

Implementation Plan for Empowering Local Schools in Victoria

NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT ON EMPOWERING LOCAL SCHOOLS

PRELIMINARIES

1. This Implementation Plan is created subject to the provisions of the **National Partnership Agreement on *Empowering Local Schools*** (the Agreement) and should be read in conjunction with that Agreement.
2. The objective of the *Empowering Local Schools* initiative is to empower participating schools to make decisions at a local level, supporting them to better respond to the needs of students and the local school community and provide services designed to assist their students to achieve their best educational outcomes. The *Empowering Local Schools* initiative complements reforms being delivered through the Smarter Schools National Partnerships and aligns with and builds on the broader schools reform agenda.
3. The Agreement will contribute to delivering greater local decision-making in approximately 166 government schools in Victoria participating in Phase One of the *Empowering Local Schools* initiative.
4. An independent evaluation of Phase One will collect evidence regarding the achievement of greater local decision-making in participating schools across the country. The Evaluation will consider the unique circumstances in each state and territory and provide an opportunity to learn and share what works effectively in different settings.

TERMS OF THIS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

5. This Implementation Plan supports and complements the Agreement and information provided within this plan will be critical to supporting the evaluation of activity under Phase One of the *Empowering Local Schools* initiative.
6. This Implementation Plan will commence as soon as it is signed by the Commonwealth of Australia (the Commonwealth), represented by the Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth, and the State of Victoria, represented by the Minister for Education.
7. This Implementation Plan will cease on 30 June 2014 or on completion of the project, including the processing of final payments against the performance milestones, the acceptance of final performance reporting and completion of the project evaluation, unless terminated earlier or extended as agreed in writing by the Parties.
8. This Implementation Plan may be varied by written agreement between relevant Ministers.
9. Either Party may terminate this Agreement by providing 30 days notice in writing. Where this Implementation Plan is terminated, the Commonwealth's liability to make payments to the State is limited to payments associated with Implementation Milestones achieved by the State by the date of effect of termination of this Implementation Plan.

10. The Parties to this Implementation Plan do not intend any of the provisions to be legally enforceable. However, that does not lessen the Parties' commitment to this Implementation Plan.

CURRENT LEVELS OF LOCAL DECISION-MAKING IN VICTORIA

11. Victoria has one of the most devolved school management approaches among OECD countries. Decentralisation has progressed further in Victoria than elsewhere in Australia owing to the very large measure of devolved decision-making to principals and schools councils of government schools.
(OECD, *Improving School Leadership Volume 2: Case Studies on System Leadership*, 2008, pages 183 and 202)
http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/improving-school-leadership_9789264039551-en
12. Substantial reforms to school autonomy were introduced as part of the Schools of the Future program in 1994. These reforms particularly concentrated on local decision-making in areas such as funding and workforce management, while also establishing the current curriculum and assessment frameworks that provide flexibility for schools.
13. There are six areas of Victorian school management where forms of local decision-making exist:

Governance

14. Each government school in Victoria has a school council which comprises parents, staff and community members. The school council assists in the efficient governance of the school, is involved in the development and endorsement of the school's strategic plan, and in planning, monitoring and reviewing school performance. School councils also play a role in approving the school's budget and in appointing the principal, by recommending an applicant based on the advice of a selection panel.
15. An extensive training package has recently been developed to build the knowledge, understanding and skills of school council members, school council presidents and school principals. Victorian government schools are also supported with well developed resources and processes to engage and develop partnerships with parents, carers and communities.
16. The current legislative framework for school councils provides flexibility in relation to governance arrangements.

Funding

17. Funding from the State Government is allocated to schools through the Student Resource Package (SRP) funding model, which was introduced in Victorian government schools in 2005. The SRP is calculated based on individual school size, student needs profile and student family occupation data.
18. The SRP features a distinction between student-based funding, school-based funding and targeted initiatives. Student-based funding makes up the major source of resources in the SRP. It is driven by the levels of schooling of students and their family and community characteristics. It consists of allocations for core student learning and equity.
19. The vast majority of expenditure can be directed by the schools themselves, although within certain defined parameters including salary levels, class sizes and some specialist program funding.
20. The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* states that instruction must be free in all Victorian government schools in the standard curriculum program, and empowers school councils to charge for goods and services used in the course of instruction and to raise funds.

