

# Student Achievement Reporting to the Board

## Author

Stuart Priddy  
Principal, Loburn School  
Sabbatical Leave taken Term 2 2010

## Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the support of the Loburn School Board of Trustees in approving my leave. The opportunity to take time away from school allowed me to reflect about issues of schooling away from the everyday disruptions of the workplace.

I have been the principal of Loburn for 7 ½ years and in that time have seen our roll grow from 89 to close to 170 students.

The focus of the study undertaken was to analyse how schools report to their boards on student achievement, specifically annual target reporting. The schools I have been associated with have had quite specific guidelines on the reporting process, right from the setting of the targets to the analysis and the presentation to the board. The teaching staff have had a very hands on role to play in this process, and although requiring considerable time on their part, has resulted in teachers being more reflective and critical with regard to their teaching.

I wanted to see how other schools worked through this process and get a feeling of what worked and whether it had a direct bearing on student achievement.

As well as asking principals to complete a survey I also required them to send me copies of their 2009 end of year reviews and their 2010 annual plans. I surveyed up to thirty schools and received completed replies from thirteen schools.

The table below is the full summary of the completed surveys. Of the schools that responded there was a 50 / 50 split of urban to rural schools and the same split of schools with rolls less than 200 to those greater than 200.

## Summary

- In terms of the reviews themselves. Most of the action plans had a similar template that focussed on the target, the historical position and the steps needed to achieve the target.
- Most schools had very measurable targets, especially those around mathematics and English. However, targets focussed on writing used a variety of assessments, mostly based on professional judgement rather than any one assessment tool.
- Assessment tools included: Numpa, STAR, PM Benchmarks, Probe, PAT and asTTle. Most used the assessment criteria attached to that tool in their target. ie: moving a stanine in STAR or a sub-level in asTTle.
- There was a wide variety of information that was included in the end of year target reviews presented to the BoT. Some reports contained brief summaries others contained a number of graphs and tables. A few tracked data from previous years to compare data. Most only dealt with current year data.
- In terms of who prepares, analyses and writes the targets / reports. It is varied amongst the schools surveyed. Most schools had teachers involved in target setting, although teachers at some schools had no idea of the targets and therefore had little or no input into the reviews. In at least half of the schools the teachers did not have input into the writing of the reports.

Interesting to note that in response to the question regarding whether teachers saw the benefit of target setting, most principals saw that teachers had a better understanding now. Some mentioned that since teachers have had more direct involvement they now see the benefits in setting achievement targets.

- Other thoughts.

What do schools present to the BoT: ie an executive summary or the full report?

## Student Achievement Reporting to BoT Questionnaire 2010 Summary

How many targets do you set each year?

	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E	School F	School G	School H	School I	School J	School K	School L	School M
Schoolwide			2	3 - 5	1	2	1	2-3		1		3	2-3
Class	4 (1 per syndicate)	2-3 (syndicate based)		1	1		2		4	3	6	6	>5

What curriculum area do the targets relate to? (2 year period)

	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E	School F	School G	School H	School I	School J	School K	School L	School M
Mathematics		2	1	2	1	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	1
English	4	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	3	3	3
Science													
Social sciences													
Technology													
PE and health		1		1						1			
Maori achievement			3	2					2			2	2
Other (please state)			Special character	Behaviour Key competency						Visual Arts		Attendance and punctuality	

What is the role of the principal in?

