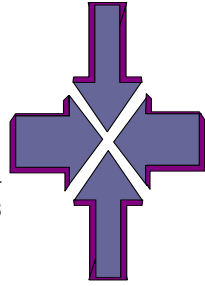


Victorian Ecumenical
System of Schools Ltd

ABN 88094 171123



System Implementation Plan

January 2014 – December 2019

Background and Introduction

The Victorian Ecumenical System of Schools Ltd (VESS) comprises 16 independent schools located across Victoria. Many are in regional areas of the state and are therefore quite remote to one another. The System has built into its constitution the principle of co-operative management. Since foundation, the System has been controlled by its member schools. VESS both supports and leads its member schools in their shared mission, and accounts authentically and accurately to the government authorities on members' operations and outcomes.

The Directors of VESS pledge to build and administer the System in accordance with civil law, fiduciary responsibilities and principles of good governance.

Every VESS member school is unique. Each has its own distinct profile in terms of student profile, year levels offered, fee structure, facilities and pedagogical style. All members offer great support to the communities to which they belong, offering educational options that would not exist without them, and often bringing professional services and facilities to their regions that would not otherwise be available to members of the wider community.

The diversity of membership means that a one-size-fits-all implementation plan in relation to the five areas of reform under the Education Act 2013 is inappropriate. Instead of prescribing specific actions and targets for member schools, this plan serves to lay out how VESS will support and lead member schools in individually striving to achieve the five aims of the Education Act 2013 according to their individual needs, strengths, resources and philosophies.

Strategic Intent	Objective	Strategy	Action	Timeline
Quality Teaching	Increase professional learning in relation to research based best teaching practice within member schools	Provide funds and professional advice to member schools for engagement of professional learning at school level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget to be determined Member schools to request expert relevant to teaching goals at each school and submit details to System office; or System office to engage quality teaching expert to travel to each school or cluster of schools to present to teaching staff 	<p>Feb 2014</p> <p>Apr 2014 for completion by Dec 2014</p> <p>Apr 2014 for completion by Dec 2014</p>
	Increase collaboration between teachers at member schools for greater exchange of ideas, research and best practice	Provide opportunities for teaching staff from different member schools to meet and engage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct Annual VESS Conference featuring professional learning sessions focusing on improving teacher quality, with as many senior teaching staff from member schools in attendance as possible Establish electronic communication links between member schools to allow ready collaboration via video conference or webinar Establish collaborative interest based groups of teachers linked to school/university research centres investigating particular issues related to teaching practice and pastoral care 	<p>August 2014</p> <p>By Dec 2014</p> <p>By Dec 2014</p>
	Increase professional practice within each and every member school	Member schools to develop their own professional practice improvement goals and strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member schools to provide list of professional practice improvement goals and strategies Member schools to provide a self-assessment against improvement goals set 	<p>Feb 2014</p> <p>Dec 2014</p>
	Recognise and encourage quality teaching within schools	Develop System wide acknowledgement of high quality teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principals to provide examples of exceptional teaching within member schools each term Letter of congratulations and acknowledgement to be sent to Principals' recommendations by VESS Executive Officer Details of exemplary teachers to be posted on VESS website 	Commence May 2014, then every term thereafter

Strategic Intent	Objective	Strategy	Action	Timeline
Quality Learning	Commitment to implementation of national curriculum initiatives	Restore the focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics within member schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate collaboration between teachers of science, technology, engineering and mathematics at different member schools to allow sharing of successful strategies in relation to increasing student engagement in these subjects 	August 2014
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide professional learning opportunities for science and mathematics teachers at member schools 	2015
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pooling of resources in specialised areas for joint activities, curriculum development and practical work 	By December 2014
		Apply a flexible approach to literacy learning for remote primary schools as applicable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and interschool group to develop and monitor and enable the implementation of research based programs to be delivered by non-traditional methods (eg, video conferencing) 	By December 2014
		Improve the take up of foreign languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage sharing of highly successful LOTE teachers between member schools to overcome the difficulties of attracting good LOTE teachers to regional areas 	2015
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video link classrooms at different member schools for remote LOTE class sharing 	2015
	Use data to guide learning programme reform	Analyse data available at school level to identify areas for improvement or adjustment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review NAPLAN, ICAS, VCE and other student assessment data against past years Track individual student learning expectations and outcomes throughout their schooling years to determine programme weaknesses Provide professional learning opportunities at school level in relation to data analysis 	Ongoing Ongoing 2014

