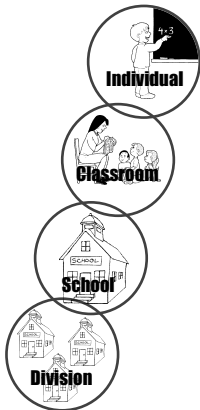

Section 1: Setting the Stage

SECTION 1: SETTING THE STAGE

Overview

Schools create Annual School Plans and, from those plans, create a report that summarizes key activities and results.

The Department reviews the Student Services, School, and Division Planning Reports to assist in provincial planning. A provincial sample of Annual School Plans is also annually reviewed.



School-Based Planning

School-based planning allows individual schools to respond to the unique needs and strengths of the communities they serve.

School planning and reporting should be understood within the context of planning and reporting at all levels. At its most effective, linkages among all levels increase efficiency and enhance communication. For instance, the priorities and plans from the Department and the division provide a broad picture of important issues. Schools, in turn, inform the division and Department, identifying many of the same issues and related activities from the school-level perspective in the Annual School Plan, School Planning Report, and Community Report. Efficiencies occur when all stakeholders plan, communicate, and report in conjunction with each other.

The priorities and plans that arise from classroom or individual student planning are most effectively addressed when they are accommodated in the School Plan. In a complementary way, classroom and individual student planning takes into account the priorities of the school and the division as a whole.

School Planning Reports help schools focus on their implementation plans while helping the province to determine emerging priorities and to evaluate progress on its current priorities. Just as divisions/ districts use School Plans to assist them in responding to educational priorities, the Department uses School Planning Reports and Division Planning Reports as important sources of information in its own planning. All School and Division Planning Reports are reviewed annually.

Benefits of School-Based Planning

The benefits of school-based planning and reporting include a systematic process for identifying, monitoring, adjusting, evaluating, and communicating school activities that enhance

- student achievement
- school improvement
- responsibility
- accountability

Planning is an integrated process that involves a variety of levels of involvement. Just as effective teaching involves planning learning activities, locating resources, determining assessment and evaluation strategies, and anticipating reporting prior to the onset of teaching, school planning follows the same process within a wider domain.

School-based planning examines challenges and choices.

Effective school-based planning asks and answers questions about educational purpose. It allows school communities to create and develop or rethink and reconsider underlying philosophies and perspectives about education and schooling. School-based planning allows school staff, students, parents, and community members to examine the challenges and choices the school faces.

School-based planning helps school communities to

- identify priorities and outcomes that enhance the success of all learners
- modify current programming, strategies, and initiatives to improve results
- identify desired results that are currently not being addressed
- develop programming for delivering new results for new purposes
- address how various services and programming will support school-wide priorities

Reporting on the evolution of the School Plan provides critical communication with individuals who can assist in the success of the plan.

Numerous studies have examined the effectiveness of school-based planning. The overall evidence suggests that although collaborative school-based planning can have its share of problems and frustrations, it offers many benefits when done appropriately.

School-based planning promotes effective learning environments.

Collaborative school-based planning promotes the development of an effective learning environment. It creates

- consensus among partners about educational purpose and direction
- improved communication among staff
- heightened staff and student morale
- effective relationships among school staff and parents, and increased parental and community involvement
- greater teaching effectiveness
- greater overall acceptance of change
- effective approaches to discipline issues
- better co-ordination of programming and services between grades and across disciplines
- effective relationships with external agencies and organizations (e.g., social services, local businesses, and seniors' groups)
- greater awareness of a school community's strengths and weaknesses
- effective and efficient use of resources, including time

School-based planning promotes reflection and responsibility.

“Together, focus, reflection, and collaboration work to create and shape ongoing improvement....Each element of the framework relies on the others. Take away one element, and the structure will collapse; it will stand only when all three supports are present and equally strong.”

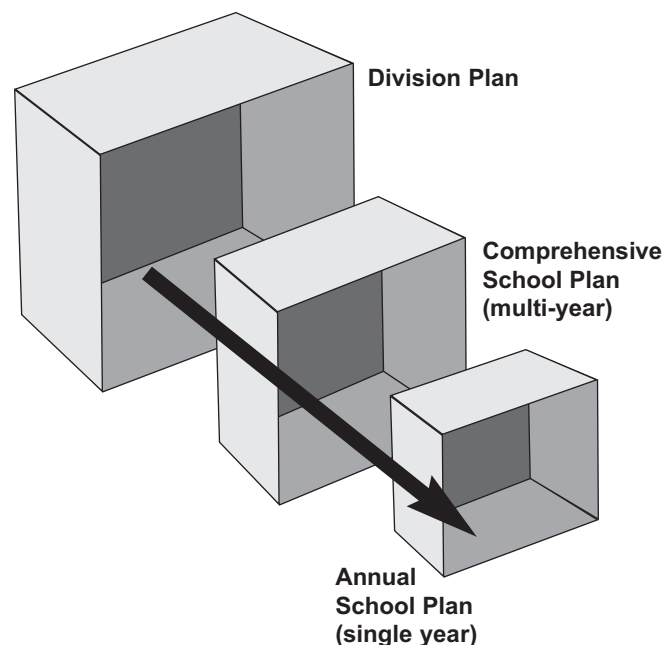
Conzemius and O’Neill

A benefit of school-based planning is the increased attention to reflection on implementation plans and an increased sense of responsibility among all individuals involved in the planning.

