

BRINGING YOUR VISION TO LIFE:

Meeting the major school strategy goals for 2022 and beyond

Step Fwd IT

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*How do your goals compare to the those of schools around Australia and how can Principals and School Leaders put themselves in the **best position to achieve their school vision?***





Big goals in a new era of education

2021 and 2020 were undoubtedly some of the hardest years Victorian schools have ever faced and will impact how school communities learn, teach, and operate for years to come.

2022 brings with it the promise of back to ‘normal’, and the opportunity to learn from these experiences to effectively set goals, plan strategies, and meet visions for the years ahead.

So, what are schools hoping to achieve? Feedback from hundreds of principals and school leaders show that attention and budgets are largely being invested in people, with the biggest priorities named as:

1. **Teaching and learning strategies**
2. **Workforce strategies**
3. **Professional development**

Wider engagement, investment in expertise and leadership, and establishing baseline measurement for student outcomes and staff experiences will be key for achieving these goals.

...But is something missing?

These are strong goals, focused on preparing schools to not only deliver the best environments and outcomes for students and teachers, but to achieve long-term performance.

However, the disruption we’ve experienced and the changes that we are and will continue to see across the education sector will change the way schools need to approach these goals.

New ways of thinking, acting, and developing skills are going to be required in order to succeed.

The data, tools, systems, and capabilities schools will rely on to efficiently meet teaching, learning, workforce, and development goals (as well as the ongoing needs of students, staff, and carers) are all underpinned by IT and technology.

Yet despite this (and the growing reliance on technology over the last two years) **ICT and IT sit lowest on the priority list for most schools.**

As we move into a period where flexibility, adaptability and disruption readiness are must-haves for schools, determining the right approach, and where to invest finite budgets, is vital. Could IT play a part in delivering both better strategies and better returns?

We looked at the big goals to determine if and how they could be better achieved with some help from IT.

GOAL ONE

Building Teaching and Learning Strategies That Deliver Outcomes & Go the Distance

70% of school principals and leaders agree that their **number one goal for the next three years is to strengthen and reassess current strategies, design new schooling delivery models and establish baseline measures for learning and teaching outcomes.**

This isn't surprising, considering the huge changes to learning and teaching we've recently experienced. As school leaders rethink strategies, they will need to know what is working, what isn't, and how the needs of both teachers and students may change in the years to come. Teachers are having to cope with bigger workloads, while flexible curriculums and strategies that meet individual learning needs are in higher demand.



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Did you know...

Evidence indicates collaborative learning in online environments enhances student learning more so than individual learning.

How should schools look to achieve the goal of adaptive, long-term delivery models and strategies in schools?



Measure performance

Utilised correctly, data can give amazing insight into all sorts of school functions -including learning outcomes. Data dashboards can be used to measure and record individual student performance, areas of concern, and how each student best learns - which in turn can act as a guide on the most effective teaching and learning techniques.



Enable personalised learning

Not all students learn in the same way, but resources to cater individually to each student rarely exists. Using learning data and online learning programs enable schools to provide **individualised learning opportunities** to cater to student strengths, weaknesses, and academic levels, improving student engagement and outcomes.



Empower collaboration

Teamwork and collaboration play a huge role in education. The right tech can help bring together teachers and students across classrooms or campuses to work together, share resources and present new opportunities for connected and collaborative learning.



Improve remote capabilities

Remote learning may be gone for now, but it won't necessarily be gone forever. While it was a struggle for many, there were some benefits that could be introduced into everyday teaching strategies. The right IT set up can provide the flexibility to switch remote or hybrid styles with ease, if required.

GOAL TWO

Creating a Workforce Strategy That Supports Increasing Demands & Maintains Staff Capability

A key enabler of sustainable schooling and positive student outcomes, **Workforce Strategy requires the analysis, optimisation, and empowerment of workforces to ensure staffing requirements can be met now and in the future.** Schools are placing high priority on the acquisition and retention of highly capable teachers and building pathways that set them up to become future school leaders.

Studies show that while principals have a positive outlook on their workforce, **teachers themselves are less optimistic, describing their recent experiences as “exhausting”.** Many are facing burn out, don't feel prepared for the next three years, and need more support to deal with the demands of their roles. To meet workforce strategy goals, school leaders will need to co-design the future of the school alongside teachers using collaboration tools, clear communication, and accurate, multi-faceted data.



How should schools be creating meaningful working environments and long-term staff capability and supply?



Use data

To improve staff capability or retention, schools first need to have a clear idea of where they currently sit and what needs to change to meet goals. Dashboarding and analytics can be used to deliver accurate and usable data to inform where effort and budgets should be spent for the greatest impact.



See the future

Schools don't want strong and capable teachers for just a year or two - they want to ensure consistent and long-term staff attraction and retention. Identifying trends, benchmarking performance, and making data-driven decisions can help futureproof workforce strategy.



