



Ministry of Education

POLICY IN
SCHOOLS INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

POLICY ADVISER: Research and Development

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1.0 POLICY OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework that will enhance and facilitate an effective, efficient and timely data collection from schools and reporting to the Ministry of Education and all stakeholders throughout Fiji.

2.0 POLICY

- 2.1 The information collected from schools will be done in an efficient and timely manner in order to minimise the impact on school staff and to maximise their attention to the learning needs of their students.
- 2.2 All information required by the Ministry of Education from schools is to be coordinated through Research and Development Section. The only exception is where specific information is required from *a particular* school and *is not* available on the Schools Information Management System Data Base.
- 2.3 Research and Development Section will send questionnaires (School Returns) to schools twice per year.
 - The first questionnaire (SIMS 1) to be in schools for the start of each school year is designed to gain information for all Sections of the Ministry of Education which is essential for ensuring a smooth operation of schools from early in the school year. The completion of this form is to be one of the requirements prior to first term grants being despatched to the school.
 - The second questionnaire (SIMS 2), to be in schools for the start of Term 2, is to confirm student numbers and seek information essential for the Ministry of Education, but is not needed for the beginning of the school year. The completion of this form to be one of the requirements prior to second term grants being despatched to the school.
- 2.4 Any Section within the Ministry of Education wishing to survey all schools to collect information, must have the specific approval of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and in consultation with the Principal Education Officer (PEO) Research and Development.
- 2.5 All senior staff and their assistants will be provided with training on how to extract information, standard and needs basis reports from the Schools Information Management System Data Base.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Definition of a Corporate Information System

A Corporate Information System is an organised set of information that simultaneously meets a range of the organisations needs and is accessible to all levels of the organisation. The uses of a Corporate Information System include:

- To report regularly, and on a needs basis, to Government on its major policy objectives and performance indicators for Education.
- To report to Government, through the Ministry of Education Annual Report on a range of indicators.
- To provide information to Ministry of Education Management to enable them to carry out their operational work effectively and efficiently.
- To provide information to Ministry of Education Management¹ to assist with decision making and planning for the future planning.
- To provide information to schools to assist with their decision making and planning.

3.2 Introduction/Rationale

The Ministry of Education, through the Research and Development Section is required to provide information for the regular reporting requirements of the organisation and on a needs basis, such as parliamentary questions.

The documents that outline and require regular performance reporting include:

- National Strategic Development Plan
- Social Justice Act (2001)
- Ministry of Education Strategic Plan
- Department of Finance Quarterly Report
- Ministry of Planning Quarterly Report
- Ministry of Education Annual Report
- Donor Reports

The Ministry of Education acquires and stores a huge amount of information. The information in the past has been collected by various sections and stored in hard-copy form or in a variety of databases within the various sections of the Ministry. There was significant duplication of information collected that contributed negatively to work loads of school, district and Central Office staff.

A single corporate information system was developed and then enhanced to store most required data (the School Information Management System -

SIMS). Previously the information was held in a database within the Research and Development area with only two officers having access and they were burdened with every query. Most senior officers in Central, Divisional and District offices now have access to SIMS via GovNet and can generate their own queries and reports at their desktop.

SIMS has been enhanced to provide reports of all key performance indicators required by Government at the touch of a button through standard reports within the SIMS database.

4.0 Relevant Legislation, Policies and Other Links

- Information – Security and Access Policy
- Equity and Access Policy (under construction)
- Capital Grants Policy (under construction)
- Staffing Policy (under construction)
- External Examinations Policy
- Information Technology Centre (ITC) Govnet Policy
- National Strategic Development Plan 2005 to 2007
- Ministry of Education Strategic Plan 2006 - 2008
- Ministry of Finance Quarterly Report
- Ministry of Planning Quarterly Report
- Ministry of Education Annual Report
- Donor Reports

Relevant Legislation or Authority

- Social Justice Act (2001)
- Education Act (1978)
- Information Act
- Public Service Act, 1999
Part 2, Section 6 (1) – (14) Public Service Code of Conduct

5.0 PROCEDURES

5.1 Collection of Corporate Information from Schools

- 5.1.1 Collection of corporate information from schools shall be done in an efficient and timely manner and responsible officers are required to see that the process does not affect teaching time in schools.
- 5.1.2 The school heads (Head teachers and Principals) shall ensure that information from their schools is complete and of high quality and is received on or well before the due dates. School Committee.
- 5.1.3 Submission of information on school finance shall be provided to the school head by the School Management at least one week before the due date.
- 5.1.4 All primary schools' Schools Information System Survey Forms shall be submitted to their district education offices. Data from the Forms would be entered in their respective education districts before its onward transmission to the Research and Development Section.
- 5.1.5 All secondary schools Schools Information System Survey Forms shall be submitted to the Secondary Section. After the data entry at the Secondary Section, it would be transmitted to Research and Development Section.
- 5.1.6 Any person found to be hindering or preventing the flow of information shall be in breach of the Public Sector Code of Conduct.

