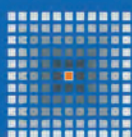


Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Education Action Plan 2010–2014

2011 Annual Report



SCSEEC

Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood

Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood
ACN 007 342 421
PO Box 202
Carlton South Victoria 3053

Tel: (03) 9639 0588
Fax: (03) 9639 1790
Email: enquiries@scseec.edu.au
Website: <http://www.scseec.edu.au>

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Front cover painting:

'This painting represents pathways to greater learning. The spiral is what life contributes, sometimes low, sometimes high. The result of persistence is the bloom, growth through learning. As a drop of water hits the surfaces the ripple effect is created, this is what is needed.'

Artist Bronwyn Bancroft: <http://www.bronwynbancroft.com>

'I have always supported the education system at primary, secondary and tertiary levels, and firmly believe that education for Indigenous people is imperative to our development and confidence. It allows us to participate with equity in an often inequitable society.'

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2011

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Education Action Plan 2010–14

2011 Annual Report

Executive summary

On 23 May 2011, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) endorsed the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014*. This endorsement provides the highest level of support across governments of the Plan.

On 9 June 2011, Australia's Education Ministers publicly launched the Plan, acknowledging the valuable feedback and input they received through the more than 100 submissions made in the public consultation process, as well as through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experts and other education stakeholders who provided advice in the development of the Plan.

Much of the foundation work associated with reporting arrangements and focus schools progressed in 2010 along with the commencement of many actions. This was discussed in the 2010 Annual Report. The 2011 academic year saw new activity across each of the domains, as well as the continuation of existing efforts of government and non-government education providers.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014 (the Plan) identifies 55 national, systemic and local level actions in six priority domains – readiness for school; engagement and connections; attendance; literacy and numeracy; leadership, quality teaching and workforce development; and pathways to real post-school options. Evidence suggests that activity in these areas will contribute to improving the educational outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

The priorities and actions outlined in the Plan will guide effort over the next five years. In addition to the actions nominated for each level, the Plan details the desired outcomes, as well as targets and performance indicators for each of the domains. Progress over the 2011 academic year against the targets, performance indicators and actions are examined in this annual report.

All parties to the Plan have agreed to a clear line of sight in reporting details of progress made against each action for which they have responsibility. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Working Group, on behalf of the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC), will ensure

that the report is compiled annually to record this progress.

This Annual Report will inform ministers with responsibility for education portfolios in their respective States and Territories, of progress towards achieving the desired outcomes, targets and performance indicators as set out in the Plan.

An annual national report for the Plan will be produced within 12 months of the end of the calendar year in scope. The report will be published on the SCSEEC website, at: <http://scseec.edu.au/>.

Readiness for school

Participation in culturally inclusive, high quality early education programs and care can assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to get the best start in life.

In 2011, there were 10,167 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander four and five year-old children enrolled in preschool programs across Australia. The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in preschool programs was 75.7 per cent, only slightly below the proportion of All children at 80.8 per cent (see Table 1 in Chapter 3: National overview of progress under the Plan).

The Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) worked with all States and Territories on the development of a national Early Years Workforce Strategy. This strategy will complement and build upon existing Australian Government and State and Territory government measures aimed at building a qualified and sustainable early childhood workforce.

The Early Years Learning Framework, together with a Families' Guide, was first disseminated to early childhood services across Australia in October 2009. States and Territories, and other peak bodies conducted professional development activities on the Early Years Learning Framework in 2011.

Examples of systemic/local level action in 2011 include:

- The New South Wales Department of Education and Communities contributed to the development of community maps that charted the locations of early childhood programs,

resources and assets; arranged community forums to increase awareness of AEDI results and to strengthen relationships between service providers; and assisted in the development of community initiatives in a range of fields such as parental support, early years English literacy, gross and fine motor development and nutrition.

- Launching into Learning (LiL) is an evidenced-based early childhood initiative from the Tasmanian Department of Education that recognises the importance of learning and development in the early years of life. LiL aims to provide children with the best possible start in life. The philosophy of LiL is to support caregivers as their child's first, ongoing and often most influential teachers. A key focus of the program is home visits. This involves engaging with families and providing a range of resources to support and enhance early English literacy and numeracy skills, as well as providing a strong cultural context for learning through cultural practices.

Engagement and connections

Schools and early childhood education providers that work in partnership with families and communities can better support the education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. The involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at all levels of educational decision-making builds connections, contributing to a positive impact on educational outcomes.

The First Peoples Education Advisory Group, established on 5 December 2011, is a cross-sectoral expert advisory committee that provides policy advice to the Australian Government on Closing the Gap in educational outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in early childhood education and school settings. The Advisory Group includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives from academia, school education, early childhood education and community organisations.

The Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies (IECBs) provide an important link between the Australian Government and State and Territory governments on Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander issues across education sectors including: early childhood; primary and secondary schooling; vocational education and training; and government and non-government education providers.

Education, Health and Community Services portfolio officials from each State and Territory and the Australian Government met during 2011 to develop a proposal to improve connections across sectors. This proposal seeks to use arrangements established under the National Indigenous Reform Agreement to initially target collaboration around three priority areas, which have been slightly refined since the 2010 meeting: Otitis Media (and related speech and language delay issues); supporting young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and caregivers; and early childhood education – connection of services at a local level.

Examples of systemic/local level action in 2011 include:

- The Western Australian Department of Education and Training established a Pregnant and Parenting Young People Working Party to assist schools to support pregnant or parenting students. Advice was sought from a variety of stakeholders including: Centrelink; Curriculum Council; Department of Communities; Department of Health; existing service providers; King Edward Memorial Hospital and registered training organisations. The draft document, *Supporting Pregnant and Parenting Young People To Continue With Their Education* was the accumulation of this work.
- The Victorian government school sector, through its Wannik Strategy, has in place a statewide specialist Koorie Education Workforce to develop and implement outreach strategies. Koorie Education Co-ordinators (KECs) and Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESOs) provide culturally appropriate community engagement activities and referrals. This includes support for at-risk young people, such as Koorie students who are pregnant or parents. The Victorian Catholic sector also employs Koorie Education Workers to support student and family engagement.
- The Northern Territory government and the Australian Government have partnered for the Families as First Teachers (FaFT) programs in the 21 Territory Growth Towns. The program is a key strategy of the Northern Territory

Department of Education and Training's Early Years focus. Professional and local staff work in communities to develop and deliver place-based programs aimed at giving children the best start in life. FaFT staff work in collaboration with health, education, child protection and other community organisations to provide culturally appropriate service models. Primary strategies of the program include: dual generational playgroups; parent workshops; books in homes; parent coaching and transition to preschool programs. The Families as First Teachers program is currently implementing the Abecedarian Approach strategies of Conversational Reading and Learning Games alongside the Early Years Learning Framework.

Attendance

Attending school and engaging with learning is fundamentally important in helping young Australians to acquire the skills they need for life.

In 2011, the largest difference between the attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in government schools was 27 percentage points in Year 9, in the Northern Territory. In the independent and Catholic sectors, the largest differences were also in the Northern Territory for Year 2 students at 29 percentage points in independent schools, and Year 10 students at 32 percentage points in Catholic schools.

The Evidence Base Project is funded from the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) National Project Fund and is phase one of a two-phase project. Phase one is an environmental scan of effective attendance policies and programs through literature reviews and stakeholder consultations, which will inform the development of a searchable online evidence base of successful strategies in phase two.

Examples of systemic/local level action in 2011 include:

- Most jurisdictions have targeted programs and strategies aimed at improving attendance, such as: It's Not Ok To Be Away (Victoria), Every Child Every Day (Northern Territory) and Every Day Counts (Queensland).

- Aboriginal Turn Around Teams have been developed in four regions of South Australia: Northern Adelaide Region, Eyre and Western Region, Far North region and the Western Adelaide region. The Aboriginal Turn Around Team provides intensive intervention and case management service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at high risk and who are most disengaged from education.
- To improve student attendance, the Queensland Department of Education and Training developed a Connectedness gauge. The Connectedness gauge is a tool to promote a close relationship between the school population, the teaching staff and the local community. The Connectedness gauge shares responsibility between school and family, and seeks to put the student and family at the centre of the school, and school at the centre of the community.

Literacy and numeracy

Mastering the basics of English literacy and numeracy is essential to participation in contemporary Australian society. Ensuring young Australians achieve and go beyond these basics is one of the most effective ways of enabling their participation and broadening their life choices and options.

The 2011 NAPLAN results show that the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard ranged from 55 per cent in Year 9 writing, to 84 per cent in Year 3 numeracy. Outcomes for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students ranged from 86 per cent in Year 9 writing to 96 per cent in Year 3 numeracy.

Since 2010, the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who are achieving at or above the national minimum standard increased in seven of the eight comparable test areas. The largest increases from 2010 to 2011 were 7.0 percentage points for Year 3 numeracy and 7.7 percentage points for Year 9 reading. In 2011, six of the eight national trajectory targets (progress points) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were met. One of these was met only because the upper limit of the NAPLAN confidence interval exceeded the trajectory – Year 9 reading.

The Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) engaged with Education Services Australia (ESA) to develop a database of effective literacy and numeracy strategies. This database is the Teach Learn Share website which was launched on 21 November 2011, at: <http://www.teachlearnshare.gov.au/> (Action 28).

Examples of systemic/local level action in 2011 include:

- The Koorie Literacy Project is a cross-sectoral project operating across 20 selected government, independent and Catholic schools in the Gippsland and Loddon Mallee regions of Victoria. This project is an extension of a place-based application of Reading Recovery practices currently being used in Central Gippsland, and is funded by DEEWR through the Intensive Literacy and Numeracy Grants program. The target area for this intervention is the Gippsland area and Mildura. The aim of the project is to improve the outcomes of targeted Koorie students in Years 3, 5 and 7 who are at risk of not achieving reading outcomes.
- The Keys to Unlocking the Future initiative from South Australia's Department for Education and Child Development aims to improve English literacy outcomes for Reception to Year 3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by improving pedagogical practices, and by developing and implementing consistent whole-school literacy approaches. The program enhances the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents to support the literacy development of their children.

Leadership, quality teaching and workforce development

It's important that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are taught by high quality teachers in schools led by effective and supportive principals who are assisted by a world-class curriculum that incorporates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives.

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) National Professional Standards for Teachers is

driving reform. Jurisdictions have entered into collaborative partnerships to improve training and professional learning in schools.

The Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment is working with AITSL in the initial teacher education component of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education: Improving Teaching project. The objectives of the project are to contribute to the Plan by providing opportunities for all new and existing teachers, in accordance with the National Professional Standards for Teachers, to be adequately prepared to teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; and to understand and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and perspectives to promote reconciliation.

Under the nationally consistent system for the accreditation of initial teacher education programs, all teacher graduates must demonstrate that they meet the graduate level as outlined in the National Professional Standards for Teachers (the Standards) to obtain provisional registration as a teacher.

Examples from States and Territories in 2011 include:

- The Northern Territory Department of Education and Training has implemented a program of recruiting high performing teachers to remote schools. In addition, the Australian Government launched Teach Remote in June 2011. Teach Remote is the flagship initiative of the National Alliance for Remote Indigenous Schools. The Teach Remote program supports and connects teachers and leaders; providing a virtual and face-to-face network where staff can support each other and share the professional and personal complexities and challenges that are unique to life in a remote school.
- In partnership with the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities is currently implementing the Australian Government funded Connecting to Country initiative. At its heart, the initiative aims to enhance the capacity of principals and teachers to establish and maintain genuine, respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and communities and to plan, develop and implement culturally inclusive programs. Connecting to Country is being made available to staff in targeted schools.

Pathways to real post-school options

Successful education can lead to employment and economic independence and form the basis for intergenerational change by providing individuals with the skills to participate fully in society and work and determine their own futures.

While numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have increased over the past two decades, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to be under-represented in the higher education sector, across many indicators such as student access, participation and completion rates, and employment in universities. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' access and participation rates, and retention and success ratios for transitioning to university have been stable over the past decade. The gap in participation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students has widened, due to increasing participation by non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians over the same period.

Examples from States and Territories in 2011 include:

- In the Australian Capital Territory, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Aspirations Program continued to grow in 2011. The program was established in 2009 as an elective program that supports the successful completion of Year 12 and the transition to tertiary education for middle to high achieving students in Australian Capital Territory government schools. In 2011, 131 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students actively participated in the program. Students were selected based on their NAPLAN results and in consultation with school principals and families. The program offers a range of activities and experiences that are designed to enhance, engage and enrich each student's schooling life. From Year 5 to Year 10, students have the opportunity to explore tertiary institutions in the Australian Capital Territory through events, campus visits, enrichment programs and 'come and try' days. This is done in partnership with the Tjabal Centre at the Australian National University and the Ngunnawal Centre at the University of Canberra. In Years 11 and 12, students have the opportunity to participate on a three-day excursion

to visit Sydney or Melbourne universities. Support is also offered to assist students with university applications, scholarship applications and through liaison with university support centres around alternate entry programs.

- The Australian Capital Territory Education and Training Directorate offers five scholarships per year for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The scholarships total \$10,000 over Years 11 and 12, for students who are interested in studying teaching after completion of Year 12. In 2011, a total of ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students received scholarships: five in Year 11 and five in Year 12. In addition to the Year 11 and 12 scholarships, the Directorate awarded three scholarships totalling up to \$20,000 per year for students currently studying education at the University of Canberra and the Australian Catholic University (Signadou Campus).
- Secondary school principals throughout Queensland are the target of the Learn, Earn, Legend! Year 12 Destinations initiative. Indigenous Pathways Coordinators, in conjunction with school staff, update and utilise individual Senior Education and Training (SET) Plans as part of the case management process. The Learn, Earn, Legend! Year 12 Destinations initiative is designed to ensure that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Year 12 students successfully transition to further education, training and/or to meaningful employment. The initiative involves case management of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students throughout Year 12, and for a minimum of 26 weeks post schooling, a cross-sectoral approach, with regional place-based activities and State and regionally-based whole-of-government reference groups involving Australian and Queensland government agencies, the Queensland Indigenous Consultative Committee, tertiary, industry and sporting bodies.
- Follow the Dream: Partnerships for Success is a voluntary program in Western Australia that provides individualised after-school tuition, case management and support to high achieving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary school students. The program helped students to maximise their results at school, and achieve a successful transition into post-school university, training or employment opportunities.

2011 Annual Report for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014

Preamble

The National Education Agreement (NEA), a new funding framework for schools, came into effect on 1 January 2009. The NEA defines Australian Government, State and Territory roles and responsibilities, objectives, outcomes, performance benchmarks and indicators for reporting. The *Schools Assistance Act 2008* confirms funding for the non-government, Catholic and independent sectors and introduces the same transparency and accountability requirements that apply to government schools. Within this framework the government and non-government sectors are committed to support the reporting and evaluation activities within the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014*. The nature of the non-government sectors is such that they do not have authority to report nationally on behalf of their constituent members. The non-government sectors do not operate State and Territory, or national systems. They will bring their best endeavours to this task in collaboration with the relevant State and Territory governments.

Purpose

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014 (the Plan) identifies fifty-five national, systemic and local level actions in six priority domains that evidence shows will contribute to improved outcomes in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

All parties to the Plan have agreed to a clear line of sight in reporting details of progress made against each action for which they have responsibility.

The Plan requires that a report be compiled annually to record this progress. This Annual Report¹ will inform ministers, with responsibility for education portfolios in their respective States and Territories, of progress toward achieving the desired outcomes, targets and performance indicators as set out in the Plan. Each Annual Report will be published on the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) website, <http://scseec.edu.au/>.

Footnotes

¹ Where possible, this report uses 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' in preference to the term, 'Indigenous'. In some instances, particularly in labels for graphs and tables, the term 'Indigenous' has been included by the provider of the information and therefore, it is unable to be changed.

Chapter 2

Statistical picture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students in Australia

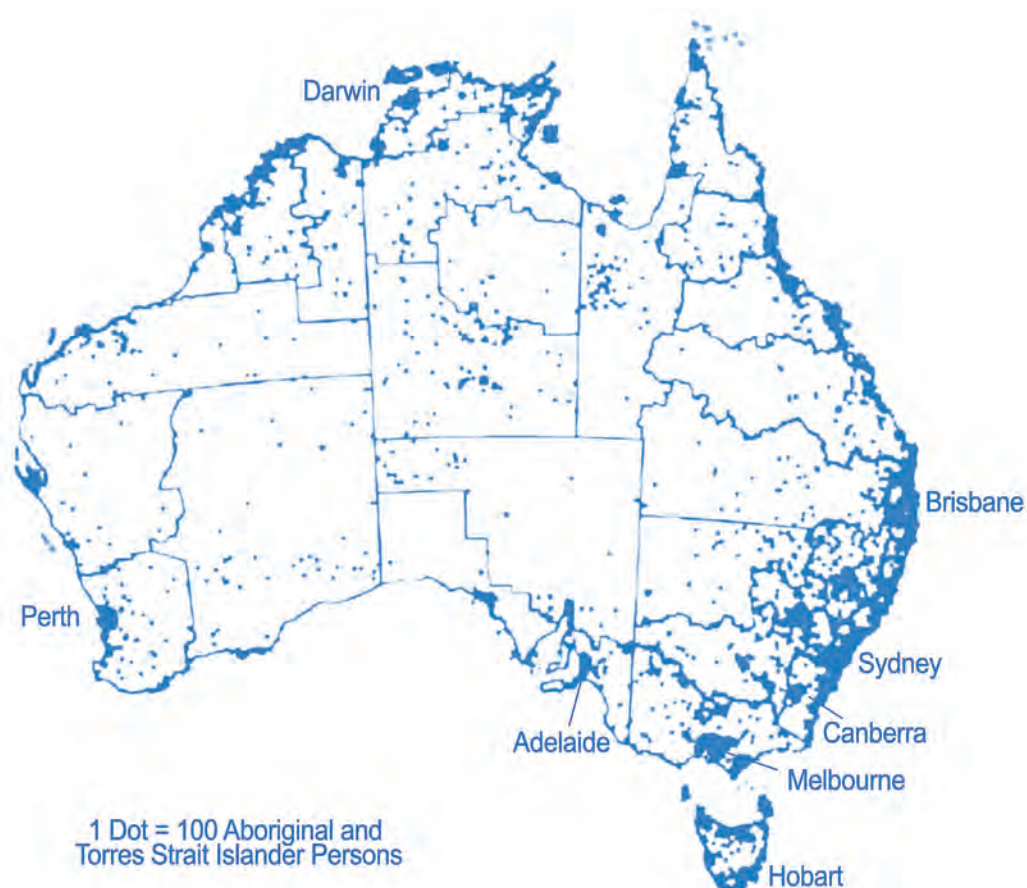
Statistical picture

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) reported that the estimated resident Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of Australia, as at 30 June 2006, was 517,000 people. This equates to 2.5 per cent of the total Australian population. The median age for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander population was reported as 21.0 years, compared to 37.0 years for the non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. For the 2006 Census report, the ABS mapped the distribution of people identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (as a percentage) by State and Territory, and provided information about the distribution of this population according to remoteness.

Population distribution

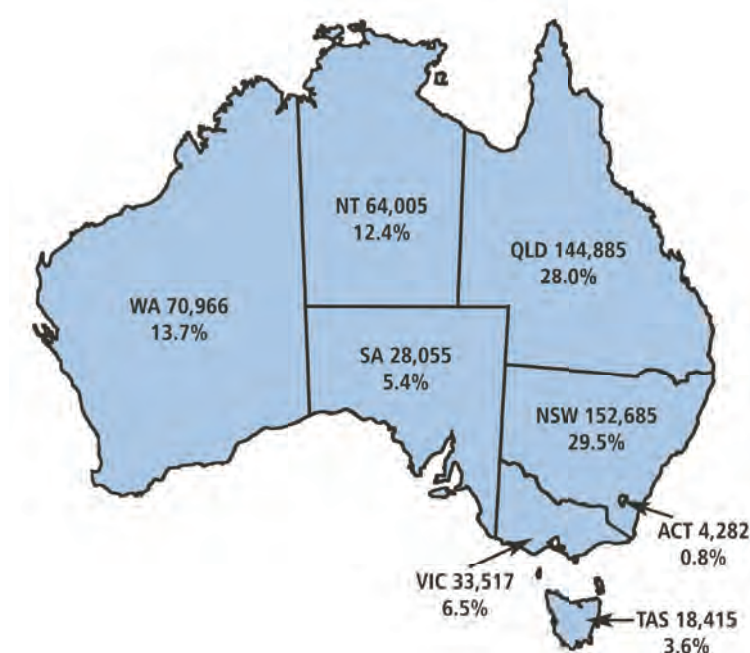
Figure 1: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population distribution, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Region Boundaries, 2006



Source: ABS, *Population Distribution, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 2006*, (Cat.No.4705.0), p.7, available online: [http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/377284127F903297CA25733700241AC0/\\$File/47050_2006.pdf](http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/377284127F903297CA25733700241AC0/$File/47050_2006.pdf)

Distribution by State/Territory 2006

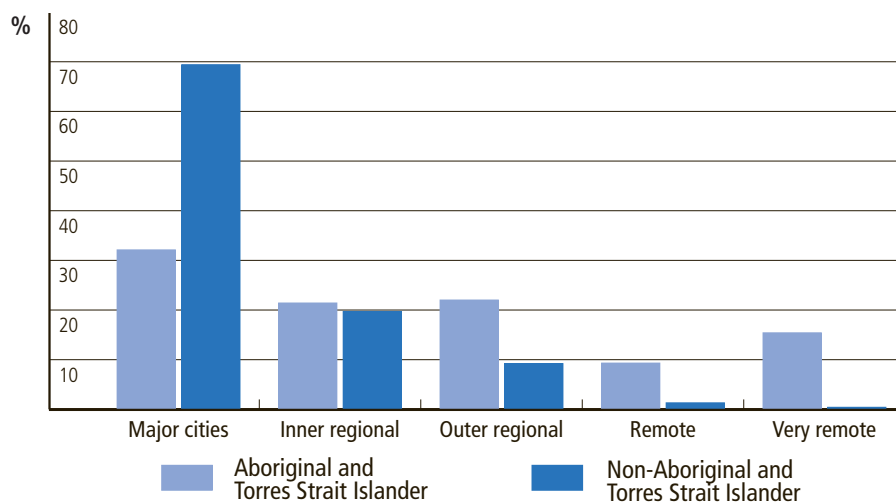
Figure 2: Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and percentage of total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, 2006



Source: ABS, *Experimental Estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians June 2006*, (Cat.No.3238.0.55.001) available online: <http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/c311215.nsf/web/Aboriginal+and+Torres+Strait+Islander+Peoples+-+Population>

Distribution by remoteness

Figure 3: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population distribution, by remoteness, as of 30 June 2006



Source: ABS, *Experimental Estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, June 2006*, available online: [http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3238.0.55.001Jun 2006?OpenDocument](http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3238.0.55.001Jun%2006?OpenDocument)

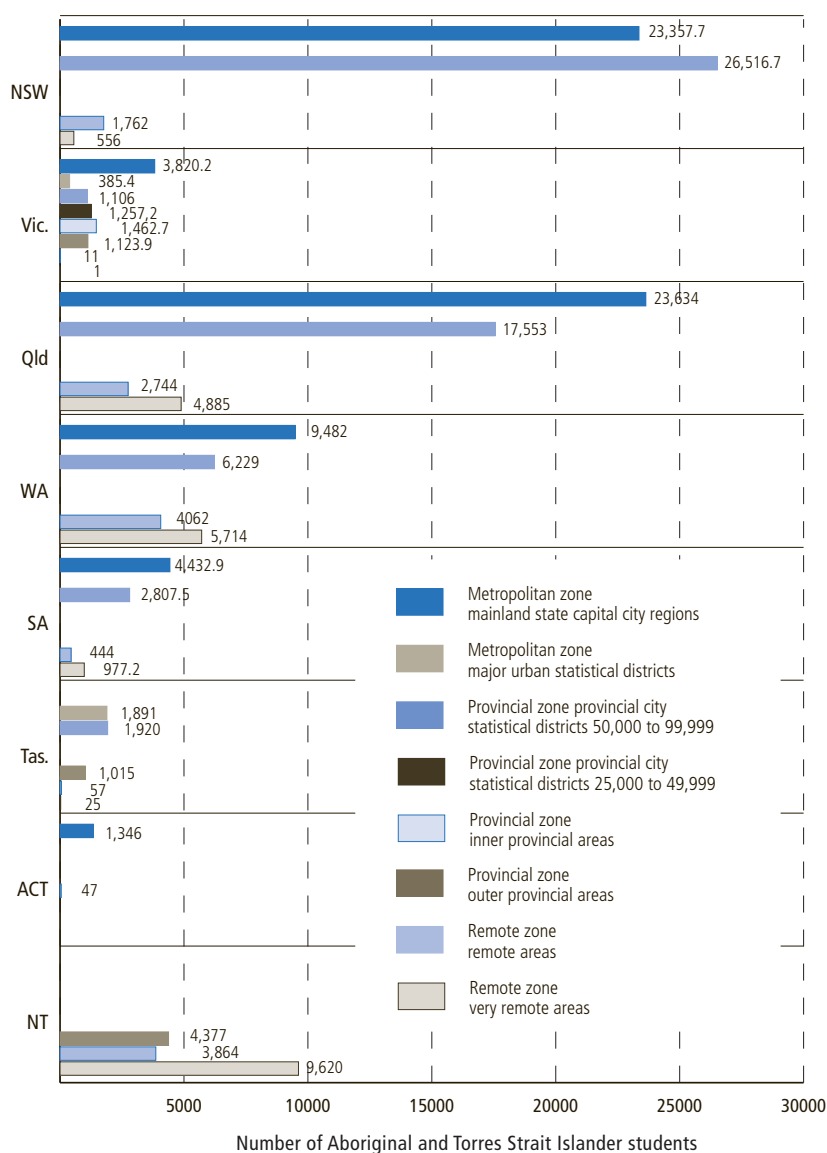
School information

Tables providing detailed information about the number of full-time and part-time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are available in [Table 42b](#) – Full-time and part-time students 2006–2011, from the ABS, *Schools Australia, 2011*, on the Australian Bureau of Statistics website. [Table 42b](#) includes a breakdown of student enrolments, showing numbers attending

government, Catholic and independent schools by level and year of schooling, and also gender.

The figure below shows the number of students enrolled in 2011, in each geolocation, by State and Territory.

Figure 4: Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled, by geolocation, by State and Territory, 2011



Source: State/Territory departments of education

Factors impacting on education

There are just over half a million Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia today, comprising 2.5 per cent of the Australian population.

Although many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians have a good standard of living, too many experience unacceptable levels of disadvantage in living standards, life expectancy, education, health and employment. Current data shows a significant gap in these critical areas between the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other populations. The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates for 2009 show life expectancy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians to be lower than the 'Other' population, by approximately 11.5 years for males, and 9.7 years for females. In the period 2002–2006, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children under five years of age died at around three times the rate of other children (305.2 compared with 102.4 deaths per 100,000). Approximately 83 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander deaths below age five occurred in the first year of life, and of these, nearly half occurred within the first month.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are less likely to participate in early childhood education than non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Without access to, and participation in, engaging, relevant preschool learning opportunities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are likely to be behind their peers from their first year of formal schooling, in some aspects of early language development and comprehension.

While most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in metropolitan and regional areas meet the minimum reading standard, the proportion achieving at least the minimum standard of literacy and numeracy skills decreases as the level of remoteness increases.

Australians who do not complete Year 12 are less likely to have the same opportunities as those who do. In 2006, Year 12 completions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians were 45.3 per cent, compared to 86.3 per cent for other Australians. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians also experience much higher levels of unemployment than other Australians.

At the time of the 2006 Census, around 48 per cent of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce-aged population was in employment. This compares to 72 per cent for other Australians – a gap of 24 percentage points.²

For individual State and Territory contexts please refer to the following section.

State and Territory contextual information

New South Wales

Over half of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in New South Wales (50.8 per cent) are enrolled in schools in provincial locations. A further 44.8 per cent of students are enrolled in schools in metropolitan locations, while 3.4 per cent are in schools in remote locations, and only 1.1 per cent in schools in very remote locations.

It is noteworthy that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments were spread over a large number of schools in New South Wales in 2011. Although Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students represented 4.6 per cent of the total students, these enrolments were distributed across 2,656 schools, which is more than 80 per cent of all schools in New South Wales. Moreover, 46.0 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in New South Wales are enrolled in schools in which they comprise less than 10 per cent of total student enrolments.

The New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated is the peak Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisation concerned with education and training in New South Wales. Throughout 2011, the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group worked collaboratively with sectors to implement the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014*.

Victoria

The Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population today is young and growing. In 2011, more than one in three Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians were under 15 years of age, and the median age was 22 years, compared to 37

years for the non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorian population.

The 2011 Census shows that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is growing more than two and a half times faster than the rest of the Victorian population, at nearly 5 per cent, and faster than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations in other jurisdictions (with the exception of the Australian Capital Territory). The increase may be driven by a combination of high birth rates and net migration to Victoria and some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians having the confidence to identify as Indigenous for the first time. Continued net migration increases reflect the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who move to Victoria for education and employment opportunities.

In 2011, there were around 37,991 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Victoria, which comprised 0.7 per cent of the total population. Of these, 46 per cent lived in metropolitan Melbourne and 53 per cent lived in regional Victoria. Unlike other jurisdictions, no areas in Victoria are classified as remote. Victoria's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population includes those connected to land in Victoria and those whose lands are elsewhere in Australia.

The population trends are evident in the strong growth in the Victorian school system, which had 10,625 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments in 2011, a growth of around 25 per cent since 2007. The majority of students were enrolled in the government system, comprising 9,184 students or 86.4 per cent. This compares to 1,441 enrolments in the non-government sector. Aligning with the overall national trend, the government school sector share in Victoria is declining relative to the Catholic and independent sectors, with a decrease from 89.2 per cent to 86.4 per cent between 2007 and 2011.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians have suffered disproportionately from historical policies that removed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their homes and families. Compared with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in other jurisdictions, 11.5 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians report having been removed from their natural family, compared with 7.0 per cent across the national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.³ Forty-seven per cent of Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents reported they had relatives removed from their family, compared to 37.6 per cent nationally.

Queensland

Queensland has a highly regional population with medium to large population centres along the east coast. Approximately half of the population lives in the south-east of the State. However, higher proportions of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people live outside the Brisbane capital city area.

The preliminary Queensland population estimates for 2011 indicate a total resident population of just under 4.5 million people, including just under 189,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, making up approximately 4.2 per cent of Queensland's population and approximately 28 per cent of the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. Approximately 40 per cent of the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population live in the Brisbane metropolitan area.

Schools

In 2011, there were 1,708 schools in Queensland, of which 72.4 per cent (1,237) were government schools and 27.6 per cent (471) were non-government schools. Of the 1,708 schools in Queensland in 2011, 1,152 (67.5 per cent) were primary schools, 251 (14.7 per cent) were secondary schools, 243 (14.2 per cent) were combined primary/secondary schools and 62 (3.6 per cent) were special schools.

Students

Queensland had approximately 733,652 full-time students attending schools in 2011, 20.8 per cent of the Australian total. Of these, 66.7 per cent attended Queensland government schools, and 33.3 per cent attended non-government schools. For the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student population, the proportion of government school enrolments was approximately 84.7 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, or 8.4 per cent of the overall government school student population.

In 2011, 48,865 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students attended Queensland schools full-time, comprising 41,405 in government schools, 4,431 in Catholic schools and 3,029 in independent schools. Of these:

- 48 per cent attended in metropolitan areas
- 36 per cent attended in provincial areas

- 6 per cent attended in remote areas, and
- 10 per cent attended in very remote areas.

Western Australia

Western Australia faces some unique challenges in closing the disadvantage gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander citizens. Western Australia has the third largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of all the States and Territories. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, there were approximately 69,665 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Western Australia in 2011. This equates to 3.1 per cent of the total State population, and 12.7 per cent of the total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in Australia.⁴ The State's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population has a young profile. Approximately 35.2 per cent of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community is under the age of 15 years. These population characteristics impact on the provision of services, particularly in the areas of prevention and early intervention during the early childhood and school years to improve health, wellbeing and life opportunities.

A greater proportion of Western Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population live in remote or very remote areas of the State. Based on the latest data available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the 2006 Census, it is estimated that 42 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Western Australians live in remote or very remote areas, and 34 per cent live in major cities. In the Perth metropolitan area, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are more likely to live in the least wealthy suburbs, with only 15 per cent of Perth's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population living in areas that have high socio-economic status.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Western Australia are characterised by variation in size, high population mobility, cultural and linguistic diversity, and remoteness.

Western Australia is second only to the Northern Territory in having a large proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in remote or very remote locations. There are more than 250 discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities dispersed across Western Australia. This is in addition to the many communities living within remote townships. The majority of discrete communities are classified as

very remote⁵, meaning that there is very little access to goods, services and economic opportunities for those living in these communities. A further implication is the problem of attracting and retaining service providers, such as health professionals, teachers, police, legal services and child protection workers, who have appropriate training to meet the specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in remote locations.

Adding to the impact of remoteness on service provision is the fact that over 60 per cent of these communities have a population of less than 50 people. These communities are spread throughout the Kimberley, Pilbara and Western Desert regions. The dispersal of a large number of communities with small populations makes it very difficult to address the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in these areas.

There are more than 60 Aboriginal language groups in Western Australia⁶ with approximately 14 per cent of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population speaking an Aboriginal language at home. The prevalence and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages means that extra measures, such as interpreting and translating services, are required to ensure equitable access to services.

There is also a complexity in service delivery within remote towns and communities, arising from the diverse cultural and linguistic 'mix' of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups within a town or the surrounding community. The varied characteristics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Western Australia are recognised as significant factors in the planning and delivery of effective services.⁷

South Australia

South Australia has a culturally diverse population, with medium to large population centres in the Adelaide metropolitan region, and at regional centres across the State. The estimated resident population for South Australia was 1,638,232 at the end of 2011, with 30,431 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, comprising 1.9 per cent of the total South Australian population. Nearly three-quarters of the total population live in Adelaide. However, just over half of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population live outside Adelaide, with a quarter living in the north of the State.

Schools

In August 2011, there were 752 schools in South Australia, of which, 74 per cent were government, and 26 per cent were non-government schools. Of the 752 schools in South Australia in 2011, 497 (66 per cent) were primary schools, 89 (12 per cent) were secondary schools, and 166 (22 per cent) were combined primary/secondary schools. There are approximately 417 schools in the Adelaide capital city area.

Students

South Australia had approximately 256,200 full-time students attending schools in 2011, 7.3 per cent of the Australian total. Of these, 64.0 per cent of South Australian students attended government schools and 36.0 per cent attended non-government schools. For the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student population, the proportion of government school enrolments was approximately 88.0 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, or approximately 5.3 per cent of the overall government student population.

In 2011, 9,794.6 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students attended South Australian schools. Of the 8,661.6 enrolled in South Australian government schools:

- 4,432.9 full-time equivalent students comprised 3.8 per cent of all metropolitan enrolments
- 2,807.5 full-time equivalent students comprised 6.2 per cent of all provincial enrolments
- 444 full-time equivalent students comprised 7.3 per cent of all remote enrolments, and
- 977.2 full-time equivalent students comprised 50.0 per cent of all very remote enrolments.

In 2011 (Term Two data collection), there were 18,771 preschool enrolments in South Australia. There were 1,275 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander preschool enrolments, 6.8 per cent of all preschool enrolments. Ninety-four per cent of all preschool enrolments are enrolled in government preschools, compared to 99.0 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments.

Tasmania

Iutruwita (now known as Tasmania) has been the country of Tasmanian Aborigines for over 40,000 years. Pre-invasion

Iutruwita supported a number of different Aboriginal Nations. While the Tasmanian Aboriginal community of today is quite different to that of the Old Peoples, their culture survives and continues to be dynamic and diverse.

Maintaining strong connections to community, country and culture continues to be an integral part of Aboriginal family and community life in Tasmania. Connection to country is connection to family, community, knowledge and learning. The importance of these connections in the lives and education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students is critical to sustain successful learning outcomes. In order to achieve this, it is crucial that families of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are fully engaged in schools.

In 2011, Tasmania recorded 80,723 full-time students attending Tasmanian schools, with 5,546 (6.9 per cent) of these students identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Tasmanian schools represented 2.7 per cent of the national total, with 255 schools operating across the State. Of this total, 190 were government schools administered by the Department of Education; 37 were Catholic schools, administered by the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office, and 28 were independent schools operated by Independent Schools Tasmania. Approximately three quarters of Tasmania's schools have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled.

The majority of these students live and attend schools in the metropolitan and provincial areas.

Australian Capital Territory

In 2011, there were 66,114 students enrolled in Australian Capital Territory government and non-government schools, an increase of 732 (1.2 per cent) since February 2010. The overall increase in the number of enrolments is a result of increases of 711 (2.0 per cent) in primary schools, 106 (1.1 per cent) in secondary schools. There were decreases of 78 students (0.4 per cent) in secondary schools and seven students (2.0 per cent) in special schools.

In 2011, there were 39,010 students enrolled in public schools, up 157 students (0.4 per cent) since 2010. This included increases of 272 (1.2 per cent) in primary schools, and 45 (0.8 per cent) in colleges. In 2011, public schools accounted for 59.0 per cent of the total student population, with over eight in 10 (87.3 per cent) preschool level enrolments in public schools.

Since 2010, the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in ACT schools increased by 89 students (6.0 per cent) to 1,569 in 2011, with public schools increasing by 75 (6.2 per cent), independent schools increasing by five (5.3 per cent) and Catholic schools increasing by 9 (5.1 per cent).

The government sector continued to have the highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (1,283 or 81.8 per cent of total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments). From 2007 to 2011, the government school sector showed the greatest increase numerically, up by 358 students (38.7 per cent).

Allocating resources to public schools physically located in the Australian Capital Territory focuses on strategically targeting need as well as student numbers. The most significant impact on resource allocation to schools is experienced by the location of Jervis Bay School, which is approximately 320km from Canberra.

Northern Territory

According to the 2011 Census, the Northern Territory has a population of 211,943, which is approximately one per cent of the 2011 total Australian population (21,507,717).⁸ It is the third-largest State or Territory, with a land area of 1,346,200 square kilometres, yet has the smallest population. The Northern Territory has a high proportion of young people (with a median age of 31, compared to the national median age of 37),⁹ has the highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population (approximately 27 per cent),¹⁰ and the largest proportion of the population living in very remote locations, compared with any other jurisdiction.

The Northern Territory has 17,199 children from birth to four years of age (representing 8.1 per cent of the total population), and 32,022 children aged five to 14 years (representing 15.1 per cent of the total population).¹¹ According to ABS estimates at the 2011 Census, the Northern Territory recorded 12,745 Indigenous children aged five to 14 years (representing 22.4 per cent of the Indigenous population), and a total of 6,112 children under the age of five were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (representing 10.7 per cent of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population).¹²

The Northern Territory has the largest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population with approximately 56,779 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, representing 26.8 per cent of the total population.¹³ The proportion of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is even greater in the school-aged population, with 40.9 per cent of students enrolled in Transition to Year 12 identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, compared with the national average of 4.8 per cent.

Student mobility is high and continuity in learning programs is a major issue. Irregular attendance or chronic under-attendance also impacts on student outcomes. Where non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attendance rates have remained stable at about 90 per cent since 2006, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attendance rates are on average about 70 per cent, with average attendance rates lower in very remote areas. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attendance rates are volatile and often follow seasonal trends. Of all the Northern Territory student enrolments, 53.5 per cent are enrolled in provincial areas (including Darwin and Palmerston). A total of 21.2 per cent of the student population is enrolled in remote areas of the Northern Territory, and 25.3 per cent of the student population is enrolled in very remote areas. Schools in very remote locations tend to have much smaller student populations, but are required in order to ensure the Northern Territory government provides access to education for the dispersed Northern Territory population.

Students attending distance education schools, such as the Northern Territory Open Education Centre (NTOEC), Alice Springs School of the Air, and Katherine School of the Air, comprise 3.1 per cent of the student population. Although classified as remote, the physical location of the students can be anywhere from provincial to very remote. A range of strategies, under the 'Every Child, Every Day' initiative, are being implemented to address the issue of absenteeism, particularly in very remote schools. As per the 2011 Census, about 78,928 people living in the Northern Territory have a language background other than English.¹⁴ Just 63.0 per cent of the population speak English only; 10.3 per cent are speakers of languages from other countries; 16.3 per cent are speakers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages (34,443) and a further 11.5 per cent do

not identify their language. Of the total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language speakers in Australia (61,789), 55.5 per cent are located in the Northern Territory.

For many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners studying in remote schools, English is rarely used in their communities outside of school. This means that while at school they are learning English as an additional language. The Northern Territory has over 57 per cent of its government schools in the bottom 10 per cent of the Socioeconomic Indexes for Areas – Index of Relative Socioeconomic Disadvantage (SEIFA-IRSD – see below for definition) range. Over 28 per cent of Northern Territory students attend the schools in the bottom (most socio-economically disadvantaged) decile.¹⁵

Other factors that have a potential impact on education in the Northern Territory include a high level of seasonal mobility in remote communities, and a relatively high teacher turnover rate in remote schools.

SEIFA-IRSD

Socio-economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) is a suite of four measures created from Census information. The measures summarise different aspects of socio-economic conditions in an area, and are appropriate for distinguishing between relatively disadvantaged areas. The Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD) measures the proportion of:

- low income households in an area
- people who do not speak English well
- households that pay low rent
- people with no post-school qualifications.

Areas within Australia are then ordered from the lowest to highest scores. The lowest 10 per cent of areas are given a decile number of one and so forth, up to the highest 10 per cent of areas, which are given a decile number of 10. This means that areas are divided into 10 groups, depending on their score.

Footnotes

- 1 Where possible, this report uses 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' in preference to the term, 'Indigenous'. In some instances, particularly in labels for graphs and tables, the term 'Indigenous' has been included by the provider of the information and therefore it is unable to be changed.
- 2 Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), *Indigenous Australians: Closing the Gap – The need to act* (2009) <http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/indigenous-australians/programs-services/closing-the-gap/closing-the-gap-the-need-to-act>
- 3 ABS, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2008, (Cat.No.4714.0), available online at: <http://abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/mf/4714.0/>
- 4 ABS, Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021, 2009, (Cat.No.3238.0)
- 5 According to the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care and the ABS, ARIA (Accessibility/Remoteness Index for Australia).
- 6 Western Australia Department of Health, *Environmental Health Needs Survey 2008*, available online at: http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au/3/1066/1/environmental_health_needs_survey_ehns_report_pm
- 7 Western Australia Department of Indigenous Affairs, *Closing the Gap in Indigenous Life Outcomes, Western Australia*, June 2010, available online at: <http://www.dia.wa.gov.au/Publications/>
- 8 ABS, *2011 Census of Population and Housing*, (Cat.No.2011.0.55.001) available online at: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/2011.0.55.001Main%20Features12011?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=2011.0.55.001&issue=2011&num=&view=>
- 9 ABS, *2011 Census of Population and Housing*, (Cat.No.2011.0.55.001) available online at: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/2011.0.55.001Main%20Features12011?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=2011.0.55.001&issue=2011&num=&view=>
- 10 ABS, *2011 Census of Population and Housing*, (Cat.No.2011.0.55.001) available online at: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/2011.0.55.001Main%20Features12011?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=2011.0.55.001&issue=2011&num=&view=>
- 11 ABS, *2011 Census of Population and Housing*, (Cat.No.2011.0.55.001) available online at: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/2011.0.55.001Main%20Features12011?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=2011.0.55.001&issue=2011&num=&view=>
- 12 ABS, *2011 Census of Population and Housing*, (Cat.No.2011.0.55.001) available online at: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/2011.0.55.001Main%20Features12011?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=2011.0.55.001&issue=2011&num=&view=>
- 13 ABS, *2011 Census of Population and Housing*, (Cat.No.2011.0.55.001) available online at: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/2011.0.55.001Main%20Features12011?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=2011.0.55.001&issue=2011&num=&view=>
- 14 ABS, *2011 Census of Population and Housing*, (Cat.No.2011.0.55.001) available online at: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/2011.0.55.001Main%20Features12011?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=2011.0.55.001&issue=2011&num=&view=>
- 15 ABS, *2006 Census of Population and Housing: SEIFA, Australia* (Cat.No.2033.0.55.001) 2006 data only; and Northern Territory Department of Education and Training, *Age Grade Census*, 2010.

National overview of progress under the Plan

Readiness for school

Performance indicator 1

The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending (where possible to measure) a preschool program.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates 2011* (Cat.No. 4240.0); *Estimated Population by Age and Sex, June 2011* (Cat.No. 3101.0 DO002); *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991–2021* (Cat.No.3238.0).

Table 1: Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending a preschool program, Australia, 2011

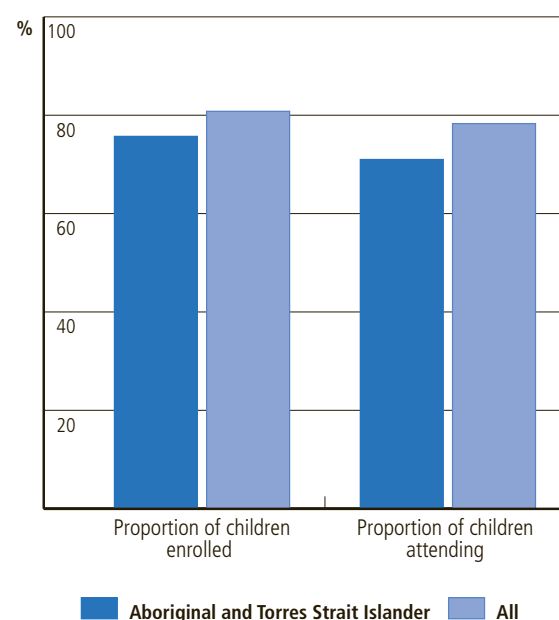
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	All children
Number of children enrolled	10,167	233,128
Children enrolled (per cent)	75.7	80.8
Number of children attending	9,536	225,886
Percentage of children enrolled that are attending ^(a)	93.8	96.9
Percentage of children attending ^(b)	71.0	78.3

Notes:

- a) Calculated as per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled.
- b) Calculated as per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over Estimated Resident Population (ERP). ERP Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 4 year-olds at June 2011, New South Wales = 4,027; Australia = 13,427.

Source: ABS, *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates 2011* (Cat.No.4240.0) *Estimated Population by Age and Sex, June 2011* (Cat.No. 3101.0 DO002); *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991–2021* (Cat.No.3238.0)

Figure 5: Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and 'Other' students enrolled and attending preschool programs, Australia, 2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011* (unpublished)

In 2011, there were 10,167 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander four and five year-old children enrolled in preschool programs across Australia, compared to 233,128 Australian children overall. The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in preschool programs was 75.7 per cent, only slightly below the proportion of 'All' children, at 80.8 per cent.

The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children attending preschool in relation to the estimated residential population of four year-olds was 71.0 per cent, compared to 78.3 per cent for 'All' children.

Performance indicator 2

The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students assessed as developmentally on track across four or more domains in the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI).

Source: Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), Unpublished AEDI data, 2009 data collection

The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) results indicate a lower proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are developmentally 'on track' when they start school than their non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peers.

It is not possible to compare whether there has been improvement over time on this indicator as the AEDI has only been administered once, in 2009. The AEDI will be administered again in 2012, to a different cohort of children, who will also be in their first year of full-time schooling.

Table 2: Proportion of children in Australia assessed as developmentally 'on track' in four or more domains of the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, 2009 (per cent)

	Australia
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children	42.5
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children	68.6

Notes:

- This indicator is based on the results of the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), which was administered in 2009.
- The AEDI population comprises children with at least one valid domain score.
- Children are deemed to be developmentally 'on track' if they scored above the 25th percentile of the national AEDI population in four or more AEDI domains.
- The average age of Australian children who completed the AEDI was 5 years 7 months.
- Where Standard Australian English is not the child's first language, there may be an over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are assessed as developmentally vulnerable in the 'language and cognitive skills' or the 'communication skills and general knowledge' domains of the AEDI. Cultural differences in the child's mode of communication and general knowledge should also be acknowledged and taken in consideration when reviewing the AEDI data.

Source: Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), Unpublished AEDI data, 2009 data collection

Engagement and connections

Performance indicator 3

Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with personalised learning strategies in place.

There is no national data set for this performance indicator. Further information is available in the State and Territory chapters of this report.

Performance indicator 4

Proportion of Focus schools with a school – community partnership agreement in place.

There is no national data set for this performance indicator. Further information is available in the State and Territory chapters of this report.

Attendance

Performance indicator 5

Attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and 'Other' students in schools.

Source: Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished).

The student attendance data collection is in a transitional phase until all jurisdictions and sectors have the capacity to report their data using an agreed standard. All States and Territories and the non-government sectors are collaborating to standardise the collections. However, because the definitions and methodologies used by jurisdictions and sectors to collect the 2011 data (and data for previous years) are not uniform, accurate comparisons between jurisdictions and sectors cannot currently be made.

