learning outcomes.

¹ The Education Department has been merged with the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) since 1 January 2003.

² The four domains in the QA Framework include: (I) Management and Organization, (II) Learning and Teaching, (III) Student Support and School Ethos, (IV) Student Performance.

Enhanced School Development and Accountability (SDA) Framework

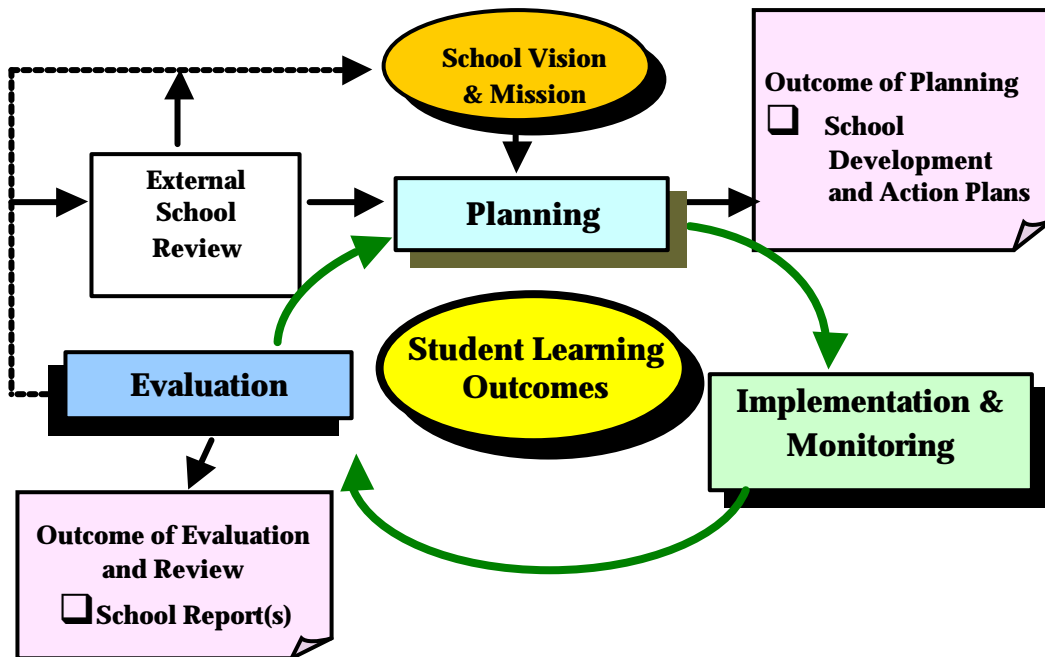


Figure 1

5. The key features of the enhanced School Development and Accountability (SDA) Framework are set out in *fig. 1*. In line with school-based management, all public sector schools are:

- to conduct strategic planning complemented by an annual action plan;
- to conduct rigorous self-evaluation which entails setting of targets/success criteria, use of evaluation tools and on-going monitoring and evaluation of school programmes;
- to report on their performance annually using school data; and
- to be reviewed by EMB in a four-year cycle and to have their performance and standards reported.

6. In the course of planning and evaluation, schools are required to focus on the implementation of curriculum reform initiatives and capacity building for educational change. They are also required to manage their own performance against developmental needs and targets set and to make their evaluation reports accessible to the public for enhanced transparency and accountability. To facilitate schools' self-evaluation, EMB will provide schools with the necessary tools, including a common set of key performance measures (KPM) and standard stakeholder survey questionnaires. Both schools and EMB will use multiple sources of data and make reference to KPM to substantiate the judgement on school performance and to gauge schools' progress and determine

follow-up actions.

Implementation plan and strategy

7. Building on schools' past experience in SBM, EMB will assist schools through training in enhancing their capacity for self-evaluation. A draft training package, capturing essential elements of school planning, reporting and performance management with emphasis on use of data and evidence for sustained development and improved learning outcomes, has been developed, and will be introduced to schools progressively from May 2003.

8. EMB will make available a set of guidelines, sample school plans and reports on the EMB website for school reference. These will support schools in the formulation of targets and prioritisation of tasks for strategic development planning, and direct their attention to the need to manage and report on their performance with the use of multiple sources of data. Involvement of all major stakeholders in the process of development and performance management is a pre-requisite and schools are required to upload strategic plans, annual school plans and school reports to their own website. It is also important that schools should build a close network amongst themselves in order that effective practices in strategic planning and reporting can be shared and comparison against schools can be made to generate the momentum for development and accountability.