Strategic Intent	Objective	Strategy	Action	Timeline
	Improve learning quality through feedback	Provide strong communication to students and parents with regard to student progress and achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers at member schools to provide informative, accurate and clear student reports Teachers at member schools to provide focussed, constructive feedback to students in classroom and in relation to class work Encourage open lines of communication between teachers, students and parents Establish a professional development program to assist teachers in developing understanding of effective feedback and student monitoring 	<p>At least twice a year, ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>December 2014</p>
Quality Learning continued	Focus on school-wide literacy, numeracy and LOTE	Member schools to develop school-wide literacy, numeracy and LOTE goals and strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member schools to provide list of literacy, numeracy and LOTE goals and strategies Member schools to provide a self-assessment against literacy, numeracy and LOTE goals set 	<p>Feb 2014</p> <p>Dec 2014</p>
Empowered School Leadership	Develop leadership styles and capacities of Principals	Provide professional learning opportunities to assist school leaders in developing their leadership styles and providing alternative styles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal professional development sessions to be conducted at each Directors' Meeting focusing on leadership related topics Mentor programme for new Principals where an experienced VESS Principal provides support and advice to first-time Principals during their first year in the role 	<p>Ongoing, once per term</p> <p>Ongoing, as applicable</p>
	Improve school governance	Provide professional learning in relation to governance processes and expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual professional learning session for Board Members at member schools to obtain updates in relation to governance requirements and expectations 	Annually
	Improve system governance	Provide professional learning in relation to governance processes and expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VESS to provide funds for Principals to complete AICD Company Directors' Course to raise governance understanding and standards within the System 	Commencing 2014 then annually as applicable

Strategic Intent	Objective	Strategy	Action	Timeline
Transparency and Accountability	Meet all accountability and reporting requirements in line with Government expectations	Guide members through the various reporting processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System Office to communicate to members, via email, reporting requirements and time frames in relation to Financial Questionnaire, Annual Report, My School, Financial Accountability, Census, Compliance and all other accountability measures as may arise, with at least one month's notice for response time • System Office to check all reports for accuracy and compliance prior to submission 	<p>Ongoing, annually</p> <p>Ongoing, annually</p>
Transparency and Accountability continued	Determine financial viability of member schools	Monitor schools' financial performance and enrolments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct in depth review of school financial data when any member's result is a cash loss in any one year • Conduct in detailed review of projected school financial data when significant downturn in enrolments (> 10% decrease) is experienced in any one year • Determine whether further action or assistance is required on a case by case basis 	<p>Ongoing, annually as applicable</p> <p>Ongoing, annually as applicable</p> <p>Ongoing, annually as applicable</p>
	Increase financial and governance standards within member schools	Provide professional learning opportunities to educate Business Managers in governance and accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Manager professional learning to be conducted at each Business Managers' Meeting focusing on governance, accountability and finance related topics 	Ongoing, three times per year
Meeting Student Need	Achieve best practice for student care and well-being	Collaborate with member schools to determine best practice benchmarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish System wide generic codes of best practice in relation to student well-being and care which are able to be applied in the unique environment of each member school 	December 2014

Strategic Intent	Objective	Strategy	Action	Timeline
	Distribute Commonwealth recurrent funds using a needs based funding distribution model	Develop needs based funding distribution arrangement that complies with needs based funding principles by the Commonwealth as required under the Act (subsection 78 (3)(a)) and Regulations (subsection 51(3) and 61(4))	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply base funding to each member school discounted by the capacity to contribute (CTC) of each member in accordance with individual members' SES scores for 2014 • Additional funding to be provided to students and schools with additional needs in order to support student achievement, including students with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, schools based on location and schools based on size 	January 2014, as soon as full details are available from the Commonwealth Department of Education
	Distribute Victorian recurrent funding according to FAM modelling		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate funds to member schools according to Victorian DEECD advice 	Ongoing

Publication and Review of Implementation Plan

This implementation plan will be publicly available via the Victorian Ecumenical System of Schools Ltd website: www.vess.com.au

The implementation plan will be reviewed annually in December by the System Office and Directors to measure achievement against each action and timeline. Results of the review and subsequent changes to the implementation plan will be published in January 2015 at www.vess.com.au and updates each January thereafter.

From January 2015, the school improvement plans of each member school will also be accessible at www.vess.com.au

Needs Based Funding Distribution Principles

- 1 No school will receive less funding as a member of VESS than it would if it was its own approved authority. For this reason funding will be distributed to schools in line with the Australian Government's needs based funding model, with the CtC of each member determined by its individual SES score rather than the System's averaged SES score.
- 2 If there are funds remaining after the first criteria has been met, the remaining funds will be distributed to member schools or expended by the System for the benefit of member schools in order to assist schools in meeting the objectives set out in the Victorian Ecumenical System of Schools Ltd System Implementation Plan. The actual method of distribution will be determined annually and agreed upon by all VESS Directors.