The interrelationship among focus, reflection, and collaboration contributes to a shared clarity of thought, direction, and purpose, and it helps planners to learn from the past. This, in turn, enhances the identification and future accomplishment of new plans. The collaboration component encourages sharing and knowledge from a variety of sources.

The Division Plan, Comprehensive School Plan, and Annual School Plan all flow from the same priorities and processes. Like nesting tables, the Annual School Plan fits within and flows from the broader Comprehensive School Plan, which then fits within and flows from the even broader Division Plan.

Figure 1: Flowchart of School/Division Plans



Comprehensive School Plans

A Comprehensive School Plan is a multi-year, written document prepared collaboratively by school staff, parents, students, and representatives of other stakeholder groups, particularly community representatives of Advisory Councils for School Leadership. A Comprehensive School Plan provides a detailed summary of divisional and school priorities, goals, budget over time, as well as issues essential to the day-to-day operation of the school. Most schools keep their Comprehensive School Plan in a binder, since updates are common even though basic information remains constant.

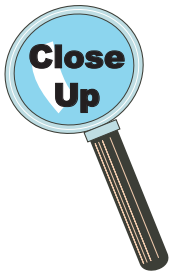
A Comprehensive School Plan includes district/division and school policies, staffing, courses offered, co-curricular activities, transportation, emergency preparedness plans, and building maintenance. Schools sometimes refer to the Comprehensive School Plan as “The Handbook,” or “The Policies and Procedures Manual” in cases where plans are combined with information related to school and division protocols and procedures.

A Comprehensive School Plan provides information about all the procedures, policies, staffing, and outcomes of the school over several years, whereas the Annual School Plan and School Planning Report are focused solely on key priorities for a given year.

The sample table of contents below highlights many of the commonplace components of a Comprehensive School Plan. Common elements of an Annual School Plan, extracted from a Comprehensive School Plan, are identified by an asterisk.

Golden Prairie School Comprehensive School Plan	
Table of Contents	
* Golden Prairie School Mission Statement	3
Philosophy	3
* Key School Priorities	4
* Division Priorities	5
Golden Prairie School Policies and Programs	6
Addressing Student Diversity	11
Individual Education Plans	11
Behaviour Intervention Plans	12
Health Care Plans	13
URIS Reporting Procedures	14
Emergency Preparedness Plan	15
* Strategies for a Supportive, Inclusive Environment	22
* Professional Development/Administration Activities	34
Committees	35
* Parental and Community Involvement Initiatives	36
* Outcomes Information (3-year plan)	36
Building Maintenance	37
Transportation	37
School Budget Summary	38

* Items extracted for Annual School Plan



Case Study: Golden Prairie School



At the January meeting of the planning team, the group reviewed the Comprehensive School Plan to determine which areas of the plan might be helpful to create the information categories for the Annual School Plan.

The group discussed the key issues in the Comprehensive School Plan to determine

which could be used as focal points for further research in the current year, which could be seen as ongoing activities that would be considered in “maintenance” mode, and which issues needed immediate planning and action.

The committee designated two members to generate from the discussion a list of next steps to be distributed prior to the upcoming planning meeting.

Focus: Data Analysis and Decision Making

Annual School Plans

An Annual School Plan is the product of a continuous planning process. Similar to the Comprehensive School Plan, it is a written document prepared collaboratively by a combination of community members, parents, students, and school staff. An Annual School Plan reflects a school division’s or district’s educational priorities and outcomes, goals, and budget for a given year and responds to a school community’s unique strengths and needs. It sustains and extends strengths and addresses areas that require change.

The Annual School Plan is intended to guide the development and maintenance of an effective learning environment that includes academically challenging programming that strengthens learning opportunities and outcomes for all students. The plan also serves to communicate key information to parents and community members.