9. Schools are required to adopt KPM which cover the four domains, viz. management and organization, learning and teaching, student support and school ethos, and student performance, for school performance management. These KPM are selected based on criteria including their quality – whether they are valid measures of performance and can differentiate school performance; their usefulness – whether they can provide useful and relevant information that leads to action for improvement; and their collectibility – whether they are readily available and easy to collect.

10. The use of KPM corresponds to an increasing demand for public accountability for school performance and improved student learning. While the principle of increasing transparency is generally accepted in school education, there is equal agreement that this transparency should avoid the use of 'league tables' of certain performance measures in isolation. Our strategy will be to develop KPM gradually as a common platform for the balanced assessment of school performance in the four domains. However, for KPM to work, it is necessary to have territory-wide norms against which school performance can be

compared and assessed. For this purpose, schools will be required to provide school level information on all KPM for EMB to generate territory norms. Concurrently, EMB will put in place an electronic platform for the collection of such information.

11. Taking into account schools' readiness and availability of territory norms for self-evaluation, mandatory reporting of KPM will be enforced in stages. In the first two years of implementation, schools will be required to report on and evaluate performance in connection with the following "mandatory" KPM :

- Composition of School Management Committee
- Teachers' professional development (including principal's continuing professional development)
- Teachers' qualification and experience (including Language Proficiency Requirement)
- Number of active school days
- Lesson time for the 8 Key Learning Areas
- Students' Reading Habit
- Destination of exit students including early exits (for secondary schools)
- Hong Kong Attainment Test
- Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (for secondary schools)
- Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (for secondary schools)
- Students' attendance

In the long term, these KPM will be supplemented with qualitative assessments. The full set of KPM is at Appendix A.

12. In the 2003/04 school year, the four-year ESR cycle will commence. The focus of ESR is to validate schools' SSE and to report on the standards of performance. A written report containing valid and reliable information on performance of the school under review will be produced for the school and members of the public. The school should devise strategies to respond to developmental issues outlined in the report or other measures as deemed necessary. The school will include in its subsequent school plan the areas for development to be agreed by the school management committee and the EMB. The School Sponsoring Body will oversee that the formulation of the school plan is in line with the education policies of the school. The EMB will follow the school's self-evaluation closely to maximize effectiveness.

Justifications

13. SSE is not new to schools. It is a core element of the School Management Initiative (SMI) promulgated since 1991 and is a core process embedded in SBM. Most schools practise SSE for development and accountability. In an era of educational change, it is expected that schools will engage themselves in strategic planning for the implementation of curriculum reform initiatives and in reporting on their progress and the impact on learning outcomes. With easy access to evaluation tools and school performance measures, schools will be better equipped to evaluate their performance and they, in turn, will be able to conduct systematic evaluation based on data and evidence. Schools can further benefit from the four-year ESR cycle in identifying their strengths and developmental needs. An open and transparent school performance management culture will be cultivated and schools will be empowered for continuous, outcome-based development and improvement.

14. With the use of objective data, schools can make informed decisions for subsequent planning while EMB can be facilitated in making policies. The implementation of a KPM-based performance management system also makes it more possible to identify good schools for sharing good practices, and for relatively weaker schools for intervention action. EMB will provide appropriate support to schools as shown in *fig. 2* in the enhanced SDA Framework. When a school is identified through ESR as under-performing, the school will be closely monitored. If the school fails to achieve the targets set for improvement, the following measures will be taken for students' benefits:

- urging the School Management Committee to consider changing the senior management of the school;
- appointing government officials/suitable persons as managers of the school;
- if the situation warrants, taking over the operation of the school.