In 2011, the largest difference between the attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and other students in government schools was 27 percentage points in Year 9, in the Northern Territory. In the independent and Catholic sectors, the largest differences were also in the Northern Territory for

Table 3: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, government sector, by State and Territory, 2011 (per cent)

	Year level										Ungraded	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Prim.	Sec.
New South Wales												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	90	90	90	90	90	89	86	81	78	74	87	74
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	95	95	95	95	94	93	91	90	88	92	85
Total	94	94	94	94	94	94	92	90	89	87	91	83
Victoria												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	89	90	89	89	89	89	87	82	80	79	84	84
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	94	94	94	94	93	91	90	90	89	89
Total	94	94	94	94	94	94	93	91	90	90	89	89
Queensland												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	86	86	87	86	87	87	86	84	79	77	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	92	93	93	93	93	93	93	91	89	87	n/a	n/a
Total	92	92	92	92	93	92	92	91	88	87	n/a	n/a
Western Australia												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	80	81	82	82	83	82	81	74	67	64	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93	94	94	94	94	94	93	91	89	88	n/a	96
Total	92	93	93	93	93	93	92	90	87	86	n/a	96
South Australia												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	80	82	81	82	82	83	82	76	72	70	81	74
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	92	93	93	93	93	93	92	90	88	86	92	90
Total	92	92	92	92	92	92	92	89	87	85	91	89
Tasmania												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93	93	92	93	93	93	87	87	81	79	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	94	94	94	94	93	90	89	87	n/a	n/a
Total	94	94	94	94	94	94	92	90	88	86	n/a	n/a
Australian Capital Territory												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	89	89	88	87	90	89	82	79	73	72	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93	94	94	93	93	93	91	89	87	86	n/a	n/a
Total	93	93	94	93	93	93	91	89	87	86	n/a	n/a
Northern Territory												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	69	72	72	72	73	74	70	65	61	60	79	66
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	92	93	93	93	92	93	92	90	88	85	92	90
Total	81	83	83	83	83	84	81	79	77	76	84	89

Notes: Definitions and methodologies used by jurisdictions and sectors to collect attendance data are not uniform. As such, direct comparisons of attendance rates between jurisdictions and sectors cannot currently be made. Nor can attendance data for 2011 be aggregated or averaged at the national or State/Territory level. Variations in methodology between jurisdictions are described in the explanatory notes for the 2011 attendance data contained in the ACARA *National Report on Schooling in Australia 2011*.

n/a data not available or reported

Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished)

Table 4: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, Catholic sector, by State and Territory, 2011 (per cent)

	Year level										Ungraded	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Prim.	Sec.
New South Wales												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	89	89	90	91	91	90	87	89	87	85	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	94	94	94	94	94	92	92	91	94	n/a
Total	94	94	94	94	94	94	94	92	92	91	94	n/a
Victoria												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	90	90	87	90	91	90	91	91	83	87	na	85
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	95	94	95	94	94	93	93	92	90	80
Total	94	94	95	94	95	94	94	93	93	92	90	80
Queensland												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	89	89	91	90	90	90	92	91	89	86	n/a	58
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	94	94	94	94	94	94	93	92	n/a	90
Total	94	94	94	94	94	94	94	94	93	92	n/a	73
Western Australia												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	74	74	81	78	76	82	80	82	78	85	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	94	94	95	94	95	94	94	94	n/a	n/a
Total	93	93	94	94	94	94	95	94	94	94	n/a	n/a
South Australia												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	92	92	90	91	87	92	92	87	85	89	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95	94	95	95	95	95	95	94	93	93	96	96
Total	94	94	95	95	95	95	95	94	93	93	96	96
Tasmania												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	92	94	96	92	93	95	92	90	90	94	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	94	94	94	94	94	93	92	92	n/a	n/a
Total	93	94	94	94	94	94	94	93	92	92	n/a	n/a
Australian Capital Territory												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	91	85	90	86	93	95	90	89	88	92	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	93	94	94	94	94	94	91	91	90	n/a	n/a
Total	94	93	94	94	94	94	94	91	91	90	n/a	n/a
Northern Territory												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	67	65	69	76	79	69	69	75	71	55	n/a	47
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	91	91	91	92	91	90	88	89	87	87	n/a	n/a
Total	82	79	83	86	87	83	81	84	82	74	n/a	47

Notes: Definitions and methodologies used by jurisdictions and sectors to collect attendance data are not uniform. As such, direct comparisons of attendance rates between jurisdictions and sectors cannot currently be made. Nor can attendance data for 2011 be aggregated or averaged at the national or State/Territory level. Variations in methodology between jurisdictions are described in the explanatory notes for the 2011 attendance data contained in the ACARA *National Report on Schooling in Australia 2011*.

n/a data not available or reported

Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished)

Table 5: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, independent sector, by State and Territory, 2011 (per cent)

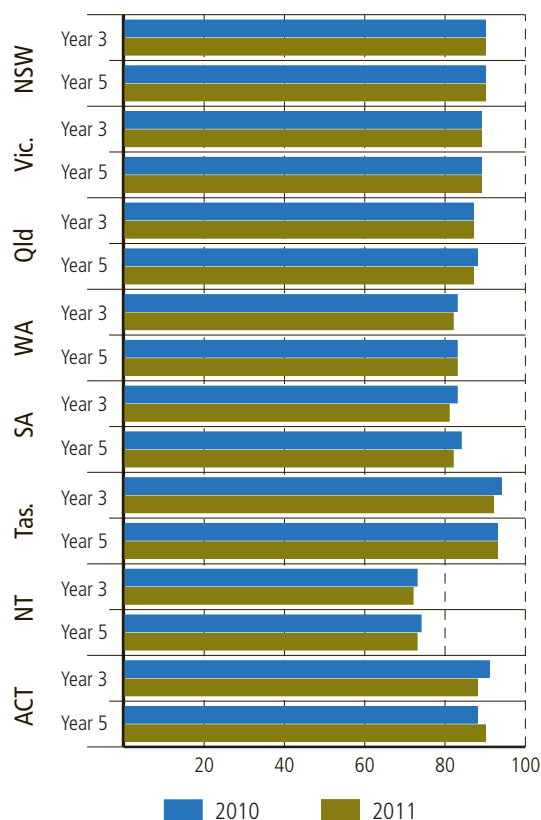
	Year level										Ungraded	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Prim.	Sec.
New South Wales												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	87	90	90	89	89	92	91	90	87	83	91	88
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	95	94	95	94	95	94	94	93	94	93
Total	94	94	95	94	95	94	95	94	94	93	94	93
Victoria												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95	95	94	93	92	93	83	84	87	87	n/a	72
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95	94	95	95	95	95	95	94	94	93	85	82
Total	95	94	95	95	95	95	95	94	94	93	85	82
Queensland												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	88	90	93	90	91	88	91	89	83	86	78	90
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	95	95	95	94	95	94	94	92	91	84
Total	94	94	95	94	95	94	95	94	93	92	90	84
Western Australia												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	83	80	82	84	80	85	85	84	78	74	n/a	33
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93	94	95	94	95	95	95	94	93	93	92	36
Total	93	94	94	94	95	94	95	94	93	93	92	35
South Australia												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	88	87	88	89	90	90	86	85	90	87	n/a	83
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95	95	95	94	95	94	94	94	94	93	90	81
Total	95	95	95	94	95	94	94	94	94	93	90	81
Tasmania												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	91	97	95	93	97	91	92	91	88	87	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	94	94	95	94	93	93	92	91	90	100
Total	94	94	94	94	95	94	93	93	92	91	90	100
Australian Capital Territory												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95	96	94	93	90	99	95	91	100	98	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	95	94	94	95	94	95	94	94	93	n/a	n/a
Total	94	95	94	94	95	94	95	94	94	93	n/a	n/a
Northern Territory												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	74	65	74	76	68	67	81	82	85	80	n/a	54
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93	94	94	93	95	92	95	93	93	92	n/a	Na/
Total	91	90	91	91	90	88	91	90	91	88	n/a	54

Notes: Definitions and methodologies used by jurisdictions and sectors to collect attendance data are not uniform. As such, direct comparisons of attendance rates between jurisdictions and sectors cannot currently be made. Nor can attendance data for 2011 be aggregated or averaged at the national or State/Territory level. Variations in methodology between jurisdictions are described in the explanatory notes for the 2011 attendance data contained in the ACARA *National Report on Schooling in Australia 2011*.

n/a data not available or reported

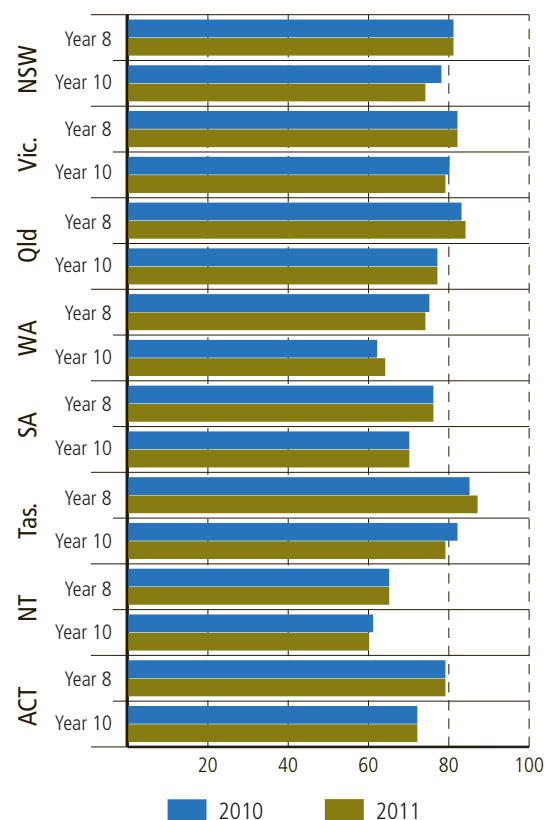
Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished)

Figure 6: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student attendance rates, government schools, by State and Territory, Years 3 and 5, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished)

Figure 7: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student attendance rates, government schools, by State and Territory, Years 8 and 10, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished)

Year 2 students, at 29 percentage points in independent schools, and Year 10 students, at 32 percentage points in Catholic schools.

Between 2010 and 2011, there was little variation in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student attendance rates across States and Territories. States and Territories that had the larger variations were those with smaller proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Government schools

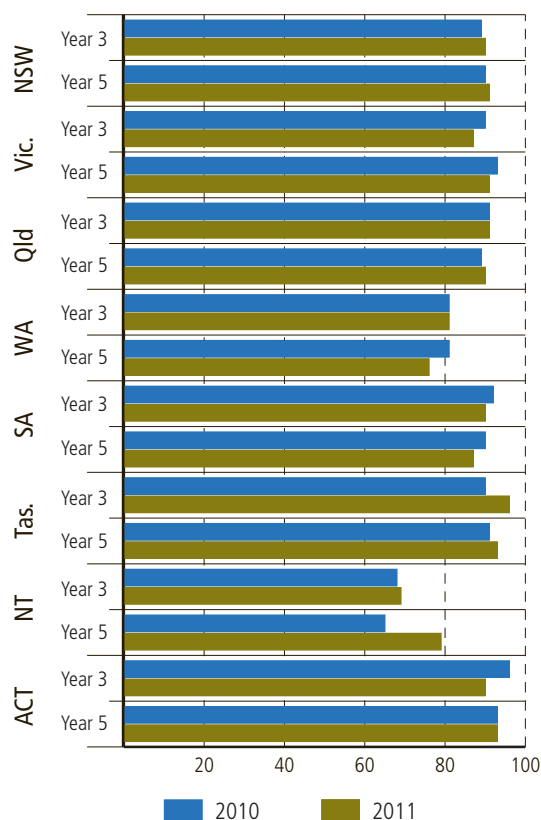
In 2011, the largest difference in the attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students for Years 1 to 6 in government

schools was 23 percentage points, in Year 1, in the Northern Territory. The smallest difference was in Tasmania at one percentage point for Years 1 to 2 and Years 4 to 6.

For Years 7 to 10, the largest gap in attendance rates between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was in the Northern Territory, at 27 percentage points for Year 9, while the smallest gap was three percentage points in Tasmania, for Year 8 students.

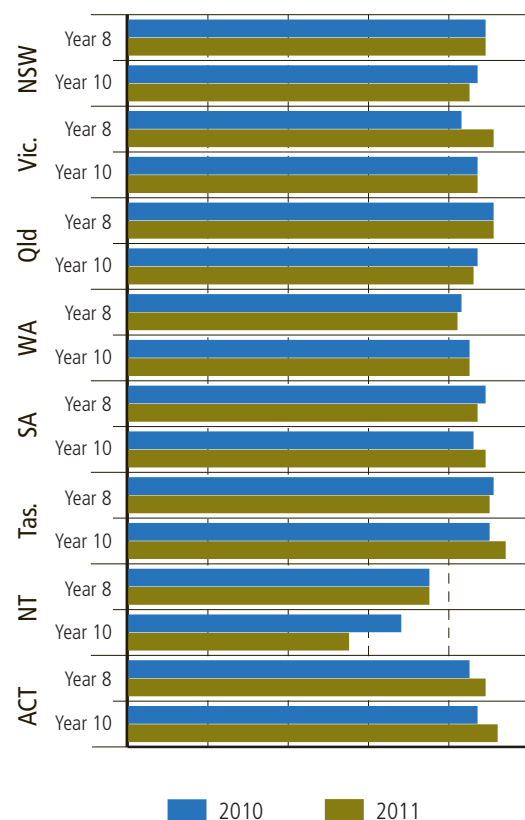
Tasmanian government schools have the smallest gap between the attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. In Years 1 to 6, the largest difference was two percentage points for Year 3 students. In 2011, across Years 1 to 7, New South

Figure 8: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student attendance rates, Catholic schools, by State and Territory, Years 3 and 5, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished)

Figure 9: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student attendance rates, Catholic schools, by State and Territory, Years 8 and 10, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished)

Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Tasmania all recorded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student attendance rates above 86 per cent; South Australia and Western Australia recorded rates above 80 per cent. In the Northern Territory the attendance rates across Years 1 to 7 were above 69 per cent. Attendance rates in the Australian Capital Territory were above 82 per cent for Years 1 to 7. Figures 6 to 7 show a representative selection of year level attendance in government schools, by State and Territory.

Catholic schools

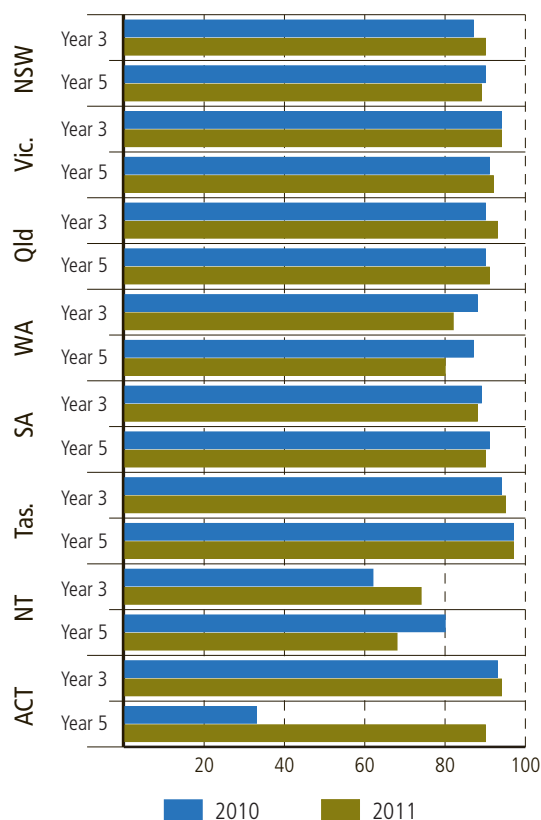
In Catholic schools, the largest difference in the attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students for Years 1 to

6 was 26 percentage points, for Year 2 students in the Northern Territory. The smallest gap was in Tasmania where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students outperformed non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by two percentage points in Year 3.

In 2011, for Years 7 to 10, the largest gap in attendance rates was in the Northern Territory for Year 10 students at 32 percentage points, while the smallest gap was in both the ACT and Tasmania, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students outperformed other students by two percentage points in Year 10.

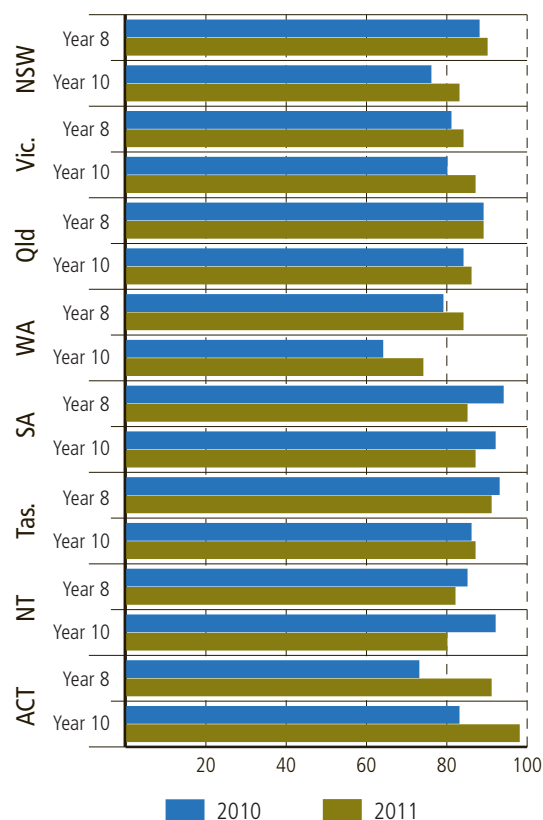
In Catholic schools, Tasmania had the highest attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, with all Years 1 to 10 rates above 90 per cent. In the ACT, New South Wales,

Figure 10: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student attendance rates, independent schools, by State and Territory, Years 3 and 5, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished)

Figure 11: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student attendance rates, independent schools, by State and Territory, Years 8 and 10, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished)

Queensland and South Australia for Years 1 to 10, all had attendance rates above 85 per cent. For Years 1 to 10, Victoria recorded rates above 83 per cent; Western Australia above 74 per cent; and in the Northern Territory, all rates were above 65 per cent, except for Year 10, which recorded a rate of 55 per cent. Figures 8 to 9 show a representative selection of year level attendance in Catholic schools, by State and Territory.

Independent schools

Attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in independent schools varied between States and Territories. The largest difference between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

for Years 1 to 6 was 29 percentage points in the Northern Territory, for Year 2 students. The smallest gap in attendance rates was in the ACT, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students outperformed their non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peers by 5 percentage points for Year 6 students.

For Years 7 to 10 in independent schools, the largest difference was 19 percentage points, in Year 10, in Western Australia; while the smallest gap was in the ACT, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students outperformed their non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peers by five percentage points for Year 10 students.

In independent schools, the ACT and Tasmania recorded the best attendance rates with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students outperforming their non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander peers across a number of year levels, with rates for Years 1 to 8 all above 90 per cent. In 2011, across Years 1 to 6, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Queensland all recorded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student attendance rates above 87 per cent; and Western Australia recorded rates above 80 per cent. In the Northern Territory, the attendance rates across Years 1 to 6 were above 65 per cent. Figures 10 to 11 show a representative selection of year level attendance in independent schools, by State and Territory.

Enrolment to population ratio

Performance indicator 6

Enrolment to population ratio of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians to 'Other' Australians

For 2011, school participation rates have not been published by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status due to concerns with the quality of the indicator. Specifically, the rates for most States and Territories exceeded 100 per cent, primarily as a result of modal differences in the data sources. The denominator is sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Estimated Resident Population series, itself drawn from the Population Census, while the numerator is sourced from the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC). The Australian Bureau of Statistics is working to provide a substitute measure.

Apparent retention rates

Performance indicator 7

Retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Schools, Australia*, 2011 (Cat.No.4221.0), Apparent Retention Rates.

The apparent retention rate measures the number of school students in a designated year of education expressed as a percentage of their respective cohort group in a base year.

In 2011, the Year 10 to Year 12 apparent retention rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was 53.5 per cent,

an increase of 1.0 percentage point from the 2010 rate of 52.5 per cent. Since 2006, the Year 10 to Year 12 apparent retention rate has increased by 6.7 percentage points from 46.8 per cent. However, over this time, the gap has shown little evidence of closure, with the gap decreasing only slightly from 29.4 percentage points in 2006 to 27.1 percentage points in 2011.

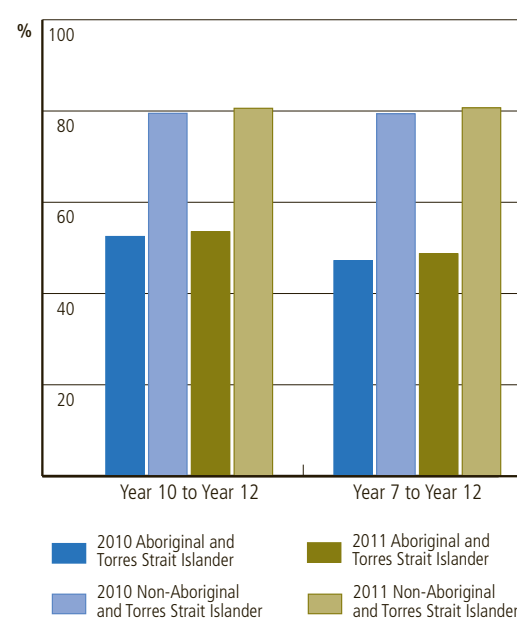
The Year 7/8 (first year of secondary schooling) to Year 12 apparent retention rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students increased from 47.2 per cent in 2010, to 48.7 per cent

Table 6: Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from Year 7/8 to Year 10 and Year 7/8 to Year 12, Australia, 2011 (per cent)

	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Year 7/8 – Year 10	98.7	101.3
Year 7/8 – Year 12	48.7	80.7

Source: ABS, *Schools Australia 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0)

Figure 12: Apparent retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and 'Other' students, Australia, 2010–2011



Source: ABS, *Schools Australia 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0)

in 2011. This outcome has increased by 8.6 percentage points since 2006, when the equivalent outcome was 40.1 per cent. Over this time, the gap has decreased from 35.9 percentage points to 32 percentage points.

Apparent grade progression ratios

Performance indicator 8

Progression ratios for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia, 2011* (Cat.No.4221.0), Additional Statistics

Apparent grade progression ratios measure the number of students at a given year level compared to the number enrolled in the previous year, at the time of the annual August census.

Table 7: Apparent grade progression ratios of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, Australia, 2011 (per cent)

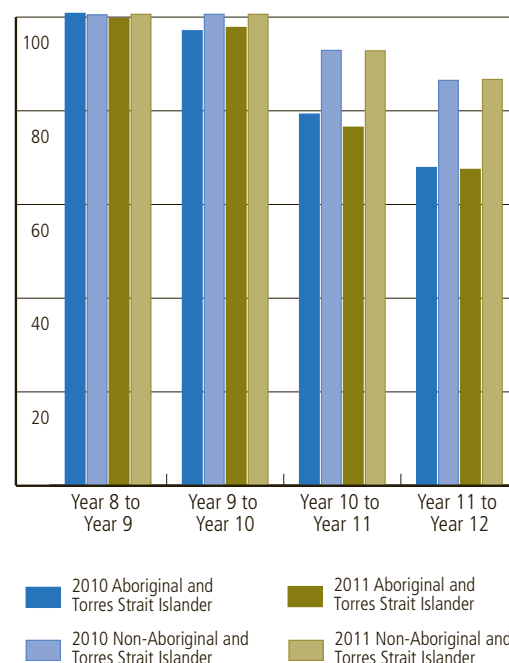
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Year 8 to Year 9	99.7	100.6
Year 9 to Year 10	97.8	100.6
Year 10 to Year 11	76.5	92.8
Year 11 to Year 12	67.5	86.7

Notes:

- Grade progression rates show the number of students at each Year (level) as a percentage of the number enrolled in the previous year.
- Full-time students only.
- Care should be taken when interpreting these rates since a range of factors affecting the calculation are not taken into account, such as students repeating a year of schooling, movements between schools and systems or States/Territories, and net changes to a school's or system's population. There is also the effect of ungraded students – they are not included in the calculations of rates.
- Components may not add due to rounding. Per cent point gap calculations are based on unrounded data.
- Issues that may affect comparability over time can be found in the Explanatory Notes, ABS, *Schools, Australia, 2011* (Cat.No. 4221.0)

Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia, 2011*, (Cat.No. 4221.0)

Figure 13: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and 'Other' students' apparent grade progression ratios, Australia, 2010–2011



Source: ABS, *Schools Australia 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0)

Progression ratios for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the Year 8 to 9 and Year 9 to 10 ranges are showing strong results in 2011, at around 100 per cent (99.7 per cent and 97.8 per cent respectively). The progression ratios for the 10 to 11 grade range drop dramatically to 76.5 per cent, and further to 67.5 per cent for the Year 11 to 12 range.

Year 8 to Year 9

The 2011 progression ratio for Years 8 to 9 was 99.7 per cent, representing a slight decrease from the 2010 outcome of 100.8 per cent. The outcome for 'Other' students was 100.6 per cent, resulting in a gap of 0.9 percentage points in 2011.

Year 9 to Year 10

For Years 9 to 10, the 2011 progression ratio was 97.8 per cent, a slight improvement from the 2010 outcome of 97.1 per cent. The gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other students was 2.8 percentage points.

Year 10 to Year 11

The 2011 progression ratio for Years 10 to 11 was 76.5 per cent, a decrease of 2.8 percentage points from the 2010 result of 79.3 per cent. The outcome for 'Other' students was 92.8 per cent, resulting in a gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students of 16.3 percentage points.

Year 11 to Year 12

The 2011 progression ratio for Years 11 to 12 was 67.5 per cent, representing a slight decrease from the 2010 outcome of 67.9 per cent. The gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander and 'Other' students was 19.2 percentage points, with the 'Other' students' Years 11 to 12 progression ratio at 86.7 per cent.

Literacy and numeracy

Performance indicator 9

Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who are at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in NAPLAN testing.

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy* (NAPLAN), 2010 and 2011

NAPLAN results 2011

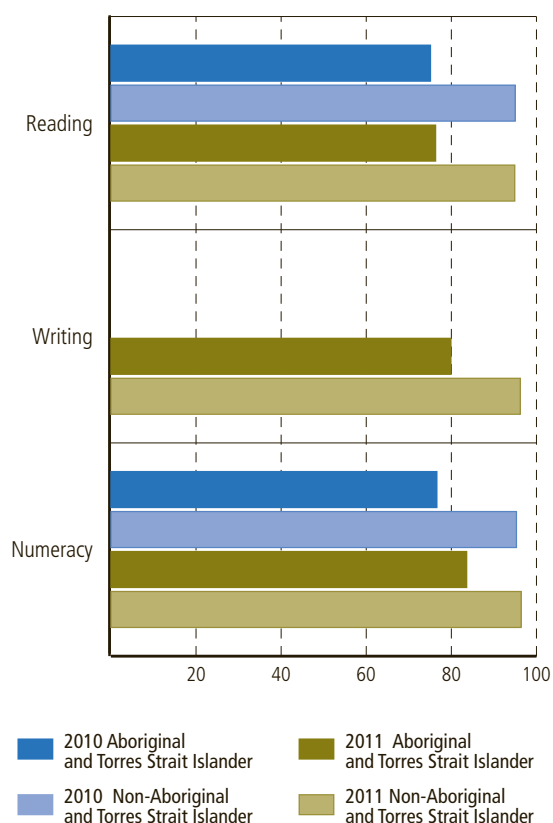
Table 8: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, Years 3, 5, 7 and 9, Australia, 2010–2011 (per cent)

	2010			2011		
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Gap	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Gap
Year 3						
Reading	75.1	95.0	19.9	76.3	94.9	18.6
Writing	79.0	96.6	17.6	79.9	96.2	16.3
Numeracy	76.6	95.3	18.7	83.6	96.4	12.8
Year 5						
Reading	66.2	92.7	26.5	66.4	92.9	26.5
Writing	70.5	94.4	23.9	68.9	93.9	25.0
Numeracy	71.4	95.0	23.6	75.2	95.5	20.3
Year 7						
Reading	76.6	95.9	19.3	77.1	95.7	18.6
Writing	69.8	93.9	24.1	66.9	92.6	25.7
Numeracy	77.0	96.1	19.1	76.5	95.5	19.0
Year 9						
Reading	64.2	92.2	28.0	71.9	93.5	21.6
Writing	59.0	88.7	29.7	55.0	86.4	31.4
Numeracy	70.4	94.3	23.9	72.0	94.1	19.4

Note: A new scale was introduced for writing in 2011. With the break in the time series, the persuasive writing results for 2011 should not be directly compared to the narrative writing results from previous years.

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy* (NAPLAN), 2010 and 2011

Figure 14: Percentage of Year 3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and 'Other' students 'at or above' the national minimum standard in NAPLAN, by year level and key domain, Australia, 2010–2011

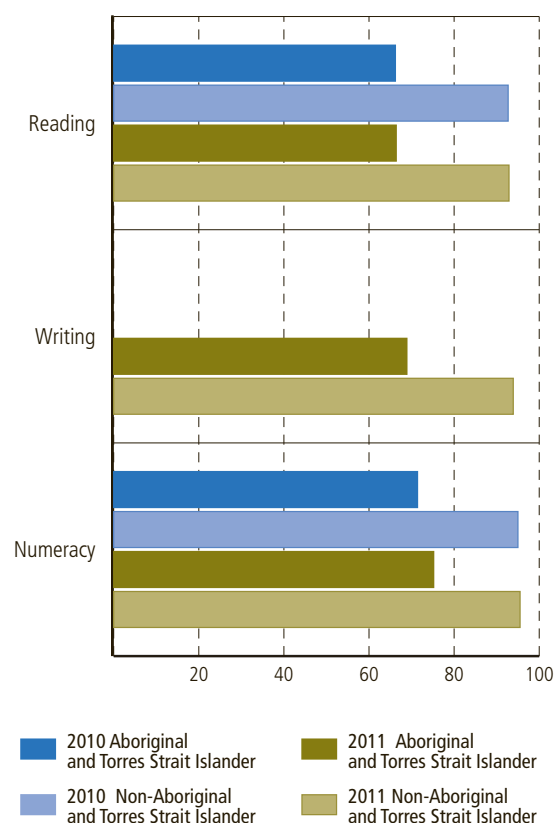


Source: ACARA, National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), 2010 and 2011

The 2011 NAPLAN results show that the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard ranged from 55 per cent in Year 9 writing to 84 per cent in Year 3 numeracy. Outcomes for 'Other' students ranged from 86 per cent in Year 9 writing to 96 per cent in Year 3 numeracy.

It should be noted that a new scale was introduced for writing in 2011. With the break in the time series, the persuasive writing results for 2011 should not be directly compared to the narrative writing results from previous years. The change in the writing genre has also resulted in the 12 Closing the Gap trajectories being reduced to eight, as the writing trajectory targets are no longer applicable.

Figure 15: Percentage of Year 5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and 'Other' students 'at or above' the national minimum standard in NAPLAN, by year level and key domain, Australia, 2010–2011

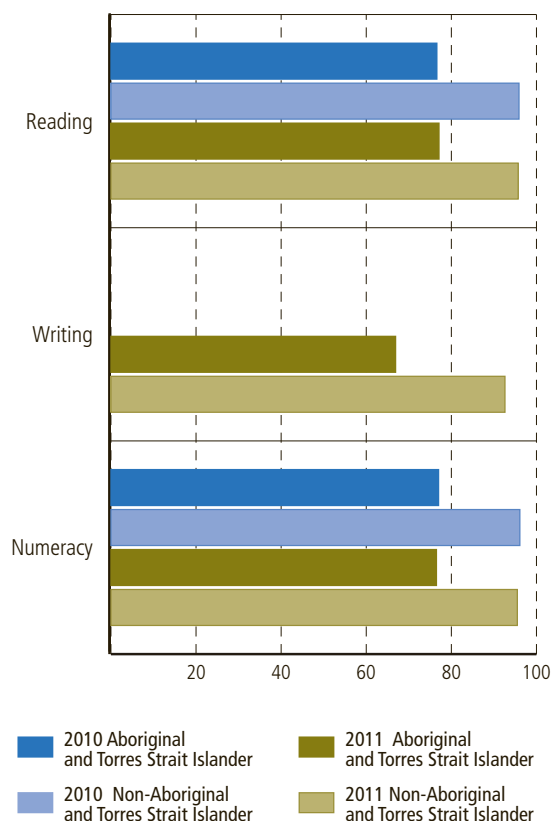


Source: ACARA, National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), 2010 and 2011

Since 2010, the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard increased in seven of the eight comparable test areas. The largest increases from 2010 to 2011 were 7.0 percentage points for Year 3 numeracy and 7.7 percentage points for Year 9 reading. In 2011, six of the eight national trajectory targets (progress points) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were met. One of these was met only because the upper limit of the NAPLAN confidence interval exceeded the trajectory, for Year 9 reading.

Between 2010 and 2011, there were notable increases in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' outcomes, with one gap remaining the same and seven gaps decreasing. The

Figure 16: Percentage of Year 7 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and 'Other' students 'at or above' the national minimum standard in NAPLAN, by year level and key domain, Australia, 2010–2011

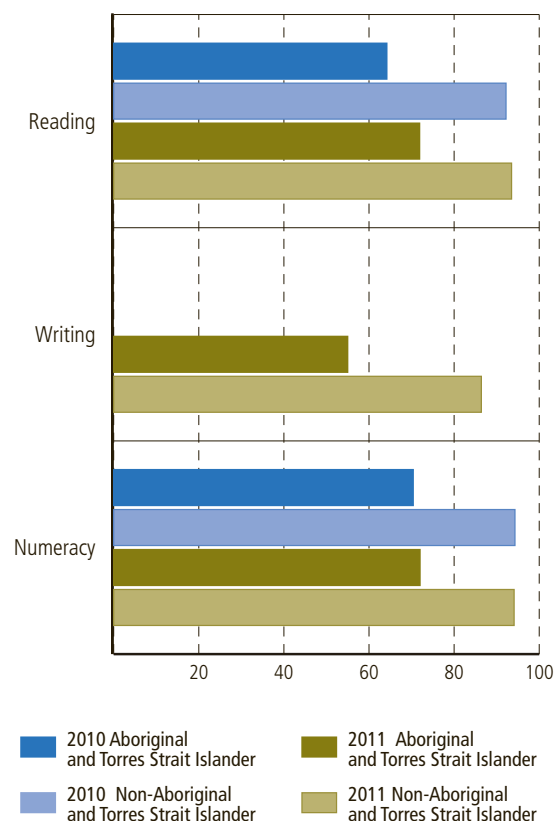


Source: ACARA, National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), 2010 and 2011

largest decreases in the gaps between 2010 and 2011 were 6.4 percentage points for Year 9 reading and 5.9 percentage points for Year 3 numeracy.

In general, the achievement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, at or above the national minimum standard in 2011, was significantly below that of 'Other' students at every year level and in all three key domains. The gaps between the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and 'Other' students attaining the national minimum standard for all year levels and domains ranged from 12.8 to 31.4 percentage points.

Figure 17: Percentage of Year 9 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and 'Other' students 'at or above' the national minimum standard in NAPLAN, by year level and key domain, Australia, 2010–2011



Source: ACARA, National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), 2010 and 2011

In 2011, the overall results across Australia show that most students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 achieved the national literacy and numeracy minimum standards. Boys have a lower achievement level than girls, while students living in remote regions, especially in very remote regions, achieve at lower rates than metropolitan and provincial students in all year levels and domains.

Reading

In 2011, reading outcomes were greatest for Year 7 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, with 77.1 per cent achieving the national minimum standard, compared to only 66.4 per cent

of Year 5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The gaps between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student outcomes and 'Other' student outcomes in reading ranged from 18.6 percentage points for both the Year 3 and 7 cohorts, to 26.5 percentage points for the Year 5 cohort.

The greatest increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student outcomes since 2010 was in Year 9, with the reading outcome increasing by 7.7 percentage points. There were also increases in the Years 3, 5 and 7 reading outcomes by between 0.2 and 1.2 percentage points.

The reading outcomes for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 exceeded the trajectory targets (progress points) for 2011. However, the Year 9 target was met only because the upper limit of the NAPLAN confidence interval exceeded the trajectory.

Writing

The writing outcomes in 2011 were greatest for Year 3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, with 79.9 per cent achieving the national minimum standard. Year 9 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students had the lowest outcome, with 55.0 per cent achieving at or above the national minimum standard. The outcome for the Year 9 cohort was the lowest for all year levels in each of the key domains in 2011, and the gap in outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and 'Other' students' outcomes was also larger in Year 9 writing than it was in any other year level in each of the key domains. The gaps in writing outcomes ranged from 16.3 percentage points, for the Year 3 cohort, to 31.4 percentage points for the Year 9 cohort. Due to the change in the writing genre, the trajectory targets (progress points) for 2011 are no longer applicable.

Numeracy

The Year 3 numeracy outcome (83.6 per cent) for the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard was the highest for all year levels in each of the key domains in 2011. The gap between the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and 'Other' cohort for Year 3 numeracy, at 12.8 percentage points, was the smallest of all gaps for each year level, in each of the key domains. Year

9 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students had the lowest numeracy outcome, with 72.0 per cent achieving at or above the national minimum standard. The gap between the outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and 'Other' students was largest for the Year 9 cohort, at 22.1 percentage points.

The greatest increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student outcomes since 2010 was in Year 3, with the numeracy outcome increasing by 7.0 percentage points. There were also increases in the Years 5 and 9 numeracy outcomes, by 3.8 and 1.6 percentage points respectively. The Year 7 numeracy outcome decreased by 0.5 of a percentage point.

The numeracy outcomes for Years 3 and 5 exceeded the trajectory targets (progress points) for 2011, while the Years 7 and 9 numeracy outcomes were below their trajectory targets (progress points).

Trends in NAPLAN outcomes from 2008 to 2011 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

Noting the 'trends' do not reflect the progression of the same cohort of students from 2008 to 2011, the greatest improvement in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student performance since 2008 occurred in Year 3 reading. In 2008, 68.3 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were at or above the national minimum standard. This increased by 8.0 percentage points to 76.3 per cent in 2011. The greatest decline in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student performance since 2008 occurred in Year 7 numeracy.

In 2008, 78.6 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were at or above the national minimum standard. This decreased by 2.1 percentage points to 76.5 per cent in 2011.

The reading outcomes increased between 2008 and 2011 for all year levels. The percentage increases of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard were: 8.0 percentage points for Year 3; 3.0 percentage points for Year 5; 5.2 percentage points for Year 7; and 1.2 percentage points for Year 9. In the numeracy domain, the outcomes increase between 2008 and 2011 for Years 3 and 5 declined for Years 7 and 9. The percentage of Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard increased by 5.0 percentage points for Year 3, and 6.0 percentage points for Year 5; while they decreased by 2.1 percentage points for Year 7 and 0.5 of a percentage point for Year 9.

A new scale was introduced for writing in 2011. With the break in the time series, the persuasive writing results for 2011 should not be directly compared to the narrative writing results from previous years. Therefore, the above analysis only includes trend year comparisons on the reading and numeracy domains.

NAPLAN participation

Performance indicator 10

Participation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in reading, writing and numeracy in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in NAPLAN testing.

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2010 and 2011

The 2011 participation rates in NAPLAN for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students ranged from 90.8 per cent for Year 5 reading to 78.0 per cent for Year 9 numeracy. The national absentee rates were higher for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students than for 'Other' students and in most instances the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander absentee rates were at least three times higher than those for 'Other' students. The absentee rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students ranged from 8.0 per cent for Year 5 reading, to 20.6 per cent for Year 9 numeracy, while 'Other' students' absentee rates ranged from 2.2 per cent to 5.9 per cent.

Withdrawal rates for both cohorts were all below 2.0 per cent for each year level and in each of the key domains. The exemption rates were all below 2 per cent for 'Other' students and below 3 per cent for all year levels and domains for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

In 2011, an average of just under 13,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students participated in the Year 3 tests in each of the domains, with participation rates ranging from 89.0 per cent to 90.1 per cent. The absentee rates for Year 3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students ranged from 8.3 per cent

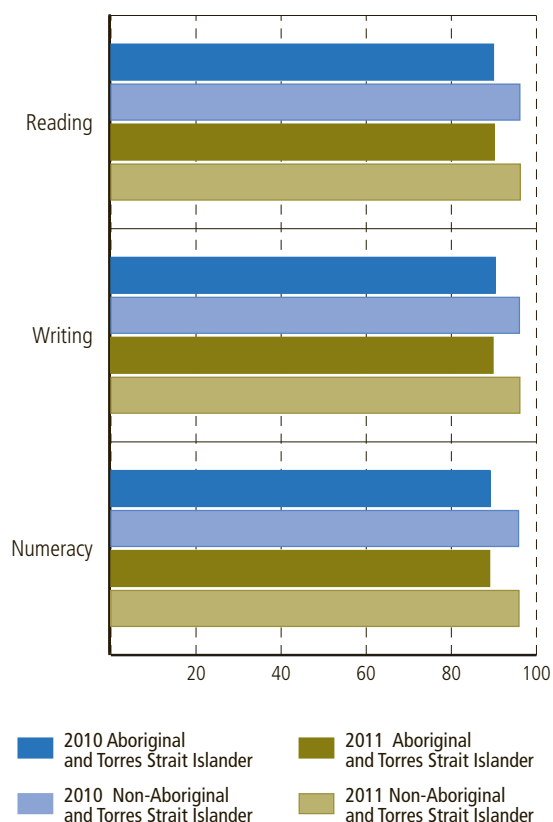
Table 9: Reading, writing and numeracy participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, exemptions, absences/withdrawals and assessed students, 2011 (per cent)

	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9
Reading				
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	90.1	90.8	88.8	79.0
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	96.2	96.7	96.5	93.7
Writing				
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	89.8	90.7	89.0	79.4
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	96.1	96.6	96.6	94.1
Numeracy				
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	89.0	89.7	87.6	78.0
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95.9	96.3	96.2	93.2

Note: The NAPLAN participation data provided reflects students who were exempted, absent/withdrawn and assessed.

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2011

Figure 18: NAPLAN participation rates, Year 3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and 'Other' students, by key domain, Australia, 2010–2011

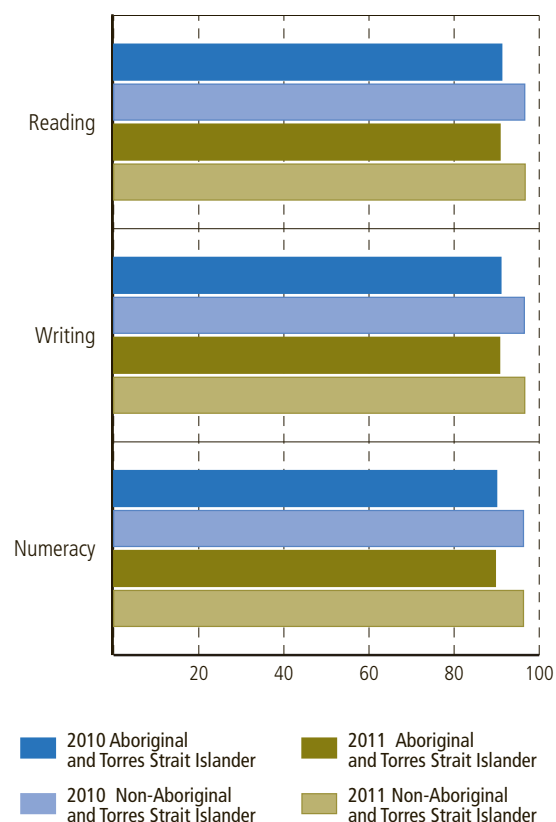


Source: ACARA, National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), 2010 and 2011

to 9.4 per cent, while for 'Other' students, participation rates were around 96 per cent and absentee rates below 3 per cent. Between 2010 and 2011, the participation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students remained stable, with the rates fluctuating less than 0.5 of a percentage point.

The Year 5 participation rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were the highest when compared to the other year levels, ranging from 89.7 per cent in numeracy to 90.8 per cent in reading, representing an average of more than 12,700 students sitting the tests. Participation rates for 'Other' students were over 96.0 per cent and absentee rates were all below 3.0 per cent; while for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, Year 5 absentee rates were around 8.0 per cent. From 2010

Figure 19: NAPLAN participation rates, Year 5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and 'Other' students, by key domain, Australia, 2010–2011

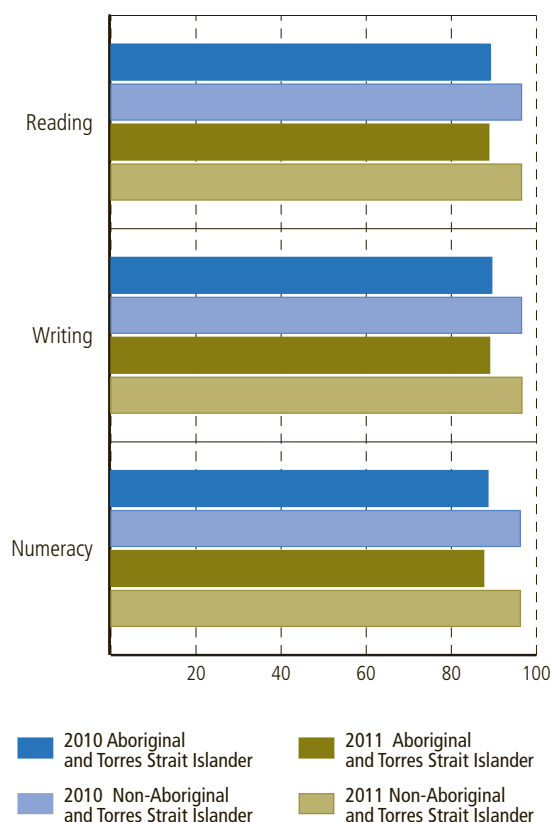


Source: ACARA, National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), 2010 and 2011

to 2011, the participation rates for Year 5 students decreased in all domains; however, the decreases were less than 0.4 of a percentage point.

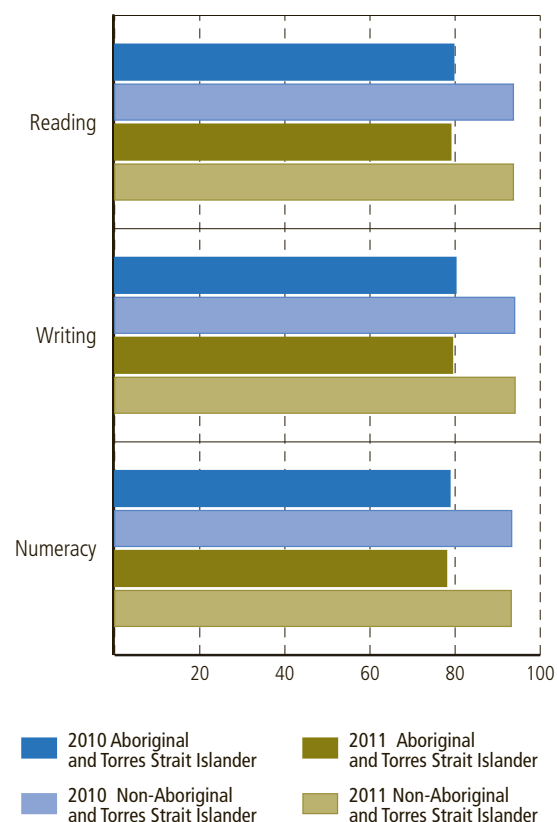
The Year 7 participation rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students varied between 88.8 per cent and 89.7 per cent, representing an average of more than 12,500 students sitting the tests. Absentee rates for Year 7 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were around 10.0 per cent, while for 'Other' students, absentee rates were around 3 per cent and participation rates were above 96.0 per cent. Between 2010 and 2011, the participation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Year 7 decreased slightly in all domains, with the largest decrease in numeracy, of one percentage point.

Figure 20: NAPLAN participation rates, Year 7 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and 'Other' students, by key domain, Australia, 2010–2011



Source: ACARA, National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), 2010 and 2011

Figure 21: NAPLAN participation rates, Year 9 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and 'Other' students, by key domain, Australia, 2010–2011



Source: ACARA, National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), 2010 and 2011

For Year 9 students, an average of just under 10,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students participated in the tests, representing between 78.0 per cent and 79.4 per cent of Year 9 students. The participation rates for 'Other' Year 9 students ranged from 93.2 per cent 94.1 per cent. Absentee rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were quite high and ranged from 18.3 per cent to 20.6 per cent, while for 'Other' students, absentee rates were around 5.0 per cent. From 2010 to 2011, the participation rates decreased in all domains for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; however, these were only slight, with the largest decrease at 0.8 of a percentage point.

Leadership, quality teaching and workforce development

Performance indicator 11

Number of professional development hours on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and cultural and linguistic competence training undertaken by principals and teachers.

There is no national data set for this performance indicator. Further information is available in the State and Territory chapters of this report.

Performance indicator 12

Number and Full-Time equivalents (FTEs) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals, teachers and education workers (AIEWs and equivalents).

There is no national data set for this performance indicator. Further information is available in the State and Territory chapters of this report.

Performance indicator 13

Average Length of Service of Principals and Teachers in Focus schools with high enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

There is no national data set for this performance indicator. Further information is available in the State and Territory chapters of this report.

Pathways to real post-school options

Performance indicator 14

Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20 – 24 who have attained Year 12 or equivalent or Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate II or above.

Note: Although the performance indicator for this domain cites a national data source, there is no publicly available national level data for 2011.

Further information is available in the State and Territory chapters of this report.

Report on activities in support of the Plan at the national level

Readiness for school

Intended outcome

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children under 5 years of age benefit from inter-agency actions to improve their social, physical and cognitive development
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are developmentally ready to benefit from schooling (e.g. in their physical health, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills, communication skills and general knowledge).

Targets

- Increased proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children participating in quality early childhood education and development and child care services
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students perform at equivalent or better rates to 'Other' students in school on-entry assessment.

Source: Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA), 2011, *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014*.

Action 1

MCEECDYA will support the development of a national Early Years Development Workforce Strategy. This Strategy will address the skills and capacity of the current and future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's workforce, including the early childhood educational and care sector in rural and remote areas. Connections will be made with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educator Workforce Strategy (see Action 33).

The Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) is currently working with all States and Territories on the development of a national Early Years Workforce Strategy. This Workforce Strategy

will complement and build upon existing Australian Government and State and Territory government measures aimed at building a qualified and sustainable early childhood workforce.

Development of the Early Years Workforce Strategy will be informed by the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educator Workforce Strategy and the National Indigenous Employment Strategy. The final draft of the Strategy will be provided to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Working Group for comment. Once final comments have been received and incorporated, the strategy will be provided to all ministers for final endorsement through the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) in 2012.

Action 2

MCEECDYA will support the use of the Early Years Learning Framework in all early childhood settings to ensure the delivery of quality early education programs through partnerships with families. The Framework also supports the cultural competence of early childhood educators in developing and delivering programs for young children. An Educators' Guide and other resources will also support educators in developing their cultural, linguistic and contextual knowledge about the communities in which they teach and support them in engaging with these communities.

The *Early Years Learning Framework* is the first national curriculum framework for early childhood education. It is a part of the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care and is incorporated into the National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and School Age Care.

The final rounds of the consultation on the National Law and Regulations were conducted in 2011, with submissions received from a variety of peak bodies, including Indigenous representatives.

The Early Years Learning Framework, together with a Families' Guide, was first disseminated to early childhood services across Australia in October 2009. States and Territories, and other peak bodies conducted professional development activities on the *Early Years Learning Framework* in 2011.

An Educators' Guide to the *Early Years Learning Framework* was released on the DEEWR website on 6 December 2010 and disseminated to early childhood services in February 2011. This guide, available online – http://www.deewr.gov.au/earlychildhood/policy_agenda/quality/pages/earlyyearslearningframework.aspx contains chapters on cultural competence (Chapter 6) and on competence in working with Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures (Chapter 7).

The Australian Government DEEWR has provided a range of support and training to assist with implementation of the *Early Years Learning Framework*:

- Professional Support Coordinators to provide training and mentoring to eligible childcare services
- Inclusion Support Agencies to support educators in inclusive practice
- Early Childhood Australia, which is funded to provide web-based support including an interactive online forum and e-newsletter.

In addition, specifically targeted support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services will include Indigenous Professional Support Units in each State and Territory, who assist Indigenous Services to deliver quality programs under the *Early Years Learning Framework*.

Action 3

MCEECDYA will reference, synthesise and report on longitudinal studies into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early childhood education and care in the annual report on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–14. Research will consider integrated approaches for children aged 0–8 years, examining barriers to and enablers of success and curricula and resources that provide skill development in the foundations for learning essential for the first year of formal schooling.

Longitudinal studies and data sets

Initial action has included scoping the current datasets. The Australian Government runs and/or funds the following longitudinal studies and datasets:

- Footprints in Time: the Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC)

- Growing up in Australia: the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC)
- Study of Environment of Aboriginal Resilience and Child Health (SEARCH)
- Effective Early Educational Experiences for Kids (E4Kids) study
- Australian Early Development Index (AEDI)
- National Data Collections

Footprints in Time: the Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC)

The Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC) is an initiative of the Australian Government, managed by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), under the guidance of the *Footprints in Time* Steering Committee. Funding for this study is ongoing.

LSIC is a long-term research project following 1,677 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in two groups (one including children between six to 18 months old, and the other group comprising children three-and-a-half to four-and-a-half years of age, when the study began in 2008) and their families from 11 sites across Australia. The main objective of the study is to follow the children throughout their childhood and teenage years to improve understanding of, and policy response to, the diverse circumstances faced by these children, their families and communities.

It collects data every year from parents or carers of the participant children covering: (i) children's environment and services such as childcare, education, health; and (ii) developmental outcomes, such as health, social and cognitive development. Data collection for Wave 4 was completed in 2011.

The first LSIC Research Conference was held in conjunction with the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC) in November 2011. Findings from the latest wave were presented on a range of topics including preschool participation, school readiness and educational outcomes. Research materials using LSIC data can be accessed online – <http://flosse.fahcsia.gov.au/>. Detailed information about LSIC can be found online at http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/indigenous/pubs/families/lisic/wave_1/Pages/what_is.aspx.

Growing up in Australia: the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC)

The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC) is another initiative of the Australian Government managed by FaHCSIA. It is a national study of approximately 10,000 children (aged 3-19 months and 4-5 years old when the study began in 2004) and their families across Australia, and funding for this study is also ongoing. Wave 4 data collection was completed during 2010 to 2011 with additional questions on computer usage and a new method (Time Use Diary) for the older children.