The Annual School Plan helps a school community to articulate

- a clear purpose and direction
- strengths and areas for improvement
- current educational priorities
- priorities and outcomes that are to be monitored and evaluated
- strategies to achieve those priorities and outcomes

Annual School Plans can assist a school division/district to

- gain a better understanding of local school needs
- establish educational priorities and budgets
- identify issues and trends that will affect current and future operations of schools
- communicate/form partnerships with parents and the broader community regarding priorities and plans

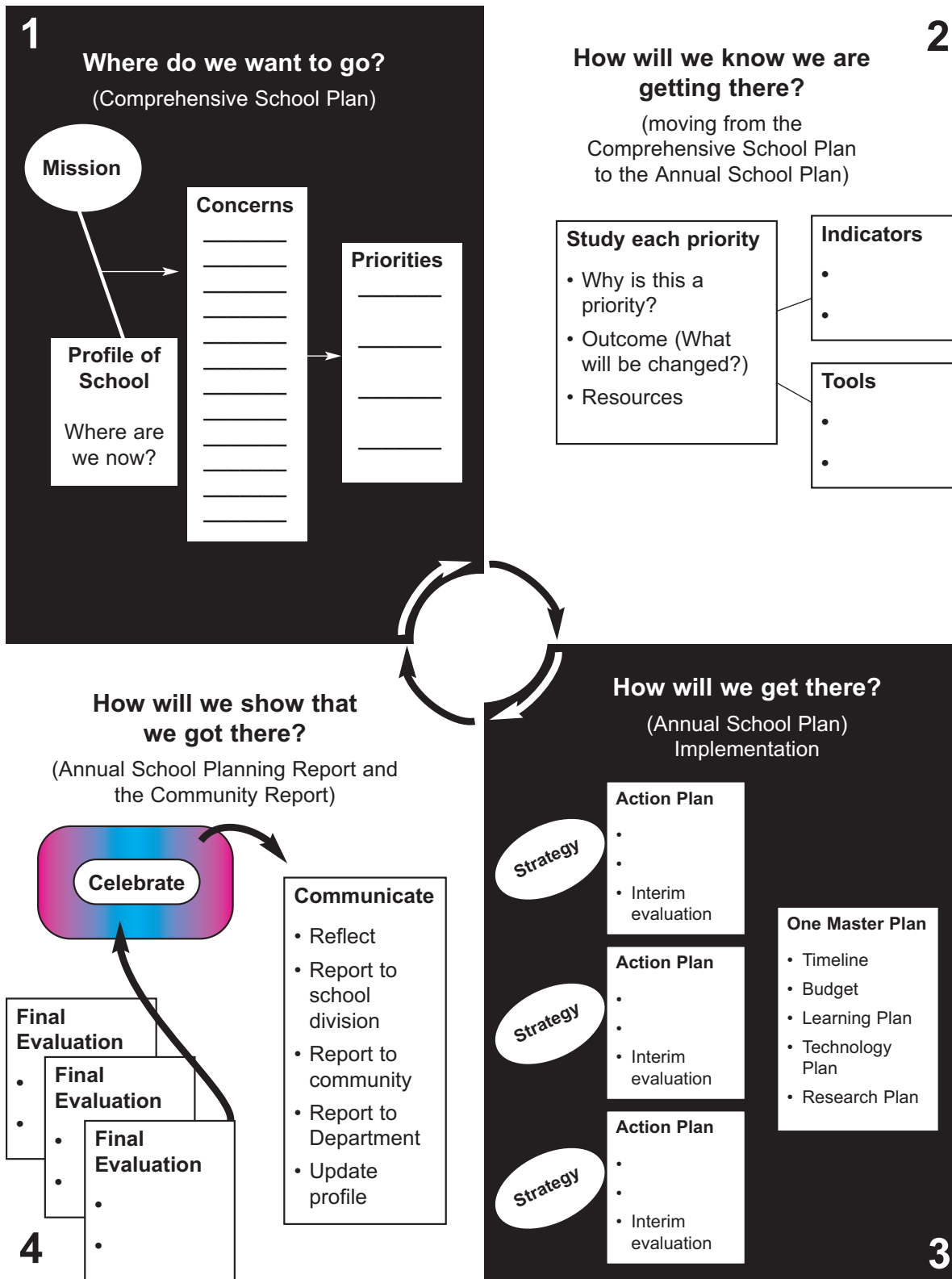
The Annual School Plan is not an end in itself. Once a plan is completed, school staff, with support from parents, students, and community members, begin the challenging task of putting it into practice.