Target setting	<p>In conjunction with the Literacy and Numeracy leaders, my Associate Principals. Shared with curriculum leader (but usually the initiator)</p> <p>Work with staff with data we have to decide on target, in line with strategic plan and PD focus.</p> <p>Leading discussion/direction with Teachers and BOT</p> <p>Major role</p> <p>Sets targets</p> <p>Selects the focus curriculum area with the syndicate leaders</p> <p>Developing and drafting</p>
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	<p>Leadership team including principal</p> <p>Work with senior staff in first instance to consider ongoing achievement data. Literacy targets are then developed by the Literacy Leader and discussed firstly with senior management and then input from staff.</p> <p>Mathematics targets will be developed by the principal and discussed with senior staff and then all teaching staff.</p> <p>Other curriculum areas the teacher with responsibility in that area works closely with the principal</p> <p>The specific targets are set by syndicates or classes. I support them to ensure the targets are reflective of school direction.</p> <p>Initiating and drafting targets, consulting with staff and BOT, monitoring progress towards targets</p>
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Analysis of data	<p>I read the analysis prepared for me</p> <p>Shared with curriculum leader</p> <p>With the staff</p> <p>Principal performs analysis independently</p> <p>Major role</p> <p>With staff</p> <p>Reviews what the syndicate leaders write</p> <p>Assisting group to analyse data.</p> <p>Principal &amp; DP</p> <p>Initial analysis completed by principal – then discussed with senior management and staff</p> <p>Full analysis with staff</p> <p>In consultation with staff</p>
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Writing of reports	<p>Completed by Associate Principals and summarised by Principal</p> <p>Shared with curriculum leader</p> <p>With unit holder if relevant and staff</p> <p>Write reports independently, amends after discussion with teachers and BOT</p> <p>Major role</p> <p>Most of the time but additions from staff when required</p> <p>Reviews what the syndicate leaders write</p> <p>Principal collates findings and writes report</p> <p>Principal &amp; DP</p> <p>Principal and/or teacher responsible</p> <p>The teachers write the reports. I read them and ask critical questions to clarify reports.</p> <p>I write these in discussion with senior staff</p>
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Presentation to board	<p>By Principal and Associate principals</p> <p>Full responsibility</p> <p>Principal</p> <p>Principal presents to BOT</p> <p>Major role</p> <p>Principal and staff rep</p> <p>Helps the DP report to the Board</p> <p>Sometimes lead and sometimes support</p> <p>Principal &amp; DP</p> <p>Principal and/or teacher responsible</p> <p>Support syndicate leaders in presentation</p> <p>I present this data to BOT with curriculum leaders</p>
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## What is the role of the teacher or teachers in?

Target setting	<p>Class targets in Literacy for 2010          Shared with curriculum principal          Guided by Principal, teachers have major say in specifics of each target providing data-discussion on what targets would address data          Review of target and discussion          Teacher in syndicates discuss and identify target together          Teachers have input into drafting          Comes from classroom data          Syndicates decide on targets based on beginning of year data or trends from previous year.          Teachers have input into school-wide goals via our strategic planning process.          Class and group goals are set individually or in syndicates</p>
Analysis of data	<p>At class level in 2010 in Literacy          Shared with curriculum principal          Involved in discussion stage          A little          Done together so we all see picture          Collect own student's data and pass on to syndicate leaders          Gathering and initial analysis is done by teachers and then team leaders          Nil          Fully analysed by teachers and syndicates          Teachers analyse data within syndicates. School-wide data is discussed at staff meetings</p>
Writing of reports	<p>Could be involved in recommendations in A of V for 2010          Shared with curriculum principal. (Responsible for first draft. Responsible for mid-year review/update.)          None          None          Read and review          Most only syndicate leaders who write reports          Minimal input          Nil          Write the individual target reports          Not generally</p>
Presentation to board	<p>No          No responsibility          None          None          Not usually unless focussed on certain area of curriculum          Mostly only DP and Principal who present to board          Curriculum Personnel report on individual curriculum areas          Nil          Syndicate leaders present report          Teachers present class reports to BOT once a year</p>

How worthwhile do you believe student target setting is to the achievement of your students?

Probably has made little difference to students. They probably don't even know they have been set. Has the positive advantage of focusing attention for teachers and principal. It also means there is priority money, staffing and resourcing allocated to this area.

The targets allow clear priorities to be established.

Keeps us focussed – by reviewing mid year it ensures that we are on focus – gives the chance to change if needed.

Vital

Very worthwhile - teacher awareness of school wide trends and curriculum needs can be directly linked to class descriptions and impact on planning and teaching

Gives the school a focus, a must do.

Can create a focus with the staff that can lift achievement. So yes I think it is worthwhile

I think the target setting can be worthwhile, if it is a school-wide approach in a focus learning area, with a well thought out area of identified need.

I feel that it is a very sound way of monitoring how effective systems are in the school.

The process of what? – How? – Did we? – Next step? Is easy to follow using the data.

I think we, as a school, have become better at formulating targets based on reliable student achievement data. Having a focus is beneficial, particularly when the focus is school-wide.

Research shows that professional development is most effective when it is delivered school-wide. I am now inclined to think that student achievement targets are the same. When we are all moving in the same direction as a staff, and focused on the same targets, I believe the greatest benefit for the students will emerge.

There is an expectation that achievement data will influence programmes of work.

All teachers are made aware of the implications of the achievement data for their class through on going professional discussions.

Modifications to programmes of work and ongoing teacher professional learning are associated with the improvement of achievement for children

A school picture of achievement in numeracy and literacy is shared and discussed with staff.

Outcomes are reviewed on a regular basis with associated professional discussions.

Staff development is focused on target areas as well as other identified areas of need.

We use the above process. It has resulted in improved student achievement and progress as well as the development of effective pedagogy of teaching and learning across the school.

It enables us to focus on specific areas of weaknesses either in classes or across the school. Helps us to target PD or resources to the areas needed. Yes, directly it benefits the students.