The 2011 LSAC/LSIC Research Conference covered a wide range of topics and presented findings from the latest wave of interviews. Research materials using LSAC data can be accessed online – <http://flosse.fahcsia.gov.au/>.

It should be noted that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sample in LSAC is not fully representative due to the exclusion of remote areas, and the rate of attrition in later waves being high, in comparison with the non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sample. Whilst LSAC has a fairly small sample of Indigenous children (just over 400) they can be tracked over time. The main website for the study is <http://www.aifs.gov.au/growingup/>.

Study of Environment of Aboriginal Resilience and Child Health (SEARCH)

The Study of Environment of Aboriginal Resilience and Child Health (SEARCH) is a longitudinal study of the health of urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children attending Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services. The Australian Government DEEWR has provided one-off funding to advance the study, and the first progress report was submitted to the department in 2011.

To date, data collection has been completed from 1,372 children aged zero to 17 years and 597 parents/carers. Analysis on factors relevant to school readiness, health and developmental outcomes is currently underway. Collection of the longitudinal information will commence in the middle of 2012. Further information about SEARCH can be found online at – <http://www.saxinstitute.org.au/researchassetsprograms/ImprovingAboriginalHealththroughResearch/SEARCH.cfm?objid=410>.

Effective Early Educational Experiences for Kids (E4Kids) study

The Effective Early Educational Experiences for Kids (E4Kids) is a five-year longitudinal study of more than 2,600 children, investigating the impact of participation in childcare and kindergarten on child education outcomes. DEEWR has provided one-off funding to advance the study, and the first progress report was submitted to the Department in 2011. Some analysis on childcare usage patterns and its quality is currently underway. Further information about E4Kids can be found online at – http://education.unimelb.edu.au/news_and_activities/projects/E4Kids.

Australian Early Development Index (AEDI)

The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) is a population measure of children's early development by the time they are in their first year of full-time schooling. Following the success of the first national implementation of the AEDI in 2009, the Australian Government has committed to collect this important data every three years. The next AEDI collection will take place from May to July 2012, with results expected to be available in 2013.

During 2011, governments and communities (early childhood service providers, schools, parents, non-government organisations and local government) used the AEDI results to: inform planning for playgroups and transition to school programs; to strengthen community partnerships; and improve collaborative approaches for service delivery. Information on the AEDI, including the 2009 National Report, community maps and community profiles is available online at – <http://www2.rch.org.au/aedi/>.

National Data Collections

There are also a number of relevant national administrative data collections, including:

- National Collection on Early Childhood Education and Care (NCECEC): This Australian Bureau of Statistics collection, conducted annually since 2010, aims to provide comparable State and Territory statistics on early childhood education. Compiled from the NCECEC ABS publication, the *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education*,

Australia, 2011 (Cat.No.4240.0) was released on 13 April 2012. Further information on the release can be found online at – [http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/2462BA7A835DA939CA2579DE00135B61/\\$File/42400_2011.pdf](http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/2462BA7A835DA939CA2579DE00135B61/$File/42400_2011.pdf).

- National Preschool Census (NPC): The NPC collects information on preschool participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and all students across Australia. The Census is conducted annually for DEEWR by the Data Analysis Australia. The 2010 Census Summary Report was published in May 2011 and can be accessed online at – <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Resources/Documents/NationalPreschoolCensus2010.pdf>.

Clearinghouses

The Australian Government supports two clearinghouses, which publish issues papers and resource sheets summarising research and evidence:

- the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse, managed by the Australian Institute for Health and Welfare, can be viewed online at – <http://www.aihw.gov.au/closingthegap/publications>. Several of their publications and resource sheets relate to school readiness, as well as barriers and enablers to engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in schooling
- the Communities and Families Clearinghouse Australia, currently managed by the Australian Institute of Family Studies, can be viewed online at – <http://www.aifs.gov.au/cafca/>.

Action 4

MCEECDYA will commission further development of on-entry assessment frameworks and guidelines for their use in particular settings.

Jurisdictions currently use a variety of on-entry diagnostic tools and/or testing in pre-primary education. These enable schools to identify at the earliest possible stage students for whom a specific case-management plan is required. Students can then be tracked and monitored throughout their schooling, and this

approach provides opportunity for more targeted and purposeful planning and implementation of programs.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Working Group began exploring collaborative activity with the Early Childhood Development Working Group on this action during 2011. This work will progress over 2012.

Engagement and connections

Intended outcome

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are engaged in and benefiting from schooling. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and communities are empowered through the promotion of their identity, culture and leadership in community partnerships with providers of early childhood and school education.

Targets

- Increased number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students involved in personalised learning
- Active school-community partnership agreements in place within Focus schools.

Source: MCEECDYA, 2011, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014.

Action 9

MCEECDYA will seek support from the Australian Health Ministers' Conference and Community and Disability Services Ministers' Conference to strengthen connections between schools and health, welfare, family support, and youth and community services at local and systemic levels. Consideration will also be given to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with disabilities.

During 2010, officials representing the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs

(MCEECDYA), the Australian Health Ministers' Conference and the Community and Disability Services Ministers' Conference met and agreed to initially prioritise three themes of collaborative work:

- (i) Otitis media (a chronic middle ear infection which potentially affects the ear drum and causes hearing impairment)
- (ii) supporting young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers
- (iii) early childhood education with an emphasis on connection to, and of, services at a local level.

These three areas are aligned with the National Disability Strategy and the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children.

During 2011, an integrated strategy to advance this work was considered by officials of the Working Group on Indigenous Reform. Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies were consulted as the draft was developed. Further consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, and organisations is expected as the work progresses.

Action 10

Governments commit to maintaining appropriate advisory arrangements to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, cultures and languages can be considered when developing policy and programs.

Three advisory mechanisms are currently used to provide advice to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are considered by governments at both the State or Territory and national levels.

The First Peoples Education Advisory Group, established on 5 December 2011, is a cross-sectoral expert advisory committee that provides policy advice to the Australian Government on Closing the Gap in educational outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and other Australian students in early childhood and school settings. This group includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives from academia, school education, early childhood education and community organisations.

The Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies (IECBs) provide an important link between the Australian, State and Territory governments on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues across education sectors, including early childhood, primary and secondary schooling, vocational education and training and government and non-government education providers. IECBs in each State and Territory promote engagement between the Australian Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and education providers to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education outcomes. The IECBs provide advice to the Minister for Education on strategies to improve education outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and the effectiveness of mainstream and supplementary education policies and programs.

The Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council, established in 2004, provides policy advice to the Australian Government on enhancing higher education participation and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (see Action 45).

Action 11

The Australian Government and education providers will work together to promote the cross-cultural value of formal education in contemporary Australia to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and families. This will help to create partnerships with families to build from and strengthen their capacity to be involved in their children's education.

During 2011, DEEWR began work on an information campaign addressing this action. The aim of the information campaign is to raise awareness of the importance of attending school every day and to increase positive attitudes of communities towards education in order to increase school attendance and engagement in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and low socio-economic communities.

DEEWR has engaged Orima Research to conduct developmental research for the campaign. To date, the developmental research is halfway through completion, and completion of final focus groups and interviews is expected in early 2012. On completion of the research, DEEWR plans to develop a detailed communication strategy. It is also expected that the findings from the research will be used across DEEWR to inform future policy development around school attendance and engagement,

and shared with participating schools to further assist them in their efforts to increase school attendance and engagement at the school level.

Action 12

As part of the implementation of the Australian Government's National Indigenous Languages Policy, a study will be commissioned into the feasibility of a national panel of experts framing the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, including consideration of out-of-school schemes.

The National Indigenous Languages Policy is an Australian Government initiative, jointly co-ordinated by the Office of the Arts at the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport, and the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA). The direction of the National Indigenous Languages Policy is supported by the work of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) on the development of the Australian Curriculum: Languages.

In November 2011, ACARA released the Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Languages Paper (Shape Paper). The Shape Paper recognises the unique status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages as the languages of the first peoples of Australia. The Australian Curriculum: Languages includes the development of language-specific curricula and a Framework for Australian Languages (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages).

To support this and wider work, ACARA established two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander expert advisory panels to provide expertise and advice on curriculum documents. The Australian Languages Expert Advisory Panel focused on, and reviewed, the work of the languages curriculum writers. The second panel provided advice on how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures can be best incorporated into the Australian Curriculum.

ACARA is currently developing an Australian Languages Framework to be implemented within agreed community protocols and will establish, maintain and extend language programs in schools that are responsive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' needs and aspirations for the revitalisation of their languages.

It is noted that the national panels of experts established by ACARA and the ongoing development of the Australian Languages Framework will assist in framing the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

Significant funding for languages education is being provided to States and Territories through the National Education Agreement, allowing jurisdictions flexibility to determine how funding is allocated according to the needs of schools, and more importantly, student needs. Funding can be used to support and maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages programs operating in government schools. In addition, \$62.4 million is being provided from 2010–2011 to 2013–2014 through the *Schools Assistance Act* (2008) to support the teaching of languages, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, in non-government schools.

Action 13

MCEECDYA's National Plan for Languages Education in Australian Schools will acknowledge the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and require all States and Territories to communicate their expectations surrounding the teaching of these languages to schools.

The Shape Paper was released in November 2011 and a Framework for Australian Languages (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages) (see Action 12) is currently being developed. It will be implemented within agreed community protocols and will establish, maintain and extend language programs in schools that are responsive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' needs and aspirations for the revitalisation of their languages.

The consultation process for the Shape Paper raised a number of issues that required national discussion in relation to languages education. As a result, ACARA is working with the Strategic Policy Working Group (SPWG) to determine how these issues should be addressed.

To avoid duplication, the Australian Education, Early Childhood and Youth Systems Officials Committee (AEEYSOC) members agreed that the draft *National Plan for Languages Education in Australian Schools 2011–2014* (National Plan) should be considered with the forward work of ACARA in relation to languages education.

Action 14

The Australian Government and education providers will work together to develop options to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in regional and remote areas to access high quality secondary schooling while retaining links with their communities.

The Australian Government and education providers currently have a number of agreements and national programs in place to provide quality secondary schooling options while retaining links with communities. These include:

- the National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions
- Compact with Young Australians
- Youth Connections Program
- School Business Community Partnership Brokers
- the Indigenous Youth Leadership Program
- Sporting Chance Program
- Trade Training Centres in Schools Program
- Reducing Substance Abuse Program
- No School No Play Initiative
- Boarding Facilities in the Northern Territory.

Further details about jurisdictional activity for these programs can be found in State and Territory Chapters 5 to 12.

National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions

The National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions between the Australian Government and respective State and Territory governments commits all parties to work towards achieving a Year 12 or equivalent attainment rate of 90 per cent by 2015, and to halve the gap between Year 12 or equivalent attainment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people by 2020.

Compact with Young Australians

Although there are no incentives directly linked to the halving the gap target, the Compact with Young Australians includes

a requirement that all young people participate in schooling (or an approved equivalent) to Year 10, and then participate full-time (at least 25 hours per week) in education, training or employment, or a combination of these activities, until age 17.

Youth Connections Program

The Youth Connections Program assists young people who are at risk of disengaging from secondary education, or who have left school, to continue with their education and ultimately gain a Year 12, or equivalent, level education. It does so through individualised, case-managed and youth-focused outreach activities.

In 2011, approximately 5,980 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people participated in the Youth Connections program. This represented 20 per cent of the Youth Connections caseload. Over 2,440 (or 41 per cent) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants during that period achieved a final outcome, which represents re-engagement or a sustained improvement in a young person's engagement with education, training or employment. A further 1,100 (or 18 per cent) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants in the Youth Connections program were assessed as making significant progress in addressing their barriers to full engagement in education.

School Business Community Partnership Brokers

School Business Community Partnership Brokers foster a whole-of-community approach, that support young people's learning and development with the key goal of ensuring that young Australians attain Year 12 or equivalent qualifications.

Partnership Brokers build partnerships that empower local communities to take ownership of relevant issues and drive change with the aims of improving education and transition outcomes for all young people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. There were 297 partnerships with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focus as at January 2012, comprising 2 per cent of the total partnerships (noting that these figures exclude Victorian data, as the Partnership Brokers program is delivered through the Victorian Government's Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN), and is managed by the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD).

Indigenous Youth Leadership Program

The Indigenous Youth Leadership Program provides scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, mainly from remote and very remote regions, to attend high performing schools or universities. While the program supports vocational and academic post-school pathways, it promotes the value of university study. Therefore, young people who have completed secondary school with the support of the program are given priority for tertiary scholarships.

The program is delivered through eight Partnership Brokers nationally. Tertiary students may attend any university, while secondary schools must apply to participate and meet criteria including:

- demonstrated excellent academic results for students
- a culturally sensitive and appropriate environment
- a proven capacity to engage with community and student families.

In 2011, 68 high performing schools provided education to 516 secondary students and 91 students completed Year 12. In 2011, the program had a retention rate of 95 per cent amongst secondary level students. Around 120 tertiary scholarships were also awarded.

Between 2006 and 2011, there were 289 Year 12 completions by Indigenous Youth Leadership Program scholars, with a retention rate of 85 per cent. Students who completed Year 12 in 2011 are able to continue their pathway to further study with support from the Indigenous Youth Mobility Program (see Action 45) or a tertiary-level Indigenous Youth Leadership Program scholarship.

Sporting Chance Program

The Sporting Chance Program uses sport and recreation as a vehicle to increase the level of engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in their schooling to encourage positive educational outcomes. The program has two elements: school-based sports academies and education engagement strategies. School-based sports academies target secondary school students at risk of not successfully completing their schooling through the provision of:

- innovative and high-quality sports-focused learning
- opportunities to develop leadership
- enhanced education and career opportunities
- activities to improve the health and wellbeing of learners, including self-esteem and confidence, as well as the promotion of positive learning experiences that foster success.

Education engagement strategies deliver a range of sport and recreation-based activities to engage students in education, including those with a focus on: developing healthy and positive lifestyles; mentoring; promotion of leadership skills and exposure to community and sports role models.

In 2011, under the Sporting Chance Program, there were 59 school-based sports academies and five education engagement strategies targeting some 11,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary and secondary school students across Western Australia, the Northern Territory, South Australia, New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland.

Outcomes of the program in 2011 include:

- a 75 per cent average attendance rate for academy students, compared to 69 per cent for the total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student cohort in participating schools
- average attendance rates of academy students ranging from 60 per cent to 98 per cent
- participating schools reporting that, on average, over 57 per cent of academy students improved in their literacy and numeracy performance
- qualitative reporting from both providers and classroom teachers indicating significant improvement in self-esteem, attitude and behaviour of academy students
- a total of 425 participants completed Year 12 in 2011.

Trade Training Centres in Schools Program

The Trade Training Centres in Schools Program will provide \$2.5 billion over 10 years, from 2008 to 2017, to enable eligible secondary schools across Australia to seek funding for Trade Training Centres (TTCs).

The program allows secondary students from years 9 to 12 to:

- access quality and relevant vocational education and trade training in schools to give them a broader range of options
- help improve Year 12 retention rates
- enhance pathways into vocational careers which will help meet the future skill needs of Australia
- help close the gap by contributing towards halving the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other students in Year 12 or equivalent attainment rates by 2020.

As at the end of 2011, four funding rounds had been held with 225 projects approved in regional and remote Australia, representing 60 per cent of all projects approved for program funding. Of these regional and remote projects, 130 (58 per cent) will support the education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. At the end of 2011, 68 (30 per cent) of the TTCs approved for regional and remote Australia were operational with 42 (62 per cent) of these providing training to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

To facilitate and accelerate the rollout of the program to schools servicing Remote Service Delivery (RSD) communities, a dedicated DEEWR Program Officer was put in place from Round Three to work closely with education authorities, schools and community stakeholders to provide specialised and intensive assistance to support developing robust funding proposals. By the end of Round Four, program funding had been approved for 18 (62 per cent) of the 29 RSD schools.

Reducing Substance Abuse Program

The \$3.5 million Reducing Substance Abuse Program (2009 to 2012) is funded through the *Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Act* (2000) and is a component of the Australian Government's Petrol Sniffing Strategy, which aims to reduce the incidence and impact of petrol sniffing and other forms of substance abuse amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth and communities.

In 2011, DEEWR delivered three pilot projects in the following petrol sniffing zones: the Central Desert, Northern Territory; Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands, South Australia; and East Kimberley, Western Australia. The objective of

the projects was to increase pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth aged 10 to 25 years of age who are at risk of, or engaged in, substance misuse to re-engage with formal education, training or employment.

The three pilot projects will target some 190 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in 2011 and 2012. The projects are delivered through DEEWR's Youth Connections Program, which will determine if the needs of the target group can be met through the Australian Government's Youth Attainment and Transitions National Partnership.

An evaluation of the pilot started in August 2011 to determine the effectiveness of delivering the Reducing Substance Abuse Program through a mainstream initiative. The evaluation is scheduled for completion in July 2012.

No School No Play Initiative

The No School No Play Initiative aims to build strong partnerships between sporting organisations, parents and communities of secondary school students to promote the benefits of school attendance. The Australian Government has provided a total of \$2 million to implement the initiative from July 2010 to December 2012. Funding will assist the sporting organisations to include a focus on supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary school students.

Eight national sporting organisations have been contracted to implement No School No Play initiatives throughout Australia. Implementation is focusing on sport-specific strategies to strengthen the message with students and parents, such as player and parent school attendance pledges, sports-based reward and incentive schemes and engaging high profile sports figures as role models.

Boarding Facilities in the Northern Territory Initiative

The Boarding Facilities in the Northern Territory Initiative aims to provide accommodation options that assist young people from remote areas to access secondary schooling. These facilities are not boarding schools or colleges, but supervised accommodation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, designed to be close to an existing school, enabling young people from each

of the targeted regions to access a quality, full-time secondary education.

In 2007, \$28.9 million was made available for the construction and operation of three new boarding facilities in the Northern Territory for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary students. The Indigenous Land Corporation has committed an additional capital contribution of \$15 million towards the facilities, bringing total investment to \$43.9 million over four years.

The sites for these boarding facilities are: Wadeye, East Arnhem and the Warlpiri Triangle. By the end of 2011, the construction of the Wadeye facility was near completion. Aboriginal Hostels Limited was engaged to manage the construction and operate the boarding facility and a local advisory committee (that meets every six weeks) was providing cultural and community advice on the construction and operating model for the facility.

In East Arnhem, Garrthlala was announced as the location for the facility. A regional advisory committee was established (that meets every six weeks) and the site selection is nearing finalisation. The technical feasibility study is near completion and lease negotiations are progressing. In the Warlpiri Triangle, a preferred location has been identified. However, final negotiations are yet to be determined.

The Australian Government is committed to building and ensuring broad-based community support for the initiative, with further negotiations required with the Northern Territory Government and the Warlpiri Triangle communities to progress this site.

ABSTUDY

The ABSTUDY Scheme is an ongoing special measure to assist in addressing the educational disadvantage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Financial assistance can facilitate access to secondary schooling for students who may otherwise not be able to access an appropriate level of education.

In addition to the primary benefit, living allowance, the ABSTUDY scheme includes a number of supplementary benefits, which recognise the unique circumstances of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and are provided to address particular areas of disadvantage.

Attendance

Intended outcome

- All compulsory school-aged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are enrolled in school and progressing through schooling at the same rate as non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Targets

- Attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are equivalent to non-Indigenous student attendance rates.
- All compulsory school-aged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are enrolled in school.
- Increased retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
- Increased grade progression ratios for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Source: MCEECDYA, 2011, *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014*.

Action 22

MCEECDYA will dedicate National Project Funds in 2011 to further develop a better evidence base of what works in improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student attendance. The evidence base will consider a range of contextual information, including the way in which schools respond to the diverse linguistic, cultural and geographical contexts in which they operate.

The Evidence Base Project is funded with \$450,000 from the MCEECDYA National Project Fund and is Phase 1 of a two-phase project. Phase 1 is an environmental scan of effective attendance policies and programs through literature reviews and stakeholder consultations, which will inform the development of a searchable online evidence base of successful strategies in Phase 2.

The Project Team and its Terms of Reference have been agreed. The role of DEEWR is to provide support to the project and the

Project Team who provide strategic guidance at critical points in the project. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare was engaged in December 2011 to progress the project.

Action 23

MCEECDYA will initiate work to establish mechanisms for tracking individual students (enrolment and attendance) from at least the first year of compulsory schooling to post-school destinations.

During 2011, the work program of the Learner Identity Management Sub-Committee (previously the Unique Student Identifier Sub-committee of the Strategic Cross-Sectoral Data Committee) was progressed. One project undertaken canvassed the implementation and use of student identifiers across the Australian school sector. This work provided a basis for further discussion of possible approaches to ensure that students across the schools sector can be uniquely tracked.

A data linkage forum, held during 2011, brought together relevant parties from across the sector to discuss opportunities and options to effectively link education data.

Under the Digital Education Revolution, the National Schools Interoperability Program (NSIP) is supporting the implementation of a Systems Interoperability Framework (SIF) for Australia. This model provides a protocol for linking together education data systems through a set of rules and definitions, which enable disparate systems to be employed from one school to the next, to share information.

A key NSIP achievement in 2011 was the Tri-Border Attendance Strategy, which relies on SIF standards. The Tri-Border Attendance Strategy involves the exchange of identity and attendance data for highly mobile students along the Northern Territory, South Australian and Western Australian borders (see Action 24).

In February 2011, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) endorsed the preliminary business case for the Unique Student Identifier (USI) and agreed the purpose of the USI is to record all accredited education and training undertaken and qualifications achieved for each individual who accesses vocational education and training (VET) over his or her lifetime.

COAG agreed to five design principles for the USI. In November 2011, the Standing Council on Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment (SCOTESE) endorsed the business case for COAG's consideration. The final business case was underpinned by expert advice on technical specifications, costings, legal requirements, privacy and governance. It was supported by the outcomes of the public consultation process and was also informed by an Expert Advisory Group.

A consultation Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) was also released for public comment from 23 December 2011 to 20 January 2012. A broad range of stakeholders, including industry, VET providers, relevant State and Territory and national agencies, were invited to comment on the RIS.

Action 24

The Australian, Western Australian, South Australian and Northern Territory Governments will continue working with non-government providers to develop strategies to better record enrolment and attendance of highly mobile students from remote communities.

The Tri-Border Attendance Strategy has been finalised after three and a half years' implementation, from June 2008 to December 2011, with its total funding of \$682,000 being allocated by the Australian Government.

The project has fulfilled its contractual obligation by producing the Central Schools System (CSS) to track down student enrolment and attendance records, involving over 80,000 students from 277 government and non-government schools in the tri-border area of Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory.

The data gathered via the CSS from February 2009 to December 2011 revealed that 2,968 students experienced high-level mobility. For instance, during this period: 2,270 students attended three schools; 552 attended four schools; 121 attended five schools; 21 attended six schools; two attended seven schools, one attended eight schools and another attended nine schools. Furthermore, 527 students were identified as enrolled in Western Australia and Northern Territory schools, 55 in South Australia and Northern Territory schools and 106 in Western Australian government and Kimberley Catholic schools.

The capture of student records via the CSS helps to identify patterns of student mobility, which enables teachers to plan and deliver effective teaching and learning for transient students to catch up with lessons learnt by their peers.

In December 2011, the project won two awards (Australian Regional Winner and People's Choice Award) at the 2011 Australian Regional Instructional Management Systems Learning Impact Awards organised by the Information Management System (IMS) Global Learning Consortium.

These awards are recognition from the Consortium of the project's outstanding application of technology to address a most significant challenge facing global education and training. As winner of the awards, the project is invited to be assessed in May 2012 by a panel of global experts at the 2012 Global IMS Learning Impact Awards, for its ability to affect educational outcomes.

Literacy and numeracy

Intended outcome

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are meeting basic literacy and numeracy standards and overall levels of literacy and numeracy achievement are improving.

Targets

- Halve the gap in reading, writing and numeracy achievement between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Indigenous students by 2018.
- Increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student participation rates in NAPLAN.

Source: MCEECDYA, 2011, *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014*.

Action 27

The Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) will regularly review NAPLAN tests to ensure that they are not culturally biased against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is an independent statutory authority responsible for the overall management of the Australian National Assessment Program, in collaboration with representatives from all States and Territories and non-government school sectors.

In preparing the assessments test, developers must ensure that National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) tests are not culturally biased against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Appropriate trialling and equating studies were conducted for the 2011 NAPLAN tests.

Schools participated in the 2011 NAPLAN tests during May 2011 and the results are reported in the NAPLAN 2011 National Report. School level results are reported directly to schools and publicly on the My School website. Parents/Carers receive an individual report on their child's achievements in the tests in September of the year of reporting.

Action 28

The Australian Government will work with education providers to develop and maintain a national database of effective, evidence-based literacy and numeracy strategies to support the sharing of best practice. Bilingual and bidialectal evidence-based strategies will be considered for inclusion in the database.

DEEWR has engaged with Education Services Australia (ESA) to develop a database of effective literacy and numeracy strategies. This database is on the Teach Learn Share website, at <http://www.teachlearnshare.gov.au/>, which was launched on 21 November 2011.

All submissions for consideration for publication will be fully assessed by an independent panel of experts, and if appropriate, these submissions will be recommended for publication on the website.

This cross-jurisdictional Expert Reference Group has been established to oversee the development of the database with membership drawn from those bodies that have the most to offer in building a strengthened understanding of effective literacy and numeracy practices.

The Expert Reference Group comprises the parties linked to the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy, namely: the Australian Government, States and Territories; representatives

with national and international literacy and numeracy knowledge and expertise; those with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and special education expertise, and a practitioner knowledge base. This group will have responsibility for driving the evidence base and ultimately, in selecting the material that will be included.

Action 29

The Australian Government and education providers will work together to support access to family literacy and numeracy programs, including multilingual family programs, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and target participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in intensive support playgroups and other family support services.

There are a number of activities in the school, early childhood education and care, and post-school education sectors that support this action.

School sector

During 2011, DEEWR began work on an information campaign addressing this action.

The aim of the information campaign is raise awareness of the importance of attending school every day and increase positive attitudes of communities towards education in order to increase school attendance and engagement in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and low socio-economic communities.

DEEWR has engaged Orima Research to conduct developmental research for the campaign. To date, the developmental research is halfway through completion, with final focus groups and interviews expected to be completed in early 2012.

On completion of the research, DEEWR plans to develop a detailed communication strategy that outlines the key messages, communication activities and timing for the information campaign.

It is also expected that the findings from the research will be used across DEEWR to inform future policy development around school attendance and engagement, and shared with participating schools to further assist them in their efforts to increase school attendance and engagement at the local level.

Early Childhood Education and Care sector

Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY)

In 2011, the two-year home-based parenting and early childhood Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY), was rolled-out in 15 communities. This additional rollout added to the 35 locations that were progressively rolled-out in 2009 and 2010, bringing the total HIPPY communities nationally to 50.

Of the 50 locations, Katherine, Pioneer (Mt Isa), Inala, La Perouse and Alice Springs all reported a high number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments in 2011.

The Australian Government committed \$32.5 million over five years (2008–2012) to rollout HIPPY in 50 communities and support around 3,000 families. In 2011, the program was extended in 23 of the existing locations for an additional cohort of children commencing in 2012 through to December 2013. These 23 locations included Pioneer (Mt Isa), Inala, La Perouse and Alice Springs.

While these sites have a high number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments, the program also operates in 31 locations, which have identified Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in the 2011 year.

HIPPY builds upon parental strengths, and empowers parents and carers to take an active role in their children's education, development and overall wellbeing. This occurs through parents and carers working with a home tutor to read, play and undertake educational activities with their child for around 15 minutes per day, 5 days per week. Parents and carers also attend regular group gatherings and social activities.

The Australian Government commissioned an evaluation on the national rollout of HIPPY, and in late 2011, the HIPPY evaluation report, *Investing in Our Future: An evaluation of the Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY)* was released by the Hon. Kate Ellis MP, Minister for Employment Participation and Childcare, and the Hon. Peter Garrett AM, MP, Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth. The evaluation report, available online at: <http://www.hippyaustralia.org.au/research.html>, shows that HIPPY is

working well in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and there were many reports of positive impacts.

Among the positive reports were improvements in the following:

- increased confidence for parents to teach their child
- increased confidence for parents to talk to their child's teacher
- improved parenting skills: patience and responding to difficult behaviour
- better relationship between parents and child and improved quality time spent with the child
- increased social connectedness from meeting other parents
- the child becoming familiar and confident with schoolwork
- more insight about the school's requirements and expectations
- better awareness of their child's skills, abilities and academic needs
- pride, for both the parent and the child, in the child's learning and achievement.

The evaluation report also highlighted that:

- successfully engaging communities with a high number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples takes significantly more time and this was evident when recruiting and enrolling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents
- many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are generally sceptical about programs and successfully engaging the community was dependent on the relationship between the HIPPY staff and the local community
- maintaining engagement requires flexible modes of program delivery.

Flexibility in the mode of delivery, taking time to break down program content and modifying program materials to suit varying literacy levels enabled parents to gain the confidence to teach their child and also provided a sense of ownership.

Data for the period 1 January to 31 December 2011 shows that 2,451 mothers and 52 fathers took part in HIPPY.

Furthermore:

- 245 (10 per cent) of these mothers and 11 (21 per cent) of these fathers identified as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- 434 (14 per cent) children had at least one parent identified as being an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Australian
- 57 (8 per cent) of the children who graduated from HIPPY had at least one parent identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- another 497 families involved *both* parents and 57 (11 per cent) of these families had at least one parent identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- 40 (1 per cent) of the participating families listed Aboriginal English as the main language they speak at home, and 25 families speak an Indigenous language at home either as the main language, or in addition to another language.

Several HIPPY sites have adjusted their delivery methods to accommodate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families whose cultural needs differ from the traditional HIPPY delivery. There are now two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander themed HIPPY storybooks available – *Kuppi's Clever Surprise Plan* and *Merinya and Nupiya*.

National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development (Children and Family Centres)

Based on information provided by jurisdictions, of the 38 locations identified, 36 physical sites have been identified and agreed in consultation with communities (this does not include Roebourne, Western Australia and Palmerston, Northern Territory).

The construction of three centres has been completed and these are now operational: West Belconnen, ACT; Whittlesea, Victoria; and Halls Creek, Western Australia.

Construction has commenced at a further eight sites: Bairnsdale, Victoria; Bridgewater and Geeveston, Tasmania; Fitzroy Crossing, Western Australia; Pukatja, South Australia; Doomadgee, Mareeba and Mornington Island, Queensland.

Construction will commence at a further six sites by June 2012: Kununurra, Western Australia; Ballina, Mt Druitt, Campbelltown, Blacktown Two, Brewarrina, Gunnedah, Lightning Ridge, Nowra and Toronto, New South Wales.

Six sites are expected to be completed by June 2012: Bridgewater, Tasmania; Fitzroy Crossing, Western Australia; Pukatja, South Australia; Doomadgee, Mornington Island and Mareeba, Queensland.

Interim services are currently being delivered at 17 sites: Bairnsdale, Victoria; Bridgewater and Geeveston, Tasmania; Pukatja, South Australia; Mt Druitt, Campbelltown and Ballina, New South Wales; Maningrida, Ngukurr, Yuendumu and Gunbalanya, Northern Territory; Mornington Island, Doomadgee, Mareeba, Cairns, Ipswich and Mt Isa, Queensland.

Based on the limited information provided by jurisdictions:

- at least 39 staff have been employed across 13 of the centres
- staff recruitment is underway in at least 16 locations
- training is underway in at least 11 locations.

Post-school sector

Indigenous Employment Program (IEP)

The Australian Government Indigenous Employment Program (IEP) supports activities that develop the capacity of employers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their communities, in order to increase opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through employment, business and other economic development activities.

From 1 July 2009 to 31 December 2011, there were 70,882 commencements in employment and training and other assistance, with 32,871 in employment and 38,011 in training and other assistance.

In the 2011 calendar year, the IEP achieved 34,630 commencements in employment and training.

Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program (LLNP)

The Australian Government Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program (LLNP) seeks to improve adult job seekers' English

language, literacy and/or numeracy skills with the expectation that such improvements will enable them to participate more effectively in training or employment and lead to greater gains for them and society in the longer term. Through this program, eligible job seekers can obtain up to 800 hours of free training. The program is available to all eligible job seekers and does not specifically provide family literacy or school literacy.

LLNP training may be included, where appropriate, as part of packages of tailored assistance available under the IEP, and is incorporated into contracting arrangements with employers or providers on an as needs basis.

The LLNP has operated since January 2002 and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in the program has increased over this time. The measured outcomes under the LLNP are referrals into the program, commencements into training and completions. Namely,

- referrals of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients to LLNP have been growing steadily, and in 2011, the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients referred to LLNP was 13.4 per cent, an increase from 8.2 per cent in 2006–07
- commencements into training have increased over time, reaching a 7.8 per cent share of all commencements in 2011, which represents an increase from 4 per cent in 2006–07
- completion rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in the program have also increased significantly – from 0.6 per cent (2006–07) to a peak of 2.4 per cent (2009–10). This represents a doubling of the completions in 2009 to 2010, compared to those in 2008 to 2009. In 2011, the completion rate was 1.7 per cent. However, there are a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients (referred in 2011) that are currently in training who may not yet have completed their first training block.

To further improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation, through the Building Australia's Future Workforce measure, more places in LLNP have been allocated to targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients. Improved access to the LLNP means there will be an additional 30,000 places (\$143.1 million) over the next four years. The additional places target youth, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and mature age clients in high priority employment areas and commenced on 1 July 2011.

Leadership, quality teaching and workforce development

Intended outcome

- High performing principals and teachers are effective in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to become successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students benefit from school leaders who have a strong understanding of their students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Targets

- Increase in professional development hours in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and cultural and linguistic competence training undertaken by principals and teachers.
- Increase in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers, principals and education workers (AIEWs and equivalents).
- Increase retention of principals and teachers in hard-to-staff schools with high enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Source: MCEECDYA, 2011, *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014*.

Action 33

MCEECDYA will develop a National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educator Workforce Strategy to assist education providers to make progress towards an equitable ratio of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to students. The Strategy will support aspiring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education leaders, include initiatives to attract more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians into the education workforce and bureaucracies and provide pathways through the workforce. The Strategy will also help to recognise and

clarify the role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education workers and support their professional development and career aspirations.

The More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative (MATSI) was announced by the Hon. Peter Garrett AM, MP, Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth, on 7 July 2011. MATSI is a national program aimed at addressing the low numbers and retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers in Australian schools.

The objectives of MATSI are to:

- identify the factors that contribute to the numbers of Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander people entering and remaining in teaching positions in Australian schools
- identify the work currently being undertaken across all Australian jurisdictions to attract and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers, and identify the gaps in that current work
- determine future priority initiatives that would help to deliver against the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educator Workforce Strategy objectives in relation to teachers.

MATSI is managed by the David Unaipon College of Indigenous Education and Research of the University of South Australia.

Action 34

MCEECDYA has agreed to the development and implementation of an Australian Curriculum by the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority that will include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives to ensure that all young Australians have the opportunity to learn about, acknowledge and value the cultures and languages of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

On 14 October 2011, MCEECDYA approved the Foundation to Year 10 (F–10) achievement standards for the first four Australian Curriculum learning areas – English, mathematics, science and history.

In December 2011, MCEECDYA approved amendments to the history curriculum to strengthen its coverage of Sorry Day, the Stolen Generations and related issues. The amendments included

the study of National Reconciliation Week and National Sorry Day in Year 3; and in Year 6, the inclusion of the status and rights of children as well as Aboriginal people and/or Torres Strait Islanders, migrants and women within experiences of Australian democracy and citizenship.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority continues to be incorporated into the Australian Curriculum and ACARA remains committed to ensuring that its curriculum work acknowledges the need for all Australian children to: 'understand and acknowledge the value of Indigenous cultures and possess the knowledge, skills and understanding to contribute to, and benefit from, reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.'

Source: MCEECDYA, 2008, *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*

During 2011, work was undertaken on an Australian Curriculum for geography, languages, the arts, health and physical education, and technologies, which will incorporate this cross-curriculum priority.

During 2011, ACARA held consultation forums in relation to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures priority. The forums provided an opportunity for participants to understand how the priority is being addressed in the Australian Curriculum, and to provide feedback on the overview, organising ideas and learning area statements. The forums were in addition to ACARA's online consultations on the cross-curriculum priorities, which ran between July and September 2011.

ACARA also released its *English as an Additional Language: Teacher Resource* to support teachers as they develop teaching and learning programs using the Australian Curriculum. The English as an Additional Language resource, available online at: http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/student_diversity/eald_teacher_resource.html, is designed to help teachers make the F–10 Australian Curriculum content accessible to students for whom English is an additional language or dialect, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students whose first language is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language, including traditional languages, creoles and related varieties, or Aboriginal English.

In November 2011, ACARA released the *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Languages* paper, available online at: <http://www.acara.edu.au/languages.html>, which provides broad directions

for the development of languages curriculum. A *Framework for Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages* is being developed as part of the first phase of the languages curriculum. Development of the framework is being guided by expert curriculum writers and advisory panel members.

During 2011, ACARA also conducted an expression of interest process for membership of its Equity and Diversity Advisory Group for the next phase of curriculum development.

Action 35

Education providers in Northern and Central Australia will work more closely together to provide professional learning for staff and to share staff and resources where mutually beneficial. Providers will work with the Australian Government to establish a coordinated approach to support sustained improvement in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous contexts.

Teach Remote is a collaborative initiative between the Australian Government and the National Alliance for Remote Indigenous Schools (NARIS), which is targeting the recruitment, training, supporting and rewarding of teachers working in remote and very remote schools.

NARIS consists of over 170 member schools from Western Australia, the Northern Territory, South Australia, Queensland, New South Wales, with around 16,500 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolled students.

Teach Remote commenced in June 2011 and will implement 14 projects to support teachers and school leaders working in these communities over 2011, 2012 and 2013.

Action 36

MCEECDYA will consult with the VET and higher education sectors to develop and introduce core components on good practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, including those from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, in all pre-service teacher education courses across Australia.

Jurisdictions began familiarising themselves with the *National Professional Standards for Teachers* during 2011 and national implementation of the standards will take effect from 2013.

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) commenced a project in 2011 which will identify good practice and develop resources to support all new teachers to be adequately prepared to meet focus areas 1.4 and 2.4 of the Standards, which specifically relate to the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and to teacher understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.

The national accreditation of initial teacher education programs, which will come into effect progressively from 2013, as programs are due for re-accreditation, is linked to the standards. Under this nationally consistent system all providers of initial teacher education programs will be required to demonstrate that their graduates meet the graduate level of the standards, which include focus areas 1.4 and 2.4.

Further information about the standards is available from the AITSL website, at: <http://www.teacherstandards.aitsl.edu.au/>.

Action 37

Education providers will consult with teacher registration boards to ensure that completion of core components on good practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, including those from diverse linguistic and cultural background, in pre-service training before these requirements were introduced, education providers will ensure the provision of appropriate professional learning.

Under the nationally consistent system for the accreditation of initial teacher education programs, all teacher graduates must demonstrate they meet the graduate level as outlined in the *National Professional Standards for Teachers* to obtain provisional registration as a teacher.

Professional requirements for teacher registration under the new nationally consistent teacher registration system, which will take effect from 2013, is also based on the standards, which include a focus on the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and teacher understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.

AITSL commenced a project in 2011, which will identify good practice and develop resources to support all new and existing teachers to be adequately prepared to meet these focus areas.

Action 38

MCEECDYA will ensure that requirements for teachers to have knowledge and understanding of the learning needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, including those from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds are included in the forthcoming National Professional Standards for Teachers. This requirement will be made at graduate, proficient, highly accomplished and lead teacher levels. The Standards will inform reforms in pre-service education course accreditation and national consistency in teacher registration.

The *National Professional Standards for Teachers* underpin significant national reforms including the national accreditation of initial teacher education programs, nationally consistent teacher registration and nationally consistent certification of highly accomplished and lead teachers.

During 2011, jurisdictions began familiarising themselves with the standards, and their national implementation will take effect from 2013.

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) has continued to work with key education stakeholders on implementation of the standards, and has developed a range of supporting documentation and resources to support teachers to meet the standards.

Action 39

MCEECDYA will consult with the higher education sector to establish a coalition of universities, based on the New Zealand model, to provide evidence-based culturally and linguistically authenticated research that can directly inform classroom pedagogy.

No work was progressed on this action during 2011. It is now anticipated work will be progressed in 2013. This work is to be informed by activities being undertaken by the following organisations:

- Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)
- Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)
- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)

- Education Services Australia (ESA)
- Closing the Gap Clearinghouse (supported through the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare)
- What Works project (supported through National Curriculum Services)
- Stronger Smarter Institute (supported through the Queensland University of Technology)
- Dare to Lead project (supported through Principals Australia).

It is expected that the higher education sector will be consulted on this issue to assist officials with the development of implementation strategies for this action.

Action 40

The Australian Government and education providers will provide access to high quality, highly effective professional learning and research for current and aspiring school leaders for the purposes of improving the educational outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership will oversee and facilitate the delivery of national flagship programs.

The National Professional Standard for Principals was endorsed by MCEECDYA on 8 July 2011.

The standard sets out what principals are expected to know, understand and do to achieve excellence in their work. It acknowledges the responsibility principals have in working with members of the school community to ensure a knowledge and understanding of the traditional rights, beliefs and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their role in fostering understanding and reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Since its release in July 2011, AITSL has promulgated the standard through social media and the development of tools and resources. Further information about the standard is available from the AITSL website, at: <http://www.aitsl.edu.au/school-leaders/national-professional-standard-for-principals/national-professional-standard-for-principals.html>.

In October 2011, AITSL released a draft *Australian Charter for the Professional Learning of Teachers and School Leaders*

for national consideration. The draft charter sets out the characteristics of effective professional learning, describes professional learning activities and experiences that work and highlights the importance of good evaluation practice in professional learning.

AITSL also has an integral role in the Empowering Local Schools initiative, which seeks to deliver greater empowerment for schools to make decisions at the local level and respond better to local community for the best educational outcomes.

Under this initiative, AITSL will develop a national flagship professional learning program for principals and school leaders. The program will provide principals with a deep knowledge and understanding of requirements to lead schools with greater levels of autonomy, to promote accountability and choice, strongly associated with higher achievement for students from both disadvantaged and advantaged backgrounds using the standard.

Pathways to real post-school options

Intended outcome

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students make a successful transition from school to work and further study.

Targets

- Halve the gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Year 12 attainment or equivalent attainment rates by 2020.

Source: MCEECDYA, 2011, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014.

Action 45

MCEECDYA will seek advice from IECBs, the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council, Universities Australia and other strategic stakeholders to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who make a successful transition to university, in conjunction with new national reforms to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education.

While numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have increased over the past two decades, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to be under-represented in the higher education sector, across many indicators such as student access, participation and completion rates, and employment in universities. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' access and participation rates, and retention and success ratios for transitioning to university have been stable over the past decade. The gap in participation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and other students has widened, due to increasing participation by other Australians over the same period.

The Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People was announced in April 2011 to examine action that will identify how to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people share equally in the life and career opportunities that a quality higher education provides. The review provides the opportunity to consider new strategies to look at higher education access and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and redress the current inequality, based upon the best available evidence. The Review Panel is scheduled to report their findings to Government in May 2012.

The Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (IHEAC) provides policy advice to the Australian Government on improving higher education outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The third IHEAC (the current Council) was formed in October 2009. The third IHEAC's key outcomes in 2011, up to 31 December 2011, were:

- collaboration in the development of the Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, in line with Recommendation 30 of the Bradley Review of Australian Higher Education, including:
 - the provision of advice to Government on the terms of reference and scope of the review; and
 - representation on the Review Panel.
- development of a National Indigenous Higher Education Workforce Strategy (building on the work of the second IHEAC), which was endorsed by Universities Australia in March 2011 as a strategy its members would voluntarily pursue and promote

- help to establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Researchers' Network, which will bring together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers of all career stages and from a range of discipline areas at research institutions across the country to build their capacity and leadership. The Australian Research Council is currently pursuing the project through a competitive grant process
- the hosting of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Academic Doctors' Forum in November 2011 (in partnership with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Consortium) which brought together for the first time around 50 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander PhD graduates from a range of fields of research to discuss how higher education access and outcomes can be improved for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (particularly in relation to postgraduate student outcomes)
- collaboration with Universities Australia in the development of a National Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities as part of the joint IHEAC-UA Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities project. The framework, that was endorsed by the Universities Australia Plenary in November 2011 and launched by Universities Australia in January 2012, aims to:
 - provide universities with the tools to embed cultural competency at the institutional level so that they are encouraging, supportive environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff; and
 - produce well-rounded graduates with the ability to provide genuinely competent services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Australian Government provides support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the tertiary sector through a number of supplementary funding programs.

The Indigenous Support Program assists higher education providers to meet the specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in order to improve their access, participation, success and retention in higher education. Funding is provided to eligible institutions each year based on their proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments and the institution's performance in relation to student progression rates and completions.

The Commonwealth Scholarships Program assists eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from low socio-economic backgrounds, particularly those from rural and regional areas, with costs associated with higher education. There are five scholarships in the program:

- Indigenous Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarship (ICECS): assists undergraduate students with general education costs for up to eight semesters (\$2,290 in 2011)
- Indigenous Enabling Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarship (IECECS): assists enabling course students with general education costs for up to two semesters (\$2,290 in 2011)
- Indigenous Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarship (ICAS): assists undergraduate students from regional and remote areas who need to move away from home to commence higher education with accommodation costs (\$4,580 in 2011)
- Indigenous Enabling Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarship (IECAS): assists enabling course students from regional and remote areas who need to move away from home to commence higher education with accommodation costs (\$4,580 in 2011)
- Indigenous Access Scholarship (IAS): a one-off payment to assist commencing students to undertake an eligible enabling course or undergraduate course (\$4,321 in 2011).

Eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students may access supplementary assistance through the Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme – Tertiary Tuition (ITAS-TT), or the Away from Base for 'mixed-mode' delivery program ('Mixed-mode' AFB).

ITAS-TT provides funding to support eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students studying university award level courses at eligible institutions, by meeting the costs of engaging tutors to deliver supplementary tuition. ITAS support is also available to postgraduate students in limited circumstances.

'Mixed mode' study is a form of tertiary education where students undertake accredited courses of study through a combination of distance education and 'residential' periods of intensive face to face teaching. This mode of study allows students to complete courses in their home communities with occasional time on campus, and is well suited for some Indigenous students. 'Mixed-mode' AFB provides funding to cover travel costs including fares, meals and accommodation for

eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students where their course requires them to travel away from their permanent home for a short period of time. This includes attendance at short courses, field trips, occasional residential schools or practical placements. The primary objective of 'Mixed-mode' AFB is to increase access and participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from rural and remote areas in tertiary study.

Established in 2010, the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) aims to ensure that Australians from low socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds, who have the ability to study at university, get the opportunity to do so. HEPPP provides funding to assist universities to undertake activities and implement strategies that improve access to undergraduate courses for people from low SES backgrounds, as well as improving the retention and completion rates of those students. HEPPP does not specifically target Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students but given their high incidence of low SES status, they are likely to be major beneficiaries of this program (ie, in 2010, 31.9 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in Table A universities [ie, higher education providers listed as Table A providers in the *Higher Education Support Act* (2003)] were from low SES backgrounds, compared with 15.3 per cent of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students). The HEPPP supports the Australian Government's ambition that 20 per cent of domestic undergraduate students will be from low SES backgrounds by 2020.

Enabling Loading provides targeted funding within the Commonwealth Grants Scheme (CGS) to universities for courses that provide additional academic support to students, either as a pathway to award study or in addition to their regular classes. The funding is specifically attached to places in courses that prepare or assist a person to undertake a course that leads to a higher education award. Enabling courses are not specifically targeted to under-represented groups, but approximately 50 per cent of students enrolled in enabling courses are identified as being from several equity groups such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, regional and remote students and low SES status students, compared with 30 per cent of all domestic undergraduate enrolments.

The Indigenous Youth Mobility Program helps young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people move away from home to gain the skills they need to get a job in their community or elsewhere. Young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 16 to 24

from remote areas can relocate to an Indigenous Youth Mobility Program host location to undertake post secondary education and training options. Training options include: Australian Apprenticeships; vocational education and training and/or higher education that leads to qualifications, for example, in nursing, teaching, business administration and/or accounting.

From 2012, the Australian Government will introduce Reward Funding for universities that achieve performance targets identified in their Mission-based Compacts. In their compacts, each eligible university has nominated an under-represented group of students for whom reward payment targets have been stipulated. In 2011, 20 universities nominated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as their nominated group of under-represented students. These universities were:

- Australian Catholic University
- Charles Darwin University
- Charles Sturt University
- Central Queensland (CQ) University
- Flinders University
- Griffith University
- James Cook University
- La Trobe University
- Monash University
- Queensland University of Technology
- Southern Cross University
- University of Newcastle
- University of the Sunshine Coast
- University of New England
- University of New South Wales
- University of Queensland
- University of Southern Queensland
- University of Sydney
- University of Technology, Sydney
- University of Western Sydney

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff numbers in universities have increased over the past decade, although the increase is predominantly for general non-academic staff. Currently,

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make up less than one per cent of all staff in universities. Moreover, by distinguishing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff from non-academic, or 'general' staff, this picture presents an even greater challenge, with approximately two-thirds of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce employed in general or non-academic roles. In contrast, approximately half of all workers are employed within non-academic roles across the entire higher education workforce.

The significant majority of universities in recent years report at least some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on high-level decision-making bodies, such as the University Senate, University Council or Academic Boards.

Action 46

MCEECDYA will request that the Ministerial Council on Tertiary Education and Employment (MCTEE) develop a companion document to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014 that outlines actions to close the gap in training, university and employment outcomes. This companion document would improve links between the school sector and the training, tertiary education and employment services sectors and support the development of innovative cross-sectoral approaches to programs and pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

In August 2011, the Secretary of MCEECDYA (which became the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) in January 2012) wrote to the Secretary of the Standing Council on Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment (SCOTESE) in August 2011 to request that National Collaborative Action 46 be brought to the attention of SCOTESE.

The development of the companion document has been included in the 2012–2013 work plans of the SCOTESE Access and Participation Principal Committee and the National VET Equity Advisory Council (NVEAC).

A proposal that the NVEAC Secretariat will coordinate the development of a companion document in conjunction with the relevant branches of DEEWR and the Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education on taking this work forward is being developed for consideration and action in 2012.

Action 47

MCEECDYA will institute an investigation into how new technologies can increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' access to education and training, collaborate with relevant bodies such as the Learning Federation and Education Services Australia in extending these technologies to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students for use in education and training programs, and monitor the results of innovative developments in the use of interactive technologies.

During 2011, the Australian Government continued its commitment to harnessing the potential of technology to transform teaching and learning in schools through the following:

- under the Australian Government's National Secondary School Computer Fund, a 1:1 computer to student ratio is being achieved nationally in Australian schools (irrespective of location or school sector) for years 9 to 12 for the start of the 2012 school year. More than 911,000 computers (and other ICT equipment) have been installed in Australian schools, exceeding the national target of 786,000
- Education Services Australia (ESA) continues to identify and align digital resources (including many with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focus) to the Australian Curriculum and make them accessible for teaching and learning across Australia
- work continued on the Australian Curriculum Connect (ACC) project. ACC is supporting implementation of the Australian Curriculum by enabling access to digital curriculum resources, teaching ideas, discussions, assessment items and lesson plans through local and national e-learning environments
- the \$31.4 million package, Supporting the Australian Curriculum Online (SACOL), was announced by the Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth, the Hon Peter Garrett AM MP, on 23 September 2011. SACOL is supporting the resourcing of digital resource gaps; professional development of teachers in using digital resources in their teaching; development of an online Language Learning Space and enhancement of the national infrastructure.