Infrastructure

21. Infrastructure in Victoria is government owned, with schools receiving a funding allocation for maintenance of facilities (based on enrolment numbers). Schools also have flexibility around hiring out their facilities to community members.
22. Rebuilding and refurbishment programs have been centrally managed. However, in 2011, schools commencing Building the Education Revolution projects were given the opportunity to manage the implementation of these projects.

Workforce

23. Hiring decisions are made at the school level with reference to some system requirements, including the placement of excess teachers and compassionate transfers.
24. Principals manage the following human resource responsibilities in respect to all school staff:
 - staff development and performance;
 - workforce planning;
 - maintenance of staff records and payroll;
 - excess staff processes;
 - consultation with staff in respect to workforce change/issues; and
 - compliance with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development industrial agreements.
25. Victoria is also implementing a number of nationally significant reforms related to increased school-based decision-making through the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership.
26. Victoria is trialling two reward models over the 2009-2013 school years involving school-based and teacher-based rewards. The two 'Rewarding Teaching Excellence' models consist of:
 - A teacher rewards model in government schools across a subset of regions, with a monetary bonus paid to the top 30% of teachers in a given school based on assessment against a balanced scorecard; and
 - A school rewards model in government schools across a subset of regions, with a financial reward paid to the top 20% of participating schools annually, based on improvement against a broad-based measure of school performance.
27. Wider Workforce Field trials were conducted in 34 primary, secondary and special schools in 2010. The trials explored models for teachers to work with other professionals and para-professionals to deliver a wider range of learning experiences and allow teachers to focus on areas where they have unique skills. The trials tested different configurations of teaching, support staff and allied health staff, clarified the resources required for different models, and identified further potential differentiation of teacher roles and responsibilities

Operational Model

28. All Victorian government schools have a universal operational environment, common academic year, instructional load, defined number of student-free days and system wide workforce arrangements.
29. Reforms announced during the 2010 Victorian election will result in schools having the authority to manage support services and school discipline issues.

Curriculum and Assessment

30. The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority minimum standards and other requirements for school registration require all Victorian schools to provide a planned and structured curriculum that covers eight learning areas (the arts, English, health and physical education, languages other than English, mathematics, science, studies of society and environment and technology).
31. All government primary and secondary schools work to the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS), which outline what is crucial for all students to learn from Prep to Year 10.
32. Secondary schools offer the Victorian Certificate of Education and/or the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning. Schools may also offer accredited Vocational Education and Training programs.
33. Provision of alternative curriculum options and/or streams (such as curriculum specialisation, the Select Entry Accelerated Learning Program, International Baccalaureate programs and Steiner education) require application to, and approval by, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.
34. All Victorian government schools are required to report teacher judgements against the VELS for Prep - Year 10 and participate in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) annual assessments for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 students.

FOCUS OF ACTIONS TO INCREASE LOCAL DECISION-MAKING

35. Victorian government schools operate in a highly devolved management model. This management model empowers local decision-making at the individual school level. Principals and school councils make decisions on all aspects of staff employment and personnel management, financial budgeting and forecasting, and school infrastructure management.
36. On 29 November 2011, the Victorian Minister for Education announced the State Government's commitment to directions for school reform that will seek to increase local decision-making and to enhance autonomy for government schools. This will enable them to make decisions and pursue goals which are in the best interests of all Victorian students.
37. Victoria's approach will be underpinned by a culture of professional trust and support to empower school leaders and teachers to work with their communities. This approach will determine the best way to improve school performance and to achieve the best outcomes for students in their local context.
38. It is expected that increasing autonomy for Victorian government schools will produce a range of benefits including increased student engagement and learning outcomes, better use of resources, increased participation of local stakeholders, and more collegial relationships and increased satisfaction for the workforce.
39. The *Empowering Local Schools* initiative will enable Victoria to put in place programs and initiatives that support these directions, initially focussing on helping school leaders to better exercise the autonomy that they already have, and on the reduction of the bureaucratic burden on schools.
40. Four initiatives have been identified for Victoria's participation in Phase One of the National Partnership Agreement on Empowering Local Schools.