Enhanced SDA Framework: Complementary Processes

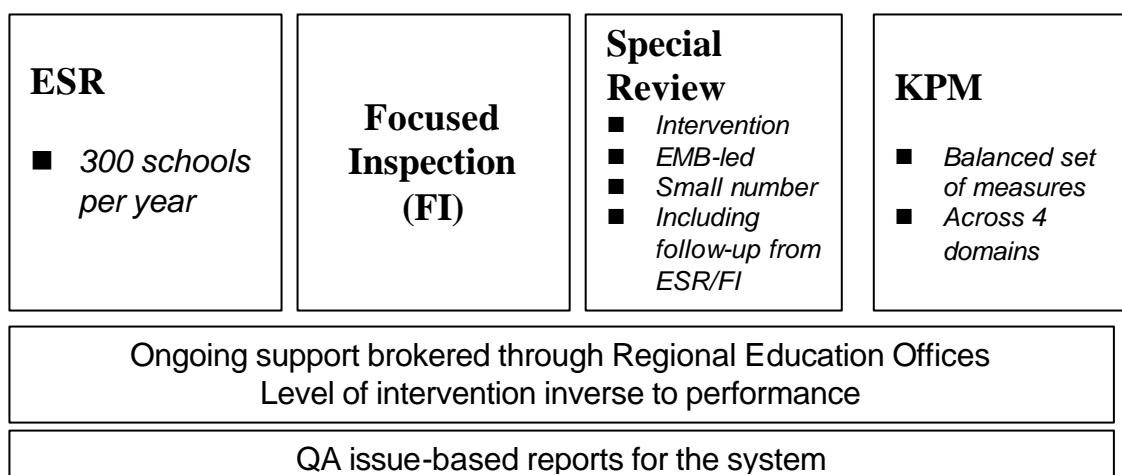


Figure 2

15. The expected outcomes of enhanced school development and accountability are as follows:

- All schools report on performance and transparency increases over time.
- All schools have readily accessible performance measures to which members of the public can refer.
- All schools have benefits of ESR within a four-year cycle to complement their internal evaluation and performance assessment.
- The processes involved focus the school community on improved learning outcomes.
- Delineation of school performance is made more distinct, which in turn facilitates diagnosis of developmental needs and informs decisions on intervention measures.
- A feedback loop is established in the school system to influence policy and set priorities.

Way Forward

16. EMB has a commitment to quality education and enhanced learning outcomes. KPM will be released by phases to support open and transparent school performance management and schools will embark on continuous school improvement activities in raising the quality of education provided. ESR will be conducted on a four-year basis and all Divisions of EMB will make enhanced school development and accountability their core business in raising school standards and performance.

Education and Manpower Bureau
April 2003

Key Performance Measures at School Level

Management & Organization	Learning & Teaching	Student Support & School Ethos	Student Performance
1. <u>Composition of SMC</u> 2. Staff's views on school leadership 3. <u>Teachers' professional development (including principal CPD)</u> 4. <u>Teachers' qualification and experience (including LPR)</u> 5. School expenditure on learning and student support	6. Teachers' and students' views on learning and teaching 7. <u>Number of active school days</u> 8. <u>Lesson time for the 8 KLAs</u> 9. <u>Students' reading habit</u> 10. Provision of co-curricular activities	11. Teachers', students' and parents' views on school culture 12. Parents' views on home-school partnership 13. <u>Destination of exit students including early exits</u> 14. Students' attitudes to school	15. <u>HKAT</u> 16. BCA 17. <u>HKCEE</u> 18. <u>HKALE</u> 19. Academic value-added performance 20. Student participation in inter-school events 21. Student participation in uniform groups 22. <u>Students' attendance</u> 23. Students' physical development

Notes:

- (a) Items 13, 17, 18 and 19 – For secondary schools only.
- (b) Items 2, 6, 11 and 12 – Information is to be collected using standard questionnaires prepared by the EMB and administered annually by schools.
- (c) Item 14 – Measurement tool is included in the Assessment Program for Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO) developed by the EMB.
- (d) Item 19 – Information is provided by the Schools Value-added Information System (SVAIS) developed by the EMB.
- (e) Item 16 (BCA) – The use of it in KPM will be reviewed according to its on-going development.
- (f) Details of the items for mandatory reporting (underlined in the table) –
- Item 1: % of the following members in SMC (School Management Committee): school sponsoring bodies, principal, teachers, parents, alumni & other independent members.
- Item 3: Average no. of training hours & CPD (Continuing Professional Development) hours undertaken by teachers and principal respectively; average budgeted expenditure and actual expenditure per teacher on teacher professional development.
- Item 4: % of teachers holding the following academic qualifications: master or above, degree, tertiary non-degree, S6/7 & S5 or below; % of

professionally-trained teachers; % of subject-trained teachers in the core three subjects; % of English & Putonghua teachers meeting LPR; % of teachers with the following years of teaching experience: 0-2 years; 3-5 years ; 5-10 years ; over 10 years.

- Item 7: No. of school days for instruction on the school calendar (excluding activities such as examinations, staff development days, school picnic and post-examination activities).
- Item 8: % of lesson time allocated to the 8 KLAs (Key Learning Areas) as per school timetable at different key stages.
- Item 9: Frequency of borrowing reading materials from school/public library by students; average no. of hours spent on reading books, newspaper and electronic information per week.
- Item 13: % of S5 & S7 graduates in the designated destination categories: including further studies, employment, etc. and % of early exit students (exit before completion of secondary schooling).
- Item 15: Mean raw HKAT scores of students for the following papers: P3, P5 and Pre-S1A.
- Item 17: % of students awarded grade E or above in at least 6 subjects; % of students awarded 14 points or more in the best 6 subjects.
- Item 18: % of students awarded minimum entrance requirements for tertiary education.
- Item 22: Student attendance in each grade level.