ESA has been engaged to manage the project, in consultation with ACARA, AITSL, government and non-government schools authorities. Completed projects and resources are, or will be, searchable through the National Digital Learning Resources Network (NDLRN) website repository.

- Through the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Innovation Fund, the Australian Government has invested over \$16.3 million to fund four projects to help teachers and school leaders better use ICT in the classroom. These projects commenced in early 2011 and are all on track for completion by mid-July 2012.

Three of the projects include specific aims for facilitating better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students:

- Teaching Teachers for the Future aims to improve the proficiency of pre-service teachers in using ICT to improve student learning outcomes. This project has been implemented in 39 universities and higher education institutions. ESA leads the Consortium
- Leading ICT Learning in Technology Enabled Schools aims to enable current and aspiring school leaders to lead school communities in understanding the role and potential of ICT to extend and transform their school. Principals Australia leads the Consortium
- ICT in Everyday Learning: Teacher Online Toolkit aims to enhance the capacity of in-service teachers by showing them how to incorporate ICT into teaching the Australian Curriculum key learning areas of English, history, science and mathematics. ESA leads the Consortium.
- The Online Diagnostic Tools initiative is providing Australian teachers and parents with access to online tools and resources that help them to assess student progress in key learning areas and link to relevant digital learning resources to help them improve. For example, Improve was made available nationally in December 2011 and will continue to be upgraded through 2012.
- National funding of \$13.5 million was also provided in 2011 for the Australian Flexible Learning Framework as the e-learning strategy for the VET sector. It provided the VET

sector with essential e-learning infrastructure and expertise needed to respond to the challenges of a modern economy and the training needs of Australian businesses and workers. Framework funds supported both national and jurisdictional initiatives.

In the Northern Territory, for example, workshops and e-learning professional development were provided as part of a pilot Community Based Indigenous Trainer (CBIT) program. Training provided to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from regional and remote communities to become local trainers for their communities included units on e-learning and the development of culturally appropriate delivery methods.

A key element of the training design and delivery was digital storytelling and using technology to connect remote communities with towns, for example, using Skype. Participants were trained to use wikis and blogs for the delivery of training, and students established a Facebook page to keep connected. Thirty-six Indigenous people from both Top End and Central Australian communities graduated with full qualifications through the program and ten others achieved statements of attainment.

The national VET funding also supports the development of Flexible Learning Toolboxes: high quality, cost effective, interactive e-learning and assessment resources for use by training providers and industry to support online delivery of VET. A focus for toolbox development was content to support learners to improve their foundation skills of language, literacy and numeracy, in various vocational contexts. These products were relevant to a range of educationally disadvantaged learners including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies' (IECBs') feedback

The Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies (IECBs) represent the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community perspectives and viewpoints and make the following comments

and recommendations on the six domains of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014*.

Readiness for school (National Actions 1–4)

IECBs' comments

Progress on the outcomes in this domain is evident in remote communities, as IECBs are largely engaged with schools in these settings.

There is a need for greater involvement and consultation with IECBs on the development of the Early Years Workforce Strategy. In addition, appropriate cultural practices need to be taken into consideration and embedded into the Framework in order to effectively build a diverse, highly skilled workforce that provides high-quality services for children.

The lack of access to comprehensive data means that IECBs are unable to compile an accurate picture of what is happening in all schools, which makes input into the development of effective programs and meaningful progress reporting difficult. IECBs note that access to real-time data from all sectors – government, independent and Catholic – will assist in being able to identify current needs and better plan for the future of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

There is a vast amount of quality research occurring in early childhood education. However, there appears to be limited Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific research. IECBs are often unaware of research projects being conducted and would like to know how the Commonwealth communicates this information and outcomes of relevant studies to parents and communities.

On-entry assessment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students entering the school system are not standardised and do not adequately capture the cultural learning of students. As pre-primary education sits outside the school system, feedback on students' progress in pre-primary years cannot easily be passed on to schools, meaning that they rely on on-entry assessments to create a full picture of each student. This un-systematic approach is inadequate and can lead to largely objective assessments.

SCSEEC's comments

Departments work closely with local community members to provide access to activities for young children prior to the commencement of formal schooling. In Western Australia, remote Community Schools host playgroups or allow younger children to participate in play-based early childhood programs.

The SCSEEC Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Working Group, which includes representation from Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies, was consulted on the Early Years Workforce Strategy in the final stages of drafting. The comments provided as part of this process have been incorporated in the final Strategy, which was released by the Chair of SCSEEC, The Hon. Peter Collier MP, Minister for Education, Energy and Indigenous Affairs, in September 2012. The Commonwealth and each State and Territory government have developed an implementation plan which outlines the steps that will be undertaken to support people to join the early education and care workforce and to get the qualifications and skills they need to support children from diverse backgrounds and with differing needs. Further information and copies of the Early Years Workforce Strategy and implementation plans can be accessed on the Australian Government DEEWR website, <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Pages/default.aspx>

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan Annual Report provides a range of data to indicate progress. Further access to data is a matter for partnership arrangements between education authorities and individual Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies.

A key national study on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is the *Footprints in Time – Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC)*. Considerable care is taken to communicate the results of the study back to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This includes the development of a targeted community booklet and summary report. For further information on LSIC see <http://flosse.fahcsia.gov.au/>.

A compilation of information for Action 3 of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan will promote a range of relevant longitudinal studies, datasets, websites and research projects concerning barriers and enablers of success in transitions, integrated services, curricula and resources that provide skill development and the foundations for learning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children essential for

the first year of formal schooling. This information has been sourced from the Australian Government and State and Territory governments and is available on the SCSEEC website at – <http://scseec.edu.au/>.

The Closing the Gap Clearinghouse has a wide variety of resource sheets which summarise research in a format which is accessible to practitioners, parents and the community at – <http://www.aihw.gov.au/closingthegap/>.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Working Group has sought to collaborate with the Early Childhood Development Working Group to investigate the development of nationally comparable on-entry assessment frameworks and guides.

Engagement and connections (National Actions 9–14)

IECBs' comments

IECBs believe that School Community Partnerships and Personalised Learning Plans benefit students not only in their engagement with education but also in establishing their post-school pathways.

IECBs would like to see more support for children who are doing well. Despite a focus on the deficit group of students, acknowledgement should be given to those who are doing well to sustain their engagement.

Hearing problems for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are not just restricted to those in remote or desert locations. Hearing difficulties are a genuine issue for students and have a significant effect on the student's ability to engage and learn in the classroom.

There needs to be more interagency collaboration to better identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with disabilities and strengthen connections to help assist families of students in terms of awareness of what support is available to them and training in how to best support the education of children with special needs.

IECBs see the benefits of the Australian Government Parental and Community Engagement program (PaCE) and would like to see the funding for this program maintained and guaranteed on a long-term basis. IECBs note that the current funding model sees significant proportions of funding going to large non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations with high costs and who are, in addition, often not in touch with the local community.

IECBs propose that funding for PaCE programs go directly from the Commonwealth to IECBs, who are best placed to manage the funding to local community service providers and projects. This will empower local providers and ensure greater transparency of funds.

The establishment of the First Peoples' Education Advisory Group and continued support of the IECBs and the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council is positive in gaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives on key issues. However, it is important to make sure these groups have an equal voice.

IECBs need to be more closely consulted with, and involved in strategies aimed at community engagement and connections, especially in the delivery of cultural awareness programs, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies and languages curriculum development. IECBs should be heavily involved in these processes during the development and rollout of the Australian Curriculum, given the associated professional development and resources that will be required for the increased focus placed on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives.

Similarly, IECBs should be utilised to ensure any languages studies or programs have the support and endorsement of the local language group where the school is located. The introduction of Aboriginal languages and Creole in schools should be a priority engagement strategy for students and families as it shows a strong acknowledgement and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and fosters greater cultural identity in students.

There is a need to better support parents – both young parents and older students – to re-engage with study and be supported to move back into the education sector.

SCSEEC's comments

Support for high achieving students is provided through programs operating at the State and Territory level, e.g. the Follow the Dream program in Western Australia and the I-Dream program in Queensland. In other States and Territories, teachers use student data to inform the planning, delivery and assessment of programs for high achieving students, or use Individual Learning Plans to support these students.

Otitis Media and supporting young parents and care-givers have been identified as two of the areas to be considered, by a group of relevant Standing Council Working Group Chairs, in regard to how inter-sectoral action at the national, systemic and local levels can assist in overcoming delays caused by hearing loss.

In most States and Territories, interagency links between education, health, community services and police provide considerable support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and families. Through the Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership, States and Territories, with the support of the Australian Government, are establishing Children and Family Centres, which are targeted at addressing the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and their young children. The centres will also provide services to all families in the community by delivering integrated services, including early learning, childcare and family support programs.

The PaCE program is funded under the Australian Government *Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Act* (2000). Appropriations under this Act are currently expected to cease on 30 June 2014. The Australian Government will be considering arrangements beyond this period as part of its response to the Review of Funding for Schooling.

PaCE projects are designed to build on the strengths of local community members. PaCE Guidelines state that: 'DEEWR is committed to developing/enhancing the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. Where possible, an appropriate preference will be given to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to receive PaCE funding as providers or auspicing bodies'. In support of this, community members who propose projects are asked to identify trusted organisations

to assist them with the administration of resources under this program. This includes Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies (IECBs).

While some IECBs are already receiving funding to deliver PaCE projects, others do not currently have the capacity or resources to deliver projects in school communities. The grassroots approach to the development of PaCE projects has meant that communities have not been limited to IECB administration of projects. However, recent advocacy by IECBs has resulted in a revision of the Guidelines for PaCE projects, which from 2013, will mandate consultation with IECBs prior to approval of projects.

While each body is established for a different purpose, each has the capacity to report to the relevant Federal Minister. Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies also have a relationship with their relevant State or Territory Education Minister. In addition, Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies have a special role in relation to providing independent commentary on progress under the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan*. The current chairpersons of the South Australian, New South Wales and Western Australian IECBs are among the members of the First Peoples' Education Advisory Group.

ACARA has established two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisory groups:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group, providing perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across all key learning areas
- the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Advisory Group, providing specific expertise in the development of the curriculum framework on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

ACARA has also:

- involved Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers and academics in developing the overview, organising ideas and learning area statements for the cross-curriculum priority area of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures
- held ten face-to-face consultation meetings across Australia throughout August and September 2011, specifically focusing on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples'

perspective priority. A total of 230 people attended these consultation forums. Invitations were sent to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators and community members and extended through State and Territory IECBs and Education Authorities

- involved Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers with specific learning area expertise in developing general directions for, and providing advice on, inclusion of the cross-curriculum priority in Phase One learning areas.

The Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages is currently being developed by ACARA with completion expected by the end of 2013. The framework will elaborate on the diverse program types, content and achievement standards related to each program, as well as the protocols that must be followed in decision-making in the learning and teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

Attendance (National Actions 22–24)

IECBs' comments

IECBs are aware of several major reviews of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education strategies in recent years that have found the attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to be relatively high. Studies have shown that there are comparatively high attendance rates amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students however; this is not reflected in their educational outcomes. This indicates that engagement, rather than attendance, is the crucial factor to improving student outcomes in school.

IECBs believe that overall attendance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students is on the rise and chronic non-attendance is often associated with students from the same family. There is no standardised attendance data collection, making it difficult to form meaningful comparisons and analysis of attendance patterns. This poses a significant challenge in being able to utilise this information in an effective way to inform current attendance strategies and education policies.

A lot of emphasis is placed on the Tri-Border Attendance Strategy and IECBs would like to know if the Australian Government is investing in other attendance and mobility projects.

SCSEEC's comments

The connection between engagement and attendance is recognised by States and Territories with schools adopting a multi-pronged approach. Some strategies include ensuring that the curriculum is relevant and engaging; training teachers to be culturally competent; employing local teachers in schools; and employing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in other roles within regions and schools, including Inclusion Officers.

According to published Attendance data collections (such as ACARA's *National Report on Schooling in Australia* and the Productivity Commission's *Report on Government Services*), overall Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attendance rates for reported sectors remain substantially lower (around 5 to 10 per cent) than those of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Through the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014*, Ministers recognised that: 'increased engagement between the school, community and parents is a key factor in supporting regular attendance. A curriculum and pedagogy that embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural perspectives will support attendance and retention'.

Source: MCEECDYA, 2011, *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014*, p.16

As such, the Action Plan contains many actions aimed at improving the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in school education, both within the Engagement and Connections domain, as well as across other domains of the Action Plan.

The SCSEEC Early Childhood Development Working Group data sub-groups are currently considering the issue of national collections of attendance data. (Note: the Early Childhood data sub-group is addressing this through the National Minimum Data Set and not as a separate issue).

ACARA is addressing inconsistencies in Attendance Data reporting through the ACARA Attendance Data Working Group.

The development of the National Early Childhood Education and Childcare Collection has also improved the availability of data on

attendance across all jurisdictions and in most sectors of early childhood education. Further work is underway to continuously improve this measure. However, the availability of unit record level data for the majority of jurisdictions and Commonwealth data on preschool programs in long daycare settings will support data linkage with schools data in the future for further analysis.

The Australian Government is sponsoring some research into the nature of the relationship between attendance and outcomes, as well as how to better measure attendance through the Attendance Data Measurement Project.

The Australian Government provided funding of \$687,000 over three years to assist with the establishment of the Tri-Border Attendance Project. In addition, the Australian Government is funding a number of projects to assist education authorities in their responsibilities to support regular school attendance. These include:

- Focus School Next Steps Initiative and the Project Agreement – Investing in Focus Schools represents a \$70 million investment in supporting more than 300 focus schools to accelerate the implementation of local actions under the Action Plan. This includes establishment of School and Community Partnerships covering locally developed attendance strategies
- the Improving School Enrolment and Attendance through Welfare Reform Measure (SEAM) makes parents aware of their responsibilities and provides extra support to families to ensure that their children are attending school and benefiting from their education. SEAM will be expanded to 22 communities in the Northern Territory as part of Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory.
- developmental communications research aimed at increasing school attendance and engagement
- the Sporting Chance Program, providing incentives through sports and other activities to enhance the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in school
- ABSTUDY, providing support to eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to access secondary education where they are unable to reasonably access appropriate schooling in their home location
- the School Nutrition Program in the Northern Territory, providing nutritious meals for students

- supporting the Kimberley Success Zone initiative, which includes a cross-sectoral attendance strategy
- the Parental and Community Engagement program, assisting families to support their children's participation in education.

The SCSEEC Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Working Group has also been progressing a feasibility study into an accessible database on evidence of successful attendance approaches under Action Item 22 of the Action Plan.

A number of mobility projects are currently under way in Queensland that will capture and identify mobility data and their trends. These include:

- a mobility website to provide information and tools which schools can use to support mobile students
- mobility and absence reason research of discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Far North Queensland.

Literacy and numeracy (National Actions 27–29)

IECBs' comments

IECBs note the NAPLAN test is limited in its comprehensiveness and ability to accurately gauge the literacy and numeracy capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Nonetheless, it can be utilised as a helpful indicator and starting point in determining this capacity, and needs to be used in conjunction with a variety of other assessment tools.

IECBs note that NAPLAN data has shown improvement in several areas. However, IECBs are concerned at the slow pace in which this is occurring. Literacy and numeracy assessments need to be administered in a culturally appropriate way, recognising the existence of Aboriginal English and Creole and taking into account the distinctive language backgrounds and cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

In some jurisdictions, NAPLAN results for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are being tracked at the school level. This

is to identify schools in which literacy and numeracy strategies are effective and model these strategies to other schools.

IECBs would like to know if English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers mark NAPLAN tests, to ensure that qualified people are considering the literacy skills of students that have English as a second, third or fourth language.

Child and Family Centres (CFCs) contribute to family literacy and are an excellent incentive that have grown out of the concept of the Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services (MACS), and are progressing well. It would be positive to see CFCs expanded across the country, and also to have MACS expanded and enhanced to offer a similar suite of services directed at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities. Care should be taken to ensure these services are culturally welcoming and appropriate.

SCSEEC's comments

The NAPLAN test is an objective measure of a student's ability to demonstrate age expected Standard Australian English (SAE) literacy and numeracy. It is the nationally agreed tool to measure student performance across Australia. Schools also use other tests to augment testing for students and give a more holistic view of their abilities.

While language and cultural backgrounds can place Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at some disadvantage, the NAPLAN tests are delivered in SAE and it is important that they are administered consistently. National work to build the capacity of teachers and school leaders to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners who speak English as their second language or dialect is being led by Queensland through the Bridging the Language Gap project, which is funded by the Australian Government.

It is good practice to identify the schools that are performing well on NAPLAN testing, to investigate what strategies and approaches may be contributing to their success, and to use this information to assist like-schools that are not performing as well in NAPLAN.

Under Action 9 of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014*, Education Ministers have approached Health Ministers and Community Services Ministers to prioritise early childhood education connections between services at the local level.

A comprehensive evaluation of the National Partnership for Indigenous Early Childhood Development (NP IECD) has commenced and will review the quality of consultation processes and success of engaging families in using CFC services. Outcomes of the evaluation will be valuable in supporting improvements to service delivery in future.

An essential ingredient, explicitly presented in the NP IECD, has been the commitment to invest time and effort in local consultations with communities regarding site selection, service delivery models and building design, with the net effect of raising community participation and expectations. In each location there has been agreement to establish fully integrated services, including early learning, childcare and parent and family support services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, with links to other government services and accessed at, or through, the CFCs, based on the individual needs of communities. Extensive consultation has occurred in all States and Territories, and at the local level with key stakeholders. A key element of each State and Territory's Implementation Plan was an expectation that local reference groups be established for each centre, which will include representation from local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the design and operation of the centres. These consultation forums have been established in all States and Territories.

ACARA's comments

Comment from the ACARA Chief Executive Officer, Robert Randall

The NAPLAN is a standardised testing program with the purpose of providing reliable, comparable information on how students, schools and school systems are performing against national literacy and numeracy standards, including national minimum standards in each of the assessed areas.

Consequently, the tests must be designed in such a way that the questions, administration conditions, scoring procedures and analysis are the same for all students.

NAPLAN information provides a baseline for monitoring student achievement, and can be used to inform strategies for improving the literacy and numeracy achievement of students. It also allows governments and education authorities to direct resources to where they are most needed.

NAPLAN tests identify whether all students have the literacy and numeracy skills that provide the critical foundation for their learning. While it is recognised that all students do not have the same background knowledge, competency in Australian English is essential for all students, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, to allow them to participate fully in Australian society. NAPLAN tests are standardised and an alternative assessment tool is incompatible with the purpose of NAPLAN.

ACARA supports the sharing of strategies implemented by schools that have been effective in improving students' competency in literacy and numeracy.

NAPLAN information provides a baseline for monitoring student achievement and is only one part of a suite of assessment tools implemented by schools. NAPLAN results should be considered together with those of other assessments to help identify strategies to improve students' competency in literacy and numeracy.

Teachers from all learning areas, and from both primary and secondary schooling, are employed by jurisdictions to mark NAPLAN tests. However, as NAPLAN is a standardised testing program, the marking of NAPLAN tests is also standardised. ACARA has in place a set of protocols around marking that all jurisdictions must use. These include code frames, marking guides, common quality control material, and training packages. All marking is based on Standard Australian English.

Leadership, quality teaching and workforce development (National Actions 33–40)

IECBs' comments

In order to fill the current gap in teacher knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories, all pre-service teachers should undertake both mandatory and elective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies units as a part of their studies to qualify as teachers. The development of compulsory study units by universities should be in close

partnership with the local community and with the support of the IECBs and government.

Nearly all teachers will come into contact with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student and their family, and will therefore need to be culturally competent. The Australian Curriculum and the National Professional Standards for Teachers will require that all teachers be competent in teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies and students. IECBs support these standards but recognise that their achievement will require systemic professional development for the teaching workforce across Australia. The development of professional learning packages for teachers and all education staff should be in partnership with schools, local community and be supported by IECBs and government.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies need to be solidly embedded in the curriculum, in line with the Australian Curriculum's priority to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across all learning areas. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies curriculum will need to be developed in partnership with schools, local community and incorporate local cultures, histories and perspectives.

IECBs suggest that the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educator Workforce Strategy be developed in line with the Early Years Workforce Strategy, and believe that this should have progressed further by now.

IECBs are satisfied with the More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative, but are concerned about the lack of programs targeting the employment and ongoing training of Indigenous Education Workers, as they also play a pivotal role in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in school.

SCSEEC's comments

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) is managing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education: Improving Teaching Project, which will develop resources to support all new and existing teachers to be adequately prepared to meet focus areas 1.4 and 2.4 of the *National Professional Standards for Teachers*.

To support pre-service teachers to be adequately prepared to meet these focus areas at the graduate career stage, AITSL, in

partnership with the Queensland Department of Education and Training, is working with course providers and the Australian Council of Deans of Education to develop model units, evaluation tools and guidelines to assist universities in preparing their graduates. The Indigenous Studies Research Network at the Faculty of Education at the Queensland University of Technology has compiled an overview of existing effective practice, including important contemporary literature. Examples of identified effective practice will lead to the development of Annotated Illustrations of practice for focus areas 1.4 and 2.4 of the standards.

This project focuses on both pre-service and in-service training. The key priority is to support the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan* by ensuring that all teaching courses and programs include material that gives teachers the opportunity to be adequately prepared to teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, culture, history and perspectives in accordance with the *National Professional Standards for Teachers*.

States and Territories recognise the need for all teachers and school leaders to be culturally competent and work, through a variety of partnerships such as work with the Stronger Smarter Institute, is currently being undertaken.

A response provided earlier, in reference to languages and incorporating the perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the curriculum, also applies here. This included the establishment of advisory groups by ACARA, as well as considerable consultations on curriculum development.

As schools, States and Territories are responsible for implementation of the Australian Curriculum, each State and Territory is developing its own implementation plans, along with support programs for teachers. It is expected that schools will consider ways of presenting local cultures, histories and perspectives in the delivery of curriculum. The SCSEEC Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Working Group has established a sub-group to progress this strategy.

In addition, the Australian Government has invested \$7.5 million in the More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative (MATSI) to support efforts to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers. MATSI projects are producing research into the complex barriers to employment,

as well as identifying current initiatives in jurisdictions. A workforce forum held in November 2012 discussed the findings of this research in order to plan future work.

States and Territories report that a number of programs are being implemented to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Assistant Teachers, Teacher Aides and Education Workers in other roles. A number of States and Territories have also provided funding for these employees to undertake further study and in some cases, particularly Teacher Aides in Queensland, the status of employment for some of these employees has been changed to permanent rather than casual, ensuring some continuance and security in that role.

Pathways to real post-school options (National Actions 45–47)

IECBs' comments

IECBs note that there has been a steady increase in Year 12 participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. In some jurisdictions a 'service guarantee' is in place for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who complete Year 12. This program ensures that students are supported to gain employment, undertake training or engage in further education on completion of Year 12. In other jurisdictions, various support mechanisms are available, however, there are no guarantees and IECBs in these jurisdictions would like to see these measures put in place.

IECBs would also like to see Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary school students supported in their studies to identify real post-school options, especially around moving into the higher education sector, through better access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander careers advisors.

There is also an increasing trend for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary students to move into the VET sector,

indicating that for many students the school system is not meeting their secondary educational needs. This trend reflects the need for more flexible learning environments and culturally relevant curriculum at these later stages of schooling in order to increase Year 12 retention rates. Students who choose to move into the VET sector also need to be supported during this transition to attain relevant qualifications leading to local employment opportunities.

In relation to the national collaborative actions under this domain, there is limited information on progress towards increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students making a successful transition to university, in the development of a higher education companion document to the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan*, or in the investigation into utilising new technologies to increase access to education and training.

IECBs note that the Widening Participation Project is not mentioned under Action 45. This project aims to increase participation in higher education from low socio-economic status, regional and remote, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by partnering with primary and secondary schools to deliver programs that raise aspirations towards higher education, facilitate access into university, and provide support for first year undergraduate students.

SCSEEC's comments

Where States and Territories do not have a service guarantee, there are support systems in place to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to either achieve employment, or go on to further study at either TAFEs or universities, e.g. the support mechanisms in Western Australia.

The companion document referred to at Action 46 of the Action Plan relating to the Training University and Employment Support sectors is currently under development by SCOTESE. This work is being led through the Access and Participation Principal Committee of SCOTESE.

The Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People was announced in April 2011 to examine action that will identify how to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people share equally in

the life and career opportunities that a quality higher education provides. The review examined higher education access and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and considered strategies to redress the current inequality, based upon the best available evidence. The review's Final was released in September 2012, and is available online at: <http://www.innovation.gov.au/HigherEducation/IndigenousHigherEducation/ReviewOfIndigenousHigherEducation/Pages/default.aspx>. The Australian Government will work closely with higher education providers and other stakeholders in implementing the review's outcomes.

The third Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council was also involved in the development and securing of Australian Learning and Teaching Council funding of two research projects. The projects will look into the transition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students into higher education, with specific focus on strategies to increase the participation of under-represented Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Funded in late 2011, these projects are being led by research teams at Curtin University and the University of Notre Dame, Western Australia, and involve partner institutions across Australia. Both projects are scheduled to conclude in 2013.

Chapter 5

New South Wales report on activities and outcomes

Introduction

In 2011, there were 52,355 full time equivalent (FTE) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in schools in New South Wales. Approximately 86 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (45,184) were enrolled in government schools and 14 per cent (7,171) were enrolled in schools in the non-government sector (Catholic and independent schools). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students comprised 6.1 per cent of students in government schools and 4.6 per cent of the total New South Wales student enrolment.

In 2011, over half of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (50.8 per cent) in New South Wales were enrolled in schools in provincial locations, 44.8 per cent were enrolled in schools in metropolitan locations, and 4.5 per cent were enrolled in schools in remote or very remote locations.

It is noteworthy that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments were spread over a large number of schools in New South Wales. Although they represented 4.6 per cent of total students, these enrolments were distributed across 2,656 schools, which was more than 80 per cent of all schools in New South Wales. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were enrolled in 1,944 of the 2,231 government schools in New South Wales, and in 712 of the 920 non-government schools. Moreover, 46.0 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in New South Wales were enrolled in schools in which they comprised less than 10 per cent of total student enrolments.

The New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated (New South Wales AECG) is the peak Aboriginal community organisation concerned with education and training

in New South Wales. Throughout 2011, the New South Wales AECG worked collaboratively with sectors to implement the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014*.

Profile of Focus schools

In 2011, there were 115 Focus schools in New South Wales, of which 88 were government schools, 23 were Catholic schools and four were independent schools. While the number of government Focus schools remained constant between 2010 and 2011, the number of Catholic Focus schools increased from one in 2010 to 23 in 2011, and the number of independent Focus schools increased from three in 2010 to four in 2011. The 22 additional Focus schools in the Catholic sector did not commence as Focus schools until Term 4, 2011. In these schools, Term 4 was devoted to planning for action implementation in 2012.

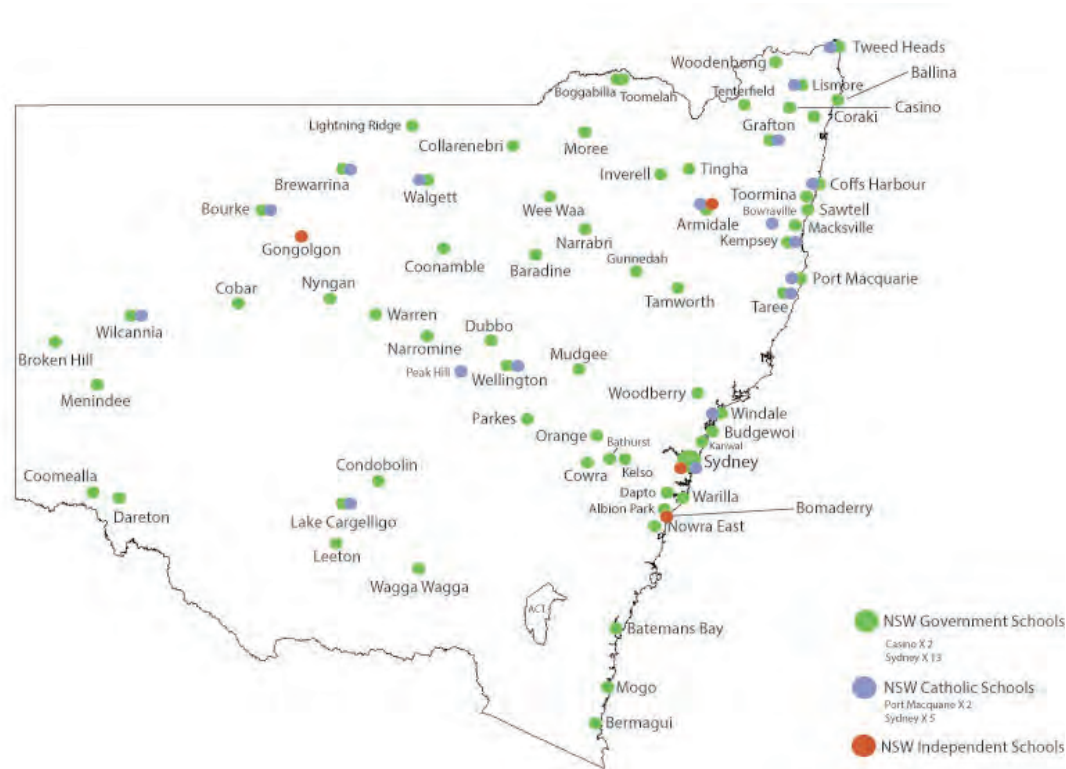
The majority of Focus schools (70) were located in provincial areas, 28 were located in metropolitan areas, 12 in remote locations and five in very remote locations.

In 2011, there were 7,756.6 FTE Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in Focus schools in New South Wales.

A number of Focus schools were involved in key National Partnerships. Three Focus schools: Walgett Community College Primary School; Wilcannia Central School and St Joseph's School, Walgett, were involved in the Remote Service Delivery National Partnership and 76 Focus schools were involved in the Low Socio-Economic Status (SES) School Communities National Partnership.

Distribution of Focus schools in New South Wales

Figure NSW1: Map of New South Wales Focus schools
(Focus schools are listed in a table at the end of this chapter).



Notes:

- Dots indicate location of Focus school/s
- Sydney metropolitan Focus schools are not individually identified.

New South Wales report on progress by Domains

Readiness for school

Performance indicators

- The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending (where possible to measure) a preschool program.*

- The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students assessed as ready for the first year of full-time schooling by State and Territories measures.*

Overall progress

Table NSW1 shows that 2,788 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged four and five were enrolled in a preschool program in New South Wales in 2011. This represents 69.2 per cent of the experimental Estimated Resident Population (ERP) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 4 year-olds in New South Wales (as calculated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics).

Table NSW1: Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending a preschool program, New South Wales and Australia, 2011

	New South Wales		Australia	
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	All children	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	All children
Number of children enrolled	2,788	64,358	10,167	233,128
Children enrolled (per cent)	69.2	72.2	75.7	80.8
Number of children attending	2,667	63,290	9,536	225,886
Percentage of children enrolled that are attending ^(a)	95.7	98.3	93.8	96.9
Percentage of children attending ^(b)	66.2	71.0	71.0	78.3

Notes:

- a) Calculated as the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled.
- b) Calculated as the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over the Estimated Resident Population (ERP). The ERP of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 4 year olds at June 2011 in New South Wales = 4,027; in Australia = 13,427.
- c) Due to data collection limitations, South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland have not reported on unique counts of children in preschool. However, episodes (counts of the instances of preschool programs provided to a child without accounting for duplication) are available for these jurisdictions. For information on methodologies and concepts of the preschool enrolment data please refer to explanatory notes in the ABS publication, *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates, 2011* (Cat. No. 4240.0).
- d) Because early childhood education is not compulsory, and children can be enrolled in multiple preschool programs, the collection of unit record level (URL) data on preschool programs is seen to be fundamental in addressing data quality issues, both to eliminate duplication and to gain an accurate count of records at the child level. An episode is a term used in the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection to refer to an 'instance of learning' that a child has received. When one child is attending two different preschool programs, the same child is attending two episodes of preschool (i.e. may be double-counted). This affects the Australia totals but not the New South Wales figures. New South Wales provided URL data so children enrolled in a preschool program in New South Wales are not double-counted in Table 1.
- e) While there have been improvements in consistency of reporting across jurisdictions, it should be noted that Preschool Education Estimates have not yet achieved complete alignment with nationally agreed standards.
- f) For information on adjustments for 2006 Census undercount and the methods used to calculate projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, see explanatory notes in the ABS publication, *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991–2021* (Cat.No.3238.0).
- g) Estimates for the total population are sourced from ABS, *Estimated Population by Age and Sex, June 2011* (Cat.No. 3101.0). The Australia total includes 'Other territories' including Jervis Bay and Norfolk Island. However, Jervis Bay and Norfolk Island are excluded from Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales totals. Therefore, State and Territory Estimated Resident Population numbers will not add to Australia totals.
- h) In the absence of population estimates by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status for inter-censal years, non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population figures are calculated by subtracting projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population from estimates of the total population.

Source: ABS, *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates 2011* (Cat.No.4240.0) *Estimated Population by Age and Sex, June 2011* (Cat.No. 3101.0 DO002); *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991–2021* (Cat.No.3238.0)

Of those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled, 2,667 (95.7 per cent) were recorded as attending at some time during the two-week data collection period. This compares with 98.3 per cent of all students. When the ERP for

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 4 year-olds is used as the denominator, the proportion of New South Wales Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children attending a preschool program is 66.2 per cent.

Table NSW2: Proportion of children in New South Wales assessed as 'developmentally on track' in four or more domains of the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), 2009 (per cent)

	New South Wales	Australia
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (per cent)	50.7	42.5
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (per cent)	71.2	68.6

Notes:

- a) The AEDI population comprises children with at least one valid domain score.
- b) Children are deemed to be developmentally 'on track' if they scored above the 25th percentile of the national AEDI population in four or more AEDI domains.
- c) Where Standard Australian English is not the child's first language, there may be an over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are assessed as developmentally vulnerable in the 'language and cognitive skills' or the 'communication skills and general knowledge' domains of the AEDI. Cultural differences in the child's mode of communication and general knowledge should also be acknowledged and taken in consideration when reviewing the AEDI data.

Source: DEEWR, unpublished *Australian Early Development Index* data, 2009 data collection

Table NSW2 shows the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) data for New South Wales and Australia. The AEDI provides information on young children's development, based on a checklist completed by teachers for children in their first year of full time schooling. The five domains covered by the AEDI are: physical health and wellbeing; social competence; emotional maturity; language and cognitive skills (school-based); and communication skills and general knowledge. The data indicates that 50.7 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in New South Wales assessed using AEDI in 2009 were 'developmentally on track' in four or more domains, compared to 71.2 per cent of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. The data also shows that a higher proportion of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in New South Wales were assessed as being 'developmentally on track' in 4 or more domains in New South Wales, than in Australia overall.

Systemic level actions (5, 6 and 7)

The New South Wales Department of Education and Communities engaged Local Champions to work across Families New South Wales planning areas to facilitate a greater level of understanding of AEDI results and to identify initiatives to support young children prior to school entry, where AEDI results identified a significant number of vulnerable children. This

involved working collaboratively with local government, family support workers, playgroups, community development officers and preschools.

The Department contributed to the development of community maps that charted the locations of early childhood programs, resources and assets and arranged community forums to increase awareness of AEDI results and strengthen relationships between service providers. It also assisted in the development of community initiatives in a range of fields such as parental support, early literacy, gross and fine motor development and nutrition.

Twenty-three of the 88 government Focus schools have a government preschool attached. Regional Early Childhood Consultants liaised with preschools to ensure that local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families were offered access to 15 hours per week of a quality early childhood program for their child/ren. In addition, information sessions for principals, executive members and preschool teachers were conducted to review enrolment and attendance patterns to facilitate recognition of the need for, and planning towards, ensuring that universal access to early childhood education is available for all focus school communities by 2013.

The Department has developed, and is using, the Best Start Kindergarten Assessment, a linguistically and culturally inclusive on-entry assessment which identifies each student's literacy and

numeracy skills and understandings at the beginning of kindergarten. The assessment provides information for kindergarten teachers so that they can: build on each student's current knowledge and experiences in literacy and numeracy; develop quality teaching and learning programs that support students in achieving Early Stage 1 syllabus outcomes; and tailor the curriculum to address each student's identified individual needs.

Kindergarten students in Catholic schools were also assessed in all areas of literacy. Strategies used were pre- and post- testing of phonemic awareness, word attack skills, running records and the development of a program of work.

Local level actions (8)

Focus schools implemented a range of strategies and approaches to address readiness for school. These included: offering transition-to-school programs; facilitating playgroups; running Positive Parenting Programs; and providing family/carer workshops on early literacy and numeracy. Members of teaching staff were also provided with professional learning opportunities in the Early Years Framework. In addition, the Wambinya program was implemented in some Focus schools to provide additional support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in kindergarten that were identified as needing additional assistance on the basis of Best Start assessment data.

Engagement and Connections

Performance indicators

3. *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with personalised learning strategies in place.*
4. *Proportion of Focus schools with a school – community partnership agreement in place.*

Overall progress

In 2011, 55 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Years K-10 across all sectors in New South Wales (Government, Catholic and independent) had a Personalised Learning Strategy or Personalised Learning Plan in place. For this

indicator, 2011 forms the baseline against which subsequent year outcomes will be compared.

In 2011, 25 per cent of Focus schools across all sectors in New South Wales (government, Catholic and independent) had a school – community partnership agreement in place. The impact of the 22 additional Focus schools in the Catholic sector on this outcome should be noted. For this indicator, 2011 forms the baseline against which subsequent year outcomes will be compared.

Systemic level actions (15, 16, 17 and 18)

The Department employed a range of approaches to promote outreach strategies to connect schools, including Focus schools, with early childhood, health, welfare and family support services. The Department's State office and regional staff also provided assistance to Focus schools to develop community maps, and support to liaise with external agencies and service providers to develop networks of positive sustainable interactions.

The Department is updating the *Young Mothers in Education Resource for Schools* to provide assistance to schools to support students who are pregnant to continue their education. The development of the resource has included extensive consultations with internal and external stakeholders to ensure that the resource includes, and addresses, the needs of this group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Over the past five years, the Department has reviewed and clarified positions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in schools, including Aboriginal Education Officers (AEOs). The review of the role of the AEO position has resulted in a revised role statement for AEOs along with a change in remuneration and classification (now graded as equivalent to Clerk Grade1/2). The revised AEO role statement focuses the work of AEOs in the classroom assisting the teacher to improve student outcomes through personalised learning. The broadening of career pathways for AEOs was also taken into consideration throughout the review process. The revised classification of the AEO position aims to provide greater career pathways for AEOs within the Department, leading to greater retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

A formal and effective Partnership Agreement between the Department and the New South Wales AECG covering the period 2010 to 2020 is crucial to the Department's approach to strengthening accountability and reporting to families and the community on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student outcomes. Under the Partnership Agreement, regions and schools are encouraged to develop their own Partnership Agreements with Regional and Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups. The Schools in Partnership initiative and Youth Excel program, which operate in targeted schools with significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments, also promote the formation of partnerships between schools and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Such partnerships promote the two-way flow of information and advice – from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities to schools, regions and State offices and from schools, regions and State offices to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities.

Local level actions (19, 20 and 21)

As at December 2011, 29 of the 115 Focus schools in New South Wales had a partnership agreement in place. All Focus schools are aware of the requirement to negotiate such an agreement and are in the process of working towards formalising one.

Thirty-four of the Department's Focus schools had established parent forums.

The government, Catholic and independent school sectors are actively promoting the development of Personalised Learning Strategies/Plans (PLSs/PLPs) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in kindergarten to Year 10, and in 2011, 55 per cent of these students had a Personalised Learning Strategy or Personalised Learning Plan in place.

Attendance

Performance indicators

5. *Attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in schools.*
6. *Enrolment to population ratio of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians compared to other Australians.*

7. *Retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*
8. *Grade progression ratios for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*

Overall progress

Attendance rates

Table NSW 3 shows that the 2011 attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in government schools were lower than for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in each year of schooling. The attendance rates for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were higher in the primary years than the secondary years. The gap between the attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was fairly constant in the primary years (around 5 percentage points), but increased in the secondary years. The gap was greatest for students in Year 10 where it reached 14 percentage points. The gap has widened since the change to the school leaving age in 2010.

The table also shows that the attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Catholic schools were lower than for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in each year of schooling. The attendance rates for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were higher in the primary years than the secondary years. The gap between the attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students varied between three and five percentage points in the primary years and between three and seven percentage points in the secondary years. The gap was greatest for students in Year 7, at seven percentage points.

With respect to 2011 attendance rates in independent schools, the table shows that the attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were lower than for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in each year of schooling. The attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students ranged between 87 per cent and 92 per cent in the primary years and between 83 per cent and 91 per cent in

Table NSW3: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, by sector, 2011 (per cent)

	Year level										Ungraded	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Prim.	Sec.
Government												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	90	90	90	90	90	89	86	81	78	74	87	74
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	95	95	95	95	94	93	91	90	88	92	85
Total	94	94	94	94	94	94	92	90	89	87	91	83
Catholic												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	89	89	90	91	91	90	87	89	87	85	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	94	94	94	94	94	92	92	91	94	n/a
Total	94	94	94	94	94	94	94	92	92	91	94	n/a
Independent												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	87	90	90	89	89	92	91	90	87	83	91	88
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	95	94	95	94	95	94	94	93	94	93
Total	94	94	95	94	95	94	95	94	94	93	94	93

Note: Definitions and methodologies used by jurisdictions and sectors to collect attendance data are not uniform. As such, direct comparisons of attendance rates between jurisdictions and sectors cannot currently be made. Nor can attendance data for 2011 be aggregated or averaged at the national or State/Territory level. Variations in methodology between jurisdictions are described in the explanatory notes for the 2011 attendance data contained in the *National Report on Schooling in Australia 2011*.

n/a not available

Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished)

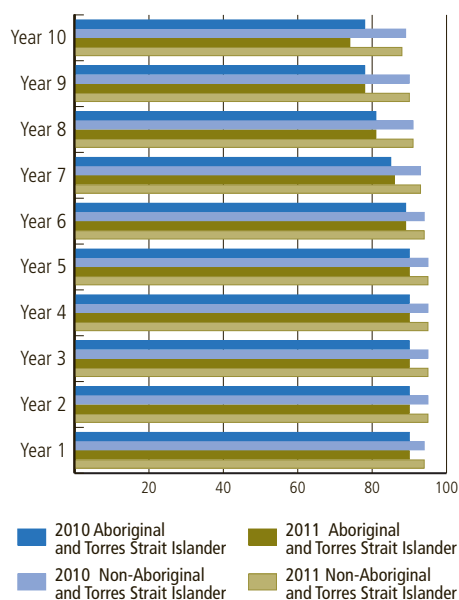
the secondary years. The gap between the attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was lowest for students in Year 6 (2 percentage points) and greatest for students in Year 10 (10 percentage points). The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in independent schools was small, which means that little significance should be attached to the variation in rates observed across school years.

For the most part, there were small variations in the attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 2011 relative to 2010 in both the primary and the secondary years, across all three schooling sectors. The largest improvement in rates was a seven percentage point increase in the Year 10 attendance rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

students in independent schools. However, this is based on a small number of students. The largest decreases were a four percentage point drop in the Year 10 attendance rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in government schools, and a four percentage point drop in the Year 7 attendance rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Catholic schools.

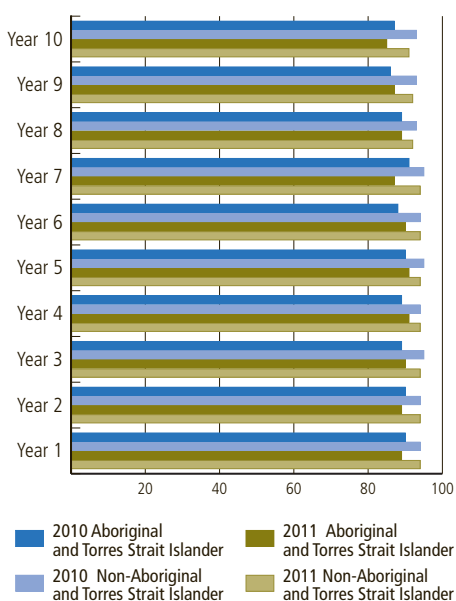
On the whole, there was small variation in the gap between the attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 2011 relative to 2010 across all three sectors. Noteworthy exceptions were the eight percentage point decrease in the gap for Year 10 students in independent schools, and the three percentage point increase in the gap for Year 10 students in government schools.

Figure NSW2.1: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, government sector, New South Wales, 2010–2011 (per cent)



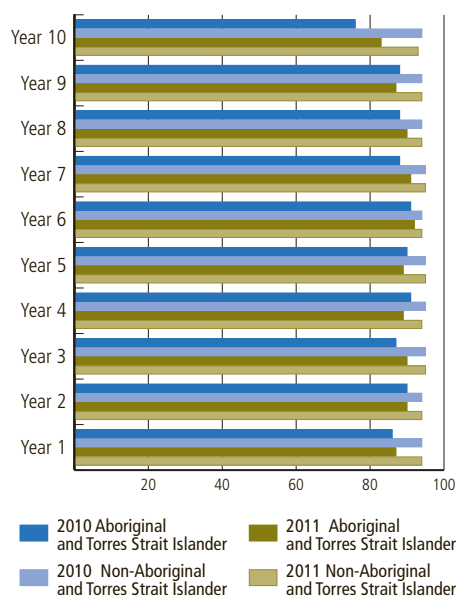
Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished).

Figure NSW2.2: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, Catholic sector, New South Wales, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished).

Figure NSW2.3: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, independent sector, New South Wales, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished).

Systemic level actions

In 2010, the Department released a revised *School Attendance Policy* that applies to all New South Wales government schools, excluding preschools. In 2011, this policy continued to inform the range of strategies and plans employed by the Department to address the attendance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in New South Wales government schools.

In the New South Wales government school sector, schools are divided into 10 school regions. The *Student Attendance in Government Schools Procedures* document associated with the *School Attendance Policy* requires school regions to develop and implement a Regional Attendance Action Plan that outlines strategies, targets, timelines, resources and responsibilities for the improvement of attendance in the region.

In schools with attendance rates below regional primary or secondary averages, school principals are required to develop and implement a School Attendance Action Plan that includes targets, strategies, resources and timelines.

In 2011, 15 additional Aboriginal student liaison officers, who were appointed from the beginning of 2010, worked with an expanded number of Aboriginal communities to develop locally identified solutions to the non-attendance of Aboriginal students and to improve their connections to education. There are now 26 Aboriginal student liaison officers across New South Wales.

The Department's Child Wellbeing Unit also assisted by providing advice to schools where poor school attendance was due to risks and needs often outside the control of the education environment. Assessment officers supported schools by assessing these risks and advising on appropriate referrals to other services/agencies that could support families to reduce the risks and meet the needs that are impacting on children's school attendance.

In 2011, the New South Wales Ministerial Working Party on Aboriginal Attendance was also in operation. The working party monitors the implementation of the new New South Wales school attendance legislation and procedures in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and advises on any new initiatives or changes that could be implemented to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student attendance.

In the Catholic and independent school sectors, key strategies employed to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student attendance included: the provision of pastoral care; providing consistent, positive messages to students about the importance and value of attending school; and increasing the involvement of parents and carers in the education of their children.

Local level actions

Regional staff in several of the Department's school regions reported providing significant support to Focus schools to develop and implement school attendance action plans or strategies. This support included the provision of professional learning to staff in Focus schools and assistance from Aboriginal Student Liaison Officers, Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers and Home School Liaison Officers to analyse data, develop strategies and support families. Some of the more specific strategies implemented in Focus schools included: the development of Personalised Attendance Plans for students with attendance issues; the inclusion of attendance on the agenda for weekly learning support team meetings; the importance

of attendance being communicated regularly to parents and students at school assemblies and via school newsletters; the implementation of attendance rewards schemes; and the early follow-up and follow-through for non-attendance.

Enrolment to population ratio

For 2011, school participation rates have not been published by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status due to concerns with the quality of the indicator. Specifically, the rates for most States and Territories exceed 100 per cent, primarily as a result of modal differences in the data sources. The denominator is sourced from the Estimated Resident Population series, itself drawn from the Population Census, while the numerator is sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' *National Schools Statistics Collection* (NSSC). The ABS is working to provide a substitute measure.

Apparent retention rates

Table NSW4 shows the Year 7 to Year 10 and Year 7 to Year 12 Apparent Retention Rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in New South Wales in 2011. The Year 7 to Year 10

Table NSW4: Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, from Year 7 to Year 10 and Year 7 to Year 12, New South Wales, 2011 (per cent)

	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Year 7– Year 10	106.1	100.9
Year 7 – Year 12	42.9	75.9

Note: Apparent retention rates are 'apparent' as they do not track individual students through their final years of secondary schooling. What they measure is the ratio of the total number of full-time school students in a designated year (for example, Year 10 in 2011) divided by the total number of full-time students in a previous year (for example, Year 7 in 2008). The base year is Year 7 for New South Wales.

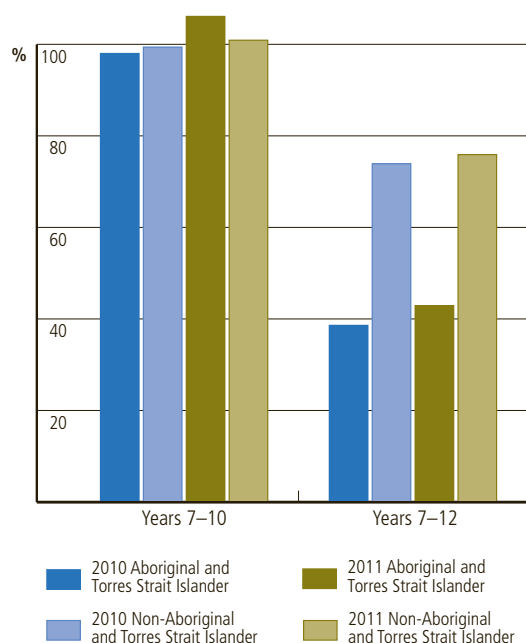
Source: Derived from ABS, *Schools Australia, 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0) and based on full-time student enrolments

apparent retention rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was 106.1 per cent, while that for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was 100.9 per cent. Apparent retention rates can exceed 100 per cent due to a number of factors, including the migration of students between States and Territories and school sectors.

In 2011, the Year 7 to Year 12 Apparent Retention Rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in New South Wales was 42.9 per cent, while that for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was 75.9 per cent, a gap of 33.0 percentage points.

Figure NSW3 charts apparent retention rates for Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Figure NSW3: Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, from Year 7 to Year 10 and Year 7 to Year 12, New South Wales, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ABS, Schools, Australia, 2011, (Cat.No.4221.0)

Strait Islander students for 2010 and 2011. There was an increase in both apparent retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in New South Wales in 2011 compared to 2010, with the Year 7 to Year 10 rate going from 98.0 per cent in 2010 to 106.1 per cent in 2011 and Year 7 to Year 12 rate going from 38.6 per cent in 2010 to 42.9 per cent in 2011.

There was also a reduction in the gap between apparent retention rate outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 2011 compared to 2010, with the elimination of the gap for the Year 7 to Year 10 rate, and a reduction of 2.3 percentage points in the gap for the Year 7 to Year 12 rate (decreasing from 35.3 percentage points in 2010 to 33.0 percentage points in 2011).

There was a change in the legislation covering the school leaving age in New South Wales that came into effect in January 2010. Under the new legislation, students are required to complete Year 10 and continue participating in education or training or full time paid employment until they turn seventeen years-of-age. A significant factor in the increase in Year 7 to Year 10 apparent retention rate is likely to have been related to this change.

