

Evaluation

It is important to collect and use reliable evidence to inform decision-making.

Education settings should implement a plan to collect, analyse and discuss data on academic outcomes, attendance, behaviour and student wellbeing for both formative and summative purposes. Together these data provide:

- ▶ an overview of the progress of individual students, priority cohorts, whole-school and system levels
- ▶ insights into the academic, social and behavioural needs of students
- ▶ insights into the effectiveness of specific approaches.

Success measures for evaluating outcomes of alternative settings

The Department of Education has established a clear key performance indicator framework for early childhood and school settings. This framework includes indicators that cascade at the provider, regional and central office level.

Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) has also developed *An Outcomes Framework for Queensland Independent Special Assistance Schools*, which is available to all member schools.

High expectations for students, in terms of strong academic gain and learning, and strong transitions, are a key attribute for all school environments, including flexible and alternative education settings. These important outcomes should be measured.

Changes in wellbeing can also provide important insights into student progress. Wellbeing data often require subjective and qualitative judgments to be made by personnel on the effectiveness of their program, in line with the Department of Education's standards of evidence.

The following measures provide an overview for a wide range of data to describe the outcomes of an alternative setting. In isolation, no one set of data provides a rigorous picture of outcomes for students. However, the multiple measures of success we are proposing present a robust overview of the outcomes that an educational setting can deliver for its students.

The use of current and accurate data to measure the success of alternative settings is necessary to achieve valid results.

Achieving a balanced view of success

The Department of Education is proposing five measures for evaluating the success of alternative settings, noting that wellbeing is a new measure, underlining its importance to a student's engagement and success in learning.

These measures need to be interpreted as a whole. Each data set works together to provide a holistic picture of distance travelled in the wellbeing, learning and transitions of individual students, as well as overall outcomes for the school.

The Department of Education is continuing to develop and assess tools to assist in evaluating alternative settings. While the use of these measures is not mandated, the measures are designed as a mechanism for schools to reflect on student improvement in a holistic way.