

Recommendations from the report of the Independent Review of Government School and Preschool Governance in South Australia

Recommendation	Department endorsement
<p>1</p> <p>That a dedicated school and preschool governance portal be developed and launched which provides concise, up to date and easy to understand governance information such as but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councils' powers and functions • Roles and responsibilities of councillors, including all office holders • Roles and responsibilities of school and preschool leaders • School and preschool constitutions • Code of practice • Model employment contracts • School and preschool financial management • Council meeting and operational procedures • Insurance matters • Legal frameworks • Dispute resolution procedures • Councillor liabilities • Employment responsibilities, including legal and work health and safety obligations • Best practice community representation and engagement • Communication with the school and preschool community • Fundraising ideas • Child protection screening requirements • Government and department initiatives and policies relating to governing councils. 	<p>Endorsed in principle</p>

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2	That resources be provided for the development of face-to-face and online training materials, and proposals invited for the delivery of training, both induction and refresher training, on an affordable fee for service basis. This training material should be aligned with other online materials as identified in recommendation 1, and should include specific training for office holder positions.	Endorsed in principle
3	That training on best practice engagement with school and preschool governing councils be included as part of the induction of school and preschool leaders, and these materials also be made available for existing school and preschool leaders.	Endorsed in principle
4	That the department provide dedicated staff support for school and preschool governing councils who are able to deal quickly with inquiries, concerns and requests for support and information, or act as a conduit for seeking this information.	Endorsed in principle
5	That the option of periodic statewide and/or regional gatherings be examined for school and preschool councillors which provide the opportunity for sharing of successful initiatives, training, engagement with the department and communicating successfully with the school and preschool community.	Endorsed in principle
6	That ways be evaluated to update the school governing council model constitution to clearly articulate the functions and powers of the council, the functions and powers of the principal, those that are to be shared and how they are to be shared. In particular, in relation to the authority of the governing council to determine the application of the total financial resources available to the school.	Endorsed in principle
7	That the model preschool constitution be reviewed and updated to align with the provisions in the Children's Services Act, as well as to make reference to the National Law and the National Quality Framework and standards.	Endorsed in principle
8	That ways be evaluated to make the existing school and preschool governing council constitutions more adaptable to local needs in areas such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dedicated office holders (other than the chair) • frequency of meetings • quorums • online meetings etc. 	Endorsed in principle

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9	That <i>Administrative Instructions and Guidelines (Schooling Sector) Section 5: School Councils, Affiliated Support Committees and Related Matters</i> be reviewed and updated, including clearly distinguishing between legal requirements, policies and guidelines.	Endorsed in principle
10	That advice be provided to local partnerships concerning the exploration of innovative models of governance which are relevant and appropriate in each community.	Endorsed in principle
11	That the department assist school and preschool governing councils by providing timely financial reports in an easy to read and interpret format that distinguishes between discretionary and non-discretionary expenditure.	Endorsed in principle
12	That ways be evaluated for the Minister and department to communicate efficiently and directly with governing council chairpersons.	Endorsed in principle
13	That the interim dispute resolution procedures that have already been announced by the Minister in relation to disputes between a school governing council and the department are confirmed, and that additional information be provided to school governing councils about the options available for councils who are unable to resolve disputes through a mediation process. A dispute resolution procedure should be developed for preschool governing councils.	Endorsed in principle
14	Noting that school and preschool governing councils are permitted to employ nonteaching staff and contractors, that the department should continue to provide model contracts for such employment, where applicable.	Endorsed in principle