Apparent grade progression ratios

Table NSW5 shows that in 2011, the apparent grade progression ratio for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was in excess of 100 per cent of Year 8 to Year 9 students and also for Year 9 to Year 10 students. However, the rate dropped markedly to 70.9 per cent for Year 10 to Year 11, and was 69.1 per cent for Year 11 to Year 12. The gap between the apparent grade progression ratio for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was 17.3 percentage points for Year 10 to Year 11, and 18.9 percentage points for Year 11 to Year 12.

Figure NSW4 shows that in 2011 relative to 2010, the gap between the apparent grade progression ratios for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students closed for Year 9 to Year 10. However, it increased by 1.1 percentage points for Year 11 to Year 12.

Table NSW5: Apparent grade progression ratios of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 2011 (per cent)

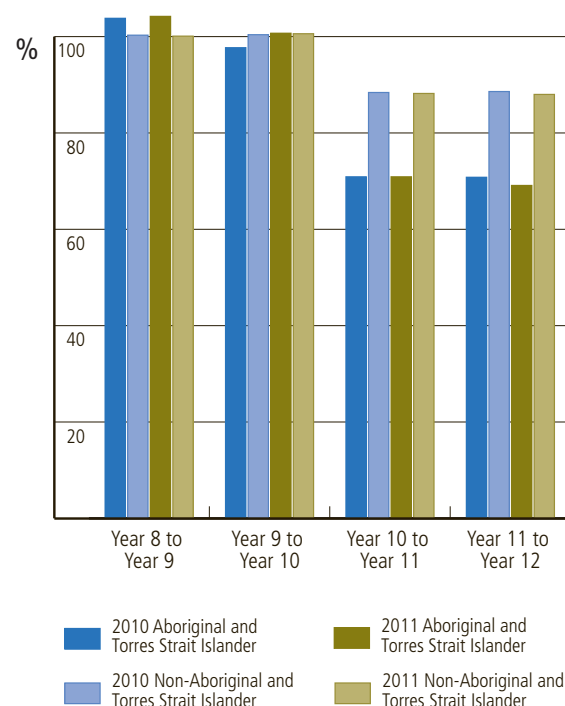
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Year 8 to Year 9	104.2	100.1
Year 9 to Year 10	100.7	100.6
Year 10 to Year 11	70.9	88.2
Year 11 to Year 12	69.1	88.0

Notes:

- Grade progression rates show the number of students at each year level as a percentage of the number enrolled in the previous year.
- Full-time students only
- Care should be taken when interpreting these rates since a range of factors affecting the calculation are not taken into account, such as students repeating a year of schooling, movements between schools and systems or States/Territories, and net changes to a school's or system's population. There is also the effect of ungraded students – they are not included in the calculations of rates.
- Components may not add due to rounding. Per cent point gap calculations are based on unrounded data.
- Issues that may affect comparability over time can be found in the Explanatory Notes, *ABS Schools Australia, 2011*, (Cat. No.4221.0)

Source: ABS, *Schools Australia, 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0)

Figure NSW4: Grade progression ratios of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, New South Wales, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia, 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0)

Literacy and Numeracy

Performance indicators

- Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at or above the national minimum standard in reading writing and numeracy in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in NAPLAN testing.*
- Participation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in NAPLAN.*

Overall progress

In 2011, as in previous years, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in New South Wales meeting the national minimum standard in NAPLAN reading, writing

and numeracy tended to decrease with year of schooling. At each year level and in each test domain, a lower proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students met the national minimum standard than non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

In respect of NAPLAN reading and numeracy outcomes in 2011 relative to 2010:

- there was an increase in the proportion of Aboriginal students achieving at or above national minimum standard outcomes in Year 5 and Year 9 reading and Year 3 and Year 5 numeracy
- there was a decrease in the proportion of Aboriginal students achieving at or above national minimum standard outcomes in Year 3 and Year 7 reading and Year 7 numeracy

- there was no change in the proportion of Aboriginal students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in Year 9 numeracy
- comments related to outcomes for NAPLAN writing for 2011-2010 have not been included here because a new scale was introduced for writing in 2011. With the break

in the time series, the persuasive writing results for 2011 should not be directly compared to the narrative writing results from previous years.

In 2011, as was the case in 2010, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students participating in NAPLAN tests in New South Wales was above the national average.

NAPLAN outcomes

Table NSW6: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, New South Wales, 2010–2011 (per cent)

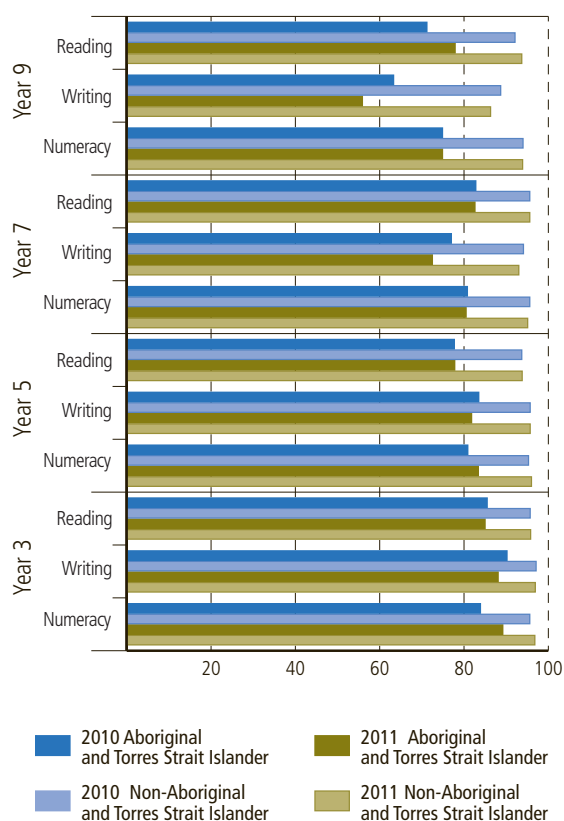
	2010				2011			
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Gap	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Confidence Intervals	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Gap	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Confidence Intervals
Year 3								
Reading	85.5	95.7	10.2	± 3.3	85.0	95.8	10.8	± 1.5
Writing	90.2	97.1	6.9	± 1.4	88.1	96.9	8.8	± 1.3
Numeracy	83.9	95.6	11.7	± 3.4	89.2	96.8	7.6	± 1.4
Year 5								
Reading	77.7	93.7	16.0	± 4.0	77.8	93.8	16.0	± 1.9
Writing	83.5	95.7	12.2	± 1.6	81.8	95.7	13.9	± 1.7
Numeracy	80.9	95.3	14.4	± 3.7	83.4	96.0	12.6	± 1.6
Year 7								
Reading	82.8	95.6	12.8	± 3.1	82.6	95.6	13.0	± 1.7
Writing	77.0	94.1	17.1	± 1.9	72.5	93	20.5	± 2.3
Numeracy	80.8	95.6	14.8	± 3.0	80.5	95.1	14.6	± 1.7
Year 9								
Reading	71.2	92.1	20.9	± 4.2	77.9	93.7	15.8	± 1.9
Writing	63.3	88.7	25.4	± 2.3	55.9	86.3	30.4	± 2.5
Numeracy	74.9	94.0	19.1	± 4.0	74.9	93.9	19.0	± 2.2

Notes:

- The confidence intervals for 2010 and 2011 in this table are specifically for New South Wales.
- A new scale was introduced for writing in 2011. With the break in the time series, the persuasive writing results for 2011 should not be directly compared to the narrative writing results from previous years.

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2010 and 2011

Figure NSW5: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, New South Wales, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished), *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*.

Table NSW6 and Figure NSW5 provide an overview of the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in New South Wales achieving 'at or above' national minimum outcomes in Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy for 2010 and 2011.

Of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students sitting the NAPLAN reading test in 2011, 85 per cent of Year 3 students, 77.8 per cent of Year 5 students, 82.6 per cent of Year 7 students and 77.9 per cent of Year 9 students achieved at or above the national minimum standard.

Of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students sitting the NAPLAN writing test in 2011, 88.1 per cent of Year 3 students, 81.8 per cent of Year 5 students, 72.5 per cent of Year 7 students and 55.9 per cent of Year 9 students achieved at or above the national minimum standard.

Of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students sitting the NAPLAN numeracy test in 2011, 89.2 per cent of Year 3 students, 83.4 per cent of Year 5 students, 80.5 per cent of Year 7 students and 74.9 per cent of Year 9 students achieved at or above the national minimum standard.

There was an achievement gap in all NAPLAN tests between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

In respect of NAPLAN reading and numeracy outcomes in 2011 relative to 2010:

- there was an increase in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above national minimum standard outcomes in Year 5 and Year 9 reading and Year 3 and Year 5 numeracy
- there was a decrease in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above national minimum standard outcomes in Year 3 and Year 7 reading and Year 7 numeracy
- there was no change in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in Year 9 numeracy.

Table NSW7 shows the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above national minimum standard outcomes by geolocation. The data indicates that the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in New South Wales achieving at or above the national minimum standard in 2011 declined consistently from metropolitan to provincial, remote and very remote areas. The difference between the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard outcomes in metropolitan locations compared to very remote areas was as high as 34.9 percentage points for Year 5 reading. This pattern is also evident in the national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student data. Indeed, the trend is even stronger in the national data, reaching a maximum difference of 49.1 percentage points for Year 9 reading.

2011 NAPLAN data by geolocation

Table NSW7: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy geolocation summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, New South Wales and Australia, 2011 (per cent)

Geolocation	New South Wales		Australia	
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Reading				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	87.1	96.0	84.2	95.2
Provincial	84.1	94.9	81.3	93.9
Remote	78.4	94.6	67.3	92.1
Very Remote	58.8	91.6	45.3	90.2
Year 5				
Metropolitan	81.3	94.0	76.7	93.4
Provincial	76.9	93.1	73.4	91.6
Remote	60.7	90.8	49.4	89.7
Very Remote	46.4	96.1	26.4	86.6
Year 7				
Metropolitan	86.1	95.6	85.0	95.9
Provincial	81.3	95.4	81.8	95.3
Remote	63.8	94.1	63.4	95.3
Very Remote	np	95.9	42.5	93.2
Year 9				
Metropolitan	81.2	93.7	78.4	93.7
Provincial	76.4	93.7	75.0	93.0
Remote	64.1	90.4	54.6	91.5
Very Remote	np	95.9	29.3	89.5
Writing				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	90.0	97.2	88.1	96.4
Provincial	87.4	96.2	85.9	95.8
Remote	83.2	94.2	70.0	94.6
Very Remote	60.8	98.9	46.0	93.3
Year 5				
Metropolitan	85.8	96.1	79.8	94.6
Provincial	80.2	94.3	75.9	92.1
Remote	64.8	92.6	50.7	90.5
Very Remote	54.0	96.7	28.4	88.1
Year 7				
Metropolitan	78.6	93.9	77.2	93.5
Provincial	69.8	90.4	71.1	90.1
Remote	42.6	87.5	47.4	90.2
Very Remote	np	92.2	28.4	87.6
Year 9				
Metropolitan	62.0	87.9	63.4	88.0
Provincial	52.5	81.1	55.0	82.0
Remote	30.0	68.6	33.8	78.6
Very Remote	np	80.0	20.6	78.2
Numeracy				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	90.4	97.0	88.6	96.5
Provincial	88.8	96.4	87.2	96.0
Remote	86.2	96.4	77.0	95.7
Very Remote	71.3	99.3	63.3	94.9
Year 5				
Metropolitan	86.8	96.2	83.8	95.7
Provincial	82.6	95.3	80.6	94.8
Remote	64.5	94.5	62.8	94.5
Very Remote	52.0	94.8	42.4	92.4
Year 7				
Metropolitan	84.4	95.3	84.5	95.7
Provincial	78.9	94.4	81.3	95.1
Remote	61.9	91.4	61.7	94.9
Very Remote	np	93.1	41.6	93.4
Year 9				
Metropolitan	79.4	94.2	78.4	94.4
Provincial	72.6	93.1	73.9	93.4
Remote	57.1	87.7	58.9	91.9
Very Remote	np	88.8	33.5	90.3

Note: 'n.p.' indicates data not published as there were no students tested, or the number of students tested was less than 30.

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2011

For non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, for both New South Wales and nationally, the impact of geolocation is much less marked. In some cases (for example, Year 7 reading and Year 5 writing) the proportion of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in very remote areas achieving at or above national minimum standard outcomes exceeded the proportion in metropolitan areas in New South Wales.

2011 NAPLAN data and 2011 progress points for New South Wales

One of the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) 'Closing the Gap' targets is to halve the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard outcomes in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade. To monitor achievement of this COAG target by 2018, progress points for each State and Territory were developed. The progress points for New South Wales are provided in Table NSW8.

When the results for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 2011 NAPLAN tests (see Table NSW6) are compared to the progress points listed in Table NSW8, the data indicate that New South Wales met its 2011 progress points in three of the twelve NAPLAN tests. These were Year 3 reading, Year 3 numeracy and Year 5 numeracy.

A new scale for persuasive writing was introduced in 2011. The addition of an extra writing scale means that student results for writing cannot be compared with their results from any of the

previous years. Consequently, it will not be possible to report student growth or trend data in writing.

Overall NAPLAN outcomes

The data in Table NSW6 indicates that the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in New South Wales meeting the national minimum standard in NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy tended to decrease with year of schooling in both 2010 and 2011. With each increase in year level and in each test domain, a lower proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students met the national minimum standard than non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

In 2011, the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student outcomes and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student outcomes was smallest for Year 3 numeracy (7.6 percentage points) and largest for Year 9 writing (30.4 percentage points).

NAPLAN participation

Table NSW9 shows the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students participating in 2011 NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy tests in New South Wales and Australia. As was the case in 2010, the participation rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 2011 NAPLAN tests was lower than for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, both in New South Wales and nationally.

Table NSW8: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy progress points for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, achieving at or above the national minimum standard (2008–2011), New South Wales (per cent)

Year	Reading				Writing				Numeracy			
	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9
2008	83.5	77.6	82.4	82.3	90.9	81.7	76.9	67.7	88.6	78.9	84.5	80.3
2009	83.6	77.7	82.5	82.4	90.9	81.8	77.0	67.8	88.6	79.0	84.6	80.4
2010	83.8	77.9	82.7	82.6	91.0	82.0	77.3	68.2	88.8	79.2	84.8	80.6
2011	84.1	78.4	83.0	82.9	91.2	82.4	77.7	68.7	89.0	79.7	85.1	81.0
2018	89.8	86.3	89.5	89.0	94.5	89.1	85.9	79.3	93.1	87.4	90.8	88.2

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2008–2011

Table NSW9: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, exemptions, absences/withdrawals and assessed students in New South Wales and Australia, 2011 (per cent)

	Year 3		Year 5		Year 7		Year 9	
	NSW	Aust.	NSW	Aust.	NSW	Aust.	NSW	Aust.
Reading								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93.9	90.1	94.4	90.8	91.2	88.8	81.4	79.0
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	97.4	96.2	97.9	96.7	97.4	96.5	95.5	93.7
Writing								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93.3	89.8	94.1	90.7	91.0	89.0	81.0	79.4
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	97.4	96.1	97.8	96.6	97.6	96.6	95.8	94.1
Numeracy								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93.4	89.0	93.9	89.7	89.6	87.6	79.6	78.0
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	97.2	95.9	97.5	96.3	97.0	96.2	94.9	93.2

Note: The NAPLAN participation data provided reflects students who were exempted, absent/withdrawn and assessed.

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2010

In 2011, as in 2010, the participation rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in New South Wales was relatively stable in Years 3 and 5, but dropped in Year 7 and much further in Year 9. For non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, participation was relatively stable until Year 9 when it declined slightly.

In 2011, in all school years and across each of the three NAPLAN test domains covered in this report, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students participating in NAPLAN tests in New South Wales was above the national average.

Systemic level actions

In 2011, staff from each of the Department's 88 Focus schools, including 176 teachers and 40 Aboriginal Education Officers/Workers, participated in an English as a Second Language (ESL)/English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) professional development workshop. The two-day workshop provided teachers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and non-school based staff with knowledge, skills and practical strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander students who use Aboriginal English as their main home language. The workshop supported the application of EALD pedagogies and the implementation of a bi-dialectal approach to teaching Standard Australian English to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Through the Senior Officers National Network of Indigenous Education (SONNIE) the Department, in partnership with its counterparts in Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory, contributed to the development of an ESL/EALD online resource that will be available for use from 2013. The Department also contributed to the National Alliance for Remote Indigenous Schools (NARIS) ESL/EALD online induction program and is represented on both the National Working Party and Steering Committee.

Local level actions

In 2011, 55 government Focus schools had in place a whole-of-school approach to the teaching and learning of Standard Australian English literacy and numeracy. In respect of this, 1,361 teachers and Aboriginal Education Officers/Workers

in government schools participated in professional learning to support the whole-of-school approach to the teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy.

Leadership, quality teaching and workforce development

Performance indicators

- 11 *Number of professional development hours on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and cultural and linguistic competence training undertaken by principals and teachers.*
- 12 *Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals, teachers and education workers (AIEWs and equivalents).*
- 13 *Average length of service of principals and teachers in hard-to-staff schools with high enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*

Overall progress

A range of professional development opportunities related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and cultural and linguistic competency training were provided to principals and teachers in New South Wales schools in 2011. Given the size of the government sector, it is not surprising that the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in New South Wales were employed in government schools.

States and Territories agreed to provide a descriptive statement for Performance Indicator 11 for the 2011 Report.

A range of professional learning opportunities was provided for teachers and principals across sectors in 2011. These opportunities included professional learning regarding: the Connecting to Country initiative and the Stronger Smarter Leadership Program; English as a Second Language (ESL)/English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) workshops; and participation in regional Aboriginal Education conferences, workshops and network meetings.

Table NSW10 shows that the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in New South Wales schools in 2011 were employed in the government sector. For each of the three classifications (principals, teaching staff and AIEWs and

Table NSW10: Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals, teachers and education workers (AIEWs and equivalents) in New South Wales, by sector, 2011

	FTE
Government	
Principals	25.2
Teaching staff	693.7
AIEWs and equivalents	359.9
Catholic	
Principals	0
Teaching staff	40
AIEWs and equivalents	n/a
Independent	
Principals	2
Teaching staff	22.1
AIEWs and equivalents	3

Note 1: This includes 130 Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers (AIEWs) and 14 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisors
n/a not available

Source: New South Wales Department of Education and Communities, Human Resources administrative records.

equivalents), considerably more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff worked in primary schools than secondary schools in the government sector. This pattern was reversed for the independent sector where the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff worked in secondary schools.

Table NSW11 shows that principals in Focus schools in the government system had been employed at their current school for an average of approximately 41 months. Principals in Focus schools in the independent system had been employed at their current school for an average of approximately 30 months. Teachers in Focus schools in the government system had been employed at their current school for an average of approximately 85 months. Teachers in Focus schools in the independent system had been employed at their current school for an average of approximately 53 months. Data for the Catholic sector was not available.

Table NSW11: Average length of service of principals and teachers in hard to staff schools with high enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (operationally defined as Focus schools), New South Wales, 2011

Classification	Average length of service (in months)		
	Government	Catholic	Independent
Principals	41	n/a	30
Teachers	85	n/a	53

n/a not available

Source: New South Wales Department of Education and Communities administrative data; Association of Independent Schools New South Wales administrative data.

Systemic level actions

In 2011, government, Catholic and independent school sectors each provided a range of professional learning opportunities for teachers to increase their levels of awareness, understanding and competencies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and perspectives. This professional learning included:

- the provision of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural immersion experiences for teachers and principals and training in areas such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pedagogies (e.g., the 8 Ways of Learning in Western Region)
- utilising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resources within the classroom
- accessing local cultural knowledge
- connecting with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and communities and
- embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content in the curriculum.

Opportunities for teachers to participate in national professional development initiatives such as Dare to Lead were also provided across sectors.

The Highly Accomplished Teacher position is a new classification to the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities, created initially under the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership. This position is designed to provide an opportunity for high quality teachers to remain in a classroom-based role while working with colleagues to enhance and improve teacher quality. A Highly Accomplished Teacher is employed in eight of the government Focus schools.

Local level actions

In partnership with the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated, the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities is currently implementing the Commonwealth funded Connecting to Country initiative. This is a five-day professional development program that commences with a three-day intensive, in-the-field cultural immersion program, followed by a two-day professional development component. In the professional development component, principals and participating teachers translate their cultural learning into quality school leadership strategies and quality teaching practices. At its heart, the initiative aims to increase the capacity of principals and teachers to establish and maintain genuine, respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and communities and to plan, develop and implement culturally inclusive programs. Connecting to Country is being made available to staff in targeted schools, including each of the 88 government Focus schools, between Term 3, 2011 and Term 4, 2012.

In 2011, the Department began the process of introducing Local Schools, Local Decisions, a major reform initiative that will significantly increase the scope for school principals to tailor operations to meet local needs. The year was devoted primarily to extensive consultation within the Department and the development of a detailed framework to support the subsequent implementation of the reform package. Local Schools, Local Decisions dovetails with the Commonwealth's Empowering Local Schools initiative.

In the Catholic sector, Diocesan Aboriginal Education Advisory Committees were involved in shaping approaches to providing greater responsiveness to local communities while in the independent sector, schools were largely autonomous and had

a great deal of flexibility to tailor their operations to meet the needs of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Pathways to real post-school options

Performance indicators

14 *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20 – 24 who have attained Year 12 or equivalent or Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate II or above.*

Overall progress

For this report, it has been agreed to use State and Territory administrative data to report progress against Performance Indicator 14. It should be noted that State and Territory administrative data for Year 12 completions is not nationally consistent and that work is currently under way to develop a nationally consistent measure.

Table NSW12 shows the number of Higher School Certificates awarded to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 2010 and 2011. It indicates that there was a 7 per cent increase in the number of Higher School Certificates awarded to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in New South Wales in 2011, relative to 2010.

Table NSW12: Number of Higher School Certificate (HSC) awards completed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, New South Wales, 2010–2011

	2010	2011
HSC Award – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	1,090	1,167
HSC Award – Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	64,124	65,014

Source: NSW Department of Education and Communities, data derived from New South Wales Board of Studies' data, as at January 2012.

Table NSW13: The number of vocational qualifications completed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, at AQF Certificate II and above, New South Wales, 2010–2011(a)

	2010	2011(a)
Certificate II and Above – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	4,080	4,553
Certificate II and Above – Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	114,048	117,899

- a) Data for qualifications completed in 2011 are based on preliminary data submissions. The 2011 data will be revised upwards in the 2012 *VET Provider Collection* to accommodate further notification of qualifications completed.
- b) The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status 'not stated' for New South Wales was 7,015 in 2010 and 2,943 in 2011.

Source: National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), *VET Provider Collection*, 2011

Table NSW13 shows the number of vocational qualifications at AQF Certificate II or above completed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in New South Wales in 2010 and 2011. It should be noted that the 2011 data provided in the table is preliminary, and will be revised upwards in the 2012 *VET Provider Collection* to accommodate further notifications of qualifications completed. The table indicates that there was a 12 per cent increase in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people completing vocational qualifications at AQF Certificate II and above in New South Wales between 2010 and 2011. It should also be noted that this data covers all age groups.

There was also an increase in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students undertaking apprenticeships and traineeships in New South Wales in 2011 relative to 2010.

Systemic level actions

Minimum service quotas for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth were in place in nine of the 30 Youth Connections regions in New South Wales and service priority flags were in place for a further 14 regions. In the first 14 months of the program (to May

2011), 1,884 young people, or 21 per cent of those involved in the program in New South Wales, identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Of these, 38 per cent (721 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people) achieved a final outcome that represented re-engagement or a sustained improvement in their engagement with education, training or employment. A further 442 young people (24 per cent) were assessed as making significant progress in addressing their barriers.

The provision of Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) courses to students, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, in government and non-government schools in New South Wales, served to promote partnerships between schools and VET providers. In 2011, 5,411 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were enrolled in accredited, industry specific courses in both Stage 5 and Stage 6 VETiS courses. These courses enable students to gain credit towards the Higher School Certificate and an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) VET Qualification or a Statement of Attainment. In several school regions, Departmental officers have forged links with universities and industry partners to provide pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. These include the staging of targeted careers expos for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, facilitating access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific mentoring programs and the development of specific pathways to university programs for Aboriginal students such as Djinggi, which enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to complete a school-based traineeship in the area of education and then, upon successful completion, go on to study Education at the University of Wollongong.

Connected classrooms, Moodles, interactive whiteboards, videoconferencing, the use of various online learning programs and the development of curriculum resource materials such as Inspiration and Influence, a Stage 4 Visual Arts resource that focuses on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art, are among the ways in which interactive technologies were employed in New South Wales in 2011.

Local level actions

The Norte Norte program provided approximately 2,671 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Years 11 and 12 with up to 75 hours tutorial assistance in 2011. Mentoring programs, Sistaspark and the Strong Brother program were also in operation in several school regions.

A number of programs, designed to improve access to school-based accredited training, were accessed including the Kickstart Pre-Apprenticeship Program and the Elsa Dixon Aboriginal Employment Program. In addition, strong links with the Aboriginal Employment Strategy were established and 1,342 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from all school sectors were provided placements by Work Placement Service Providers funded under the National Partnership: Youth Attainment and Transitions.

Career and Transition Advisors, VET coordinators or mentors were available to provide support and case management for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students undertaking school-based apprenticeships and traineeships.

The career services provided in New South Wales schools included: the provision of careers counselling by career advisors; involvement in targeted and general careers programs, such as Work Experience in Stage 5; counselling on subject choice for Stage 6; university and TAFE visits; involvement in various local/regional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Careers Expos and access to the Department's free Careers Advisory Service in the Christmas holidays.

Examples of School Business Community Partnerships operating in New South Wales included the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (New South Wales) School to Work Indigenous Scholarships, which provided scholarships to three Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 2011, and the Schools First Program which, in partnership with the National Australia Bank, provided support to several schools to provide mentoring and work experience opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Good practice

The six priority domains of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014* aim to contribute to improved outcomes in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

The intended outcome for the Pathways to Real Post-School Options domain is that: 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students make a successful transition from school to work and further study'. A case study related to this domain follows.

New South Wales – The ANZ Bank Young Entrepreneur Project

In the Illawarra and South East Region of New South Wales, Access Community Group (Youth Connections provider) with support from The Smith Family (Partnership Brokers), and in partnership with local schools within the region, delivered an alternative education program to teach young people about the 'world of work' and help them develop transferrable employability skills in an innovative and practical way.

The program allowed participants to create 'micro businesses' in order to learn about all aspects of business management. Program participants learnt about the many skills needed to hold down a job, such as: the need to be punctual and reliable; how to be an effective time manager; how to treat customers, and how to be responsive to direction. They were also encouraged to tap into their own creativity, ingenuity and initiative.

The ANZ Bank, as community sponsor, provided 'seed funding' of \$2,000 to each group of participants to 'bank roll' their businesses. The students could divide any profit between them at the end of the project as an added incentive. At the end of the program, students had the option to 'take their business with them' if they wanted to continue it, or access support to develop their own business using what they learned from the program.

This innovative, alternative learning program was underpinned by accredited training, including five modules from the Certificate II in Business Administration. All modules are transferrable and participants received recognition of prior learning from other Registered Training Organisations if they transitioned into other courses. Access Community Group delivered the training under Registered Training Organisation status.

Trainers understood the needs of Aboriginal students and the course was highly flexible and practical, recruiting the most 'at risk' and disengaged young people from across the region. As a number of the participants faced a range of factors that affected their school attendance and engagement, the Youth Connections program provided one-on-one individualised case management, individual assistance and supervision support to participants.

The program was delivered one day per week to each group in each location. The course ran for five hours on that day (in school hours). A trainer and a case manager attended to ensure that the participants had an appropriate amount of support and could be assisted if they needed any help with any aspect of the training.

Case managers worked with the participants and if they identified that any participants required additional support or personal support, this took place at times separate to the 'training' and at a time and place appropriate and suitable for the participant.

The program worked with:

- young people who were attending school but 'at immediate risk' of disengaging – the time out of school was negotiated with the school to ensure that it did not negatively impact on the participant's school performance
- young people who were recently disengaged from education
- young people who had been disengaged from education for a long time
- severely disengaged young people.

The modules delivered were generic, and easily adapted to the business interest areas that the participants identified. Participants were consulted and engaged in every aspect of the program from concept right through to delivery of the business deliverables. They came up with their business ideas, business structures and all aspects of the business planning and delivery. The modules were specifically selected for this purpose, providing a good understanding of workplace principles that the participants could use once they become employees.

The first round of the program (June to December 2011) saw 47 participants successfully complete the course. Other outcomes of the program included:

- the development of 9 businesses across the Illawarra, South Coast and Southern Highlands areas
- 36 of the 47 participants, who completed the Program, achieved a Statement of Attainment with units from the Certificate II in Business
- 11 of the 47 achieved a Statement of Attainment with units from TAFE

- a number of participants went on to begin their career pathway through casual employment, apprenticeships, traineeships and long term work experience
- the majority of participants made a decision to continue on to Year 11.

Stakeholders were critical to this project and contributed in the following ways:

Access Community Group (ACG):

Funding for this program was partially provided through the Access Community Group (ACG) (Youth Connections) program. The ACG offered marketing for the program; induction and recruitment of the participants, mentors and volunteers; experienced and qualified trainers to deliver the program; training packages for mentors and accredited training for young people; individual case management as necessary; linkage to other Access Community Group and community programs; transport; catering; certificates; and other resources as required.

The Smith Family (Partnership Brokers):

The Smith Family made the initial introductions and undertook management of the relationships of project partners; facilitated further linkages with business and community partners as required; linked participant groups with industry/business mentors; and sourced any additional resources required.

ANZ Bank:

The ANZ bank provided mentors for each group; business expertise and assistance setting up businesses; and \$2,000 initial investment for each group to start business.

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR):

DEEWR provided Indigenous Employment Project funding for 50 additional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to participate in all aspects of the program.

IECB's feedback

The New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated (New South Wales AECG) has worked closely with the Department throughout 2011, giving advice; advocating for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and communities; contributing to initiatives and supporting the implementation of systemic and local level actions across all

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan domains.

The New South Wales AECG sits on a number of New South Wales State level Ministerial Advisory Groups, such as the Ministerial Advisory Group on Literacy and Numeracy; the Ministerial Working Party on Aboriginal School Attendance; and the Director Generals Aboriginal Education and Training Reference Group, as well as being active at the regional and local levels.

The New South Wales AECG has also worked with TAFE New South Wales, and a number of universities in New South Wales, to enhance pathways and opportunities for further education and training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

While progress has been made, there is still work to be done. In accordance with our Partnership Agreement, New South Wales AECG will continue to work collaboratively with the Department to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners have access to an education system that values and respects their cultural identity; supports them to succeed academically; and enables them to realise their aspirations and potential.

New South Wales Department of Education and Communities' response to New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group's feedback

The New South Wales Government is committed to closing the gap in educational outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in New South Wales.

The New South Wales Government recognises that it is only in working together in genuine partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that this goal can be realised.

The New South Wales Department of Education and Communities recognises the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated (NSW AECG) as the peak body in New South Wales representing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in matters relating to education and training.

The Department thanks the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated for its feedback on the New South Wales chapter and for its tireless and astute advocacy and its partnership and collaboration in implementing change at the local, regional and systemic levels to drive improved educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

The Department looks forward to continuing to genuinely consult and collaborate and work in partnership with the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated, so as to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in New South Wales have access to a quality education and training system that values their cultural identity and heritage and supports their academic success.

Focus school information

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Lit/Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
Albion Park Rail Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	406	57			
Alma Public School	Gov.	Provincial	202	40	x	x	
Ashmont Public School	Gov.	Provincial	273	118		x	
Ballina Public School	Gov.	Provincial	276	84		x	
Baradine Central School	Gov.	Remote	105	44		x	
Batemans Bay Public School	Gov.	Provincial	481	79	x		
Bathurst West Public School	Gov.	Provincial	390	75	x		
Bermagui Public School	Gov.	Provincial	171	31			
Blackett Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	282	51		x	
Boggabilla Central School	Gov.	Provincial	139.6	127.6		x	
Bourke Public School	Gov.	Very Remote	210	153	x	x	
Bowen Public School	Gov.	Provincial	170	71	x	x	
Braddock Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	211	40		x	
Brewarrina Central School	Gov.	Remote	192.6	183.6		x	
Broken Hill North Public School	Gov.	Provincial	275	73		x	
Budgewoi Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	572	46			
Buninyong Public School	Gov.	Provincial	222	142		x	
Casino Public School	Gov.	Provincial	519	120		x	
Casino West Public School	Gov.	Provincial	296	85		x	
Cobar Public School	Gov.	Remote	316	86			
Coffs Harbour Public School	Gov.	Provincial	331	71		x	
Collarenebri Central School	Gov.	Remote	75	64		x	
Condobolin Public School	Gov.	Provincial	262	132	x	x	
Coonamble Public School	Gov.	Remote	211	174		x	
Coraki Public School	Gov.	Provincial	109	29	x	x	
Cowra Public School	Gov.	Provincial	360	70		x	
Crawford Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	520	70			
Curran Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	262	32		x	
Dareton Public School	Gov.	Provincial	60	50		x	
Doonside Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	155	49		x	
Drummond Memorial Public School	Gov.	Provincial	107	34		x	
Dubbo West Public School	Gov.	Provincial	309	194		x	
Gillwinga Public School	Gov.	Provincial	151	61		x	
Glenroi Heights Public School	Gov.	Provincial	223	95		x	
Grafton Public School	Gov.	Provincial	673	109			
Gunnedah Public School	Gov.	Provincial	137	91		x	
Hillvue Public School	Gov.	Provincial	252	179	x	x	
Inverell Public School	Gov.	Provincial	392	62	x	x	
Kanwal Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	722	75			
Kelso Public School	Gov.	Provincial	275	74	x		
Kempsey West Public School	Gov.	Provincial	331	164		x	
Koonawarra Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	312	66		x	
Lethbridge Park Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	382	67		x	
Lightning Ridge Central School	Gov.	Remote	381.6	154.8		x	

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Lit/Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
Lismore Heights Public School	Gov.	Provincial	225	42	x		
Macksville Public School	Gov.	Provincial	401	60		x	
Manning Gardens Public School	Gov.	Provincial	159	72		x	
Marayong Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	455	36	x		
Menindee Central School	Gov.	Remote	112.4	74.4		x	
Middleton Public School	Gov.	Provincial	288	34			
Mogo Public School	Gov.	Provincial	62	31		x	
Moree East Public School	Gov.	Provincial	121	107		x	
Mount Austin Public School	Gov.	Provincial	239	70	x	x	
Mount Druitt Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	512	13		x	
Mount Warrigal Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	236	39	x	x	
Mudgee Public School	Gov.	Provincial	503	53			
Narrabri West Public School	Gov.	Provincial	235	49		x	
Narromine Public School	Gov.	Provincial	415	174	x	x	
Newling Public School	Gov.	Provincial	104	47	x		
Nowra East Public School	Gov.	Provincial	290	120		x	
Nyngan Public School	Gov.	Remote	146	64		x	
Parkview Public School	Gov.	Provincial	188	57		x	
Port Macquarie Public School	Gov.	Provincial	430	56	x		
Ross Hill Public School	Gov.	Provincial	661	86		x	
Shalvey Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	397	74		x	
South Grafton Public School	Gov.	Provincial	576	104	x	x	
Sturt Public School	Gov.	Provincial	327	22			
Tahmoor Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	320	27			
Taree Public School	Gov.	Provincial	67	28		x	
The Sir Henry Parkes Memorial Public School	Gov.	Provincial	255	46		x	
Tingha Public School	Gov.	Provincial	111	68		x	
Tolland Public School	Gov.	Provincial	179	66		x	
Toomelah Public School	Gov.	Provincial	66	66		x	
Toormina Public School	Gov.	Provincial	330	52			
Tregear Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	373	83		x	
Tweed Heads South Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	216	70	x	x	
Walgett Community College - Primary School	Gov.	Remote	110	101		x	x
Warren Central School	Gov.	Provincial	242.4	99.4		x	
Wee Waa Public School	Gov.	Provincial	142	58		x	
Wellington Public School	Gov.	Provincial	489	231		x	
Westlawn Public School	Gov.	Provincial	484	36			
Westport Public School	Gov.	Provincial	329	53		x	
Whalan Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	331	66		x	
Wilcannia Central School	Gov.	Very Remote	119.4	117.4		x	x
William Bayldon Public School	Gov.	Provincial	176	43	x	x	
Windale Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	231	68		x	
Woodberry Public School	Gov.	Metropolitan	190	42		x	
Woodenbong Central School	Gov.	Provincial	208.4	69		x	

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Lit/Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
Currawah Adventist Aboriginal College	Ind.	Very Remote	17	17			
Minimbah Aboriginal Primary School	Ind.	Provincial	42	38		X	
Nowra Anglican College	Ind.	Provincial	664	57			
St Andrew's Cathedral Gawura School	Ind.	Metropolitan	21.4	21.4	X		
St Mary's Primary School, Armidale	Cath.	Provincial	281	22			
St Joseph's Primary School, Taree	Cath.	Provincial	401	63		X	
St Augustine's Primary School, Coffs Harbour	Cath.	Provincial	612	25			
St Agnes' Primary School, Port Macquarie	Cath.	Provincial	592	38			
St Carthage's Primary, Lismore	Cath.	Provincial	587	25			
St Joseph's Primary School, South Grafton	Cath.	Provincial	151	11			
St Josephs, Tweed Heads	Cath.	Metropolitan	317	11			
St Joseph's, Port Macquarie	Cath.	Provincial	400	22			
St Joseph's Primary, Kingswood	Cath.	Metropolitan	307	13			
Good Sheperd Primary, Plumpton	Cath.	Metropolitan	770	19			
Holy Family Primary, Emerton	Cath.	Metropolitan	332	46		X	
St Joseph's School, Walgett	Cath.	Remote	171	85	X		X
St Francis Xavier Primary, Lake Cargelligo	Cath.	Remote	66	34			
St Mary's Primary, Bowraville	Cath.	Provincial	43	40			
Our Lady of Mt Carmel Primary, Waterloo	Cath.	Metropolitan	135	88			
St Ignatius' School, Bourke	Cath.	Very Remote	119	54		X	
St Therese's Community School, Wilcannia	Cath.	Very Remote	30	29			
St Joseph's School, Peak Hill	Cath.	Provincial	33	7		X	
St Patrick's School, Brewarrina	Cath.	Remote	43	24		X	
St Joseph's Primary, West Kempsey	Cath.	Provincial	457	54		X	
St Mary's Central School, Wellington	Cath.	Provincial	154	19			
St Therese's Primary School, Sadleir	Cath.	Metropolitan	346	37			
St Pius X Primary School, Windale	Cath.	Metropolitan	36	10		X	

Victoria report on activities and outcomes

Introduction

In 2011, there were around 37,991 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Victoria, which comprised 0.7 per cent of the total population, forty-six per cent of whom live in metropolitan Melbourne and 53 per cent live in regional Victoria. Unlike other jurisdictions, no areas in Victoria are classified as remote. Victoria's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population includes those connected to land in Victoria and those whose lands are elsewhere in Australia.

The population trends are evident in the strong growth in the Victorian school system, which had 10,625 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments in 2011, a growth of around 25 per cent since 2007. The majority of students were enrolled in the government sector – 9,184 students or 85.1 per cent. This compares to 1,441 enrolments in the non-government sector. Aligning with the overall national trend, the government sector share in Victoria is declining relative to the Catholic and independent sectors, with a decrease from 89.2 per cent to 85.1 per cent between 2007 and 2011.

In 2011, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments were spread over a large number of government schools in Victoria. Although they represented 1.7 per cent of total students, these enrolments were distributed across 1,150 schools representing 75 per cent of all schools. Around 5,504 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (or 40 per cent) were in schools where there were less than ten enrolments, highlighting the spread of students across the Victorian school system. Just over half of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments are in provincial schools (representing 53 per cent), with the remainder in metropolitan schools.

Since 2008, reforms within the government school sector have focused on ensuring that everyone within the sector is responsible for improvement in educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; that the workforce has the skills and tools to achieve this improvement, and that

all schools are creating an environment that respects, recognises and celebrates cultural identity.

The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) has a strong commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. Students are supported across 158 schools, and extensive work is done to support their learning, attendance and engagement at school. In 2011, there were 987 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled, representing 9.8 per cent of total enrolments across the system. Of these, 363 students attended metropolitan schools and 513 students attended schools in regional Victoria.

Independent Schools throughout Victoria have demonstrated a commitment to providing education opportunities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with more than 450 enrolments in 2011. This represents 5 per cent of total enrolments across the sector in Victoria. Students are supported in 125 schools located in more than 60 locations, with 205 students attending schools in metropolitan Melbourne and 253 attending schools in regional Victoria.

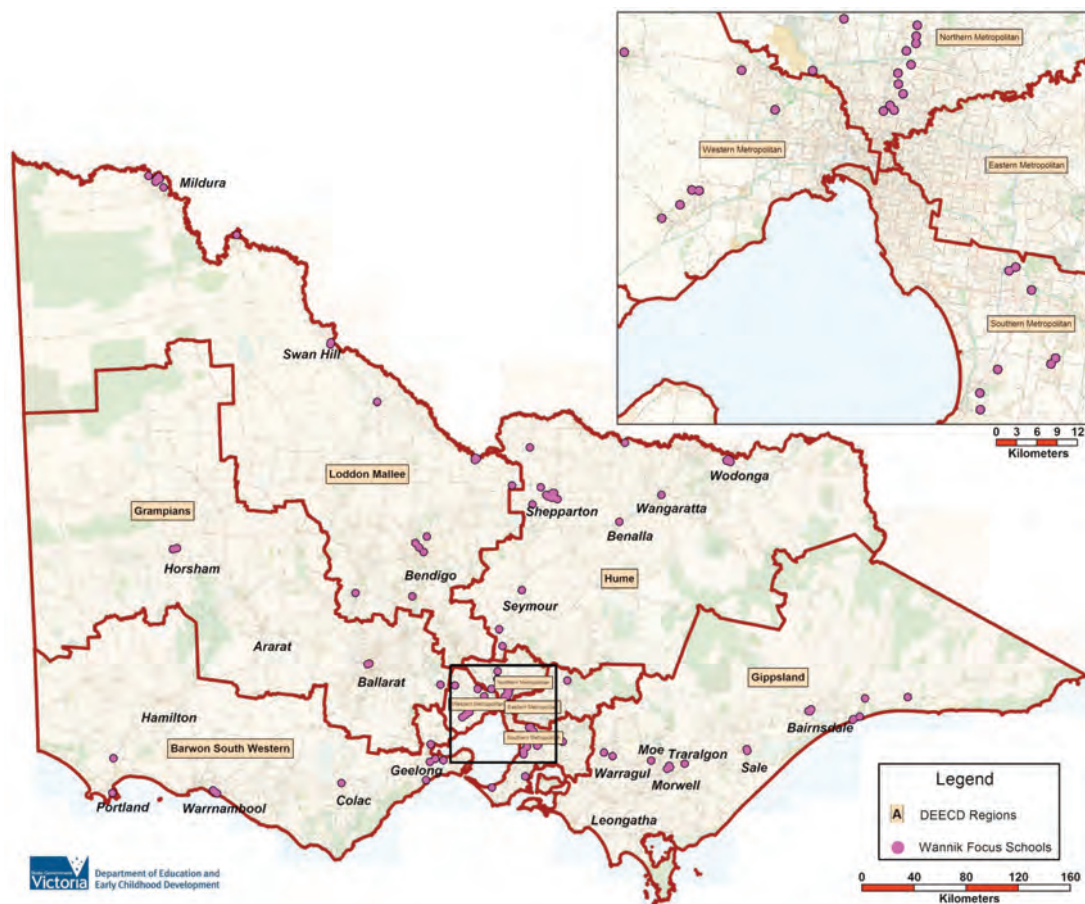
Profile of Focus schools

There are 125 Focus schools within Victoria, comprising 116 in the government sector and nine in the Catholic. Of these, 123 are primary schools and two secondary. In 2011, there were 2,924 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in Focus schools, comprising 2,762 government school enrolments and 162 Catholic enrolments.

Fifty-five of the Victorian Focus schools participate in the Smarter Schools National Partnership Focus schools with 21 Literacy/Numeracy schools and 34 Low Socio-Economic Status (SES). Victoria does not have any schools classified as remote or very remote.

There are no Focus schools within the independent education sector in Victoria.

Figure VIC1: Map of Wannik Focus schools
(Focus schools are listed in a table at the end of this chapter).



Victorian report on progress by Domains

Readiness for school

Performance indicators

1. The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending (where possible to measure) a preschool program.
2. The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students assessed as ready for the first year of full-time schooling by State and Territory measures.

Overall progress

Victorian data shows that the number of 4 year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in and attending kindergarten has shown significant improvement in recent years.

In 2009, the proportion of Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children developmentally on track on four or more domains (47.3 per cent) was higher than the national proportion (42.5 per cent), but significantly lower than the proportion of Victorian non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (71.8 per cent).

Victoria is currently considering the inclusion of a supplementary jurisdictional measure, the School Entrance Health Questionnaire, for future reports.

Table VIC1: Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending a preschool program, Victoria and Australia, 2011

	Victoria		Australia	
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	All children	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	All children
Number of children enrolled	731	67,487	10,167	233,128
Children enrolled (per cent)	86.5	93.9	75.7	80.8
Number of children attending	662	64,349	9,536	225,886
Percentage of children enrolled that are attending ^(a)	90.6	95.3	93.8	96.9
Percentage of children attending ^(b)	78.3	89.5	71.0	78.3

Notes:

- a) Calculated as the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled.
- b) Calculated as the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over Estimated Resident Population (ERP). ERP Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 4 year olds at June 2011, New South Wales = 4,027; Australia = 13,427.
- c) Due to data collection limitations, South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland have not reported on unique counts of children in preschool. However, episodes - counts of the instances of preschool programs provided to a child without accounting for duplication - are available for these jurisdictions. For information on methodologies and concepts of the preschool enrolment data please refer to explanatory notes in the ABS publication, *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates*, 2011 (Cat. No. 4240.0).
- d) Because early childhood education is not compulsory, and children can be enrolled in multiple preschool programs, the collection of unit record level (URL) data on preschool programs is seen to be fundamental in addressing data quality issues, both to eliminate duplication and to gain an accurate count of records at the child level. An episode is a term used in the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection to refer to an 'instance of learning' that a child has received. When one child is attending two different preschool programs, the same child is attending two episodes of preschool (i.e. may be double-counted). This affects the Australia totals but not the New South Wales figures. New South Wales provided URL data so children enrolled in a preschool program in New South Wales are not double-counted in Table 1.
- e) While there have been improvements in consistency of reporting across jurisdictions, it should be noted that Preschool Education Estimates have not yet achieved complete alignment with nationally agreed standards.
- f) For information on adjustments for 2006 Census undercount and the methods used to calculate projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, see explanatory notes in the ABS publication, *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991–2021* (Cat.No.3238.0).
- g) Estimates for the total population are sourced from ABS, *Estimated Population by Age and Sex, June 2011* (Cat.No. 3101.0). The Australia total includes 'Other territories' including Jervis Bay and Norfolk Island. However, Jervis Bay and Norfolk Island are excluded from Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales totals. Therefore, State and Territory Estimated Resident Population numbers will not add to Australia totals.
- h) In the absence of population estimates by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status for inter-censal years, non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population figures are calculated by subtracting projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population from estimates of the total population.

Source: ABS, *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates 2011* (Cat.No.4240.0) *Estimated Population by Age and Sex, June 2011* (Cat.No. 3101.0 DO002); *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991–2021* (Cat.No.3238.0)

Systemic level actions [5, 6 and 7]

All sectors of the Victorian education system use the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) to help communities understand the needs of their local children, and to develop outreach strategies to connect families with appropriate services including: early childhood education and care; health; family support; welfare and community services. The Victorian government schools sector and the CECV works closely with its schools to support their use of the AEDI data to identify needs of children and to put in place appropriate remedial strategies. Independent

schools have access to advice regarding AEDI through a support officer at Independent Schools Victoria.

Victoria has a comprehensive range of programs to support universal access to early childhood education across all school communities. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kindergarten program includes free access to kindergarten for three and four-year-old children and employs Koorie Engagement Support Officers and Koorie Early Childhood Preschool Assistants to support family and child engagement. Other targeted initiatives include the In Home Support and Home-Based

Table VIC2: Proportion of children in Victoria assessed as 'developmentally on track' in four or more domains of the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), 2009 (per cent)

	Victoria	Australia
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (per cent)	47.3	42.5
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (per cent)	71.8	68.6

Notes:

- a) The AEDI population comprises children with at least one valid domain score.
- b) Children are deemed to be developmentally 'on track' if they scored above the 25th percentile of the national AEDI population in four or more AEDI domains.
- c) Where Standard Australian English is not the child's first language, there may be an over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are assessed as developmentally vulnerable in the 'language and cognitive skills' or the 'communication skills and general knowledge' domains of the AEDI. Cultural differences in the child's mode of communication and general knowledge should also be acknowledged and taken in consideration when reviewing the AEDI data.

Source: DEEWR, unpublished *Australian Early Development Index* data, 2009 data collection

Learning programs, that support families to strengthen the education and development of their children. Multifunctional Aboriginal Children and Family Centres further foster strong connections between early childhood education and care, health, family support, welfare and community services, with the Whittlesea centre opening in 2011, and a second centre due to open in Bairnsdale in 2013.

The CECV has six of a total of 488 schools with co-located preschool centres. Koorie Education Workers work alongside these centres to build relationships and connections with community. Involvement and membership on in Best Start programs across Victoria ensure that there is an ongoing link between professionals involved in the early education arenas.

Other linguistically and culturally appropriate on-entry assessment programs offered to all Victorian schools includes the School Entrance Health Questionnaire (SEHQ), which records a family's concerns and observations about their child's health and wellbeing on entrance to school. A tool for clinical practice used by child health nurses, to assess children's health and wellbeing and identify issues that may impact on their child's learning, SEHQ provides a point of engagement with families and educators. The SEHQ has a sample of over 800 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and 90 per cent coverage of Victorian schools. Victorian government schools also use Transition Learning and Development Statements to provide information to families about their children's learning and development in early childhood, and to assist teachers to plan for each child's learning and development when they start school.

The CECV uses a Literacy and Numeracy Framework to ensure that there is appropriate identification, intervention and evaluation of students to ensure that their progress is monitored closely. Teachers make assessments with all incoming Prep year students. A 2011 survey of 459 of 488 schools identified that 87 students, or 64.3 per cent were assessed as ready for school in relation to literacy skills, and 65.5 per cent were ready for school in relation to numeracy skills.

Local level actions [8]

All Victorian schools, including Focus schools, are encouraged to implement the AEDI. All sectors of the education system work with schools and stakeholders to maximise participation in the data collection and subsequent use of the data to identify and address any readiness for school issues.

Engagement and connections

Performance indicators

- 3 *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with personalised learning strategies in place.*
- 4 *Proportion of Focus schools with a school – community partnership agreement in place.*

Overall progress

In 2011, in the government sector, 87 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Victorian government schools

had Personalised Learning Plans. Three school – community partnership agreements were introduced in government Focus schools, with a strategy for further implementation under development.

In 2011, in the Catholic sector, there were 358 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with Personalised Learning Plans and preliminary work has commenced on the development of school – community partnerships.

Systemic level actions [15, 16, 17 and 18]

The Victorian government school sector, through its Wannik Strategy, has in place a statewide specialist Koorie Education Workforce to develop and implement outreach strategies. The strategy comprises 10 Koorie Education Co-ordinators (KECs) and 122 (109 EFT) Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESOs) to provide culturally appropriate community engagement activities and referrals. This includes support for at-risk young people, such as Koorie students, who are pregnant or parents.