Local Administration Bureau

41. Victorian principals are expected to oversee sophisticated administrative systems and operate within a defined budget envelope and tight accountability requirements. For the majority of schools, this level of autonomy has a positive impact on school management and staff and student outcomes. In small schools, however, where there is less flexibility in the budget, there is a significant administrative burden on the principal.
42. The Department has previously explored the concept of a Local Administrative Bureau (LAB) in country Victoria designed to allow small schools to outsource some of their personnel, payroll and other administrative processes. The existing LAB is a basic administrative centre that was developed a number of years ago at the local level. As a model, it has been somewhat successful in removing the administrative burden from small schools but still allowing them to retain local decision-making and autonomy.
43. The *Empowering Local Schools* LAB project will renew and expand the concept LAB, with more sophisticated services that will extend to include financial management, human resources, occupational health and safety, procurement and/or school infrastructure maintenance services.
44. This will enable small schools/principals to participate more effectively in Victoria's devolved management model without being overwhelmed by the administrative burden, allowing principals to focus on the real decision making associated with workforce planning, goal setting and the alignment of resources with objectives. Access to the LAB will improve the capacity of school principals to focus on student learning, school governance, infrastructure, workforce and financial planning.
45. The LAB is based in Horsham, a regional centre of Victoria. The proximity of the LAB to regional and remote schools will provide for a geographic specific level of service, tailored to local needs and requirements. This aligns closely with the objectives of *Empowering Local Schools*, including the ability to innovate and respond to student and local community needs and interests.

School Partnerships – Empowering Local Decision Making

46. While Victorian schools already have significant autonomy at a legislative and policy level and a number of leading practice schools recognise this autonomy, a cultural shift is still required to enable all schools to exercise their existing autonomy. School Partnerships – Empowering Local Decision Making is designed to be an innovative capacity building initiative that will give practitioners active involvement in initiating and developing sustainable relationships. Participating schools will create new partnerships and cluster/network arrangements to design strategies with local relevance that focus on one or more of three nominated areas that are National Partnership priorities:
 - Governance (for example, building the skills of school councils and their capacity to drive improvements and innovation);
 - Funding and Infrastructure (for example, building capacity to decide resource allocation at a local level and raise extra funds and increasing capacity to create and capitalise on the use of space as a tool for improving student learning outcomes); and
 - Workforce Management (for example, building capacity to use a wider workforce drawn from the community for a variety of localised activities - such as language education).
47. Expected school level outcomes include:
 - Building capacity for increased and innovative use of teams within staffing arrangements;
 - Creating an economy of scale within the partnership model for cost effective access to para-professionals;

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- Increasing volunteerism and parent involvement through innovative approaches to workforce management;
- Enabling factors such as flexible learning spaces and ICT tools to capitalise on the potential for a shared online/virtual workforce within the partnership; and
- Building a community of practice with shared accountability for student learning outcomes.

Specialisation Grants

48. The Victorian Government is encouraging schools to create unique and rewarding school experiences to bring out the creativity, talents and potential of young Victorians through *School Specialisation Grants*. Twenty-five one-off grants of \$100,000 each will be made available to government schools in 2012 to specialise in a field of their choice, such as languages, maths, science or design. The Grants will enable schools to implement innovative solutions designed to broaden student choices in the government school system, meet student need, improve student outcomes in their local context, and allow schools to become unique and pursue their own and their community's goals.
49. The *Empowering Local Schools* initiative will extend the Victorian Government's new *School Specialisation Grants* by increasing the total number of schools that receive a grant; with up to 25 additional schools receiving an *Empowering Local Schools* specialisation grant of \$50,000 each. Increasing the total number of schools funded will provide for more student and parent choice, support schools in personalising and tailoring learning to individual and local needs, and further contribute to building the knowledge base around effective specialisation practice and its systemic applications.
50. The *Empowering Local Schools* Specialisation Grants will empower Victorian government schools to better exercise their existing autonomy, encouraging schools to engage in specialised initiatives that leverage off local relationships, priorities and partnerships in response to student and local community needs. In addition to a focus on subject matter and curriculum content, specialisation can empower schools with the flexibility to make decisions at the local level to initiate and develop relevant and authentic responses related to their specialism. This could include altering methods of school operation and responding to students' needs through, for example, changes in the way timetabling works, the structure of students' days, or the proportion of in or out of classroom learning.
51. The outcome of the Specialisation grants will provide valuable learning for the schools involved, and more broadly, on more efficient and effective school management processes and operation. Specialisation is also one means of potentially boosting motivation and engagement by personalising student learning through activities that are relevant and authentic to the learner, and reflective of their abilities and aspirations.
52. Schools' selected specialisations will be informed by consultation with their communities so that they are relevant and responsive to student and local community needs and interests.
53. It is expected that selected schools will be able to identify how the Commonwealth Government funding has supported the development and implementation of their specialisation.