5.2 Corporate Information and the Ministry of Education

- 5.2.1 The section in the Ministry of Education that is authorised to collect corporate information from schools shall be the Research and Development Section.
- 5.2.2 The only exception is when sections may collect information from schools where specific information is required from a particular school and is not available on the Ministry of Education Corporate Information data base through the approval of CEO.
- 5.2.3 Information that is **not collected** by the Corporate Information System can include the following:
 - 5.2.3.1 Details on individual staff members such as leave, payment of salary, special medical requirements etc.

5.2.3.2 Individual school purchase orders

5.2.3.3 Specific information about the coverage of syllabus, required by CDU for monitoring and advisory visits.

5.2.3.4 Lists of students names of the students attending a particular school.

5.2.3.5 List of individual students applying to sit for an external examination List of individual students results on the examinations.

5.3 School Survey Forms and Durations

5.3.1 The Research and Development Section shall distribute the Schools Information System Survey Forms twice in an academic year. SIMS 1 prior to the beginning of the school year and SIMS 2 prior to the beginning of Term 2.

5.3.2 Both survey forms shall be prepared and distributed by the Research and Development Section and despatched to schools **on or well before** the required times.

5.3.3 The **first lot** of survey forms shall be due in the relevant District Office or Secondary Section no later than the Friday of the third week of Term One.

5.3.4 Receipt of the schools fully completed first lots of survey forms at the Research and Development Section shall be one of the requirements prior to the Second Term grants being released to schools.

5.3.5 The **second lot** of survey forms shall be in the relevant District Education Office or Secondary Section no later than the Friday of the third week of Term Two

5.3.6 Receipt of the schools fully completed second lots of survey forms at the Research and Development Section shall be one of the requirements prior to the Third Term grants being released to schools.

5.4 Approval To Survey Schools

5.4.1 Approval of the Chief Executive Officer [Education] shall be sought by any section of the Ministry of Education before collecting information from schools. This shall be done in

consultation with the Principal Education Officer [PEO] at Research and Development Section.

5.5 The Ministry Of Education Corporate Information Data Base

- 5.5.1 The Research and Development Section of the Ministry of Education shall be responsible for the timely updating of the Ministry's Corporate Information Data Base and printing of the survey forms to be sent to schools. This should be done efficiently and timely each year so as not to affect the deadlines already set out in this policy.
- 5.5.2 All senior staff and their assistants will be provided with training on how to extract information, standard and needs basis reports from the Schools Information System Data Base.
- 5.5.3 Ancillary staff whose role is to input raw data into MOE Corporate Information System Data Base in the District Offices shall be provided training on how to extract information and generate reports from the Ministry of Education's Corporate Information Data Base.
- 5.5.4 Since the new Corporate Information Data Base will now be available at Divisional and District Offices in Fiji, all schools, districts, tikinas² and provincial queries in regard to Corporate Information shall be directed to their respective District Education Offices.
- 5.5.5 All responses extracted from MOE Corporate Information Data Base, shall be verified and authenticated by the Heads of Sections before submission.
- 5.5.6 All Parliamentary, Government and Non-Government agencies queries related to MOE Corporate Information Data Base shall be handled by the Research and Development Section. Responses to queries shall be authenticated by the Principal Education Officer [R&D] before submission

5.6 District Education Offices

- 5.6.1 Collection of all school surveys forms from their respective schools twice a year, completion of their data base input and forwarding them to the Research and Development Section of the Ministry.
- 5.6.2 The Research and Development Section of the Ministry of Education is responsible for receiving all completed database from

district offices each year before forwarding it back to district offices through CDs or on-line.