The Victorian Government has made a \$1.5 million investment over two years (2011–13) to build the capacity of this workforce to improve educational outcomes. In 2011, 39 KESOs participated in a Tailored Professional Learning Package (TPLP), delivered by the Stronger Smarter Institute and Swinburne University of Technology, that is supporting structured career progression. The Wannik Strategy also strengthens the accountability mechanisms for how government schools engage with Koorie learners and families, with targets to improve Koorie student outcomes in School and Principal Implementation Plans, and the requirement to engage in What Works and Dare to Lead programs.

The CECV assists schools to access the most appropriate services throughout students' schooling from the early years, key transition points, as well as pathways planning. Catholic schools provide flexible options for all students and ensure that program and educational opportunities are tailored to suit their needs. In 2011, sixteen Koorie Education Workers (EFT 11.57) were employed across Catholic schools to support student and family engagement. Professional learning included a residential program for these workers to develop strategies to improve educational outcomes. It is a requirement of the Catholic sector that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families are involved in planning the education of their children through Program Support Meetings in schools.

Assistance was provided to develop individual learning plans for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in National Partnership independent schools.

Local level actions [19, 20 and 21]

In 2011, the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) delivered a pilot Koorie Parent and Community Engagement (KPaCE) program, using forums to develop three school – community partnership agreements across the government schools sector and a set of guidelines for statewide implementation. This work lays the foundation for a significant increase in the number of partnership agreements to be implemented in 2012.

KESOs play a key role in engaging families in developing and monitoring individualised learning plans. In 2011, the Victorian Government developed an online Koorie Education Learning Plan (KELP) which enables parents, teachers and students to work together to improve outcomes for students. It links Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) performance levels, teaching and learning strategies, attendance data and interactive data for schools, families and students.

The CECV delivered family forums across all Focus schools in 2011 that enabled families to be directly involved in school – community partnerships. Individual learning plans were implemented across Focus schools and the What Works program was engaged to support this work.

Attendance

Performance indicators

5. *Attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in schools.*
6. *Enrolment to population ratio of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians compared to non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.*
7. *Retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*
8. *Grade progression ratios for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*

Attendance rates

Table VIC3: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, by sector, 2011 (per cent)

	Year level										Ungraded	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Prim.	Sec.
Government												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	89	90	89	89	89	89	87	82	80	79	84	84
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	94	94	94	94	93	91	90	90	89	89
Total	94	94	94	94	94	94	93	91	90	90	89	89
Catholic												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	90	90	87	90	91	90	91	91	83	87	n/a	85
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	95	94	95	94	94	93	93	92	90	80
Total	94	94	95	94	95	94	94	93	93	92	90	80
Independent												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95	95	94	93	92	93	83	84	87	87	n/a	72
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95	94	95	95	95	95	95	94	94	93	85	82
Total	95	94	95	95	95	95	95	94	94	93	85	82

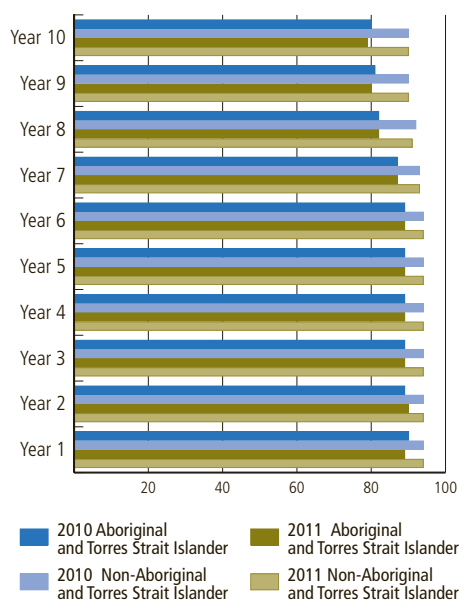
n/a not available

Notes:

- Definitions and methodologies used by jurisdictions and sectors to collect attendance data are not uniform. As such, direct comparisons of attendance rates between jurisdictions and sectors cannot currently be made. Nor can attendance data for 2011 be aggregated or averaged at the national or State level. Variations in methodology between jurisdictions are described in the explanatory notes for the 2011 attendance data contained in the *National Report on Schooling in Australia 2011*.
- Ungraded attendance includes both primary and secondary students. Therefore, while both 'Ungraded' columns contain data, the data is the same.
- The figures for Years 1–10 include students in primary, secondary and primary/secondary schools. Ungraded figures include students in special schools only.
- For Victorian government schools, ungraded attendance includes both primary and secondary students. Therefore, while both 'Ungraded' columns contain data, the data is the same. The figures for Years 1–10 include students in primary, secondary and primary/secondary schools. Ungraded figures include students in special schools only.

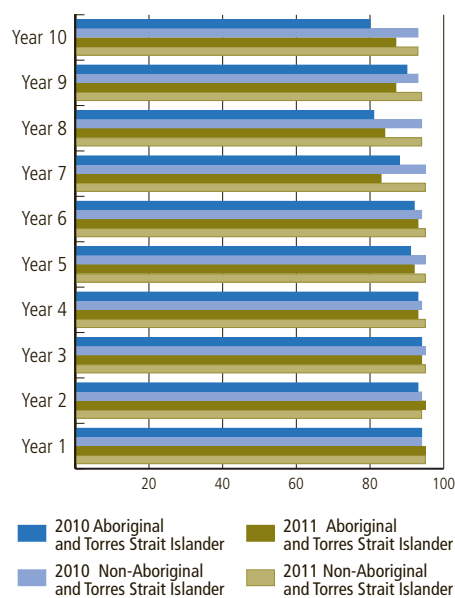
Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished)

Figure VIC2.1: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, government sector, 2010–2011 (per cent)



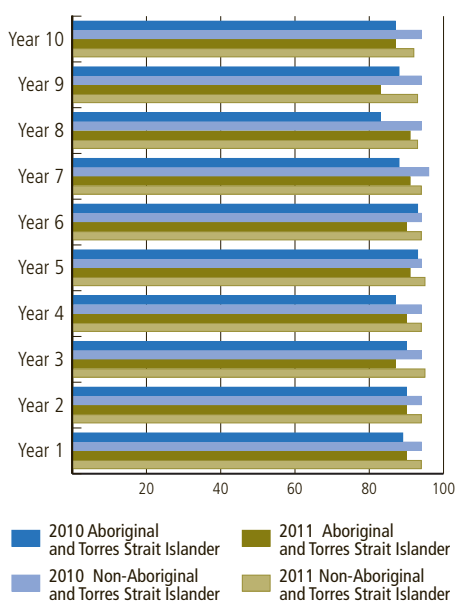
Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished).

Figure VIC2.3: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, independent sector, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished).

Figure VIC2.2: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, Catholic sector, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished).

While attendance at all year levels in Victorian government schools is generally above 80 per cent, there has been no change in 'the gap' between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students over the last four years. The gap is steady, around the 5 percentage point mark in primary schools and the first year of secondary school, but then progressively increases in secondary school to 11 percentage points in Year 10. The gap remains consistent across 2010 and 2011 for government schools.

In Catholic schools, the gap in primary levels is around 4 percentage points, compared to around 2 percentage points in independent schools. In the secondary years, the gap varies in the Catholic sector ranging from 2 to 10 per cent. In the independent sector, the gap decreases from 12 percentage points in Year 7 to 6 percentage points in Year 10. Between 2010 and 2011, the gap varied at all year levels for Catholic and independent schools.

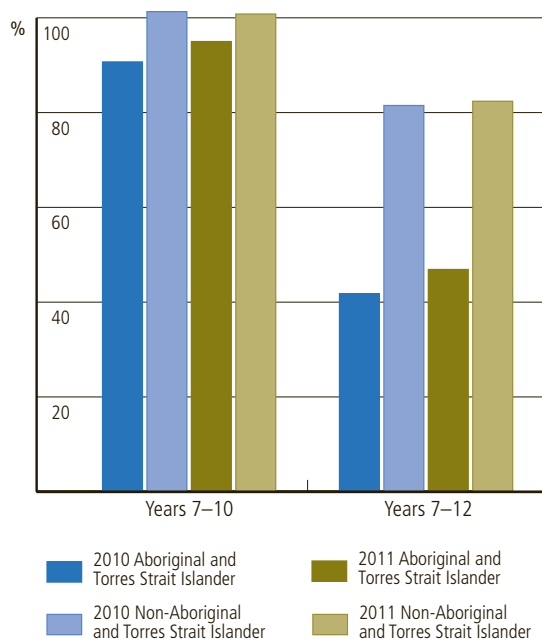
Enrolment to population ratio

For 2011, school participation rates have not been published by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, due to concerns with the quality of the indicator. Specifically, the rates for most States and Territories exceed 100 per cent, primarily as a result of modal differences in the data sources. The denominator is sourced from the ABS Estimated Resident Population series, itself drawn from the Population Census, while the numerator is sourced from the ABS National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC). The Australian Bureau of Statistics is working to provide a substitute measure.

Apparent retention rates

Victoria has shown significant improvement in apparent retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Years 7 to 10 with the gap closing from 19.8 percentage points in 2009 to 5.8 percentage points in 2011. The non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rate of 100.8 per cent

Figure VIC3: Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia, 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0)

Table VIC4: Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, from Year 7 to Year 10 and Year 7 to Year 12, all schools, 2011 (per cent)

	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Year 7 – Year 10	95.0	100.8
Year 7 – Year 12	46.9	82.4

Source: Derived from ABS, *Schools Australia, 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0) and *National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC)*, Table 64a

occurs because of significant interstate and international migration into Victoria.

The gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Years 10 to 12 closed from 37.1 percentage points in 2009 to 35.5 percentage points in 2011. It should also be noted that within Victoria, a significant number of 15 to 19 year-olds complete Year 12 or equivalent through the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system. In 2011, there were 1,040 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, aged 19 years and under, enrolled in a Year 12 or equivalent qualification in VET whose highest level of prior qualification was Year 11 or below.

Apparent grade progression ratios

Consistent with the apparent retention data, the 2011 grade progression ratio for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students decreased as years of schooling increased. The gap between non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students increased from around 9 percentage points between Year 9 to 10 and Year 10 to 11 to 18 percentage points between Year 11 to 12. With the exception of Year 9 to 10, the grade progression ratio increased in 2011, relative to 2010.

As noted elsewhere, the significant take up of Vocational Education and Training options within the VET system by 15 to 19 year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students needs to be considered when looking at grade progression.

Systemic level actions [25]

All Victorian government schools are required to implement evidence-based attendance strategies as part of their Student

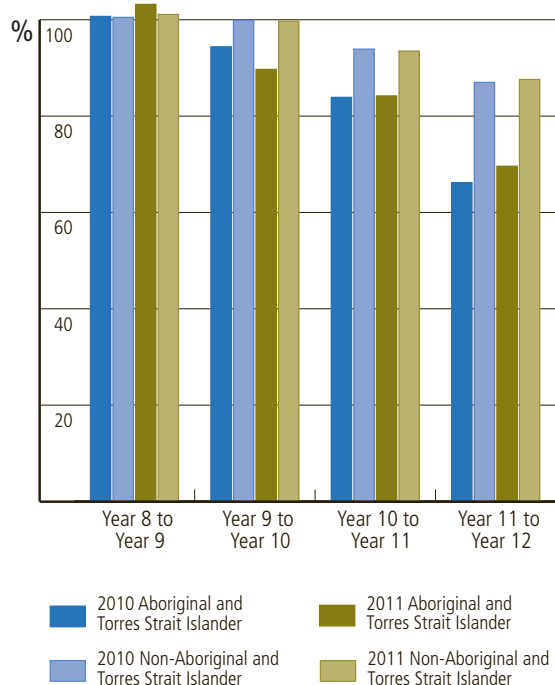
Table VIC5: Grade progression ratios of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 2011 (per cent)

	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Year 8 to Year 9	103.2	101.1
Year 9 to Year 10	89.7	99.7
Year 10 to Year 11	84.2	93.5
Year 11 to Year 12	69.6	87.6

Note: Grade progression ratios are based on full-time students only.

Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia, 2011* (Cat. No.4221.0) NSSC Table 63a.

Figure VIC4: Grade progression ratios of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia, 2011* (Cat. No. 4221.0)

Wellbeing Policy. The Wannik Education Strategy provides targeted support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attendance. This includes Koorie Engagement Support Officers who work with families and teachers to identify non-attending students and implement strategies to support stronger engagement. The Victorian Government has made a significant investment in this engagement through the Wannik Tutorial Program that provides \$1,600 for every student in Years 11 and 12, and \$1,300 for every student in Years 2 to 10 identified as achieving below the expected standard in English and/or maths.

In the Catholic sector, all schools monitored the attendance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and developed strategies to support the needs of each individual student and family. Initiatives delivered in 2011 include:

- Koorie Education Workers identifying and addressing attendance issues
- mentoring by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders
- the Worlds of Work program to improve retention in the senior years by identifying aspirational goals and vocational pathways
- an annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Secondary Student Day to celebrate identity and culture and strengthen their peer network
- Program Support group meetings that develop action plans with the family to address underlying issues
- secondary school tutoring
- tailored programs in community settings.

Local level actions [26]

Victorian government Focus schools use a Koorie specific version of the statewide It's Not OK to Be Away attendance strategy to support Koorie students. This initiative is designed to change community and student attitudes to school attendance. It requires the support of both parents and the community if student attendance is to be successfully addressed, and it promotes two key messages:

- student attendance is the responsibility of everyone in the community

- effective schools monitor, communicate and implement strategies to improve regular school attendance, as this is a prerequisite for improving educational outcomes.

In 2011, the CECV supported its Focus schools to develop attendance strategies, including visits by an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elder to help students set goals.

Individual academic tuition and boarding scholarships, funded by schools, philanthropic organisations and community members, are offered by a number of independent schools to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Literacy and numeracy

Performance indicators

9. *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in NAPLAN testing.*
10. *Participation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in NAPLAN.*

NAPLAN outcomes

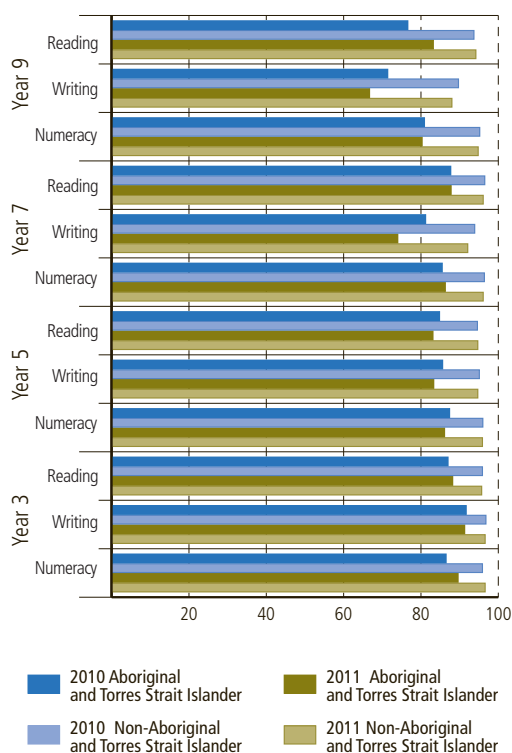
Table VIC6: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, Victoria, 2010–2011 (per cent)

	2010				2011			
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Gap	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Confidence Intervals	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Gap	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Confidence Intervals
Year 3								
Reading	87.0	95.9	8.9	± 2.5	88.2	95.7	7.5	± 2.8
Writing	91.7	96.8	5.1	± 2.3	91.3	96.6	5.3	± 2.3
Numeracy	86.5	95.9	9.4	± 2.4	89.6	96.6	7.0	± 2.3
Year 5								
Reading	84.8	94.6	9.8	± 3.1	83.1	94.7	11.6	± 3.0
Writing	85.6	95.1	9.5	± 2.6	83.3	94.7	11.4	± 3.1
Numeracy	87.4	96.0	8.6	± 2.8	86.1	95.9	9.8	± 2.9
Year 7								
Reading	87.7	96.5	8.8	± 2.9	87.8	96.1	8.3	± 3.2
Writing	81.2	93.9	12.7	± 2.8	74.0	92.1	18.1	± 3.7
Numeracy	85.5	96.4	10.9	± 3.0	86.3	96.1	9.8	± 3.3
Year 9								
Reading	76.6	93.7	17.1	± 3.8	83.2	94.2	11.0	± 2.9
Writing	71.4	89.7	18.3	± 3.8	66.7	88.0	21.3	± 4.6
Numeracy	80.9	95.2	14.3	± 3.5	80.3	94.8	14.5	± 3.8

Note: The confidence intervals for 2010 and 2011 in this table are specifically for Victoria.

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2010 and 2011

Figure VIC 5: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, Victoria, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished), *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*.

Overall progress

The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Victoria meeting the national minimum standard in NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy assessment varies across the years of schooling.

The proportion of students meeting the national minimum standard decreases between Years 3 to 9 for all domains. The biggest variation occurs in the writing domain, which decreases from 91 per cent in Year 3 to 66 per cent in Year 9. The decline for reading and numeracy is less significant with national minimum standards remaining above 80 per cent at all year levels.

There is a gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander at every level

and in every area. In 2011, the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student outcomes was smallest for Year 3 writing (5.3 percentage points) and largest for Year 9 writing (21.3 percentage points).

Between 2010 and 2011 there was a significant improvement in Year 3 reading and numeracy and Year 9 reading, with results in other domains remaining consistent.

2011 NAPLAN data by geolocation

In 2011, in both metropolitan and provincial geolocation areas the percentage of Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students performing at or above the national minimum standard remains higher than the national percentage. The smallest difference between the Victorian and national percentage is in provincial Year 3 numeracy (0.2 per cent) whilst the largest is in metropolitan Year 5 writing (8.3 per cent).

The gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Victoria is larger in provincial locations compared to metropolitan locations. The smallest gap was in metropolitan Year 3 reading and numeracy (5.2 percentage points) whilst the largest was in metropolitan Year 9 writing (18.7 percentage points).

2011 NAPLAN data and 2011 progress points for Victoria

One of the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) 'Closing the Gap' targets is to halve the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade. To monitor achievement of this COAG target by 2018, progress points for each State and Territory were developed. The progress points for Victoria are provided in Table VIC8.

The COAG Reform Council's *National Indigenous Reform Agreement: Supplement on literacy and numeracy achievement 2010*, available online at: <http://www.coagreformcouncil.gov.au/reports/indigenous.cfm>, states that:

'A jurisdiction is considered not to have met its annual progress point [target] if its result, including its 95 per

Table VIC7: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy geolocation summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, Victoria and Australia, 2011 (per cent)

Geolocation	New South Wales		Australia	
	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander
Reading				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	90.6	95.8	84.2	95.2
Provincial	86.1	95.3	81.3	93.9
Remote	np	97.4	67.3	92.1
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	45.3	90.2
Year 5				
Metropolitan	86.5	94.9	76.7	93.4
Provincial	80.3	93.9	73.4	91.6
Remote	np	95.4	49.4	89.7
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	26.4	86.6
Year 7				
Metropolitan	89.6	96.2	85.0	95.9
Provincial	86.2	95.7	81.8	95.3
Remote	np	100	63.4	95.3
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	42.5	93.2
Year 9				
Metropolitan	83.5	94.4	78.4	93.7
Provincial	83.0	93.9	75.0	93.0
Remote	np	95.9	54.6	91.5
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	29.3	89.5
Writing				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	92.4	96.7	88.1	96.4
Provincial	90.3	96.5	85.9	95.8
Remote	np	100	70.0	94.6
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	46.0	93.3
Year 5				
Metropolitan	87.6	95.2	79.8	94.6
Provincial	79.9	93.2	75.9	92.1
Remote	np	92.1	50.7	90.5
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	28.4	88.1
Year 7				
Metropolitan	77.6	93.3	77.2	93.5
Provincial	70.8	88.4	71.1	90.1
Remote	np	96.7	47.4	90.2
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	28.4	87.6
Year 9				
Metropolitan	71.0	89.7	63.4	88.0
Provincial	62.7	82.7	55.0	82.0
Remote	np	91.5	33.8	78.6
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	20.6	78.2
Numeracy				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	91.4	96.6	88.6	96.5
Provincial	88.0	96.6	87.2	96.0
Remote	np	99.3	77	95.7
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	63.3	94.9
Year 5				
Metropolitan	88.3	96.1	83.8	95.7
Provincial	84.3	95.4	80.6	94.8
Remote	np	97.5	62.8	94.5
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	42.4	92.4
Year 7				
Metropolitan	88.1	96.2	84.5	95.7
Provincial	84.7	95.7	81.3	95.1
Remote	np	100	61.7	94.9
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	41.6	93.4
Year 9				
Metropolitan	81.8	95.1	78.4	94.4
Provincial	78.9	94.1	73.9	93.4
Remote	np	95.6	58.9	91.9
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	33.5	90.3

Note: 'n.p.' indicates data not published as there were no students tested, or the number of students tested was less than 30.

n/a not available

Source: ACARA, National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), 2011

cent confidence interval, is below the progress point. In all other cases, it is considered to have met the progress point.'

Source: COAG Reform Council, (2011) *National Indigenous Reform Agreement: Supplement on literacy and numeracy achievement 2010*, COAG Reform Council, Sydney, page 3.

When the 95 per cent confidence intervals are taken into account, Victoria met the reading and numeracy trajectories for reading and numeracy in all domains except Year 3 numeracy. Writing cannot be reported post-2010.

Overall NAPLAN outcomes

Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students performed strongly in the NAPLAN compared to other jurisdictions, but a gap remains with non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students within the State. Victoria met its trajectory targets in 11 of the 12 NAPLAN areas, and there were minimal differences between metropolitan and provincial performance. Participation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students declined through secondary school, and actions are being undertaken to increase the number of students sitting NAPLAN tests.

Table VIC8: Reading, writing and numeracy progress points for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, (2008–2011) (per cent)

Year	Reading				Writing				Numeracy			
	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9
2008	88.1	83	85.5	79.9	92.1	82.7	77.6	68.9	93	83.3	87.9	78.4
2009	88.1	83.1	85.6	80	92.1	82.8	77.7	69	93	83.4	87.9	78.5
2010	88.3	83.2	85.7	80.2	92.2	82.9	77.9	69.4	93.1	83.5	88.1	78.8
2011	88.5	83.5	86	80.6	92.3	83.2	78.4	69.9	93.2	83.8	88.3	79.2
2018	92.0	88.7	91.0	87.8	94.4	88.7	86.0	80.2	95.0	89.4	92.5	87.3

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2008–2011

NAPLAN participation

Table VIC9: Reading, writing and numeracy participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, exemptions and assessed students in Victoria and Australia, 2011 (per cent)

	Year 3		Year 5		Year 7		Year 9	
	Vic.	Aust.	Vic.	Aust.	Vic.	Aust.	Vic.	Aust.
Reading								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	87.5	88.8	90.3	90.8	87.5	88.8	70.7	79.0
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95.3	96.5	95.6	96.7	95.3	96.5	91.8	93.7
Writing								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	87.1	89.0	89.5	90.7	87.1	89.0	72.9	79.4
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95.6	96.6	95.6	96.6	95.6	96.6	92.4	94.1
Numeracy								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	85.3	87.6	89.3	89.7	85.3	87.6	69.4	78.0
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95.2	96.2	95.3	96.3	95.2	96.2	91.7	93.2

Note: The NAPLAN participation data provided reflects students who were exempted, absent/withdrawn and assessed.

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2011

Participation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students fluctuate across the year levels, but significant decline occurs across all domains in Year 9, where participation is around 70 per cent. There is a participation gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at all year levels, with the smallest gap in Year 5, at around 6 percentage points, and the largest gap in Year 9, at around 21 percentage points. Victoria has implemented a number of measures to increase the participation of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in NAPLAN testing. This includes identification of, and targeted support for, schools with low participation rates, as well as promotion of the benefits of sitting the NAPLAN test for schools, parents and community members.

Systemic level actions [30]

Victoria does not have any remote geolocation area schools.

Local level actions [31 and 32]

The Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's (DEECD) *Literacy and numeracy 6–18 month strategy: P–10 improvement schedule for school leaders* provides school leaders in primary and secondary schools with a foundation for a whole-of-school approach to literacy and numeracy improvement. It is a mechanism by which schools reflect on their current whole-of-school practices to determine which activities and programs to implement to support improved student learning outcomes. It provides school leaders with a range of resources including assessment tools, support for data analysis, school accountability documentation and material to support professional learning.

This strategy provides a six-term schedule, divided into two sections. The first section, Assessment and Analysis, contains an example of a literacy and numeracy assessment schedule, including assessment of all students from Prep to Year 10 and advice on data analysis at a school, year, cohort and individual level. All schools are encouraged to develop and implement a schedule to inform their whole-of-school approach to high-quality literacy and numeracy learning and teaching. The second section, Whole-school Planning, includes an outline of a whole-of-school response to student literacy and numeracy learning needs. This includes the implementation of intervention

programs, advice on staff professional learning and strategies to strengthen partnerships with families and the broader school community. Explicit reference is made to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with Koorie students and their families schools encouraged to work with the Koorie Education Coordinators and Koorie Engagement Support Officers.

The CECV identifies individual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who have not reached literacy and numeracy benchmarks through NAPLAN data, and then assists schools to determine appropriate interventions to address their learning needs. Intervention programs, such as: the EMU (Extending Maths Understanding); the STAR literacy program; Reading Recovery; First Steps; Enhancing Reading Intervention Knowledge (ERIK); Learning to Read, Reading to Learn, along with additional tutoring and homework classes are part of a suite of programs that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students 'at risk' in literacy and numeracy achievement access to assist in their skill development.

This is further supported annually through the pre- and post-literacy and numeracy testing conducted in each year level. Extensive professional learning has been delivered to schools to build teacher capacity to develop Individual Learning Plans (ILP) to address individual student needs. In 2011, there was further work completed on the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Literacy and Numeracy Framework* that schools could use to monitor the progress of their students.

Under the Victorian DEECD's *Literacy and numeracy 6–18 month strategy: P–10 improvement schedule for school leaders*, the school leadership team ensures the professional learning is focused on student needs and meeting the goals of the Annual Implementation Plan. This includes activities such as providing regular opportunities for leaders and teachers to share their learning, and building teacher capacity in literacy and numeracy planning and instruction, as well as the specific demands of literacy and numeracy education for students from low SES backgrounds.

In the Catholic sector, teachers have been provided with extensive professional training in relation to the use of data to improve student performance. There has been a clear focus on pre and post assessment to determine teacher effect. There has been professional training provided in how to calculate effect size. The emphasis on Assessment for Learning has meant that all programs are based on evidence.

Leadership, quality teaching and workforce development

Performance indicators

11. Number of professional development hours on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and cultural and linguistic competence training undertaken by principals and teachers.
12. Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals, teachers and education workers (AIEWs and equivalents).
13. Average length of service of principals and teachers in hard-to-staff schools with high enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Overall progress

States and Territories agreed to provide a descriptive statement for Performance Indicator 11 for the 2011 Report.

In 2011, the Dare to Lead program delivered 23 Collegial Snapshots and 84 Situational Analyses to government schools and follow-up professional conversations. In addition, over 500 teachers and school staff attended Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training, with further training opportunities delivered directly by schools.

There has been significant progress in the Victorian government school sector in growing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education workforce. The number of FTE Government Teaching Staff who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander increased by 87 per cent between June 2010 and June 2011, highlighting the success of the Wannik Strategy in growing the Koorie education workforce.

In the Catholic sector in 2011, there were 22,848 hours devoted to the delivery of professional development in the area of cultural competency and knowledge. This represents an increase of 4,883 hours from 2010. Many schools have also undertaken the Dare to Lead program Collegial Snapshot.

In 2011, there were 17 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers working in Victorian Catholic primary and secondary schools.

Table VIC10: Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals, teachers and education workers (AIEWs and equivalents), Victoria, 2011

	FTE
Government	
Principals	3.0
Teaching staff	31.4
AIEWs and equivalents	93.4
Total	127.8

Source: Victorian DEECD administrative data

Table VIC11: Average length of service of principals and teachers in Focus schools with high enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 2011

Classification	Average length of service (in months)		
	Government	Catholic	Independent
Principals	n/a	66.5	n/a
Teachers	n/a	94.2	n/a

Notes:

- a) The Victorian government school sector is currently working on a methodology to develop a meaningful report on the length of service of principals and teachers in schools with high enrolments in the absence of data through the SiASS.
 - b) There are no Focus schools in the Victorian independent school sector.
- n/a not available

Source: Catholic Education Commission of Victoria

Systemic level actions [41 and 42]

The Victorian Government's Wannik Strategy requires school principals with Koorie students to undertake professional development to develop a culturally inclusive school, including the Dare to Lead, What Works and Stronger Smarter programs. Government schools are also provided with a range of teacher resources to support the development of culturally inclusive curriculum.

In 2011, Catholic schools participated in the Dare to Lead program and also supported professional learning of teachers through attendance at external professional development, and through teacher resources focused on the culture and history of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In 2011, all Victorian independent schools supported, through the Low SES School Communities National Partnership, received advisory support and professional learning for teachers regarding the provision of tailored learning opportunities and innovative strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Both the government and Catholic sectors strengthened the cultural competency of their systems through targeted scholarship programs. In 2011, 31 students benefitted from the Victorian government's Koorie Teaching Scholarship Program that provides a cash grant of \$8,000 per person, per year. The program is targeted at pre-service teachers, Year 12 leavers and mature-aged students. In 2011, the CECV funded four Koorie Education Workers and three Koorie students for the second year of their teaching degrees.

The CECV prioritises high performing teachers and school leaders and the Catholic Education Office diocesan staff supports each principal and the leaders in each of the nine Focus schools to ensure that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' outcomes are maximised.

Independent Schools Victoria engaged an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultant to present an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness program and to support advisors in their work with National Partnership schools to address the specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Local level actions [43 and 44]

The Victorian Government, through the Bastow Institute, delivered the Stronger, Smarter Leadership program to Focus school leaders. In addition, the Victorian government school sector appointed three executive principals to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Focus schools. Building on previous workforce reforms, this is a specialised strategy implemented in the government school sector, whereby outstanding school leaders are recruited and remunerated to work with targeted schools in complex and challenging environments. This achievement contributes to reform through an additional

remuneration structure for outstanding school leaders, as a strategy to address issues in school improvement, including in schools that serve disadvantaged or rural communities.

School principals across all sectors have the capacity to act with autonomy to tailor operations to meet the needs of all students.

Pathways to real post-school options

Performance indicators

14. *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20 – 24 who have attained Year 12 or equivalent or Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate II or above.*

Note: Although the performance indicator for this domain cites a national data source, there is no publicly available national level data for 2011.

Overall progress

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, *2011 Census of Population and Housing*, Year 12 or equivalent attainment rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians are increasing. Between 2006 and 2011 there was a 53 per cent increase in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians with a Year 12 or equivalent qualification. However, there remains a significant gap in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians with a Year 12 or equivalent qualification compared with non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians – 29.1 per cent compared with 51.7 per cent.

Table VIC12: Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, who completed Year 12 or equivalent in the government school sector, Victoria, 2010–2011

	2010	2011
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	257	272
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	63,619	63,424

Source: Victorian DEECD administrative data

Table VIC13: Number of vocational qualifications completed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, at AQF Certificate II and above, Victoria, 2010–2011(a)

	2010	2011*
Certificate II and Above – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	841	1,077
Certificate II and Above – Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	109,312	140,327

Notes:

- a) Data for qualifications completed in 2011 are based on preliminary data submissions. The 2011 data will be revised upwards in the 2012 *VET Provider Collection* to accommodate further notification of qualifications completed.
- b) The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status 'not stated' for Victoria was.

Source: NCVER, *VET Provider Collection*, 2011

Victorian Government administrative data shows that 271 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students completed a Senior Secondary Certificate in the school system in 2011. In addition, 1,294 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students completed a Certificate II or above in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system in Victoria.

Systemic level actions [48, 49 and 50]

In 2011, the Victorian Government's Youth Partnerships initiative aimed to reduce the escalation of problems for all at-risk young people through better co-ordinated responses across key services. Disengaged or at-risk young people were supported to participate in re-engagement programs through a government initiative in which school funding follows the student. In addition, over 200 at-risk Koorie students were involved with the Youth Connections program.

The Victorian Government survey, *On Track: The Destinations of School Leavers*, tracks all students six months after they leave school, from years 10, 11 and 12. Students are contacted and assisted with further advice and support if they are not studying or in full time employment. A similar system is in place in the Catholic sector, which monitors the pathways of all students who

have left Year 12. Students are linked in with relevant agencies to enable them to source ongoing support as needed.

An increasing proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who complete Year 12 in government schools are enrolling in university. In 2012, 38 per cent were enrolled in university, an increase of nearly 16 per cent compared to 2008 (Source: *On Track: The Destinations of School Leavers Survey*, 2012).

Victoria is building the capacity of its education system to use interactive technologies with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through a pilot, the Technology Enriched Curriculum Project, that will share good practice approaches across the sector.

Local level actions [51, 52, 53, 54 and 55]

Victoria, through the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions, implemented a range of initiatives in 2011 to support retention and career development pathways across all sectors. Koorie Transition Officers were employed to increase education and training retention, improve aspirations to succeed at school, and support strong post-school pathways. Regional Career Development Officers were employed to support education and training providers to deliver improved career development services, e.g. through the implementation of the Victorian Careers Curriculum Framework to young Koorie people. Workplace Learning Coordinators facilitated workplace-based learning experiences for Koorie young people to support informed career choices. Through the Careers Mentoring Network Initiative pilot, Year 7 and 8 Koorie students were mentored, to enhance their career aspirations and awareness.

In addition, the Victorian Government provided study grants to enable relevant staff, including the Koorie Education Workforce, to complete a Graduate Certificate in Career Development. Specific initiatives to support career development and retention in the Catholic school system included the Worlds of Work career program and a Year 12 celebration for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, Elders, community members and families.

In 2011, there was an increase in the number of school-based apprenticeships across the government and Catholic schools sectors. Apprenticeship Support Officers were engaged across

all sectors to support Koorie apprentices through working with appropriate Koorie services.

Victoria has implemented its School Business Community Partnerships through its Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs). A 2011 Partner Survey found that this model is effective in achieving the outcomes of this National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions initiative, which includes partnerships that develop the work readiness of young people including Koorie young people.

Good practice snapshots

Expanded Central Gippsland Koorie Literacy Project

The Expanded Central Gippsland Koorie Literacy Project is a cross-sectoral project through twenty selected government, independent and Catholic schools in the regions of Gippsland and Loddon Mallee. This project is an extension of a place-based application of Reading Recovery practices currently being utilised in Central Gippsland, and is funded by the Australian Government DEEWR, through the Intensive Literacy and Numeracy Grants program. The aim of the project is to improve the outcomes of targeted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Years 3, 5 and 7 who are at risk of not achieving reading outcomes.

The Gippsland component of the project takes the findings of the pilot and expands it to include fourteen schools across three networks. The focus of the project is accelerating students' literacy achievement, family engagement and staff participation. Implementation has been tailored for each school to ensure the project is relevant for the local students, school, families and communities. All schools in the project will address the core components of:

- literacy teaching and learning leading to accelerated literacy outcomes
- recognition of code switching between Koorie English and Standard Australian English and the impact on reading, writing, speaking and listening

- family, community and school partnerships
- cultural awareness and the development of culturally inclusive / competent schools (including culturally inclusive resources).

The Loddon Mallee component of the project involves daily literacy lessons of between 30 – 45 minutes with students in small groups (each with a maximum of four) or with individuals. Schools determine whether the lesson delivery is small group or individual based on student need, and lessons are timetabled in addition to regular literacy and numeracy lessons. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from each school were identified and selected to participate in the project based on their literacy attainment. Parents, guardians, carers and communities were invited to separate meetings to inform them of the project aims. Ongoing consultation has taken place with the Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (LAECG), the Koorie Education Workforce and the participating schools. In co-operation with the Mildura KESO team, parents, carers and students were personally invited to individual school morning tea/information sessions held at each school.

Technology Enriched Curriculum Project

The Technology Enriched Curriculum Project—Digital Literacy (TECP) is a place-based, cross-sectoral project across 14 schools in the outer eastern region of Melbourne and regional areas of Echuca and Ballarat, involving government, independent and Catholic sector schools. Funded by the Australian Government, through the Intensive Literacy and Numeracy Grants program, its focus and associated research is the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) with Years 5 to Year 8 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to significantly improve literacy outcomes and student engagement with learning.

The pedagogy used for this project involves the use of iPads to explore storytelling in a digital format. Students have been selected based on their Aboriginal and Torres Strait heritage. Students came together in 'Spark' sessions to showcase their culture and to have their work celebrated. Parents and carers were invited to cluster meetings to learn about the project's aims. LAECGs have been consulted throughout the project.

Careers Mentoring Network Initiative

The Careers Mentoring Network Initiative, funded under the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions, has established three pilot programs aimed at enhancing the career aspirations of young people in Years 7 and 8 who may experience barriers to making a successful transition to further education, training or employment. Each program is tailored to meet the needs of a particular group of young people: Stride Foundation in the Northern Metropolitan Region focuses on young people from low SES communities; Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre in the Southern Metropolitan Region works with young people from English as an Additional Language/ Dialect (EAL/D) backgrounds; and Berry Street in the Gippsland Region focuses on Koorie young people. Each provider has recruited mentors with experience overcoming multiple barriers to the world of school and work, and understanding of the particular socio-cultural needs of the mentees.

As part of the Berry Street program, the Koorie Transitions Officer and Regional Career Development Officer in the Gippsland Region delivered a professional learning workshop to the program mentors on career development, to equip them with the skills and knowledge to become career allies and support the career development of the mentees. The Berry Street Project Worker reported that following the workshop, the mentors felt more confident in how to approach the subject of career exploration with their mentees. The mentors were particularly interested in messages about careers as a journey rather than a job.

Worawa Aboriginal College

Worawa Aboriginal College is a Low SES independent school which receives regular visits and support from National Partnership Advisors. The Aboriginal Executive Director and College leadership team have received assistance from the Principal Advisor and Senior Advisors in planning school improvement; developing College policies and staff professional learning programs; and coordinating College, parent and community forums. The Executive Director has attended the National Partnerships Principals' Forum on Staff Appraisal and

participated in the Independent Schools Victoria Developing Principals' program.

In-school support for all teachers has included personal coaching, training in cross-cultural understanding; the use of the Brigance assessment tools; presentation of the Jigsaw student wellbeing program; as well as the use of ICT to enhance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' learning in classrooms. External professional learning opportunities supported for Worawa teachers included: Accelerated Literacy training; Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessment; iPad tools and programs; a visit to Woodville High School (South Australia) to observe the Wiltja program; and attendance at the 2012 MATSIS (More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative Conference) in Adelaide where the Executive Director and two teachers presented a paper.

In 2011, the College hosted a Communities Forum for 13 parents and community members from six isolated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia whose daughters attended the school. The discussions, facilitated by an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultant, focused on establishing an understanding of the experiences and backgrounds of the school families, strengthening partnerships and sharing aspirations for the education of their daughters. The Worawa curriculum model was outlined to parents and community members, and discussions during the day enabled the parents to fully understand the school's vision and to strengthen the link between their cultural backgrounds and the educational vision of the school.

This was the second time that parents and leaders from the students' communities across Australia had visited Worawa for a forum, and it was an opportunity for them to tell the school's story to others when they returned to their communities. The forum was an effective way to share the school's recognition of the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adolescents and the difficulties they face in mainstream schooling. The forum also provided for an opportunity for two-way sharing and exchange: to inform parents and community leaders of the ways that the school strives for mainstream academic success, along with reinforcement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and values, and for parents to share their visions and hopes for their daughters.

IECB's feedback

The Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) is a community-based and controlled organisation, established in 1976. VAEAI is the Victorian Indigenous Education Consultative Body, advocates on behalf of the Koorie Community and is the peak advisory body to the Victorian State Government – including the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) – on all issues relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and training. VAEAI also provides advice to the Commonwealth Government through the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), regarding education and training issues for Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The following feedback against progress on systemic and local actions in support of the Plan, across each of the six priority domains, is informed by Koorie Community perspectives.

School readiness

The VAEAI supports integrated early childhood programs that take a holistic approach focusing on social, physical and cognitive development. Examples of such programs are the Multifunctional Aboriginal Childcare Services (MACS) and integrated Children and Family Centres. The VAEAI also supports initiatives that reduce barriers to participation in early childhood programs – for example, subsidised kindergarten programs; culturally relevant and inclusive playgroups; Home-Based learning and In-Home Support programs. However, while the VAEAI favours the development of a National Early Years Workforce Strategy, and the use of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) in childcare settings, due preparation is needed in every setting, and in particular, for the MACS context. Regarding the EYLF, appropriate cultural practices need to be taken into consideration and embedded into the Early Years curriculum.

It is the VAEAI's position that on-entry assessment programs to assess students' pre-literacy, literacy, pre-numeracy and numeracy skills must be linguistically and culturally appropriate, and therefore positively recognise and take into account linguistic skills such as the use of Aboriginal English (Koorie English) and students' developing code switching skills. In order to do this effectively, assessors and teachers also need to be

aware of, and knowledgeable about, Aboriginal English and code switching, in both urban and rural regions.

The introduction of subsidised kindergarten in Victoria for 3 and 4 year-old Koorie children, and the VAEAI and DEECD's active, statewide promotion of the importance of early childhood education within Koorie Communities, has led to a great increase in participation during 2011, particularly kindergarten for 4 year-old Koorie children, which we believe greatly improves children's school readiness, and will continue to do so.

Programs such as the Commonwealth funded Parents and Learning Program (PaL) and the State funded In-Home Support/ Home-Based Learning Programs are actively and successfully engaging parents, particularly young parents in their children's education, and improving education outcomes for young Koorie children. The In-Home Support/Home-Based Learning Programs established in six sites in Victoria, both metropolitan and regional, is coordinated and supported by VAEAI; and where these programs are established, teachers and principals report that the children who have participated in these programs are much more engaged in their learning and commence formal schooling school-ready.

Response: The Victorian Government commends the work of the VAEAI in promoting school readiness for Koorie children, and in particular, the statewide coordination of the In-Home Support/ Home-Based Learning Programs.

Attendance

Schools need to work more closely with the Koorie Education Workforce in their regions to build on attendance strategies, as the Koorie Education Workforce is the vital link between schools, parents and Koorie Communities, and the most knowledgeable about their local community members: families, parents and students and subsequent issues that might affect school attendance. We strongly believe that the only way to 'close the gap' in attendance is around the increased engagement of families and students with the education system, and the increased engagement of schools with Koorie parents, families and local communities.

We are concerned that the 'gap' in school attendance has remained the same over the last four years, and believe that in order to close the attendance 'gap' and to improve

educational outcomes, we also need to further build on the 'It's not OK to be away' strategy employed by Victorian schools; to continue acknowledging that school attendance is everybody's responsibility, and to investigate other successful innovative strategies to increase school attendance.

The VAEAI further believes that the implementation of initiatives such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in schools, Indigenous Studies as a separate subject and a culturally inclusive curriculum will increase attendance and close the gap over time.

Response: The Victorian Government has made a significant investment in building the capacity of the Koorie Education Workforce to support stronger school and community engagement and to promote attendance of Koorie young people. The partnership between DEECD and the VAEAI to deliver the Wannik Strategy is putting in place systemic strategies to improve attendance. This includes the VAEAI supporting the implementation of school–community partnerships across the State.

Literacy and numeracy

It is VAEAI's position that the NAPLAN test is limited in its ability to gauge the literacy and numeracy knowledge and capacity of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, in the sense that it is constructed from a non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural base. Therefore, in its function as a large-scale tool for assessment, the VAEAI cautions that NAPLAN must be used in conjunction with a variety of other assessment tools (such as On Demand Testing and self-assessment tools), so as to better enable Koorie students to demonstrate what they know and are able to achieve. Furthermore, efforts to ensure NAPLAN and other forms of assessment become more culturally appropriate – not only in their subject matter but also in the manner they are delivered – should be made on a national level.

The VAEAI is concerned that the heightened emphasis on NAPLAN as a national comparative assessment tool has, according to feedback from our local Koorie Communities, resulted in incidents of Koorie children being actively discouraged by schools from attending school on testing days; and anecdotally, that teachers are 'teaching to the test', which can have detrimental effects on students' confidence, understanding and enjoyment of learning.

Regarding literacy pedagogy, the VAEAI continues to strongly support the development of literacy programs that recognise the importance of code switching between Koorie English and Standard Australian English, as noted in the Wannik strategy, and the implementation of language awareness curriculum and bi-dialectal education approaches to improve literacy outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. An understanding of Koorie English as a legitimate dialect of Australian English and the importance of enhancing code switching skills is fundamental to any plan to improve the literacy of Koorie students, including its application in assessment methodologies.

Response: The Victorian Government, in partnership with the VAEAI, is implementing systemic reforms through the Wannik Strategy to improve literacy and numeracy for Koorie students. This includes DEECD funding for targeted tutorial support and the specialist Koorie Education Workforce, as well as targeted literacy and numeracy programs supported by the Australian Government, as described in the case studies.

Leadership, quality teaching and workforce development

The VAEAI strongly advocates that all teachers employed in the education sector in Australia complete a minimum number of Indigenous Studies subjects as a requirement for the completion of their degrees or post-graduate courses in education, and as a requirement for their employment in the teaching profession. The VAEAI also believes that professional development (cross-cultural training) should be mandatory for all education staff, including principals, existing and returning teachers, administration and student support officers and Departmental and Regional Office employees, throughout Australia. This is on the basis that teachers and associated education staff with access to comprehensive pre-service training and in-service professional development will be much better placed to positively and significantly impact on the education outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students alike.

During 2011, the VAEAI developed and widely circulated a *Framework for Embedding Koorie Cultures, Histories and*

Perspectives in Victorian Schools, proposing a number of actions and strategies, including a focus on pre-service teacher training and professional development for all education staff involved in schools.

As an IECB, the VAEAI was also involved in national consultations regarding the implementation of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) *National Professional Standards for Teachers*, which focuses on quality teaching – in particular, around Focus areas 1.4: Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and 2.4: Understand and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People – to promote reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians (under Standard 2: Know the content and how to teach it)

The Koorie Education Workforce also requires ongoing up-skilling, professional development, and due recognition of their positions and the invaluable work they undertake. The Wannik Koorie Education Workforce reforms have been very important in this respect.

Response: In 2011, the Victorian Government funded the VAEAI to develop and implement a strategy to support a culturally inclusive teaching curriculum and teacher training in Victoria. Professional development of the Koorie Education Workforce is a key focus of the Wannik Strategy with significant funding directed to this activity in 2011 and beyond.

Pathways to real post-school options

In feedback from the Koorie community, the issue of the lack of availability of employment opportunities arises in all discussions about pathways to real post-school opportunities.

The VAEAI supports flexible learning options and the strengthening of partnerships between VET providers, universities and the Koorie community that broaden horizons and post-school options for Koorie students.

The Wurreker Strategy – which was developed by the VAEAI in partnership with the Victorian State Government – continues to ensure the high and increasing participation of Koorie students in VET, including the VET in Schools Program (VETiS). The VAEAI supports the VETiS program as an effective method to broaden the school curriculum, allowing students to gain a VETiS certificate (usually at the Australian Qualifications Framework I or II level) as part of their Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) or Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL). The VETiS programs link schools to industry and training providers, assist in school retention and post-school options including further training, higher education and employment opportunities.

The Toorong-Marnong Accord in Victoria, jointly auspiced by the VAEAI and the Vice-Chancellor's Committee, is developing ways to enhance Victorian universities' engagement with Koorie communities and improve enrolments, retention rates and improved educational outcomes for Koorie students in higher education. In 2011, the first Koorie Big Day Out was held to promote the diversity of university options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Victoria, and to encourage collaboration between universities by establishing a forum for sharing information, courses, programs, education strategies and projects.

Response: The VAEAI, in partnership with the Victorian Government, has played an instrumental role in supporting Koorie pathways into VET, higher education and employment. As part of the Wurreker Strategy, Wurreker Brokers, Koorie Liaison Officers and Koorie Transition Officers are employed to promote these pathways and strengthen engagement between communities and education providers. The Koorie Big Day Out is an innovative approach to increasing university enrolment for Koorie students and will be continued in 2012.