Supporting Professional Practice

54. Empowerment is enhanced by increasing the capacity of principals and leadership teams to create the conditions in their schools that improve the quality of professional practice. Central to this initiative is a more rigorous performance management process.
55. The Department will partner with selected schools and experts in the field to develop a Professional Practice Framework. The Framework will include the development of a suite of tools designed to support a more sophisticated understanding of the evidence required to make informed judgments about teacher effectiveness and teacher performance.

56. The Supporting Professional Practice initiative has been designed to assist the expected 54 participating schools to workshop shared expectations about professional practice including the dimensions of teaching excellence, teamwork, leadership and the role of continuous professional learning. The participating schools will develop a shared view on the type of evidence required to judge performance against these dimensions in order to inform the development of the Professional Practice Framework and suite of tools.
57. The development of this suite of tools will empower these principals to more effectively evaluate practice, provide informed feedback and support to individual teachers and raise expectations of collective responsibility for outcomes in their schools. Once developed, if supported by favourable evaluation, the Professional Practice Framework tools could be implemented in future performance management initiatives in Victorian government schools.

CHANGES TO ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

58. Current administrative systems reflect the highly devolved management model operating in Victoria. However, a number of minor administrative changes are required for the initiatives participating in this National Partnership.
59. The transition funding will be allocated between the four *Empowering Local Schools* initiatives based on the resources required to successfully implement each initiative.
60. An internal working group consisting of representatives from key policy and implementation areas of the department has been established to allocate the funding appropriately. For example, the LAB initiative will require a greater percentage of the overall transition support funding given the associated development costs.

Local Administration Bureau

61. A needs analysis will be undertaken and the existing LAB reviewed to identify key areas for improvement, enhancement and greater efficiency.
62. A new administration service centre with a web-based front end will be developed to facilitate the exchange of requests, information and approvals between the schools and the LAB.

School Partnerships – Empowering Local Decision Making

63. As Victorian schools already have considerable, but often untapped, autonomy at a legislative and policy level, participating schools will be encouraged to work in partnership to identify strategies for more effectively using the local decision-making that now exists within current arrangements.
64. Funding will be allocated to engage an Implementation Partner and a Community Engagement Partner to act as facilitators to support schools in this process. The Implementation Partner will support and guide the implementation aspects of the project. The Community Engagement Partner will provide additional stakeholder communication and community engagement expertise to support the work of the partnerships.

Specialisation Grants

65. It is anticipated that the current administrative systems and devolved mode of operation for government schools in Victoria is sufficient to facilitate the implementation of this initiative. However, funding will be allocated to align and manage the requirements and processes of the *Empowering Local Schools* specialisation grants initiative with the existing state specialisation initiative.

Supporting Professional Practice

66. To enable the introduction of the balanced scorecard as a tool to support more rigorous performance management processes, new performance and development guidelines will be developed in consultation with participating schools.
67. Funding will be allocated to access expert support, the facilitation for, and development and publication of, a suite of supporting tools and a Professional Practice Framework.

PARTICIPATION OF SCHOOLS

68. As part of the *Empowering Local Schools* National Partnership, each of the initiatives will be communicated to schools at the beginning of the 2012 school year via a Department circular to enable all schools to have the opportunity to be aware of what is available and to make informed choices.
69. The aims, eligibility requirements and selection criteria for the initiatives will be clearly communicated to encourage schools (and especially those that fit the Commonwealth participation requirements), to express interest in participating in initiatives. Schools will be invited to express interest through a formal Expression of Interest process and if they wish, provide a priority ranking of the initiatives they wish to participate in (noting schools are only eligible to participate in one initiative).
70. Subject to the number of expressions of interest received, the indicative numbers of schools participating in each initiative and/or the initiatives may need to be revised.
71. Schools will be selected through panel/s with representation from principals, central and regional offices, as appropriate to each initiative, sharing administrative and assessment processes where possible.
72. It is expected that the school selection process will be completed by the end of April 2012. This will enable Victoria to advise the Commonwealth of participating schools by May 2012.
73. The selected group of schools will reflect the participation requirements documented in the National Partnership including:
 - school type, size, student population and geographic location; and
 - a proportion of regional schools that reflects the proportion of regional schools in Victoria.
74. Schools with a high proportion of Indigenous students and schools located within the two Victorian sites (Shepparton and Hume) identified for Place-Based Initiatives will also be prioritised where appropriate.
75. The selection panel processes will be moderated to ensure the above participation requirements can be achieved.
76. School selection information specific to each initiative is provided below.