5.7 Information Technology Centre[ITC]

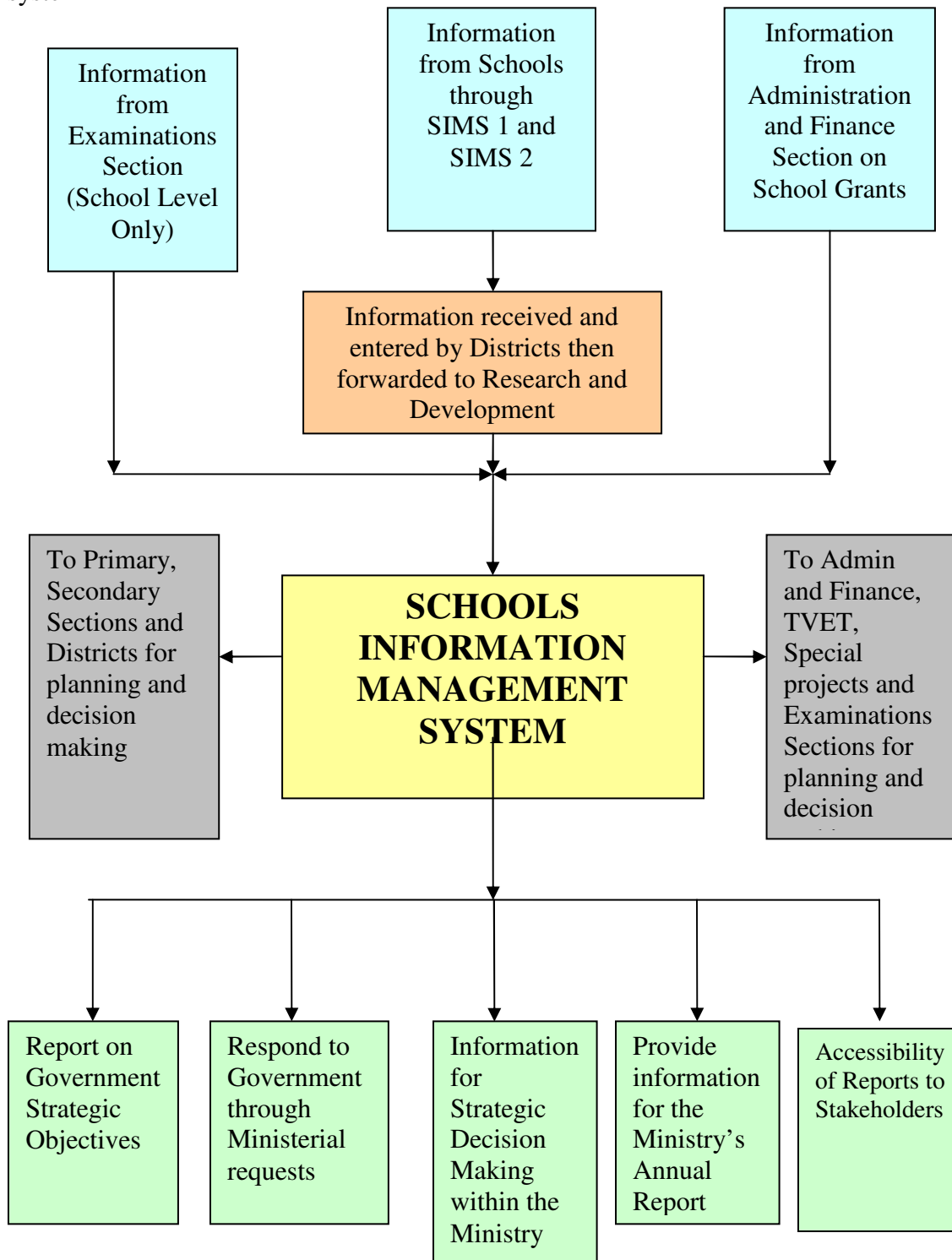
5.7.1 Under Purchase Agreement, Information Technology Centre [ITC] will provide permanent software and licences support and technical assistance where applicable.

6.0 GUIDELINES

6.1 Senior staff and their assistants at District Offices should be trained on how to extract information, standard and needs basis reports from the Schools Information System Data Base.

Appendix

Figure 1. Information Flow for the Schools Information Management system



7.0 EFFECTIVE DATE: 1 January 2006

8.0 REVIEW DATE: 1 January 2007

9.0 KEY SEARCH WORDS

Corporate Information System
Schools Information Management System
SIMS 1 and SIMS 2 Survey forms
SIMS

10.0 APPROVED BY CEO

SIGNATURE: _____

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: Senior Education Officer [Research]