Focus school information

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Lit/Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
Araluen Primary School	Gov.	Regional	161	16	yes	no	
Bacchus Marsh Primary School	Gov.	Regional	554	15	yes	no	
Baden Powell P–9 College	Gov.	Metropolitan	1,512	13	no	no	
Bairnsdale Primary School	Gov.	Regional	180.4	19	no	no	
Bairnsdale West Primary School	Gov.	Regional	233	65	no	yes	
Ballam Park Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	357	13	no	no	
Benalla Primary School	Gov.	Regional	236	11	no	no	
Bourchier Street Primary School Shepparton	Gov.	Regional	581.4	26	no	no	
Bundarra Primary School	Gov.	Regional	222	17	no	no	
Canadian Lead Primary School	Gov.	Regional	151	12	no	yes	
Carrum Downs Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	586	10	no	no	
Chaffey Secondary College	Gov.	Regional	575	79	no	yes	
Charles La Trobe P–12 College (Bellfield PS)	Gov.	Metropolitan	660.1	12	no	no	
Charles La Trobe P–12 College (Haig Street PS)	Gov.	Metropolitan		9	no	no	
Colac West Primary School	Gov.	Regional	147	11	no	yes	
Commercial Road Primary School - Morwell	Gov.	Regional	246	16	no	yes	
Courtenay Gardens Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	702	9	no	no	
Craigieburn Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	720	17	no	no	
Dallas Brooks Community Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	526	8	no	yes	
Doveton Heights Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	364.4	28	no	yes	
Drouin Primary School	Gov.	Regional	197	25	no	no	
Eaglehawk North Primary School	Gov.	Regional	337	25	no	no	
Eastbourne Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	461.4	11	no	no	
Echuca East Primary School	Gov.	Regional	372	31	yes	no	
Echuca Primary School	Gov.	Regional	506	29	yes	no	
Echuca South Primary School	Gov.	Regional	282	28	no	no	
Findon Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	481	13	no	no	
Forest Street Primary School	Gov.	Regional	362.4	30	yes	no	
Gowrie Street Primary School Shepparton	Gov.	Regional	282.8	71	no	yes	
Grovedale Primary School	Gov.	Regional	267	16	no	no	
Guthridge Primary School	Gov.	Regional	217	20	yes	no	
Guthrie Street Primary School Shepparton	Gov.	Regional	487.1	30	no	no	
Hastings Westpark Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	156	9	no	yes	
Healesville Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	360.2	28	no	no	
Heywood Consolidated School	Gov.	Regional	176	29	no	no	
Horsham Primary School	Gov.	Regional	504.2	12	no	no	
Horsham West - Haven Primary School	Gov.	Regional	638	10	no	no	

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Lit/Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
Huntly Primary School	Gov.	Regional	165	18	no	no	
Iramoo Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	566	30	yes	no	
Irymple Primary School	Gov.	Regional	298	21	no	no	
Kennington Primary School	Gov.	Regional	567	4	no	no	
Kerang Primary School	Gov.	Regional	126.4	6	no	no	
Kilmore Primary School	Gov.	Regional	450	12	yes	no	
Kyabram P-12 College (interim Name)	Gov.	Regional	1,281.0	38	no	no	
Lakes Entrance Primary School	Gov.	Regional	265	53	yes	no	
Lakes Entrance Secondary School	Gov.	Regional	286.5	30	yes	no	
Lalor East Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	396	9	no	yes	
Leopold Primary School	Gov.	Regional	698.4	11	no	no	
Lightning Reef Primary School	Gov.	Regional	201	34	no	merged school. Comet PS yes	
Lucknow Primary School	Gov.	Regional	481	22	no	no	
Lyndale Greens Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	514.4	14	no	no	
Mahogany Rise Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	174	10	no	yes	
Maryborough Education Centre	Gov.	Regional	1,203.3	24	no	yes	
Meadowglen Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	573	20	yes	no	
Melrose Primary School	Gov.	Regional	322	23	no	yes	
Melton West Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	406	16	no	yes	
Merbein P-12 College	Gov.	Regional	723	48	no	no	
Mildura Primary School (Junior Campus)	Gov.	Regional	281	74	no	yes	
Mildura Primary School (Senior Campus)	Gov.	Regional		18	no	yes	
Mildura South Primary School	Gov.	Regional	654	31	no	no	
Mildura West Primary School	Gov.	Regional	450	43	yes	no	
Mill Park Heights Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	1,001	15	no	no	
Moe Primary School	Gov.	Regional	127	15	no	yes	
Mooroopna North Primary School	Gov.	Regional	83	15	no	no	
Mooroopna Park Primary School	Gov.	Regional	87	23	no	yes	
Mooroopna Primary School	Gov.	Regional	298	54	yes	no	
Morwell Park Primary School	Gov.	Regional	343.6	26	no	yes	
Morwell Primary School	Gov.	Regional	140	28	no	yes	
Nathalia Primary School	Gov.	Regional	153	11	no	no	
Norris Bank Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	231.4	8	yes	no	
Northern Bay College- Hendy St Campus	Gov.	Regional	2,263.2	20.2	no	no	
Northern Bay College – Vermont Avenue campus	Gov.	Regional		24	no	no	
Northern Bay College – Wexford Court Campus	Gov.	Regional		35	no	no	
Nowa Nowa Primary School	Gov.	Regional	29	19	no	yes	
Orbost Primary School	Gov.	Regional	208	24	no	no	
Orrvale Primary School	Gov.	Regional	394.6	14	no	no	
Pakenham Hills Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	472	10	no	no	
Penders Grove Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	161.2	16	no	yes	

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Lit/Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
Preston North East Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	310	28	no	yes	
Preston South Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	126	16	no	no	
Ranfurlly Primary School	Gov.	Regional	440	74	yes	no	
Rangebank Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	471	8	no	no	
Reservoir East Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	127	10	no	yes	
Reservoir Views Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	238.4	13	no	no	
Robinvale P–2 College	Gov.	Regional	491.2	117	no	yes	
Roxburgh Park Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	574.4	14	no	yes	
Seymour P–12 College (Seymour East PS)	Gov.	Regional	1,023.5	45.8	no	no	
Seymour P–12 College (Seymour PS)	Gov.	Regional				no	
St Albans Meadows Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	358	13	no	yes	
St Alipius School Ballarat	Cath.	Regional	292	13	no	no	
St Brendan's School Lakes Entrance	Cath.	Regional	169	9	yes	no	
St Brigid's School Healesville	Cath.	Metropolitan	216	9	no	no	
St Catherine's School Melton	Cath.	Metropolitan	408	11	no	no	
St Georges Road Primary School Shepparton	Gov.	Regional	336	48	no	no	
St Joseph's School Collingwood	Cath.	Metropolitan	168	4	no	yes	
St Mary's School Bairnsdale	Cath.	Regional	353	8	no	no	
St Mary's School Swan Hill	Cath.	Regional	486	9	no	no	
St Paul's School Mildura	Cath.	Regional	351	21	yes	no	
St Peter's School Bendigo	Cath.	Regional	159	37	no	yes	
Swan Hill North Primary School	Gov.	Regional	217.8	18.2	yes	no	
Swan Hill Primary School	Gov.	Regional	556	60	yes	no	
Sydenham – Hillside Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	1,508.4	13	no	no	
Tatura Primary School	Gov.	Regional	266	15	no	no	
The Grange P–12 College	Gov.	Metropolitan	1,948.2	36	no	no	
Thornbury Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	294	51	no	no	
Toorloo Arm Primary School	Gov.	Regional	147	10	no	no	
Torquay P–9 College	Gov.	Regional	888	11	no	no	
Traralgon (Liddiard Road) Primary School	Gov.	Regional	344.6	22	yes	no	
Tullamarine Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	269	8	no	no	
Wallan Primary School	Gov.	Regional	614	6	no	no	
Warragul Primary School	Gov.	Regional	261	6	yes	no	
Warrnambool East Primary School	Gov.	Regional	454	30	no	no	
Warrnambool Primary School	Gov.	Regional	624.6	17	no	no	
Warrnambool West Primary School	Gov.	Regional	219.6	20	no	no	
Westgrove Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	622	16	no	no	
Whittington Primary School	Gov.	Regional	97	10	no	yes	
Wilmot Road Primary School Shepparton	Gov.	Regional	244	32	no	yes	
Winters Flat Primary School	Gov.	Regional	241	11	no	no	
Wodonga Primary School	Gov.	Regional	641	35	no	no	
Wodonga South Primary School	Gov.	Regional	473	10	no	no	
Wodonga West Primary School	Gov.	Regional	451	21	no	yes	

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Lit/Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
Wooranna Park Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	340.8	10	no	yes	
Yarrawonga College (primary campus)	Gov.	Regional	867.4	9	no	no	
Yarrunga Primary School	Gov.	Regional	253	12	no	yes	
Yuille Park P–8 Community College	Gov.	Regional	242	21	no	yes	

Chapter 7

Queensland report on activities and outcomes

Introduction

In 2011, there were 1,708 schools in Queensland, of which 72.4 per cent (1,237) were government schools and 27.6 per cent (471) were non-government schools. Of the 1,708 schools in Queensland in 2011, 1,152 (67.5 per cent) were primary schools, 251 (14.7 per cent) were secondary schools, 243 (14.2 per cent) were combined primary/secondary schools and 62 (3.6 per cent) were special schools.

Queensland had 733,652 full-time students attending schools in 2011, 20.8 per cent of the Australian total. Of these, 66.7 per cent attended Queensland government schools and 33.3 per cent attended non-government schools. For the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student population, the proportion of government school enrolments was 84.7 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, or 8.4 per cent of the overall government school student population.

In 2011, 48,865 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students attended Queensland schools full-time comprising 41,405 in government schools, 4,431 in Catholic schools and 3,029 in independent schools. Of these:

- 48 per cent attended in metropolitan areas
- 36 per cent attended in provincial areas
- 6 per cent attended in remote areas, and
- 10 per cent attended in very remote areas..

The *Closing the Gap Education Strategy* is the overarching strategy for the education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in Queensland government schools. It was developed in response to the COAG Closing the Gap agenda and sets three statewide intermediate targets for closing the gap in education outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. These targets are focused on improving the three key foundation areas of achievement, attendance and retention. The three headline targets are to:

- halve the gap in Year 3 reading, writing and numeracy by 2012
- close the gap in student attendance by 2013
- close the gap in Year 12 retention by 2013.

Under the Smarter Schools National Partnerships, addressing the education outcomes is a key priority of Queensland

implementation plans. Queensland enjoys a productive, effective and respectful working arrangement between all three education sectors: Education Queensland, representing the government schooling system; the Queensland Catholic Education Commission, representing the five Catholic Diocesan schooling systems; and Independent Schools Queensland, representing independent schools and other non-government schooling systems. The sectors engage in collaborative consultation, decision-making and feedback processes, and share information on the development and implementation and outcomes of their initiatives. All three sectors participated in Working Group meetings for the individual Agreements, as well as Smarter Schools Working Group meetings throughout 2011.

Profile of Focus schools

In Queensland, there are 269 Focus schools – comprising 206 government, 59 Catholic and 4 independent schools. The 206 government schools cater for just over 17,300 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary school students, which represent almost 62 per cent of the total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary school enrolments. Over half of the government Focus schools are also National Partnership (NP) schools under the Low SES National Partnership (71 Focus schools) and the Literacy and Numeracy NP (80 Focus schools). Five government schools are also NP schools under the Remote Service Delivery NP. Ten of the Catholic schools are Low Socio-Economic Status (SES) NP schools and ten are Literacy and Numeracy NP schools. Two independent schools are both Low SES and Literacy and Numeracy NP schools.

Queensland report on progress by Domains

Readiness for school

Performance indicators

1. *The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending (where possible to measure) a preschool program.*

2. *The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students assessed as ready for the first year of full-time schooling by State and Territories' measures.*

2008 to 68 per cent in 2011 (three percentage points above the 2011 target), and its proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in a kindergarten program, from 29 per cent in 2008 to 56 per cent in 2011 (nine percentage points above the 2011 target).

Overall progress

Queensland has made progress increasing its overall kindergarten participation rate from a baseline of 29 per cent in

As at 2011, the proportion of Queensland children assessed as developmentally ready was as presented in Table QLD2.

Table QLD1: Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending a preschool program, Queensland and Australia, 2011

	Queensland		Australia	
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	All children	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	All children
Number of children enrolled	1,911	37,862	10,167	233,128
Children enrolled (per cent)	47.4	62.2	75.7	80.8
Number of children attending	1,807	35,527	9,536	225,886
Percentage of children enrolled that are attending ^(a)	94.6	93.8	93.8	96.9
Percentage of children attending ^(b)	44.9	58.3	71.0	78.3

Notes:

- Calculated as per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled.
- Calculated as per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over Estimated Resident Population (ERP). ERP Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 4 year olds at June 2011, New South Wales = 4,027; Australia = 13,427.
- Due to data collection limitations, South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland have not reported on unique counts of children in preschool. However, episodes - counts of the instances of preschool programs provided to a child without accounting for duplication - are available for these jurisdictions. For information on methodologies and concepts of the preschool enrolment data please refer to explanatory notes in the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) publication, *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates 2011* (Cat. No. 4240.0).
- Because early childhood education is not compulsory, and children can be enrolled in multiple preschool programs, the collection of unit record level (URL) data on preschool programs is seen to be fundamental in addressing data quality issues, both to eliminate duplication and to gain an accurate count of records at the child level. An episode is a term used in the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection to refer to an 'instance of learning' that a child has received. When one child is attending two different preschool programs, the same child is attending two episodes of preschool (i.e. may be double-counted). This affects the Australia totals but not the New South Wales figures. New South Wales provided URL data so children enrolled in a preschool program in New South Wales are not double-counted in Table 1.
- While there have been improvements in consistency of reporting across jurisdictions, it should be noted that Preschool Education Estimates have not yet achieved complete alignment with nationally agreed standards.
- For information on adjustments for 2006 Census undercount and the methods used to calculate projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, see explanatory notes in the ABS publication, *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991-2021* (Cat.No.3238.0).
- Estimates for the total population are sourced from ABS, *Estimated Population by Age and Sex, June 2011* (Cat.No. 3101.0). The Australia total includes 'Other territories' including Jervis Bay and Norfolk Island. However, Jervis Bay and Norfolk Island are excluded from Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales totals. Therefore, State and Territory Estimated Resident Population numbers will not add to Australia totals.
- In the absence of population estimates by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status for inter-censal years, non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population figures are calculated by subtracting projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population from estimates of the total population.

Source: ABS, *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates 2011* (Cat.No.4240.0); *Estimated Population by Age and Sex, June 2011* (Cat.No. 3101.0 DO002); *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991-2021* (Cat.No.3238.0)

Table QLD2: Proportion of children, in Queensland and Australia, assessed as 'developmentally on track' in four or more domains of the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), 2009^(a) (per cent)

	Queensland	Australia
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (per cent)	40.8	42.5
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (per cent)	61.4	68.6

Note:

a) This is an interim measure only.

Source: Unpublished AEDI data, 2009 data collection

Systemic level actions [5, 6 and 7]

The Queensland Government is committed to providing access to kindergarten programs for all Queensland children in the year prior to the Preparatory year (Prep). Queensland has made progress increasing its overall kindergarten participation rate from a baseline of 29 per cent in 2008 to 68 per cent in 2011 (three percentage points above the 2011 target), and its proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in a kindergarten program from 29 per cent in 2008 to 56 per cent in 2011 (nine percentage points above the 2011 target).

The government is continuing to establish extra kindergarten services in areas of need. Notably, 45 of 108 kindergarten services being established by the end of 2012, that is 42 per cent, are located in areas where the population share of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander four-year old children exceeded six per cent. In addition, there were approximately 30 existing community kindergarten services in Queensland that provide programs targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

Foundations for Success: Guidelines for extending and enriching learning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the Kindergarten Year has been specifically tailored to embed language and culture in the delivery of a high quality program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in their kindergarten year. Through the guidelines educators are provided with advice for planning, implementing, reflecting and

continually improving on a culturally and linguistically sensitive program.

Information to support the transition to school includes the development of a transition statement to communicate children's learning. A complementary DVD also supports educators delivering *Foundations for Success* in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities by showing programs in action in six diverse sites.

Under the Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership Agreement (IECD NP), the Australian Government is providing \$75.18 million to the Queensland Government over six years (2008/09 to 2013/14) for the establishment of ten Children and Family Centres (CFC). These CFCs will provide integrated early childhood education and care, family and parenting support, and child and maternal health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with children aged from birth to eight years.

Governance structures have been established and service delivery models have been finalised in consultation with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities. Community ownership is growing across all ten CFC locations.

Permanent facilities in three locations are complete, and lead agency service providers are progressively providing service delivery from the permanent sites. Palm Island and Logan are scheduled for completion by end 2012, with planning progressing well in other locations.

Pre-Preparatory Year (pre-Prep) programs in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are delivered for 15 hours per week to children three-and-a-half to four-and-a-half years of age living in 35 discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Queensland. The program is delivered in a range of settings, including kindergarten services, childcare services, 28 government schools and one non-government school. Consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education experts, academics, peak organisations and community educators informed the development of curriculum guidelines for educators delivering the pre-Prep program.

Project development work began in 2011 to develop a new strategy for consistent monitoring and assessment of literacy and numeracy in the early phase of learning (Preparatory Year to Year 2) for implementation in 2013. The strategy will be inclusive of all students including: students with disability; English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD); Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and/or those requiring support or extension.

Policies, processes and procedures were put in place to enable the Queensland Catholic Education Commission and Catholic Diocesan School Authorities to fulfil approval requirements for thirteen kindergartens on Catholic school sites.

Catholic school authorities in Queensland do not use specific linguistically and culturally appropriate on-entry assessment instruments to assess students' pre-literacy, literacy, pre-numeracy and numeracy skills. Children's progress from one year level to the next is based on teacher professional judgement, in consultation with the child's family and the principal. Each child's readiness for school is considered both through the Preparatory year program and developmental framework, as well as through the enrolment interview, where professional judgement by principal and teacher is made in consultation with parents.

Local level actions [8]

The Foundations for Success guidelines for early years learning are being implemented in 35 remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, as outlined above.

Local strategies are also being trialled by Early Years Centres to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to participate in a kindergarten program.

A number of literacy and numeracy initiatives have been implemented across Catholic school authorities to support children's readiness for school including the Mini Murris support program, and targeted activities supporting families.

Similarly, a range of programs have been implemented in independent schools that engage parents in their children's early education. These include Mums and Bubs and the Home Interaction Program Parents and Youngsters.

Engagement and connections

Performance indicators

3. *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with personalised learning strategies in place.*
4. *Proportion of Focus schools with a school – community partnership agreement in place.*

Overall progress

Schools participating in the Focus Schools Next Steps and Investing in Focus Schools initiatives will be required to develop personalised learning plans for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and school – community partnership agreements. This will take place from 2012. It should be noted that the Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment will be collecting data on school – community partnerships from 2012 as part of the implementation of its Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in Schools initiative.

In 2011, almost 20 per cent of Catholic schools have personalised learning strategies in place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and a significant number of schools are in the process of developing personalised learning strategies. Formal school – community partnership agreements were in place in six Catholic schools, with a further 14 schools with agreements to be finalised.

Overall, all Focus schools within the Queensland independent schools sector have made significant progress and continue to engage parental and community groups aligned to their schools. Across all schools, there exists significant recognition and promotion of identity, culture and leadership in community partnerships.

Systemic level actions [15, 16, 17 and 18]

The Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment is well positioned to meet the outcomes of this domain through the Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in Schools (EATSIPS) strategy. The strategy offers students and teachers the chance to share and acknowledge the history and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. EATSIPS is a holistic framework for a whole-of-school approach focusing on personal and professional accountabilities, changing the organisational environment, developing community partnerships and incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in curriculum and pedagogy. Eleven Principal Project Officers lead the implementation of EATSIPS across Queensland, with support from their region.

The majority of Queensland's government schools have undertaken EATSIPS professional development across the required stages, with the remainder receiving targeted support from the Principal Project Officers in the regions. Resource guides are available to support teachers, schools and local communities in providing a more inclusive education. It offers strategies to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across all areas of school practice, giving all students access to a balanced curriculum. In addition, an online professional development package has been developed for principals, and the professional development package for teachers will be available in October 2012. Three Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers, who are members of the EATSIPS team, are providing advice and support to the Teaching and Learning Branch curriculum writers preparing units of work for the Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) project in the areas of English, mathematics, science and history. Phase Two of EATSIPS is focusing on assisting schools with the implementation of C2C.

As part of the implementation of EATSIPS and the Focus Schools Next Steps initiative, schools engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities by planning with, and reporting to them on the outcomes achieved.

The Moving Together project, funded by the Australian Government, is a joint initiative run in partnership with the Dare to Lead program, with collaboration between the Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Committee and the three Queensland education sectors. The project directly assists identified Focus schools to meet some of their responsibilities under this domain. The aim of the project is to build the capacity of school leaders to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, parents and the community. The project has engaged with 42 schools in South-East Queensland – comprising 36 government schools, five Catholic schools and one independent school. It has adopted a cluster approach (eight clusters) to work with schools to access and engage with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

In 2011, Queensland played a leading role in coordinating a cross-jurisdictional and cross-sector project across all Australian States and Territories to map and improve collaboration at the national, systemic and local levels on Otitis Media and Speech and Language, supporting young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and caregivers and Early Childhood Education (with an emphasis on Children and Family Centres) and a connection of services at the local level (refer also to report on progress in National Collaborative Action 9).

An innovative program, launched in 2011, gave a group of teenage mothers the chance to complete further study while raising their newborn babies. The Studying, Training and Effective Parenting Program (STEPP) – a partnership between the Bremer Institute of TAFE and Mission Australia's Communities for Children Plus – was created to give teenage mothers an opportunity to re-engage in education, further develop their life skills and improve their prospects for employment or further study. Piloted in 2010 and officially launched at the beginning of 2011, STEPP provides education, training and life skills courses for young mothers aged 16 to 18 who are pregnant or parenting, while also providing high quality childcare in a supportive learning environment next door to the classroom.

The role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers (AIEWs) is periodically reviewed within the Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment to ensure that they are best positioned to most effectively support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

In 2011, all Catholic schools were working towards the development of personalised learning strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Schooling authorities commenced professional development of teaching staff and all leadership teams in schools to increase understanding of the Action Plan and to build the capacity to implement personalised learning strategies. It is widely acknowledged that a successful and sustainable personalised learning strategies process relies on the support of school staff and good partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. In some instances, Tool Kits for Principals were developed, which included examples of Community – Partnership agreements, Personalised Learning booklets and Attendance Strategy templates.

The Families Supporting Schooling – Links Beyond the School project involves six independent schools with significant enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, working with an Indigenous Education consultant who has extensive experience supporting schools in strengthening their family / community partnerships. In this project, the consultant supports the schools to enhance their engagement of parents and the broader Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's literacy results. Schools have developed action plans in which they considered their individual needs and priority areas.

Local level actions [19, 20 and 21]

From 2012, the Department will be collecting data on school – community partnerships as part of the implementation of its Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in Schools initiative. Schools participating in the Focus schools: Next Steps initiative that did not already have a school – community partnership agreement began planning in 2011.

Personalised Learning strategies are being implemented in schools under a range of initiatives. In 2011, planning for personalised learning strategies commenced in all schools participating in the Focus Schools: Next Steps initiative.

Catholic schools are using a wide range of approaches to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in their learning. These include significant pastoral and personal support, homework clubs, specialised learning support and student mentors.

All schools are engaging with their community in a variety of ways that suit both the school and the local community. Examples include working collaboratively to develop community gardens, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sport and culture programs, Gungurri language project and partnerships with health and welfare agencies. Additionally, the majority of the schools are members of the Dare to Lead program Coalition. This commitment to partnership with families and communities has a strong focus on improving the educational outcomes for young people. Family forums are also being established as part of their engagement with parents, families and communities.

Forums at a number of independent schools took place in 2011 in relation to their school – community partnership agreement. Use of AIEWs continues as a key strategy to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities.

Attendance

Performance indicators

5. *Attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in schools.*
6. *Enrolment to population ratio of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians compared to other Australians.*
7. *Retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*
8. *Grade progression ratios for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*

Overall progress

Attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students generally improved between 2010 and 2011 and retention rates had a slight decline (refer to data in Table QLD3 below for further detail).

Attendance rates

School attendance rates are lower for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students than non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, in all year levels, in all school sectors. Attendance rates tend to lower in the upper years for all students, particularly in government schools. In general, there has been a slight decline in attendance rates from 2010 to 2011, for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Enrolment to population ratio

For 2011, school participation rates have not been published by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status due to concerns with the quality of the indicator. Specifically, the rates for most

States and Territories exceed 100 per cent, primarily as a result of modal differences in the data sources. The denominator is sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Estimated Resident Population series, itself drawn from the Population Census, while the numerator is sourced from the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC). The ABS is working to provide a substitute measure.

Apparent retention rates

Apparent retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are lower than for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students for both Year 7 to Year 10 and Year 7 to Year 12. There is a very slight decline for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student apparent retention rates from 2010 to 2011.

Table QLD3: Student attendance rates, Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, by sector, 2011 (per cent)

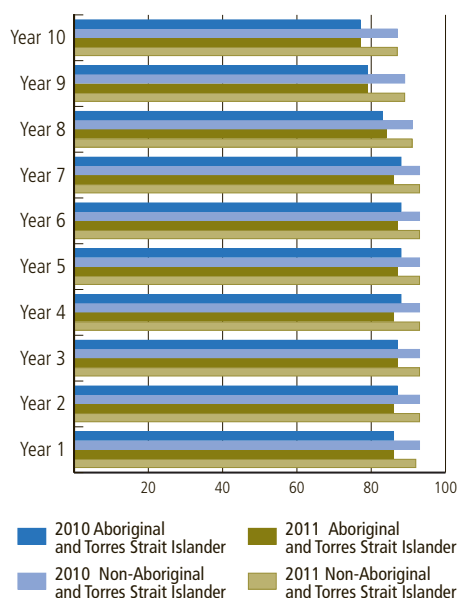
	Year level										Ungraded	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Prim.	Sec.
Government												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	86	86	87	86	87	87	86	84	79	77	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	92	93	93	93	93	93	93	91	89	87	n/a	n/a
Total	92	92	92	92	93	92	92	91	88	87	n/a	n/a
Catholic												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	89	89	91	90	90	90	92	91	89	86	n/a	58
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	94	94	94	94	94	94	93	92	n/a	90
Total	94	94	94	94	94	94	94	94	93	92	n/a	73
Independent												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	88	90	93	90	91	88	91	89	83	86	78	90
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	95	95	95	94	95	94	94	92	91	84
Total	94	94	95	94	95	94	95	94	93	92	90	84

Note: Definitions and methodologies used by jurisdictions and sectors to collect attendance data are not uniform. As such, direct comparisons of attendance rates between jurisdictions and sectors cannot currently be made. Nor can attendance data for 2011 be aggregated or averaged at the national or state level. Variations in methodology between jurisdictions are described in the explanatory notes for the 2011 attendance data contained in the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) *National Report on Schooling in Australia 2011*.

n/a not available

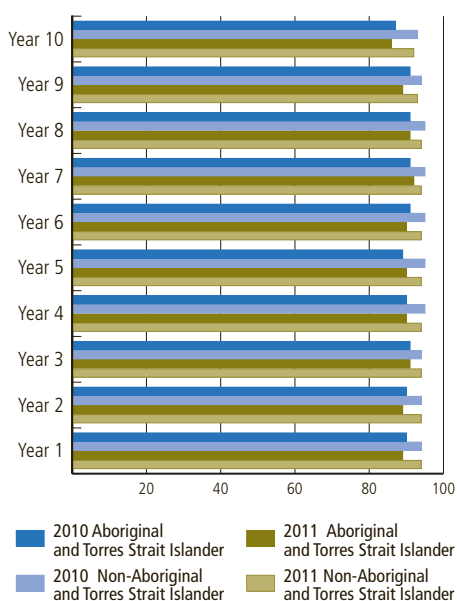
Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished)

Figure QLD1.1 Student attendance rates, Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, government sector, 2010–2011 (per cent)



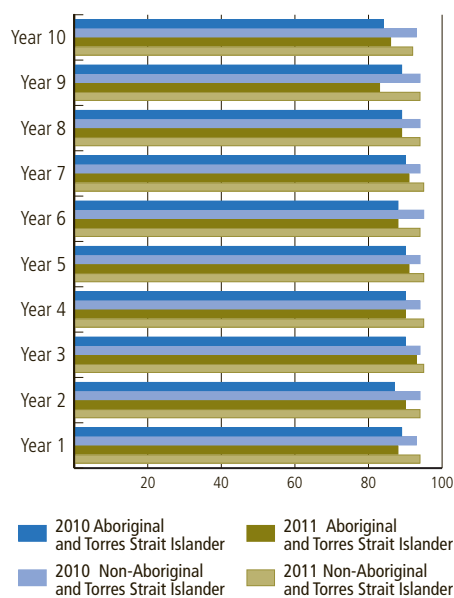
Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished).

Figure QLD1.2: Student attendance rates, Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, Catholic sector, 2010–2011 (per cent)



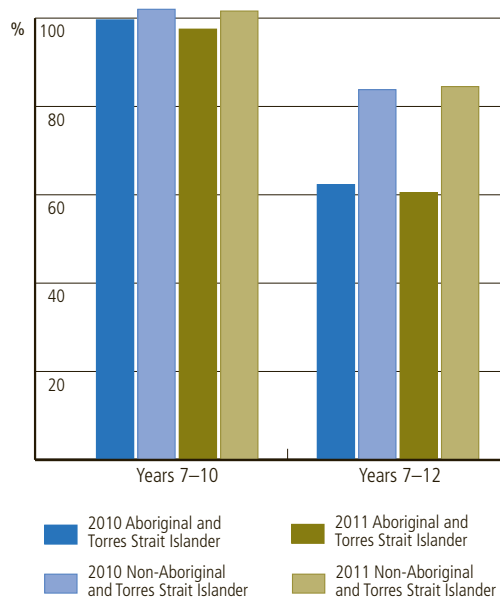
Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished).

Figure QLD1.3: Student attendance rates, Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, independent sector, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished).

Figure QLD2: Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, from Year 7 to Year 10 and Year 7 to Year 12, Queensland, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ABS, Schools, Australia, 2011, (Cat.No.4221.0)

Table QLD4: Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, from Year 7 to Year 10 and Year 7 to Year 12, Queensland, 2011 (per cent)

	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Year 7– Year 10	97.5	101.6
Year 7 – Year 12	60.5	84.5

Source: Derived from ABS, *Schools Australia*, 2011, (Cat.No.4221.0)

It should be noted that where progression appears to be above 100 per cent, this may reflect student movement across schooling sectors or jurisdictions.

Apparent grade progression ratios

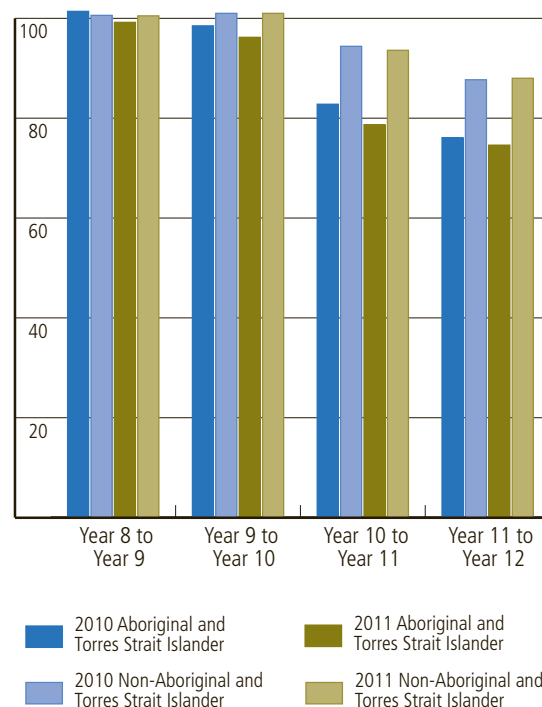
Grade progression rates decrease as the students move into upper secondary for all students, particularly amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The gaps between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are evident and most pronounced between Years 10 and 11 and Years 11 and 12.

Table QLD5: Grade progression ratios of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, Queensland, 2011 (per cent)

	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Year 8 to Year 9	99.2	100.5
Year 9 to Year 10	96.2	101.0
Year 10 to Year 11	78.7	93.6
Year 11 to Year 12	74.6	88.0

Source: ABS, *Schools Australia*, 2011, (Cat.No.4221.0)

Figure QLD3: Grade progression ratios of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, Queensland, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ABS, *Schools Australia*, 2011, (Cat.No.4221.0)

It should be noted that where progression appears to be above 100 per cent, this may reflect student movement across sectors or jurisdictions.

Systemic level actions [25]

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, the Queensland Department developed a 'Connectedness gauge', a tool to promote the concept of the 'connected school', that is, by definition a close relationship between the school population, the teaching staff and the local community with the specific aim of improving school attendance. 'Connectedness' shares the responsibility between school and family and seeks to put the student and family at the centre of the school, and school at the centre of the community. By contrast, beginning with the truancy paradigm seeks to identify the truant and apply punishment as a remedy. It is a two-way conversation where schools and

communities jointly improve the learning outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. In 2011, the Connectedness Gauge and accompanying strategies were trialled as a means of creating the 'connected school' and thus contributing to solving the low school attendance problem.

The Department engaged a 'Turn-Around-Team' to address the attendance issues in identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities including Cunnamulla, Palm Island and Yarrabah, with Weipa set to commence in 2012. The team consists of two expert practitioners in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees with expertise in working with community. This approach to improving attendance ensures schools and communities are supported to adopt a change process allowing the implementation of innovative strategies, including coaching for principals. The strategies are developed through an extensive consultation process with community members, school staff, students and other agencies.

The expert team then supports the school and community to implement the determined strategies, based on the premise that any effort to improve attendance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students requires connectedness between school and community. Schools are encouraged to publish their attendance improvement strategy through newsletters, press releases and on their websites. In three of the communities, new whole-of-community reference groups have been established specifically to enact an attendance improvement campaign. Evaluation processes are in place with all of these schools, requiring them to report regularly to their regional office and to the Division of Indigenous Education and Training Futures. System-wide attendance data is collected for all Queensland schools and used to inform decision-making processes.

Catholic schools have whole-of-school approaches to monitor and manage the attendance of individual students. Existing practices support students and families if attendance issues are identified.

Local level actions [26]

Schools have utilised their collected attendance data to develop a range of strategies at the school level. These include home visits as required, target setting, transportation to school by the school and use of incentive programs (refer also to Systemic level actions section above).

Literacy and numeracy

Performance indicators

9. *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in NAPLAN testing.*
10. *Participation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in NAPLAN.*

Overall progress

In general, the performance of Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in NAPLAN has improved from 2010 to 2011 (refer to data in Table QLD6 below for further detail).

Catholic school authorities have reported an increased awareness and understanding of effective learning support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to improve their literacy and numeracy. The characteristics of effective support have been embedded in professional learning for school staff.

Systemic level actions [30]

Queensland is leading national work on resources to build the capacity of teachers and school leaders to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who speak English as an additional language or dialect (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander EAL/D learners). This includes two projects: an online professional development course to support all teachers and a resource to support teachers in their first ten weeks of teaching in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community schools.

In 2011, Queensland began implementation of the Commonwealth-funded, Bridging the Language Gap project, which involves provision of face-to-face professional development of teachers and language leaders in 89 government and Catholic Focus schools. The project involves:

- a three-tiered professional development approach to develop sufficient depth of staff expertise and experience to provide sustainable services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander EAL/D learners in the participating schools;

- location-based practical application and professional mentoring of nominated school-based staff; workshops for school-based classroom teachers and other school personnel;
- and ongoing in-class coaching for classroom teachers on appropriate methodology for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ESL/D learners.

The project will run until the end of 2012, and the Queensland Department of Education and Training plans to build this professional development model into its systems on an ongoing basis from 2013 onwards.

Catholic school authorities implemented professional learning and programs to support teachers and students to address the contextual factors impacting on literacy and numeracy in schools. For example: 13 Catholic schools participated in the Bridging the Language Gap, Language Leaders professional development; use of the First Steps Developmental Continua programs; and the establishment of a Diocesan Learning Profile for all students and schools in the Toowoomba Diocese.

Nine independent boarding schools are involved in the Literacy Enhancement Project, funded under the Indigenous Education Support Structures, for identified projects 'aimed at providing increased learning support for Indigenous students'. Independent Schools Queensland provides targeted support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander boarding students from remote communities. The project was developed, based on the premise that independent boarding schools have a significant role to play in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander boarding students from remote communities. The aim of the Literacy Enhancement Project is to find fresh solutions to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to achieve their maximum potential and thus 'close the gap' on their disadvantage in education.

Local level actions [31 and 32]

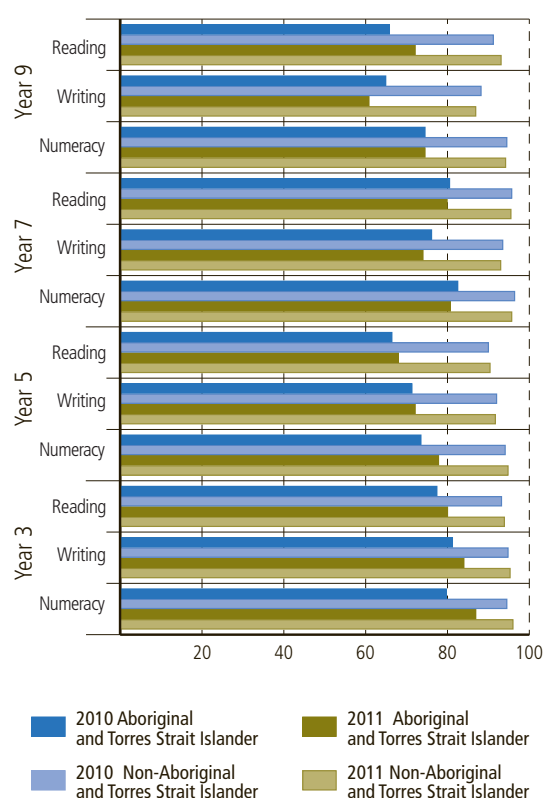
Various strategies have been utilised at the local level to support the teaching and learning of Standard Australian English literacy and numeracy. These include restructuring of the school day to support a whole-of-school approach; the use of Direct Instruction; planned intervention in response to identified levels of literacy and numeracy development, and use of English as a

Second Language Bandscales (refer also to Systemic level actions section above).

NAPLAN outcomes

Using the percentage of students who achieved at or above the national minimum standard, the performance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students has improved between 2010 and 2011, and the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Years 3 and 5 in reading and numeracy has narrowed.

Figure QLD4: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, Queensland, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished) *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*, ACARA, Sydney.

Table QLD6: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, Queensland, 2010–2011 (per cent)

	2010				2011			
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Gap	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Confidence Intervals	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Gap	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Confidence Intervals
Year 3								
Reading	77.4	93.2	15.8	2.2	80.0	93.9	13.9	2.0
Writing	81.2	94.8	13.6	2.3	84.0	95.3	11.3	1.8
Numeracy	79.7	94.5	14.8	2.3	86.9	96.0	9.1	1.3
Year 5								
Reading	66.4	90.0	23.6	3.0	68.0	90.4	22.4	2.4
Writing	71.3	92.0	20.7	3.2	72.1	91.7	19.6	2.3
Numeracy	73.5	94.1	20.6	3.1	77.8	94.8	17.0	2.1
Year 7								
Reading	80.5	95.7	15.2	2.3	79.9	95.5	15.6	2.3
Writing	76.1	93.5	17.4	2.8	74.0	93.0	19.0	2.5
Numeracy	82.5	96.4	13.9	2.2	80.7	95.7	15.0	2.2
Year 9								
Reading	65.8	91.2	25.4	3.0	72.1	93.1	21.0	3.0
Writing	64.9	88.2	23.3	3.0	60.8	86.9	26.1	3.1
Numeracy	74.5	94.5	20.0	2.9	74.5	94.2	19.7	2.7

Note: The confidence intervals for 2010 and 2011 in this table are specifically for Queensland.

Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished) *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*, ACARA, Sydney.

Please note, ACARA has indicated that the gap in narrative writing (2008, 2009, and 2010) should not be compared with the gap in persuasive writing (2011 and 2012). The percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving the national minimum standard tends to be lower in Year 9 compared to the other year levels. The gap narrowed most noticeably in Year 9 reading by over 4 percentage points. There are some cases where the gap has widened, most notably in Year 7 reading and numeracy.

2011 NAPLAN data by geolocation

The percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard is highest in metropolitan areas and generally lowest in very remote areas, with exceptions of Year 5 reading and writing, where remote is lowest. This trend is also generally reflected in the non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population

Table QLD7: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy geolocation summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, Queensland and Australia, 2011 (per cent)

Geolocation	Queensland		Australia	
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Reading				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	83.4	94.4	84.2	95.2
Provincial	80.7	92.9	81.3	93.9
Remote	70.5	92.5	67.3	92.1
Very Remote	67.7	88.8	45.3	90.2
Year 5				
Metropolitan	73.5	91.3	76.7	93.4
Provincial	69.9	88.5	73.4	91.6
Remote	46.0	87.7	49.4	89.7
Very Remote	46.2	85.3	26.4	86.6
Year 7				
Metropolitan	84.3	95.7	85.0	95.9
Provincial	82.4	95.1	81.8	95.3
Remote	65.7	94.6	63.4	95.3
Very Remote	59.0	92.9	42.5	93.2
Year 9				
Metropolitan	75.7	93.4	78.4	93.7
Provincial	72.8	92.5	75.0	93.0
Remote	58.1	89.6	54.6	91.5
Very Remote	47.5	88.9	29.3	89.5
Writing				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	87.2	95.4	88.1	96.4
Provincial	85.0	94.9	85.9	95.8
Remote	75.4	94.9	70.0	94.6
Very Remote	71.5	91.6	46.0	93.3
Year 5				
Metropolitan	77.3	92.5	79.8	94.6
Provincial	73.2	89.8	75.9	92.1
Remote	50.2	92.0	50.7	90.5
Very Remote	54.1	90.1	28.4	88.1
Year 7				
Metropolitan	79.6	93.6	77.2	93.5
Provincial	76.3	91.7	71.1	90.1
Remote	53.3	89.4	47.4	90.2
Very Remote	51.4	90.1	28.4	87.6
Year 9				
Metropolitan	66.7	88.3	63.4	88.0
Provincial	59.2	83.9	55.0	82.0
Remote	39.1	76.5	33.8	78.6
Very Remote	35.4	77.2	20.6	78.2
Numeracy				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	88.1	96.2	88.6	96.5
Provincial	87.2	95.5	87.2	96.0
Remote	79.9	96.0	77.0	95.7
Very Remote	84.3	94.6	63.3	94.9
Year 5				
Metropolitan	82.3	95.2	83.8	95.7
Provincial	78.4	93.9	80.6	94.8
Remote	61.8	93.8	62.8	94.5
Very Remote	61.9	92.3	42.4	92.4
Year 7				
Metropolitan	85.4	95.9	84.5	95.7
Provincial	83.4	95.4	81.3	95.1
Remote	62.5	94.4	61.7	94.9
Very Remote	59.0	93.5	41.6	93.4
Year 9				
Metropolitan	78.6	94.5	78.4	94.4
Provincial	74.9	93.7	73.9	93.4
Remote	60.2	90.7	58.9	91.9
Very Remote	np	88.8	33.5	90.3

Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished) NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011, ACARA, Sydney.

performance. However, the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students also tends to be the highest in very remote areas. In general, the number of Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in metropolitan, provincial and remote areas is similar to the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' achieving at or above the national minimum standard, with the exception of Very Remote areas where the Queensland percentage is generally higher than the Australian percentage.

2011 NAPLAN data and 2011 progress points for Queensland

One of the COAG 'Closing the Gap' targets is to halve the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade. To monitor achievement of this COAG target by 2018, progress points for each State and Territory were developed. The progress points for Queensland are provided in Table QLD8.

When comparing the above progress points with the actual 2010 and 2011 results detailed in Table QLD5, it can be seen that, with the exception of Year 9 writing and Year 7 numeracy, the Queensland results are above the trajectories, albeit with some downward movement in results. However, it should be noted that progress points remain stable for the first three to five years, whereas the results generally reflect an upward movement since 2008, particularly for Year 3.

Overall NAPLAN outcomes

Based on the percentage of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Years 3 and 5 is generally narrowing. In Years 7 and 9, there is little overall movement, with some exceptions as noted above. The gap tends to be most pronounced in very remote areas, in all year levels, and across all domains.

NAPLAN participation

The overall participation rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the 2011 NAPLAN was below that of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student participation rate was consistently higher than the Australia-wide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student participation rate. This was true for all domains and year levels. Participation tended to be lower in Year 9 for all Queensland and Australian students. These patterns also held for the 2010 participation rates.

Leadership, quality teaching and workforce development

Performance indicators

11. Number of professional development hours on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and cultural and linguistic competence training undertaken by principals and teachers.

Table QLD8: Reading, writing and numeracy progress points for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, achieving at or above the national minimum standard, 2008–2011 (per cent)

Year	Reading				Writing				Numeracy			
	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9
2008	66.2	62.9	74.8	70.0	77.2	72.0	72.3	61.8	75.5	69.5	81.8	73.2
2009	66.2	62.9	74.8	70.0	77.2	72.0	72.3	61.8	75.5	69.5	81.8	73.2
2010	66.2	62.9	74.8	70.0	77.2	72.0	72.3	61.8	75.5	69.5	81.8	73.2
2011	71.8	62.9	74.8	70.0	81.3	72.0	72.3	61.8	80.0	69.5	81.8	73.2
2018	88.7	88.8	89.4	81.0	93.6	90.8	86.5	73.6	93.3	92.0	92.4	83.5

Source: Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

Table QLD9: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, exemptions, absences/withdrawals and assessed students, in Queensland and Australia, Years 3, 5, 7, and 9, 2011 (per cent)

	Year 3		Year 5		Year 7		Year 9	
	Qld	Aust.	Qld	Aust.	Qld	Aust.	Qld	Aust.
Reading								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93.2	90.1	93.2	90.8	92.7	88.8	84.2	79.0
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	96.3	96.2	96.5	96.7	96.8	96.5	93.6	93.7
Writing								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	92.4	89.8	93.1	90.7	92.6	89.0	83.8	79.4
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	96.0	96.1	96.3	96.6	96.6	96.6	93.8	94.1
Numeracy								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	91.5	89.0	91.9	89.7	91.9	87.6	83.0	78.0
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95.9	95.9	96.1	96.3	96.4	96.2	93.0	93.2

Source: ACARA (2011) *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*, ACARA, Sydney.

12. *Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals, teachers and education workers (AIEWs and equivalents).*

13. *Average length of service of principals and teachers in hard-to-staff schools with high enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*

Overall progress

The Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment does not collect systemic data on the number of professional development hours on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and cultural and linguistic competence training undertaken by principals and teachers. However, significant investment continues to be made in capacity building to support teachers and school leaders in improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

At the end of 2011, the average length of service for teachers in Queensland government Focus schools was 5.64 years.

The average length of service of principals and teachers in hard-to-staff schools with high enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student data is not collected by the Queensland Catholic Education Commission.

Table QLD10: Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, by sector^(a), 2011

Employee type	Number
Government	
Public servants (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers (AIEWs))	327 ^(b)
Teachers (including Principals, Deputy Principals, Assistant Teachers and Community Teachers)	566
Teacher Aides (including Teacher Aides employed as AIEWs ^(c))	544
Ancillary staff	178
Trainees	8
Total	1,623 ^(d)
Catholic	
Senior Executive Staff	1
Principal	1
Teaching Staff	52
Administrative and clerical (including Teacher Aides and AIEWs)	157
Diocesan and Regional Specialist Support Staff	28
Building Operations, Maintenance	12
Total	251

- a) Independent Schools Queensland does not collect systemic data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.
- b) Includes 84 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers.
- c) Unable to be distinguished in data collection.
- d) Does not include the Office for Early Childhood and Care or Training.

Sources: Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment; Queensland Catholic Education Commission

Table QLD11: Average length of service of principals and teachers in Queensland Focus schools with high enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, by sector, 2011

Classification	Average length of service (in months)		
	Government	Catholic	Independent
Principals	(a)	n/a	n/a
Teachers	67.7	n/a	n/a

(a) Data in Focus schools was not collected separately for principals and teachers in Queensland government schools.

n/a not available

Source: Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment

Systemic level actions [41 and 42]

In 2011, the Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment and the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) began working in partnership to assist universities to adequately prepare pre-service teachers in Australia to teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and perspectives in accordance with the National Professional Standards for Teachers.

Queensland's Indigenous Schooling Support Units provide professional development and support to school principals and teachers to develop strategies to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Programs include: the Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in Schools (refer to the Engagement and connections section above); Bridging the Language Gap (refer to the Literacy and Numeracy section above); and support through the attendance turn-around teams (refer to the Attendance section above). Experienced educators, who work or have worked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student populations, provide support for these programs.

The Remote Area Teacher Education Program (RATEP) is a community-based teacher education program that aims to increase the pool of registered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers in Queensland. RATEP achieves this aim

through delivery of courses to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in their home communities and towns. RATEP is an initiative of the Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment in partnership with James Cook University, Tropical North Queensland TAFE and the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Under the partnership, Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate III in Education (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander); Certificate IV in Education (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander); Diploma in Education (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) and/or a Bachelor of Education (General Primary) are on offer. Two new centres were opened in 2011, one in Rockhampton and one in Doomadgee. The Bowen RATEP centre closed. Plans to expand the program beyond education are progressing.

Catholic schools adopted targeted professional learning for boarding and residential supervisors to build cultural, safe environments, improve cultural understanding and inclusive practices for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in boarding schools.

Four independent Focus schools are currently engaged within the What Works program. One of the key aspects of this program is the focus on school leadership.

Local level actions [43 and 44]

Principals in schools across Queensland have participated in a range of leadership programs over a number of years, including mentoring through the Dare to Lead coalition and via the Stronger Smarter Institute leadership program. Planning commenced in 2011 under the Focus Schools: Next Steps initiative to build capacity of principals to lead an improvement agenda to better support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Flexibility to tailor operations is provided under the Workplace Reform process for Queensland government schools. This involves consultation via the school's Local Consultative Committee, and could include reforms such as changing the staffing mix or the hours of operation.

Catholic schools have provided targeted professional learning to build cultural, safe environments, improve cultural and linguistic understanding and inclusive practices for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Pathways to real post-school options

Performance indicator

14. Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20 – 24 who have attained Year 12 or equivalent or Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate II or above.

Note: Although the performance indicator for this domain cites a national data source, there is no publicly available national level data for 2011.

Overall progress

For the 2011 Annual Report, it has been agreed to use State and Territory administrative data to report progress against

Performance Indicator 14. It should be noted that State and Territory administrative data for Year 12 completions is not nationally consistent, and that work is currently under way to develop a nationally consistent measure.

The proportion of (school identified) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students receiving a Queensland Certificate of Education and those eligible for an Overall Position (a student's position in a statewide rank order, based on their overall achievement in Queensland Studies Authority approved subjects, indicating how well a student has done in comparison to other OP-eligible students in Queensland, and is used for tertiary entrance purposes only) is lower than for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. For those achieving an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate Level II or above, the proportion is higher for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. There has been an increase in the number and proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

Table QLD12: Year 12 completions, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, Queensland, 2010 and 2011

	2010		2011	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Total student number – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	1,826		1,836	
Total student number – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	43,172		44,300	
Queensland Certificate of Education – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	956	52.4	1,150	62.6
Queensland Certificate of Education – Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	35,477	82.2	37,616	84.9
Overall Position eligible - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	378	20.7	427	23.3
Overall Position eligible – non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	25,325	58.7	25,520	57.6
Certificate II and above - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	799	43.7	950	51.7
Certificate II and above – Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	18,095	41.9	20,276	45.8

Note:

- Visa students excluded.
- Data are for students completing Year 12 only.
- A student's Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander identification is sourced from the student's school. The Queensland Studies Authority does not cross-validate or confirm student status.

Source: Queensland Studies Authority, Year 12 Outcomes data collection

receiving a Queensland Certificate of Education, those eligible for an Overall Position, and those achieving a Certificate Level II or above. The gap between those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students receiving a Queensland Certificate of Education and those who are Overall Position eligible has decreased from 2010 to 2011.

Systemic level actions [48, 49 and 50]

The Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment recognises that partnerships with other agencies provide additional avenues of support for disadvantaged young people. Schools work closely with local employment agencies and employers to create individual support programs to meet the needs of students at risk. Flexible arrangements, including work experience and training opportunities, can be tailored to an individual student's circumstance. The Youth Connections Program helps young people who have left school, or who are thinking of leaving school, to continue with their education and ultimately gain a Year 12 (or equivalent) level qualification. Service delivery is characterised by flexible and individualised case management to assist young people to remain engaged or re-engage with education and to improve their ability to make positive life choices. Youth Connections providers also run outreach activities for young people in the community and work to strengthen services in their regions so young people are better supported. There are a number of such centres throughout Queensland that the Department engages with.

The Learn, Earn, Legend! Year 12 Destinations initiative is designed to ensure that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Year 12 students successfully transition to further education, training and/or meaningful employment. The initiative provides case management of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students throughout Year 12 for a minimum of 26 weeks following their schooling. It contributes to the Queensland Government Target 2800 initiative, which aims to ensure that an additional 2800 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are employed in the Queensland Public Service by 2013. Secondary school principals throughout Queensland are the target of the Learn, Earn, Legend! Year 12 Destinations initiative. Indigenous Pathways Coordinators, in conjunction with school staff, update and utilise individual Senior Education and Training (SET) plans as part of the case management process. Commonwealth funding will be provided until 2012, to embed the practice into school processes.

Queensland is leading planning work to develop innovative strategies to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with better access to interactive technologies and their use in improving educational outcomes overall.

The Catholic sector uses a whole-of-system approach promoting high expectations, targeted, wrap-around and transition support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander senior schooling students. In 2011, strategies included: improved evidence based processes to inform strategic planning; a dedicated Pathways Officer position at the Queensland Catholic Education Commission to engage key stakeholders; and a dedicated Indigenous Education Career and Transitions Pathways Officer at Cairns Catholic Education.

The Queensland Catholic Education Commission partnered with the Australian Catholic University; the Queensland Studies Authority; the Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Committee and the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations to successfully deliver four Parent and Community Engagement (PaCE) workshops in 2011. The workshops informed family and community members on school processes, and encouraged them to become actively involved in their students' schooling and pathways planning.

Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) has actively attempted to engage with the Learn Earn Legend! Year 12 Destinations initiative through representation on State and regional committees and advisory groups. The ISQ has also directly engaged with Youth Connection and Partnership Broker providers across the State to increase direct engagement with individual schools. In addition, the ISQ has partnered with the Department of Communities to deliver the economics/management program, ECOMAN, training for schools in the Brisbane area.

Local level actions [51, 52, 53, 54 and 55]

The Learn Earn Legend! Year 12 Destinations initiative supports local level action to provide improved pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (refer to Systemic level actions section above).

Much of the information on pathways of students post-Year 12 is based on anecdotal feedback. In the case of Catholic schools,

the evidence is that schools have initiated strategies including profile data collection, exit interviews and Year 12 destination survey and data collection.

Improvements have been made in the coordination and increased opportunities and options available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students including: leadership and career camps; Former Origin Greats (FOGs) Indigenous Employment and Careers Expo; university programs including Expos and Careers markets and Engineering programs (Assets); increased partnerships with industry representatives at the local levels for school-based traineeships and cadetships and Young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's leadership groups.