I think school-wide targets are useful for student achievement as they allow us to focus on specific areas of need and they guide our decisions around resourcing of PD etc.

Class, group and individual targets are an integral part of our learning programmes; very much tied in with thinking skills, Key Competencies etc.

Do the staff see the student target process setting as directly effecting student achievement?

I think they do. It is a pretty prescribed process, has formal templates for them to use so makes it easier for them. It enables them to target groups of children or areas of need.

Not the targets as such. (We are too concerned on meeting the target.) But the staff see the impact a target has on priority and resourcing. They see some positive benefits.

Yes – and as part of raising teaching performance

I hope so! The data is shared with staff and a direct link made to new targets and PD.

They do now. In the past they were unaware of what the targets actually were.

No. Need more PD and more discussion. National Standards will develop this.

Yes, I have not had in depth discussions however they see the link between goals setting and achievement.

I think they are beginning to see how it can effect student achievement, as they have been a part of the process more in the last couple of years. They have a shared team commitment to trying to get the children's achievement up to the level set in the target.

Yes and we ensure that this is a clear and open process that the staff have input into. They do see the purpose.

Yes they do but they need constant reminding what the targets are. I usually link the targets and their intentions into the performance management system.

Yes I believe so – the process is detailed above.

All assessment informs teaching and learning in some way.

Yes, but only as part of a total teaching and learning package. The results we have collated would indicate that as a result of targets, most in the target group are making significant improvements.

There would be one/two students each year who do not show direct shift, related to the targets, but do show shift in other areas.

Yes, supported by evidence.

What aspect of the process do the board see as important? Why?

Our BoT sees the whole process as very important. They get updates at every meeting and full reports three times a year. They would like more of a summary rather than each report.

Very little feedback. Generally reassured that the school is looking at the data, achievement levels and taking the initiative. They don't engage too heavily in the specifics of the target or the results.

They take a real interest and pride too, when we present results. They also understand that if we have the data to prove a need, they are to ensure that we have the resources to do so.

Data sharing mainly because they want to know if all the PD/ learning support has made a difference

BOT likes to see school wide trends, especially in numeracy and literacy - see where the needs are to ensure funding/support can be directed into these areas.

Getting the reports to give them information on the student achievement.

Reaching targets and how we get there however they have always supported the PD to increase teacher knowledge and outcomes for students.

The analysis of variance – being able to see the level of movement the children made, and the process we use of linking the target to our PD focus area, and teacher appraisal focus.

The various data presented to them allows them to govern the school and make clear decisions in response to identified need.

The board are keen to know whether there are any student achievement deficiencies from our assessment information. This data then provides a vehicle for extra funding and/or resources. The board sees the full report at the end of the year as very important to see how well we have met our targets.

The BOT see both the initial and final achievement data when this is reported around targets in term 4.

There is also ongoing reporting of curriculum areas as per the reporting schedule in the charter.

The above is expected by the BOT to ensure that they are assured about teaching and learning in the school.

The BoT see all aspects of this process as valuable and appreciate the information, which allows them to act as informed governors of the school. They are provided with clear documentation on all aspects of student achievement.

The board values the process as evidence that we are going about our business in a reflective, considered way. They really value the reports on student achievement, which we have made the major focus of our board meetings. The board also values reports from staff about class programmes and achievement.

How much of the reporting do you share with your parent community?

Not enough. Our reports are very comprehensive and are class based so hard to give community big picture. They are however in the BoT minutes so can be seen. I publish the annual report. We report a range of curriculum information in our Annual Report. Student achievement targets form just one of many end of year reviews.

All of it – through the newsletter and end of year concert report. Then publish in a booklet and is readily available at front office.

A summary report goes in the newsletter and a full report is at the office.

Pretty much all that is shared with the BOT is then shared with the community.

Some

Aspects of the results however the whole report is available as part of BOT minutes.

Generally not much on the student achievement targets. Because they are often set specifically for a small group of children I usually just write up in the newsletter that they have been presented to the board. Other achievement data, such as asTTle results are shared more fully with the parent community.

A majority! It is important to keep them in the ‘loop’. This eliminates the ‘surprises’ element that can be damaging to the atmosphere surrounding the school.

It is mentioned in the school newsletter and full reports are placed on our school’s website for parents to download and read.

The parent community are clearly informed about our programmes of work. If a parent wishes to speak with the classroom teacher about progress and achievement they are welcome to do this about their individual child at any time

A summarised version of data and analysis is shared with the community. This aspect is not always easy to achieve, if the target groups are small in number. Again, they appreciate being informed.

Annual charter, including analyses of variance, is available via our website. Other school-wide achievement data is shared with parents via newsletters from time to time.