Local Administration Bureau

77. An anticipated target of 67 Victorian government schools will participate in the LAB project in 2012 and 2013. Each school will receive an *Empowering Local Schools* grant of approximately \$43,432 (this will be dependent on the final number of schools participating in the initiative). The schools will be expected to use their grant for the following expenses related to the LAB project:

- Release of administrators/principals to participate in workshops related to the LAB design, do user-testing of the new front-end service system and provide ongoing advice;
- School technology upgrades to support their participation in the LAB;
- Hosting of representatives from at least three other schools who could benefit from LAB services, to showcase how the LAB works for them;
- Replacement teacher costs to develop processes and resources within the school; and
- associated costs (incl. travel and accommodation to attend focus groups and training).

School Partnerships – Empowering Local Decision Making

78. An anticipated target of 20 schools will take part in the initiative, arranged in four or five partnerships or clusters. Schools will be required to demonstrate how they will contribute to the initiative, what they hope to gain, and which focus area they are interested in (Governance, Infrastructure and Funding, or Workforce Management). Once all expressions of interest have been received, they will be grouped according to focus area and with a view to ensuring mutually beneficial partnerships.
79. Each participating school will receive an *Empowering Local Schools* grant of \$50,000. Use of the funding will vary between schools according to the specific project their partnership undertakes however all will include the following:
- funds to release classroom teachers to participate in project activities;
 - a professional development component including critical friend and coaching support; and
 - the development and publishing of system level tools and resources.

Specialisation Grants

80. It is proposed that up to 25 one-off *Empowering Local Schools* specialisation grants of \$50,000 will be made available to schools. These grants would be additional to the Victorian Government's *School Specialisation Grants*.
81. Participating schools will be expected to use the *Empowering Local Schools* grant to develop a specialisation in their field of choice such as languages, mathematics, science or design.
82. Schools receiving an *Empowering Local Schools* specialisation grant will identify how the Commonwealth Government funding has supported the development and implementation of their specialisation.

Supporting Professional Practice

83. An anticipated target of 54 schools will participate in the initiative.
84. Each participating school will receive an *Empowering Local Schools* grant of \$50,000 to support the development of the Professional Practice Framework and tools, including:
- providing replacement teacher coverage to attend statewide workshops;
 - professional support and external expertise; and
 - associated costs (including travel and accommodation to attend workshops and professional learning).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRINCIPALS AND SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

85. Schools will play an active role in the development of the systems and resources that will be produced as a result of their participation in the *Empowering Local Schools* initiatives. A range of training and professional learning opportunities will be available to school leaders and teachers through participation in the *Empowering Local Schools* initiatives in Victoria.
86. The *Empowering Local Schools* training and professional development funding component of \$3,500 per participating school will be held centrally to ensure efficiencies in supporting participating schools.
87. Training and professional learning will be specific to the initiatives schools are participating in, with funding being used to design and implement training and professional learning programs and the provision of coaching and peer learning group support.

Local Administration Bureau

88. Administrators and principals will participate in focus groups to inform the design and as well as participate in training to support the implementation of the new model.

School Partnerships – Empowering Local Decision Making

89. Professional development opportunities for principals and school communities will be specifically related to building leadership capacity and managing change. Access to a critical friend and coaching support will ensure leadership teams capitalise on the professional learning embedded in the actual process of developing and working within the partnerships.

Specialisation Grants

90. Schools will identify professional development opportunities appropriate to the subject area, target group and mode of delivery of the proposed specialised initiative, as required. The application, assessment and selection process will give consideration to the prioritisation of professional development and knowledge sharing across schools, local communities and regional networks.

Supporting Professional Practice

91. Through the process of developing the Professional Practice Framework and working with external experts, school leaders will develop their capacity to work with staff to enhance and improve current practices and processes. This will include the capacity to more effectively evaluate practice and to provide informed feedback and support to individual teachers enabling them to make informed judgments about teacher effectiveness and teacher performance.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

92. The four Victorian initiatives will address the *Empowering Local Schools* performance indicators as outlined in the table below under Performance Milestones.
93. The two performance indicators not being addressed are:
 - *The degree to which schools are responsible for their finances and school budgets*
Victorian government schools are currently responsible for the management of their finances and school budgets.