Annual School Planning Reports

While School Plans are created annually, they may reflect a single phase of activity in some outcomes that are part of the Comprehensive School Plan. These activities are usually connected to longer planning processes that may encompass two or more years. Some of the outcomes that are a priority one year may be in maintenance mode in future years, or perhaps in a re-evaluation phase at other times. Like the Annual School Plan, the annual School Planning Report is confined to encapsulating the implementation plan for a single year. Annual School Planning Reports

- summarize the Annual School Plan
- highlight key priorities and outcomes for one specific year
- link outcomes with indicators
- link indicators with data sources (tools)
- link division/district priorities with the Annual School Plan
- link student services priorities with the classroom and Annual School Plan
- link individual and classroom priorities with the Annual School Plan

Figure 2: Continuous Planning and Reporting Process Cycle



Golden Prairie School Annual School Plan	
Table of Contents	
* Golden Prairie School Mission Statement	1
* Key School Priorities	1
* Division Priorities	1
* Linkages to Provincial Priorities	1
Outcomes Information (previous year)	2
Results from Previous Year's Outcomes	2
Current Year's Outcomes	3
* Strategies for a Supportive, Inclusive Environment	3
* Professional Development/Administration Activities	4
* Parental and Community Involvement Initiatives	4

* Items extracted from Comprehensive School Plan

Multi-level, Multi-year Planning and Annual Reporting

Planning and reporting are related, but one cannot replace the other.

Figure 3 (on page 1.11) shows the multi-level planning that affects schools within a given year. Divisional planning assists the school in its own planning. Similarly, the Division Planning Report and the annual School Planning Report are virtually identical in terms of scope and range. Just as planning assists teachers, schools, and school divisions in their daily activities, the planning reports assist the Department in its daily activities. To reduce the amount of duplication that schools and divisions may face when reporting on their planning process, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth created reporting templates (Appendix F, pages A19–A30). Remember, the Annual School Plan is the foundation upon which the report is based. It is not possible to have an effective report that communicates essential information to the community, the school, the division, and/or the Department without first having created an annual plan.

Student Services Planning

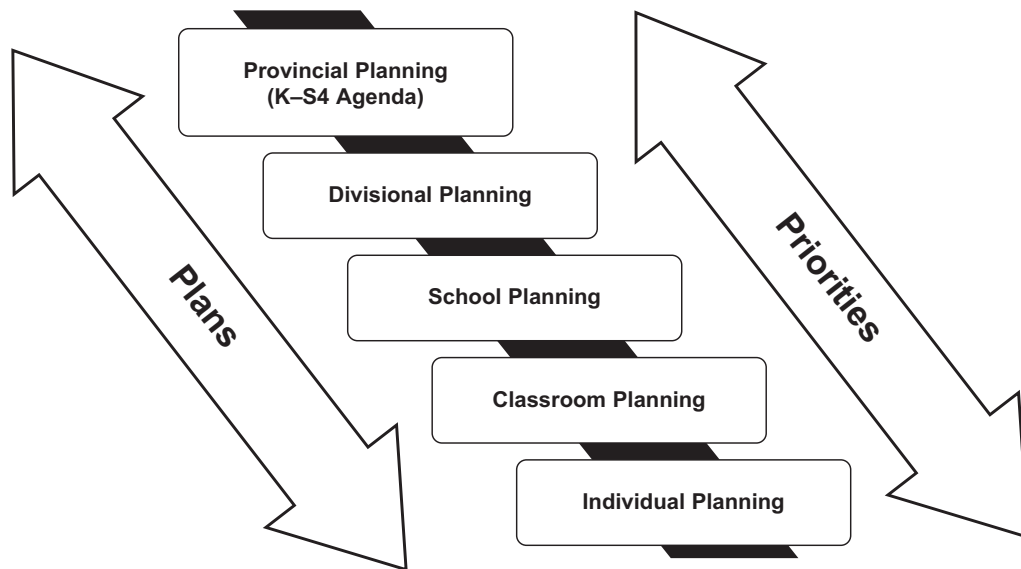
Providing a continuum of supports and services is essential for inclusive schools.



Creating a seamless continuum of supports and services to meet the unique needs of all Manitoba students requires effective planning at all levels. Student, classroom, divisional, and provincial profiles inform the planning process for the continuum of support and services. Planning for inclusive schools requires a focus on the needs of all students, especially those with special and/or unique needs. *Supporting Inclusive Schools* is a useful resource for schools developing an effective system of support and services to meet the needs of all children.

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth conducts an annual provincial sample of Annual School and Division Plans to ascertain the depth and breadth of planning across the province. The School Planning Report provides essential information related to planning processes. It does not provide the detail and context required to get a full sense of the factors affecting schools across the province.

Figure 3: Multi-Level Planning



Further Reading

Conzemius, A. and J. O'Neill. *Building Shared Responsibility for Student Learning*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2001.

McLeskey, J. and N. Waldron. *Inclusive Schools in Action: Making Differences Ordinary*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2001.

Wells, Gordon (ed.). *Changing Schools from Within: Creating Communities of Inquiry*. Toronto, ON: OISE Press Inc., 1993.