Offer flexibility

Recent experiences of disruption have shown the need for agility and flexible teaching delivery. Teachers have proven to be highly adaptable - if they are supported with the right tools and opportunities. The right technology can help teachers "shakeup" how they do things and give options during times of high pressure.



Lead the pack

As the use of IT and tech in education continues to grow, those schools who are seen as progressive leaders, taking up the latest tools and teaching strategies, will draw more interest from top teachers who are seeking the chance to work in meaningful, future-thinking environments.

GOAL THREE

Maximising Professional Development for Emerging Skillsets

Strong, ongoing professional development for teachers has proven to be a goal for schools year after year. But this year, more specifically, **there has been a shift in the highest development priority: technological skills.** This is no doubt driven by recent demand for educators to become quickly proficient in a new range of applications and devices to continue lesson delivery. Schools are now recognising the need for teachers to be 'data savvy'.

As technology continues to shape classrooms - as well as teaching and learning strategies - it makes sense that teachers are equipped to understand it so they can maximise outcomes. Recognised as a development priority across Victoria (and Australia), those schools unable to make progress with significant development across these skills will find themselves at a disadvantage. Principals and school leaders need to be asking themselves: "Are we across the best strategies to build this capability, what is the best approach, and how do we fit these areas of high priority in with general development?"



Did you know...

35% of teachers say they don't have the support they need to utilise digital resources.



How should schools prepare for changing priorities and support staff to continue to develop new skillsets?



eLearning training

Applications and devices alone cannot deliver learning outcomes. Support and training ensure teachers are aware of the tools and applications available to them, as well as to make the most out of technology they are using as part of their teaching strategies.



Data usage training

Data can be utilised to great effect, but only if it is accessed and used correctly. Training teachers to ensure they can utilise data correctly not only improves teaching and learning outcomes, but can empower teachers to drive their own process improvements and development.



Changing pedagogies

There is no guarantee remote learning won't return in 2022 as schools face unavoidable outbreaks. Class plans will need to be designed to be hybrid, dynamically shifting to fit with remote learning/teaching, and the right tech will be critical to support this new teaching pedagogy.



Cyber security

Ensuring the safety of staff, students and data is incredibly important, and online environments present extended risks. Ensuring teachers are following correct IT and security processes and protocol is a major technological skill.

Starting the conversation

No doubt you have entered this stage of planning before, considering the key goals for your school and what approaches and investments will deliver the optimum outcomes. However, the recent disruption to the education sector and the environment we now find ourselves in - prone to change, highly flexible, ready to adapt - has reshaped not only the goals schools are setting but what you need to achieve them.

How do you determine the best way forward to prioritise development, attract and retain great staff, or understand what teaching and learning models will provide the best outcome for your school's staff and students for the years to come?

The best place to start is with your overall goal and strategy conversations with your wider team and stakeholders (and maybe an external expert if you do not have the internal resources). Some questions you can start with are:

1. **How will schooling be delivered into the future and how do we move from ideas to lasting change?**
2. **How will schools be structured under our new models?**
3. **How will we ensure our future models are sustainable and continue to increase their positive impact over time?**
4. **How will we remain ready for and robust to continued disruption into the future?**
5. **How will we take a structured approach to piloting, testing, and costing new models? How will we roll them out if they're successful?**
6. **How will we manage cost, progress, risk, and realisation of benefits as we move forward?**
7. **How will we ensure that our communities and workforce enable and engage in this change?**

Supporting school strategy with IT

Many goals and capabilities schools are now striving for are underpinned by IT. Making the right investment in the right places can bring together budget, business strategy and education goals to move schools ahead further, faster.

IT is so much more than computers, emails, and printers. It plays a crucial role at a strategic level - even in areas you may never have considered. Simply having access to the right data, analytics, and dashboarding immediately boosts your strategy planning and execution capabilities. **How often are you engaging your IT manager to discuss overall IT and data capabilities and how it could support school strategy?**

IT can be a complex and difficult realm to breach for those without technological expertise. But as it becomes an ever-important feature of education, it has become impossible to ignore. After a year when strong IT was needed simply to teach a class, can you really afford not to consider it as an integral part of overall school strategy?



Step Fwd IT

As IT and technology needs of schools grow, schools find themselves needing more expertise and support to make it work.

At Step Fwd IT, we support schools to build, execute and transform their IT strategy in line with their overall school strategy.

We take a people first, tech-enabled approach, focusing on the needs and goals first. Only then do we consider how IT can or should be utilised. We are currently working alongside several Victorian schools, their leaders, and their IT managers to empower their workforce and enable future-ready learning and teaching strategies.

If you are looking for more guidance or advice on IT strategy and meeting your 2022 school goals and vision, we are happy to help.

Contact us for a no-obligation conversation.



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