- *The number and range of opportunities for engagement of parents and carers and the school community*

All government schools in Victoria have a school council which includes parents, carers and school community members in its membership. The school council assists in the efficient governance of the school. An extensive training package has recently been developed to build the knowledge, understanding and skills of school council members, school council presidents and school principals.

Victorian government schools are also supported with well developed resources and processes to engage and develop partnerships with parents, carers and communities.

94. Victoria is not addressing or including information on these performance indicators in its reports to the Commonwealth or the independent evaluator (as per points 32 and 33 of the Empowering Local Schools National Partnership Agreement)

PERFORMANCE MILESTONES

95. The table below outlines the Victorian *Empowering Local Schools* performance milestones and anticipated level of achievement in relation to the National Partnership performance indicators.

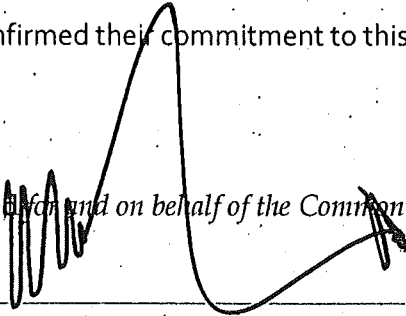
Performance Indicator	Performance Milestone	Anticipated level of Achievement	Reporting
The number of schools participating in this initiative	Up to 166 places in <i>Empowering Local Schools</i> National Partnership filled	Subject to an expression of interest process, it is anticipated that approximately: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 67 schools will participate in the LAB • 20 schools will participate in School Partnerships • 25 schools will participate in Specialisation Grants • 54 schools will participate in Supporting Professional Practice 	May 2012 Progress Report* *Payments will be made according to the number of schools participating as outlined in Clause 49 of the <i>Empowering Local Schools</i> NP Agreement.
The degree to which centralised administrative arrangements support schools to manage increased local decision-making responsibilities	Development work undertaken to enable the implementation of <i>Empowering Local Schools</i> initiatives	LAB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing LAB reviewed by December 2012 School Partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation and Community Engagement partners engaged by December 2012 Specialisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELS processes aligned with State processes by December 2012 Supporting Professional Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support materials and initial guidelines for participating schools developed by December 2012 	December 2013 Final Report

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Performance Indicator	Performance Milestone	Anticipated level of Achievement	Reporting
The extent and effectiveness of school-based decision-making, particularly in relation to governance, funding and infrastructure, and workforce, including staffing profiles	Development work undertaken to enable the implementation of <i>Empowering Local Schools</i> initiatives	<p>LAB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs analysis completed by December 2012 <p>School Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership / network arrangements established by December 2012 School action plans developed by December 2012 <p>Specialisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools to have commenced specialisation implementation by December 2013 <p>Supporting Professional Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New performance management guidelines, support materials and Professional Practice Framework developed by December 2013 	December 2013 report
The availability and appropriateness of training and professional development provided to principals and school communities	Training and professional development provided to support participation in <i>Empowering Local Schools</i> initiatives	<p>LAB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 80% of participating schools participate in LAB training <p>School Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 80% of participating schools participate in professional learning and provided with access to technical advice <p>Specialisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> participating schools identify professional learning related to their proposed specialisation <p>Supporting Professional Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 80% of participating schools participate in workshops, peer learning groups and individual school coaching 	December 2013 report
The extent to which schools are better able to respond to the needs of students and school communities, including the needs of students experiencing disadvantage	<i>Empowering Local Schools</i> initiatives implemented to increase schools' capacity to respond to the needs of students and school communities	<p>LAB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of LAB services provided increased by December 2013 <p>School Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools share strategies to respond to the needs of communities by December 2013 <p>Specialisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools to have commenced specialisation implementation by December 2013 <p>Supporting Professional Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Practice Framework available to all Victorian government schools by December 2013 	December 2013 report

Parties have confirmed their commitment to this agreement as follows:

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by



The Honourable Peter Garrett AM MP
Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth

[Day] [Month] [Year]
23. 4. 12.

Signed for and on behalf of the State of Victoria by



The Honourable Martin Dixon MP
Minister for Education

[Day] [Month] [Year]
29 / 7 / 12.