Actions in independent schools include: employment of a training coordinator to assist with placement, follow-up and mentoring during the training period; linkages with the mining industry; investigating relationships with alternative registered training organisations; culturally appropriate mentoring and coaching; use of Elders; and establishing networks with local businesses.

Good practice snapshots

Principals as Literacy Leaders with Indigenous Communities (Education Queensland)

The Principals as Literacy Leaders with Indigenous Communities (PALLIC) project is designed to build the capacity of community leaders. The good news stories relate to the changes that have occurred in the participating schools in regard to the teaching of reading and/or increased community involvement, as the following examples demonstrate.

Woree State School

This school has implemented a specific intervention program for students titled, the Academic Success Program.

The school has three tracks for students with benchmarks in each track in reading. The students who do not reach the

benchmark are offered a place in the Academic Success Program. The school has established a list of 20 to 25 students who have accepted this support. These students are both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. The extra support is for one hour per day for four days. The class students are on individual education plans and the Big Six literacy program supporting student reading has been used as the key framework to set targets for each student.

There is a learning support teacher who works with a ratio of 1 to 5-6, but it is envisaged the class teacher and the support teacher will have interchangeable roles. The aim is for students to return to regular classrooms as quickly as possible. The sessions are timetabled to be extensions of literacy. The emphasis has been to link attendance and parent involvement with the direct students receiving this support.

Mackay Central State School

This school has a number of successful community engagement programs. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leaders, for example, are involved in the school through the Song Room, where their recounted stories are recorded by students and are then published.

There is a very strong mentoring program, firstly as a peer support program and secondly, with older students from the secondary school.

PALLIC has become one of the key factors in extending the community involvement in the school. The Indigenous Leadership Partner has developed a We B- Look U Bar-B-Q approach. This started small, with three parents, and has now increased to an average of 23 parents meeting regularly as part of the Bar-B-Q approach.

The method is to use a yarning circle to receive feedback around what parents want to see in the school, and to engage them in supporting the approach to reading.

Wulguru State School

PALLIC was the catalyst to involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of the community as literacy leaders in this school. At the first sessions, which involved Modules 1 and 2, the person who was invited to attend, as the Indigenous Leadership Partner, was already an employee at the school.

The second session involved another Indigenous Leadership Partner who was a parent. The impetus from these sessions enabled the Indigenous Leadership Partners to establish a Parent Reference Group.

A small group of five parents with an extra community member formed the nucleus for this group. The focus has been on 'What can we do better?' with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders families to engage them in the school and with their children's learning.

One initiative was the establishment of a Rainbow Room where parents can drop in and meet regularly.

PALLIC was the centrepiece to start making community connections. The links are being made because of the raised profile of Indigenous Leadership Partners in the school.

Heatley State School

PALLIC enabled Heatley to have its key priority, the teaching of reading. After the first session of PALLIC training, the Principal and Indigenous Leadership Partner undertook professional development with the whole staff. This enabled the development of a consistent message by teachers on reading methodology and what a balanced reading program should entail. The focus on reading pedagogy was on independent reading, modelling reading and shared reading.

Half-way through Term 3, every teacher had been involved in professional development on the teaching of reading focusing on each year level. This was followed by a moderation activity on reviewing student work, carried out during a student-free day in October that year, and by the middle of October, each teacher had engaged in a Disciplined Dialogue with their line manager on the collection and use of data in reading.

These aims have been to develop consistency in methodology, a balanced reading program based on the Big Six and the teaching of reading across subject disciplines. Shared understanding and the development of teacher confidence have been the major priorities.

The establishment of a Parent Reference Group, called Yubu-Yunga, supported the reading program. This was developed with the Indigenous Leadership Partner and the Principal. The emphasis has been on building strong networks. One of the

focus areas has been on early reading experiences and the development of a Home Reading Practices Guide.

Education Officer – Indigenous Education – Career and Transition Pathways (Queensland Catholic Education Commission)

The Education Officer – Indigenous Education – Career and Transition Pathways provides coordination and support to the Catholic Diocesan Indigenous Career Transitions Pathway Strategy (ICTP) project. The ICTP project is focused on improving post-schooling outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in Catholic colleges within the Diocese. The Education Officer facilitates the provision of training programs to provide work readiness skills; creates positive links between schools, parents, community, employers and Industry and other relevant organisations; provides direction and support to VET coordinators and Career Counsellors within Catholic Secondary Colleges. This position monitors and tracks Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students engaged in Years 10, 11, and 12.

'Harmony in Between' project to support schools in implementing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across and beyond the curriculum

The inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in all that we do in our schools, combined with genuine partnerships with the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, will provide opportunities for us to broaden and deepen our appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of being, knowing and doing, and through that process, gain a greater understanding of themselves. All staff attended a full day of Professional Development in which they explored a variety of approaches, activities and electronic resources to support educators in the implementation of Indigenous Perspectives in the curriculum. The Harmony in Between Framework was developed by a committee comprising Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators and community members, with representation from all regions in the Rockhampton diocese.

Community Learning Hub at St Michael's Catholic School, Palm Island

The Community Learning Hub, is directed at improving the engagement and age appropriate learning outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Literacy and numeracy programs, including the Accelerated Literacy program, have been implemented with consideration of the needs and interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and communities, and of their language and cultural differences. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support staff are integral to the success of this project.

Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Committee's (QIECC) feedback

Comment from the QIECC Chair, Gina Archer

Due to the delay in the appointment process of the new Committee, this comment has been delayed and under normal circumstances the QIECC Chair would have been involved throughout the whole process.

The QIECC Chair was provided a copy of the report in early November and then briefed by a departmental representative shortly after, due to the tight reporting timeframes.

The report is quite clear and easy to follow in regards to the structure of the report under the different domains. It is pleasing to see that all three sectors (Education Queensland (EQ), the Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC) and Independent Schooling Queensland (ISQ)) are collaborating fully to collate this report.

Furthermore, it is also pleasing to see increased numbers of programs and strategies that are considered cross-sector, which demonstrates the sectors working together to achieve the same goal of closing the gap and positive outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Queensland.

It is important though, to point out that a clear distinction needs to be made between:

- a) these programs/strategies that are cross-sector, ie, for all Queensland schools; and
- b) those programs/strategies that are exclusively for government, Catholic or independent Queensland schools.

The Department needs to consider using readily available data in relation to the programs/strategies described throughout the report, for example, the Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in Schools (EATSIPS) Strategy and Dare to Lead program schools. This data can only add strength when reporting under each domain.

It is clear in the report that the ISQ needs to strongly consider a central collection of basic data that is required for this report, as the report highlights this area as a gap. The Department also needs to consider ways of collecting data against the performance indicators that, at present, cannot be adequately reported on.

Focus school information

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Low SES NP	Lit. Num. NP	RSD	NSI
Acacia Ridge State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	288	50	X			
Aitkenvale State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	394	72		X		
Allentown State School	Gov.	Provincial	394	52	X	X		
Annandale State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	881	39				
Atherton State School	Gov.	Provincial	659	135		X		
Ayr East State School	Gov.	Provincial	600	75		X		
Babinda State School	Gov.	Provincial	225	64				
Balaclava State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	278	163	X			
Baralaba State School	Gov.	Provincial	98	46				
Barkly Highway State School	Gov.	Remote	554	119				
Beachmere State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	394	20		X		
Beaconsfield State School	Gov.	Provincial	470	59		X		
Bentley Park College	Gov.	Metropolitan	1,655	391				X
Berrinba East State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	504	49	X			
Berserker Street State School	Gov.	Provincial City	438	121	X			
Biggera Waters State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	864	20				
Biloela State School	Gov.	Provincial	384	56				
Blackwater North State School	Gov.	Provincial	469	28		X		
Blackwater State School	Gov.	Provincial	194	40				
Blair State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	381	46				
Bloomfield River State School	Gov.	Remote	41	39				
Bluewater State School	Gov.	Provincial	262	26				
Bohlevale State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	721	110				
Boondall State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	712	32				
Boronia Heights State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	659	41		X		
Boulia State School	Gov.	Very remote	36	33				
Bowen State School	Gov.	Provincial	397	71	X			
Brassall State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	749	93		X		X
Bray Park State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	592	49				
Bribie Island State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	673	58		X		
Browns Plains State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	583	33		X		X
Bundaberg West State School	Gov.	Provincial	286	47	X			
Bundamba State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	593	87	X	X		
Burketown State School	Gov.	Very remote	45	40				
Burnside State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	457	44		X		X
Bwngcolman Community School	Gov.	Remote	242	239	X			
Cairns West State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	594	398	X			
Camooweal State School	Gov.	Very remote	44	35				
Caravonica State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	393	55		X		
Carole Park State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	214	46	X			
Charleville State School	Gov.	Very remote	247	74		X		
Charters Towers Central State School	Gov.	Provincial	158	60	X			
Cherbourg State School	Gov.	Provincial	116	115	X	X		
Chinchilla State School	Gov.	Provincial	491	51		X		X

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Low SES NP	Lit. Num. NP	RSD	NSI
Cloncurry State School	Gov.	Remote	338	176		X		
Cooktown State School	Gov.	Remote	410	156	X			
Cranbrook State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	608	88				
Crescent Lagoon State School	Gov.	Provincial	414	86				X
Crestmead State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	1,010	59	X			
Croydon State School	Gov.	Very remote	23	14				
Cunnamulla State School	Gov.	Very remote	125	107	X			
Currajong State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	616	106				
Dajarra State School	Gov.	Very remote	38	36				
Dalby South State School	Gov.	Provincial	669	84		X		
Dalby State School	Gov.	Provincial	508	96		X		
Darling Heights State School	Gov.	Provincial	554	61				
Deception Bay North State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	605	73	X			
Denison State School	Gov.	Provincial	467	24				
Doomadgee State School	Gov.	Very remote	303	290	X		X	
Drayton State School	Gov.	Provincial	288	20				
Eagleby South State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	300	40	X			
Eagleby State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	358	31	X			
East Brisbane State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	218	32		X		
Eidsvold State School	Gov.	Provincial	80	58				
Eimeo Road State School	Gov.	Provincial	807	72		X		
Emerald North State School	Gov.	Provincial	247	31				
Garbutt State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	121	93	X	X		
Gatton State School	Gov.	Provincial	615	32		X		
Gladstone South State School	Gov.	Provincial	306	48				X
Glenmore State School	Gov.	Provincial	514	124		X		X
Goondiwindi State School	Gov.	Provincial	584	103		X		X
Gordonvale State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	581	193		X		X
Gracemere State School	Gov.	Provincial	248	44		X		
Greenbank State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	1,086	34				
Gympie South State School	Gov.	Provincial	454	47				X
Happy Valley State School	Gov.	Provincial	332	64		X		
Harlaxton State School	Gov.	Provincial	127	50	X			
Harris Fields State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	500	53	X	X		
Harristown State School	Gov.	Provincial	358	97				X
Healy State School	Gov.	Remote	197	100				
Heatley State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	637	197		X		
Herberton State School	Gov.	Provincial	181	40	X			
Hercules Road State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	858	42		X		
Hermit Park State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	493	35				
Hopevale State School	Gov.	Remote	123	123	X		X	
Hughenden State School	Gov.	Very remote	180	34	X	X		
Humpybong State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	732	35		X		
Inala State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	472	65	X			
Ingham State School	Gov.	Provincial	413	78				
Innisfail East State School	Gov.	Provincial	196	82	X	X		
Innisfail State School	Gov.	Provincial	153	93	X	X		

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Low SES NP	Lit. Num. NP	RSD	NSI
Ipswich Central State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	624	46				X
Ipswich East State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	471	53		X		X
Ipswich North State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	112	36	X			
Ipswich West State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	169	19	X			
Isabella State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	585	184		X		
Kallangur State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	710	41		X		
Kawana Waters State College	Gov.	Metropolitan	1,333	54		X		X
Kawungan State School	Gov.	Provincial	1,003	48		X		
Kelso State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	456	100				X
Kingston State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	608	112	X	X		
Kippa-Ring State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	478	44		X		
Kirwan State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	789	92				
Kowanyama State School	Gov.	Very remote	157	151	X	X		
Kruger State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	859	68				X
Kuranda District State College	Gov.	Provincial	434	162				
Kurwongbah State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	826	27				
Laidley District State School	Gov.	Provincial	544	45				
Lakes Creek State School	Gov.	Provincial	181	32		X		
Lawnton State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	193	18		X		
Leichhardt State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	242	49	X			
Lockhart State School	Gov.	Very remote	100	100	X	X		
Mabel Park State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	693	73	X			
Mackay Central State School	Gov.	Provincial	208	56				
Mackay North State School	Gov.	Provincial	371	60				
Mareeba State School	Gov.	Provincial	711	227	X			
Marsden State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	964	90	X			
Maryborough Central State School	Gov.	Provincial	326	53	X			
Millchester State School	Gov.	Provincial	273	42				
Mitchell State School	Gov.	Remote	142	47	X	X		
Mitchelton State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	327	24				
Morayfield East State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	985	46		X		
Morayfield State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	661	83	X	X		
Moreton Downs State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	701	36				
Mornington Island State School	Gov.	Very remote	279	276	X		X	
Mossman State School	Gov.	Provincial	230	129			X	
Mount Archer State School	Gov.	Provincial	710	136		X		
Mount Garnet State School	Gov.	Remote	78	49		X		
Mount Isa Central State School	Gov.	Remote	211	62		X		
Mount Morgan Central State School	Gov.	Provincial	248	82	X	X		
Mount Warren Park State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	753	54				
Mundingburra State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	643	70				
Murgon State School	Gov.	Provincial	249	111	X			
Nambour State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	420	50		X		
Nanango State School	Gov.	Provincial	499	40	X	X		
Nerang State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	376	35				X
Newtown State School	Gov.	Provincial	307	71		X		
Normanton State School	Gov.	Very remote	195	172	X			

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Low SES NP	Lit. Num. NP	RSD	NSI
North Lakes State College	Gov.	Metropolitan	2,945	72				X
Northern Peninsula Area State College	Gov.	Very remote	526	505	X			
Oakey State School	Gov.	Provincial	352	74	X			
Oonoonba State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	479	36				
Park Avenue State School	Gov.	Provincial	143	45				X
Parkhurst State School	Gov.	Provincial	243	21				
Parramatta State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	420	259	X			
Pialba State School	Gov.	Provincial	601	130				X
Pormpuraaw State School	Gov.	Very remote	92	88				
Railway Estate State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	229	47				
Rasmussen State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	490	227		X		X
Ravenshoe State School	Gov.	Provincial	420	136	X	X		
Redbank Plains State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	741	36		X		
Redbank State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	197	20	X			
Redlynch State College	Gov.	Metropolitan	1,713	105				
Richlands East State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	380	70	X			
Richmond Hill State School	Gov.	Provincial	376	79				
Riverview State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	270	55	X			
Rockville State School	Gov.	Provincial	89	32	X			
Roma State College	Gov.	Provincial	881	161		X		X
Rosewood State School	Gov.	Provincial	274	42		X		X
Sandgate State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	318	20		X		
Southport State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	528	30		X		
St George State School	Gov.	Remote	213	107		X		X
Stafford State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	262	34				
Sunbury State School	Gov.	Provincial	302	45	X			
Sunset State School	Gov.	Remote	313	246	X	X		
Taabinga State School	Gov.	Provincial	576	27				
Tagai State College	Gov.	Very remote	1,549	1485	X			
Tannum Sands State School	Gov.	Provincial	655	47				
Tara Shire State College	Gov.	Provincial	399	68	X			
Taranganba State School	Gov.	Provincial	784	66				
Thabeban State School	Gov.	Provincial	215	48	X			
The Hall State School	Gov.	Provincial	336	49				
Tin Can Bay State School	Gov.	Provincial	404	34	X	X		
Townview State School	Gov.	Remote	348	196		X		X
Trinity Beach State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	801	73				
Tully State School	Gov.	Provincial	277	71				
Upper Coomera State College	Gov.	Metropolitan	2,485	78				X
Urangan Point State School	Gov.	Provincial	299	32	X			
Victoria Park State School	Gov.	Provincial	669	66				X
Victoria Point State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	683	36		X		X
Vincent State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	190	110	X	X		
Walkervale State School	Gov.	Provincial	531	54	X	X		
Waraburra State School	Gov.	Provincial	356	71				
Warwick Central State School	Gov.	Provincial	230	56	X	X		

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Low SES NP	Lit. Num. NP	RSD	NSI
Waterford State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	588	30		X		X
Waterford West State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	609	71	X			
Watson Road State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	207	36	X			
Weir State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	846	207				X
Western Cape College	Gov.	Very remote	1,159	737		X		X
White Rock State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	458	229		X		
Whitfield State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	954	229				X
William Duncan State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	611	26				
Wilsonton State School	Gov.	Provincial	465	103		X		X
Wondai State School	Gov.	Provincial	206	36	X	X		
Wondall Heights State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	633	36		X		
Woodridge North State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	478	51	X			
Woodridge State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	725	58	X			
Woorabinda State School	Gov.	Provincial	157	157	X			
Woree State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	869	305		X		X
Worongary State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	794	29				
Wulguru State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	439	105				
Wynnum West State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	541	35		X		
Yarrabah State School	Gov.	Provincial	431	431	X			
Yeppoon State School	Gov.	Provincial	347	21				
Yugumbir State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	1,093	37				
Zillmere State School	Gov.	Metropolitan	77	19				
Christ the King Catholic Primary School	Cath.	Metropolitan	229	22	X			
Columba Catholic College (Mount Carmel Campus)	Cath.	Provincial	376	60		X		
Columba Catholic College (St Mary's Cath. Campus)		Provincial	210	12	X			
Emmaus College (Yaamba Road Campus)	Cath.	Provincial	716	58			X	
Good Counsel Primary School (Innisfail)	Cath.	Provincial	305	30				
Good Shepherd Catholic College	Cath.	Remote	387	58			X	
Good Shepherd Catholic Community School (Rasmussen)	Cath.	Metropolitan	411	49		X		
Holy Rosary Primary School (Windsor)	Cath.	Metropolitan	61	30		X		
Holy Spirit School (Cranbrook)	Cath.	Metropolitan	859	33				
MacKillop Catholic Primary School (Andergrove)	Cath.	Provincial	333	19				
Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre	Cath.	Remote	37	50				
Mount St Bernard College (Herberton)	Cath.	Provincial	148	92	X			
Our Lady Help of Christians School (Earlville)	Cath.	Metropolitan	536	45		X		
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School (Hammond Island)	Cath.	Very remote	19					
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School (Thursday Island)	Cath.	Very remote	75	65	X			

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Low SES NP	Lit. Num. NP	RSD	NSI
Ryan Catholic College (Townsville)	Cath.	Metropolitan	1,928	77				
Sacred Heart Primary School (Cunnamulla)	Cath.	Very remote	87	39	X			
Sacred Heart School (Booval)	Cath.	Metropolitan	581	28				
Saint Mary's Catholic College (Kingaroy)	Cath.	Provincial	328	21				
Southern Cross Catholic College (Kippa Ring Prim)	Cath.	Metropolitan	336					
Southern Cross Catholic College (Scarborough Sec)	Cath.	Metropolitan	1,096	36			X	
Southern Cross Catholic College (Woody Point Prim)	Cath.	Metropolitan	192					
St Anthony's Catholic Primary School (North Rockhampton)	Cath.	Provincial	596	28				
St Augustine's School (Mossman)	Cath.	Provincial	172	26				
St Brendan's College (Yeppoon)	Cath.	Provincial	636	93				
St Columban's College (Caboolture)	Cath.	Metropolitan	909	24				
St Eugene College	Cath.	Metropolitan	865	43				
St Francis' College (Marsden)	Cath.	Metropolitan	773	47		X		
St Francis Xavier's School (Goodna)	Cath.	Metropolitan	472	21				
						X		
St Francis Xavier's School (Manunda)	Cath.	Metropolitan	598	31				
St John's School (Roma)	Cath.	Provincial	720	31				
St Joseph's School (Cairns)	Cath.	Metropolitan	383	48				
St Joseph's School (Cloncurry)	Cath.	Remote	117	17		X		
St Joseph's School (Mount Isa)	Cath.	Remote	412	21		X		
St Joseph's School (Murgon)	Cath.	Provincial	164	63	X			
St Joseph's School (Rockhampton, Park Avenue)	Cath.	Provincial	362	33		X		
St Kieran's School (Mount Isa)	Cath.	Remote	193	40				
St Mary's Catholic College (Woree)	Cath.	Metropolitan	812	51			X	
St Mary's Catholic Primary School (Rockhampton North)	Cath.	Provincial	254	24				
St Mary's Primary School (Ipswich)	Cath.	Metropolitan	614	21				
St Mary's School (Beaudesert)	Cath.	Provincial	342	14				
St Mary's School (Charleville)	Cath.	Very remote	180	26				
St Michael's School (Gordonvale)	Cath.	Metropolitan	203	24				
St Michael's School (Palm Island)	Cath.	Remote	152	138	X	X		
St Monica's School (Oakey)	Cath.	Provincial	207	24	X			
St Paul's School (Woodridge)	Cath.	Metropolitan	231	23	X			
St Peter Claver College (Riverview)	Cath.	Metropolitan	917	57				
St Saviour's College (Toowoomba)	Cath.	Provincial	378	38			X	
St Saviour's Primary School (Toowoomba)	Cath.	Provincial	415	8				
St Therese's School (Edmonton)	Cath.	Metropolitan	650	27				
St Thomas' School (Mareeba)	Cath.	Provincial	472	22				
St Ursula's College (Yeppoon)	Cath.	Provincial	426	27				
St William's Primary School (Grovely)	Cath.	Metropolitan	481	14				

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Low SES NP	Lit. Num. NP	RSD	NSI
The Cathedral College	Cath.	Provincial	823	53				
The Centre Education Programme	Cath.	Metropolitan	138	38	X			
The Marian School (Currajong)	Cath.	Metropolitan	408	28		X		
Townsville Flexible Learning Centre	Cath.	Metropolitan	92	56				
Xavier Catholic College	Cath.	Provincial	1,131	33				
Youth and Community Learning Centre	Cath.	Provincial	23	14				
Aboriginal and Islander Independent Ind. Community School		Metropolitan	201	188				
Djarragun College	Ind.	Metropolitan	427	402	X	x		
Hymba Yumba Community Hub	Ind.	Metropolitan	50	49				
Shalom Christian College	Ind.	Metropolitan	383	382	X	X		

Western Australia report on activities and outcomes

Introduction

In Western Australia in 2011, there were a total of 397,156 students enrolled in 1,113 schools. This compares to 389,381 students enrolled in 1,110 schools in 2010. There were 25,487 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Western Australian schools in 2011. Approximately 37 per cent of Western Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were enrolled in metropolitan schools, 25 per cent in provincial schools, 16 per cent in remote schools and 22 per cent in very remote schools.

Government schools enrolled 21,538 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, accounting for approximately 84 per cent of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in schools in Western Australia. The Western Australian Department of Education maintains a presence in many very remote locations, irrespective of the high costs involved, because of the very important role schools play in creating and promoting community cohesion and development.

The Catholic education sector has a strong commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. The Catholic education sector supports 16 schools in the Kimberley and Pilbara regions. Of these schools, 11 have a predominantly or 100 per cent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student cohort. A number of these are sole provider schools. Additionally, the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia (CEOWA) runs the only all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary school in Perth at Clontarf Aboriginal College.

The independent sector supports ten schools in the Kimberley and Pilbara regions, with a further two in the Goldfields; one in the Midwest; and one north of Esperance, with three of these schools being boarding schools. The Aboriginal Independent Community (AIC) schools in the Kimberley and Pilbara regions are sole education providers for the communities they serve. Both the community schools and boarding schools have a predominantly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student cohort. There are also seven Curriculum and Re-engagement (CARE) independent schools, most of which have significant numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Profile of Focus schools

There are 97 Focus schools in Western Australia, comprising 70 government schools, 15 Catholic schools and 12 independent schools. Most of these schools have either received or are receiving support through the Low SES or the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership Agreements.

Focus schools had 9,712 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in 2011, which is 55 per cent of the total enrolment in these schools. These students represent 38 per cent of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Western Australian schools.

The distribution of government Focus schools is predominately in remote and very remote geolocations, with approximately 73 per cent of Focus schools in these areas. In the Catholic sector, there is a strong emphasis on the Kimberley schools, with 12 included as Focus schools. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments are very high and in many cases, comprise 100 per cent of the cohort. Ten of the independent Focus schools are in the Kimberley and Pilbara region. Service delivery in remote and very remote areas of Western Australia can be very costly.

Western Australia report on progress by domains

Priority domain: readiness for school

Performance indicators

1. *The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending (where possible to measure) a preschool program.*
2. *The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students assessed as ready for the first year of full-time schooling by State and Territories measures.*

Figure WA1: Map of Western Australia Focus schools
(Focus schools are listed in a table at the end of this chapter.)



Overall progress

In 2011, there were 2,106 'episodes' of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled and attending Western Australian kindergartens. This represents 123 per cent of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Estimated Residential Population (ERP) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander four year-olds in Western Australia in 2011. The attendance rate for Western Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were enrolled in a preschool program in 2011 was 100 per cent.

Western Australia is not confident that the ABS's 2011 population estimates are sufficiently reliable to be used to

calculate some of the rates in Table WA1. There was a severe undercount of the Western Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in the 2006 Census, the effects of which flow through to the 2011 population estimates used to calculate the percentage of Western Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander four year-olds who are enrolled and attending school.

The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) results suggest that a higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have developmental challenges to overcome when they start school than their non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peers.

Table WA1: Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending a preschool program, 2011

	Western Australia		Australia	
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	All children	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	All children
Number of children enrolled	2,106	31,738	10,167	233,128
Children enrolled (per cent)	123.2	101.1	75.7	80.8
Number of children attending	2,106	31,738	9,536	225,886
Percentage of children enrolled that are attending ^(a)			93.8	96.9
Percentage of children attending ^(b)			71.0	78.3

Notes:

- Calculated as per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled.
- Calculated as per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over Estimated Resident Population (ERP). ERP Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 4 year olds at June 2011, New South Wales = 4,027; Australia = 13,427.
- Due to data collection limitations, South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland have not reported on unique counts of children in preschool. However, episodes - counts of the instances of preschool programs provided to a child without accounting for duplication - are available for these jurisdictions. For information on methodologies and concepts of the preschool enrolment data please refer to explanatory notes in the ABS publication, *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates 2011* (Cat.No. 4240.0).
- Because early childhood education is not compulsory, and children can be enrolled in multiple preschool programs, the collection of unit record level (URL) data on preschool programs is seen to be fundamental in addressing data quality issues, both to eliminate duplication and to gain an accurate count of records at the child level. An episode is a term used in the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection to refer to an 'instance of learning' that a child has received. When one child is attending two different preschool programs, the same child is attending two episodes of preschool (i.e. may be double-counted). This affects the Australia totals but not the New South Wales figures. New South Wales provided URL data so children enrolled in a preschool program in New South Wales are not double-counted in Table 1.
- While there have been improvements in consistency of reporting across jurisdictions, it should be noted that Preschool Education Estimates have not yet achieved complete alignment with nationally agreed standards.
- For information on adjustments for 2006 Census undercount and the methods used to calculate projections of the Indigenous population, see explanatory notes in the publication, *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991-2021* (Cat. No.3238.0).
- Estimates for the total population are sourced from ABS, *Estimated Population by Age and Sex, June 2011* (Cat.No. 3101.0). The Australia total includes 'Other territories' including Jervis Bay and Norfolk Island. However, Jervis Bay and Norfolk Island are excluded from Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales totals. Therefore, State and Territory Estimated Resident Population numbers will not add to Australia totals.
- In the absence of population estimates by Indigenous status for inter-censal years, non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population figures are calculated by subtracting projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population from estimates of the total population.

Source: ABS, *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates 2011* (Cat.No.4240.0) *Estimated Population by Age and Sex, June 2011* (Cat.No. 3101.0 DO002); *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991-2021* (Cat.No.3238.0)

Table WA2: Proportion of children developmentally 'on track' as they enter school, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, 2009

	Western Australia	Australia
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (per cent)	39.5	42.5
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (per cent)	67.5	68.6

Notes:

- This indicator is based on the results of the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), which was administered in 2009 to 27,565 Western Australian children during their first six months of pre-primary (full-time schooling).
- The AEDI population comprises children with at least one valid domain score.
- Children are deemed to be developmentally 'on track' if they scored above the 25th percentile of the national AEDI population in four or more AEDI domains.
- The average age of Western Australian children who completed the AEDI was 5 years 5 months, which was younger than the average nationally (5 years 7 months) and for all states and territories except Queensland and the Northern Territory (also 5 years and 5 months).
- The percentage of children who lived in remote or very remote areas of Western Australia was almost three times that of the national average and the second highest amongst the states and territories.
- Where Standard Australian English is not the child's first language, there may be an over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are assessed as developmentally vulnerable in the 'language and cognitive skills' or the 'communication skills and general knowledge' domains of the AEDI. Cultural differences in the child's mode of communication and general knowledge also need to be acknowledged and taken in consideration when reviewing the AEDI data.

Source: Unpublished AEDI data, 2009 data collection

It is not possible to compare whether there has been improvement over time on this indicator, as the AEDI has only been administered once, in 2009. The AEDI will be administered again in 2012, to a different cohort of children, who will also be in their first year of full-time schooling.

In Term One 2011, more than 20,000 government school pre-primary students, including almost 1,700 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, participated in the first full implementation of the On-entry Assessment Program. The main purpose of the program is to enable teachers to collect information about the early literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge of each child early in the year to assist the planning and development of targeted learning programs that address the needs of each individual.

Catholic schools and many independent schools used the Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (PIPS) On-entry baseline assessment.

PIPS and the Department of Education's On-entry Assessment Program are both specifically focused on the early literacy and numeracy capabilities of students, and complement the information provided by the more broadly based, triennial Australian Early Development Index (AEDI). The Association of

Independent Schools of Western Australia (AISWA) have no common tool in place due to the structure of the association.

Systemic level actions [5, 6 and 7]

In Western Australia, a suite of initiatives and services were employed to support school readiness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

The Western Australian Local Champions Program is a collaborative initiative between the Department of Education and the AEDI Coordinating Committee, and seeks to facilitate an understanding of the AEDI and its potential to improve outcomes for children. In 2011, 14 government and non-government organisations worked with the Department of Education to deliver the program in communities with high levels of children's developmental vulnerability, as shown by the 2009 to 2010 AEDI results. The City of Armadale and the Save the Children Fund (Kimberley) were two 'Champions' that developed approaches specifically targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and children.

The integration of early childhood services through Children and Family Centres aims to improve the health, wellbeing, education and care of young children by supporting parents and improving

accessibility to services within the local community. The Halls Creek centre opened in 2011, with another four centres in the establishment phase and due to be open by 2014.

Catholic Education employed a data consultant to work with all available data sets, including the AEDI. This support is in addition to the work undertaken at local levels by principals and educators to ascertain the needs of the school community from AEDI data. An English as a Second Language or Dialect (ESLD) consultant was employed to coordinate assessment and strategies in the early years.

Universal Access was expanded in 2011 to include schools from government and non-government sectors in the Southwest and South Metropolitan Regions. This was in addition to schools that commenced Universal Access Schools in 2010 in the former districts of Swan, the Midwest, Kimberley, Pilbara and Goldfields, and was in accordance with the established schedule to prioritise communities with the greatest need. From the beginning of 2011, 325 government schools, 72 Catholic schools and 60 independent schools offered 15 hours per week of kindergarten. Ninety Focus schools provided 15 hours of kindergarten in 2011.

The on-entry literacy and numeracy assessments conducted in 2011 by the Department were subject to rigorous trialing and previewing to determine linguistic and cultural appropriateness. Advice on conducting the test with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was included in the handbook for teachers and administrators. On-entry was a required assessment for all students enrolled in government schools in Term One of pre-primary.

Most Catholic schools in Western Australia implement the Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (PIPS) as the on entry assessment for pre-primary, which is considered a highly reliable and valid instrument to assess early literacy and numeracy skills in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. PIPS assists in the identification of students at educational risk and enables teachers to implement early intervention strategies.

Local level actions [8]

In 2011, a range of approaches and strategies were identified and implemented by government Focus schools to address readiness for school. These included using on-entry data to tailor learning opportunities and intervention, liaising with parents on home-based literacy activities, developing young mothers programs to engage prospective parents and provide support

for school readiness, and providing early childhood programs for birth to four year-olds to provide early literacy and numeracy support.

Catholic Focus schools have provided additional programs for young children and their families. Four Focus schools offered playgroup services, while another four provided a program for three year-olds. Community based programs operate in many communities, as well as a mobile service in both the East and West Kimberley.

Independent Focus schools that are the sole provider of education in their communities, run programs for all pre-compulsory school aged children to ensure preparedness for the first year of full-time schooling.

Engagement and connections

Performance indicators

3. *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with personalised learning strategies in place.*
4. *Proportion of Focus schools with a school – community partnership agreement in place.*

Overall progress

A survey of 290 government schools in 2011 indicated that 84 per cent of schools with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students had personalised learning plans (PLPs) in place for their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school population. All students undertaking the Follow the Dream: Partnership for Success program in 2011 were on PLPs. Ten per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the Catholic sector had personalised learning strategies. Aboriginal Independent Community Schools in Western Australia are working towards personalised learning strategies for all students.

In 2011, of the 70 government Focus schools 25 (35.2 per cent) had a school–community partnership in place. Thirty-nine schools (54.9 per cent) had commenced the process, while six schools (8.4 per cent) had not started the process. One school has been closed. Seven (46.6 per cent) of the 15 Catholic Focus schools had a school–community partnership in place. Aboriginal Independent Community Schools in Western Australia all had school community partnerships in place.

Systemic level actions

The Department of Education supported and provided an annual allocation to assist the Department for Communities run the Best Start program to improve life opportunities and school readiness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged birth to five years, by enhancing their health, education, social and cultural development.

The Department of Education assisted schools to plan for and implement a range of evidence-based programs that related to mental health and wellbeing, including Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies, Youth Mental Health First Aid, the Positive Parenting Program, KidsMatter, and MindMatters.

Comprehensive planning within the Catholic Education Office for a targeted professional learning program in the development of a Master Class of teachers with ESLD specialised knowledge commenced in 2011. This capacity building strategy ensured that local expertise was available for all teaching staff at each school. All Catholic Focus schools published a school-based literacy and numeracy plan, and School Support consultants assisted in the implementation.

The Department established a Pregnant and Parenting Young People Working Party to assist schools support pregnant or parenting students. Advice was sought from a variety of stakeholders including: Centrelink; Curriculum Council (now known as the Western Australian School Curriculum and Standards Authority); Department of Communities; Department of Health; existing service providers; King Edward Memorial Hospital and registered training organisations. The draft document, *Guidelines for Supporting Pregnant and Parenting Young People to Continue with their Education* was the accumulation of this work.

School-aged students who are parenting receive educational support through Department programs, such as those offered through the Balga Teen Family Centre, Eyes Wide Open and Fast Track. The Schools of Isolated and Distance Education (SIDE) enrolls over 70 pregnant and parenting young people each year.

The Catholic Education Office does not have any specific programs in place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who are pregnant or parenting; however, each school supports these students in completing the schooling process.

A Department of Education review of the Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer (AIEO) Program was undertaken in 2010.

Following the review, a number of improvements were developed during 2011, including new program guidelines and online resources to assist schools to better work with and support AIEOs, and a professional learning program that provides AIEOs with access to Australian Qualifications Framework Certificate III, IV and Diploma level training.

In 2011, the Catholic Education Office trialled two pilot training programs for Aboriginal Teacher Assistants (ATAs) in the Kimberley. A process that defined the role of new ATAs and redefined the role of established ATAs in Catholic schools was developed. This enabled schools to map roles to school needs and determine professional learning requirements for the ATAs.

The establishment of school–community partnerships, in conjunction with the development of personalised learning strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, assisted in strengthening communication between schools, families and communities.

Local level actions [19, 20 and 21]

Focus schools in Western Australia are progressing steadily in the establishment of formal school–community partnerships (SCPs). The Department's Aboriginal Education teams in central office and regional areas, in conjunction with independent contractors assist the development of SCPs. Support is prioritised towards government Focus schools. Schools were provided with professional learning and a SCP Resource Kit, which contained practical planning tools, strategies and guidelines.

The Catholic Education Office (CEO) consultant working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander School Community Liaison Officers (SCLLO) in each of their assigned school communities assisted in the development of School Community Partnership Agreements (SCPA). In the independent school sector, all Aboriginal Independent Community Schools had SCPs in place in 2011.

In 2011, the Department engaged the expertise of school, regional and central office staff and external agencies to assist in facilitating family forums. The Department provided funding to the What Works and Dare to Lead programs to provide support to government Focus schools. Parent forums were developed through the Parents and Friends Association in the Catholic sector.

The Western Australia Aboriginal Education and Training Council actively supported parents and community members by conducting capacity building forums for all sectors. The forums contributed to the development of partnership agreements.

The Department has a phased implementation process for the development of personalised learning plans for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Focus schools were encouraged to implement personalised learning strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in consultation with families, teachers, AIEOs and other appropriate service providers.

The Catholic sector provided career development coaching workshops for teachers and is currently developing a personalised learning plan research tour for 2012, in order to develop skill levels in this area. Students undertaking the Follow the Dream: Partnerships for Success program in 2011 were on personalised learning plans which required family support in order to work effectively.

Attendance

Performance indicators

- Attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in schools.
- Enrolment to population ratio of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians compared to other Australians.
- Retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
- Grade progression ratios for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Attendance rates

Table WA3: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, by sector, 2011 (per cent)

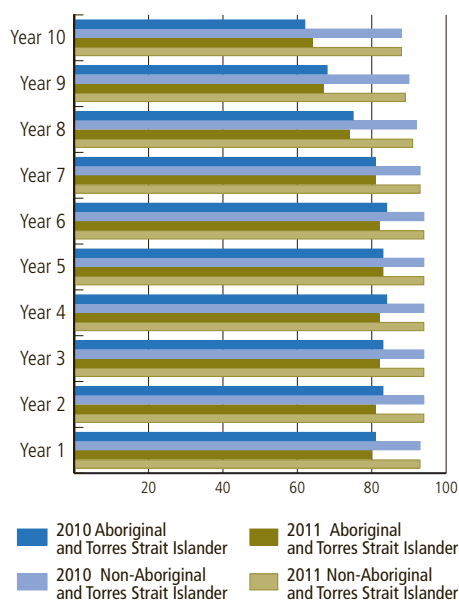
	Year level										Ungraded	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Prim.	Sec.
Government												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	80	81	82	82	83	82	81	74	67	64	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93	94	94	94	94	94	93	91	89	88	n/a	n/a
Total	92	93	93	93	93	93	92	90	87	86	n/a	n/a
Catholic												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	74	74	81	78	76	82	80	82	78	85	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	94	94	95	94	95	94	94	94	n/a	n/a
Total	93	93	94	94	94	94	95	94	94	94	n/a	n/a
Independent												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	83	80	82	84	80	85	85	84	78	74	n/a	33
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93	94	95	94	95	95	95	94	93	93	92	36
Total	93	94	94	94	95	94	95	94	93	93	92	35

Note: Definitions and methodologies used by jurisdictions and sectors to collect attendance data are not uniform. As such, direct comparisons of attendance rates between jurisdictions and sectors cannot currently be made. Nor can attendance data for 2011 be aggregated or averaged at the national or State/Territory level. Variations in methodology between jurisdictions are described in the explanatory notes for the 2011 attendance data contained in the *National Report on Schooling in Australia 2011*.

n/a not available

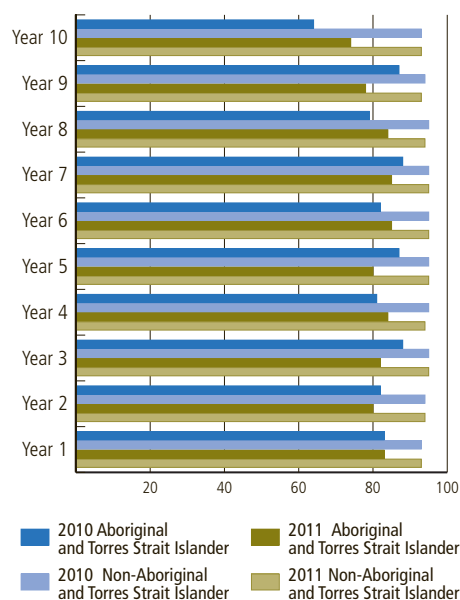
Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished)

Figure WA2.1: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, government sector, 2010–2011 (per cent)



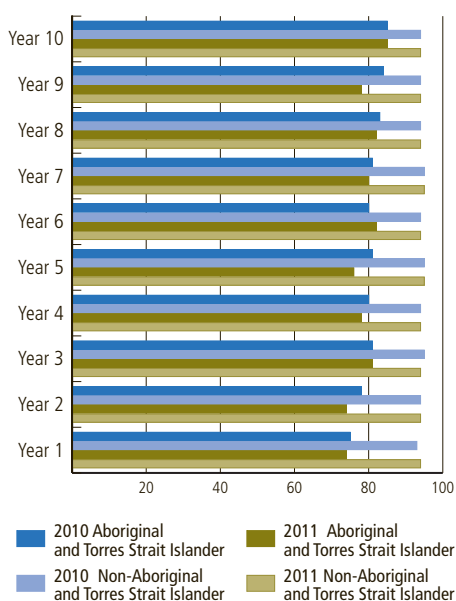
Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished).

Figure WA2.3: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, Independent sector, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished).

Figure WA2.2: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, Catholic sector, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011 (unpublished).

Overall progress

In 2011, attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were lower than those of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across all ages and sectors. There was also a slight decline in the attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, evident in most year levels and across government and non-government schools.

Between 2010 and 2011, the attendance rate gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students decreased in Years 6 and 10 by two percentage points or more (in at least two of the three school sectors) but increased in Years 2, 4, 5 and 9. The gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 2011 was at least nine percentage points in every year level and sector.

Government Focus schools employed an array of strategies to improve attendance in 2011, including employment of Attendance Officers to monitor and improve attendance;

the development of individual attendance plans and other case management approaches; and working closely with families and communities (for example, home visits). Other strategies included: the establishment of incentives, rewards programs and special events; provision of school bus services; increasing awareness of attendance through newsletters, newspapers and interviews with parents; and the provision of direct support related to attendance and participation for families of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Planning is underway for the appointment in 2012 of a Coordinating Consultant to coordinate all requirements for Focus schools in the Catholic system.

Enrolment to population ratio

For 2011, school participation rates have not been published by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status due to concerns with the quality of the indicator. Specifically, the rates for most States and Territories exceeds 100 per cent, primarily as a result of modal differences in the data sources. The denominator is sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Estimated Resident Population series, itself drawn from the Population Census, while the numerator is sourced from the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC). The Australian Bureau of Statistics is working to provide a substitute measure.

Apparent retention rates

In 2011, there was an almost nine percentage point improvement in the Year 8 to Year 10 apparent retention rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students compared to 2010. As a result, the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was only 2.6 percentage points.

The Year 8 to Year 12 apparent retention rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was 2.6 percentage points lower than it was in 2010. The gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students is still around 40 percentage points.

The Year 8 to Year 10 apparent retention rate for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students exceeded 100 per cent in both

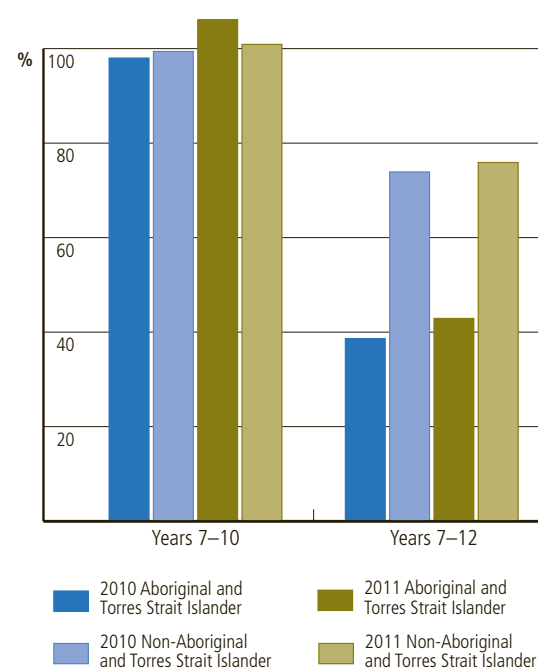
2010 and 2011 because the Year 10 non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student populations in those years were larger than the corresponding Year 8 populations two years earlier.

Table WA4: Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, from Year 8 to Year 10 and Year 8 to Year 12, 2011

	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Year 8– Year 10	99.6	100.9
Year 8 – Year 12	40.3	75.9

Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia, 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0)

Figure WA3: Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, from Year 8 to Year 10 and Year 8 to Year 12, 2011 (per cent)



Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia, 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0)

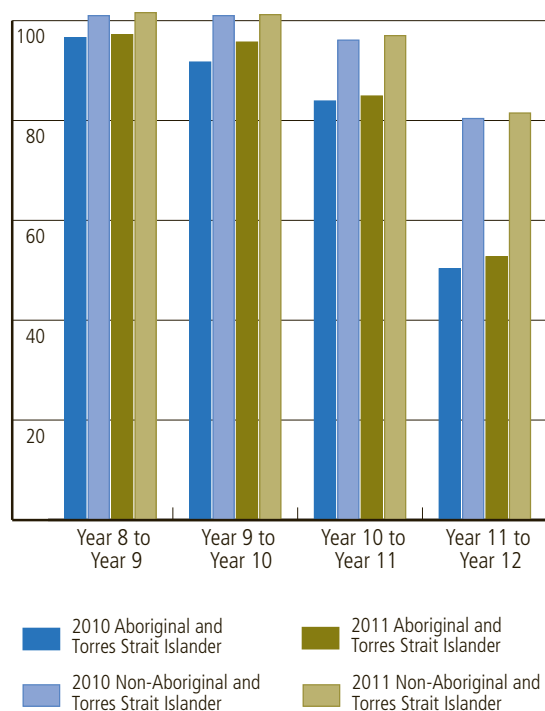
Apparent grade progression ratios

Table WA5: Apparent grade progression ratios of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, Western Australia, 2011 (per cent)

	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Year 8 to Year 9	97.2	101.6
Year 9 to Year 10	95.7	101.2
Year 10 to Year 11	84.9	97.0
Year 11 to Year 12	52.7	81.5

Source: ABS, *Schools Australia, 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0)

Figure WA4: Apparent grade progression ratios of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, Western Australia, 2010 and 2011 (per cent)



Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia, 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0)

In 2011, there were slight improvements in the apparent grade progression rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in every category in 2011. The improvement was largest for Year 9 to Year 10 (4 percentage points) and Year 11 to Year 12 (2 percentage points).

As a result, the gap in apparent grade progression rates between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students for Year 9 to Year 10 dropped by almost 4 percentage points to under 6 percentage points. The gap for the Year 11 to Year 12 apparent progression rates also reduced slightly, but is still the largest at almost 29 percentage points.

Some rates for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were higher than 100 per cent because the size of the Year 9 and Year 10 populations in 2010 and 2011 were larger than the corresponding population in Year 8 and 9 of the preceding year.

Systemic level actions [25]

Improving school attendance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students is a key priority for the government sector. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are one of five key target groups identified for support through the Department of Education's evidence-based Better Attendance: Brighter Futures Strategy, which was launched in 2010. Improving attendance is also one of the six domains framing the *Aboriginal Education Plan for WA Public Schools 2011–2014*.

In the Catholic sector, the MAZE school attendance database has been installed in all Kimberley schools, enabling absentee information to be fed through to the Central Schools System.

The Tri-Border Attendance Strategy has established a data system, the Central Schools System (CSS) that enables the sharing of attendance, enrolment and learning information across education sectors (government, Catholic and independent), and across the State borders of South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory, in order to identify and address the issue of absenteeism and significant mobility amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The CSS became fully operational at the beginning of April 2011.

Local level actions [26]

In 2011, 90 per cent of government Focus schools indicated progress in developing an evidence-based attendance strategy, in consultation with parents and their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, with 65 per cent rating their progress

between fair and excellent. In addition, 92 per cent of schools indicated progress in improving attendance and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, with 63 per cent rating their progress as between fair and excellent.

Literacy and numeracy

Performance indicators

9. *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in NAPLAN testing.*

10. *Participation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in NAPLAN.*

Overall progress

The 2011, NAPLAN results consolidated and further built on the significant improvement experienced by Western Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 2009 and 2010, particularly in Years 3 and 7. For example, there was significant improvement between 2010 and 2011 in the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standards in Year 3 numeracy and Year 9 reading.

The gap decreased between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in reading and numeracy for every year group except Year 7 numeracy (no change). Year 9 reading had the largest reduction in gap (8 percentage points), while the gap reduced by about four percentage points in Year 3, 5 and 9 numeracy.

While improvements have been made in many areas in recent years, they have been experienced by both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. As a result, the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students continues to be substantial for all tests, both in Western Australia and nationally.

Systemic level actions [30]

In Western Australia, improving Standard Australian English literacy and numeracy outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students is a priority for all sectors. Schools and systems

continue to identify and implement effective approaches to support student proficiency.

The Department of Education's Aboriginal Early Childhood Initiative provided funding to support teachers become language leaders in schools and to strengthen the capacity of the Statewide Speech and Language Service. This funding was also used to guarantee assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children needing to receive speech and language support and develop online K-1 year level teaching and learning programs to support teachers in their efforts to improve the literacy and numeracy skills.

The number of schools receiving full-time equivalent (FTE) staff to develop speech and language leaders rose from 25 in 2010, to 28 in 2011, and included 12 positions in Focus schools.

In 2011, the Aboriginal Language Speaking Students (ALSS) Program recognised the unique English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EALD) needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students entering compulsory schooling for the first time by: promoting the implementation of quality EALD learning and teaching programs; the ongoing monitoring of student improvement against the ESL/ESD Progress Map; developing effective partnerships with the community; and the application of whole-school two-way methodologies. In 2011, the ALSS supported 603 students in 59 schools, compared to 507 students in 58 schools during 2010.

In the Catholic sector, teachers in the Kimberley were provided with information and resources to work towards the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) requirements, which included preparation for English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EALD). Schools were provided with a resource package to allow them to cater for the secondary students. This project was supported by School Support Consultants and Curriculum Consultants to develop secondary programs for students.

In the independent sector, the Aboriginal Independent Community Schools (AICS) have continued the development of the AICS Numeracy Strategy, a systematic, developmental strategy designed to increase student numeracy skills as they progress through the years of schooling. The strategy includes an online portal that has a data collection facility, diagnostic assessment tool, resources and activities. Once complete, the accompanying Literacy Portal will also provide a way of gathering and analysing data allowing schools to measure

student progress and identify gaps in student learning. The portal also includes lesson strategies, resources and training packages.

Local level actions [31 and 32]

A 2011 survey of government sector Focus schools indicated that all schools had established whole-school approaches to the teaching of literacy and numeracy. All government sector Focus schools were encouraged to use the ESL/ESD Progress Map for monitoring, assessing and planning for the English language proficiency of EAL/D (English as an Additional Language or Dialect) students.

The Closing the Gap Literacy and English as a Second Language (ESL) in the Early Years project aims to improve the language and literacy outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students whose first language or dialect is not Standard Australian English. Staff in Focus schools, including para-professionals, will have the opportunity to participate in the project through access to professional learning in 2012. School-based facilitators (Key Teachers) will be trained to deliver the modified South Australian Department of Education and Child Development's professional learning course, English as a Second Language (ESL) in the Mainstream for the Early Learner.

A trial in 2011 of the ESL in the Mainstream for the Early Learner course was conducted with two government Focus primary schools, Bluff Point Primary School and Rangeway Primary School. The trial of the modified course and associated teacher growth measure provided valuable information and feedback on essential adjustments required before broader access to all Focus schools is offered in 2012.

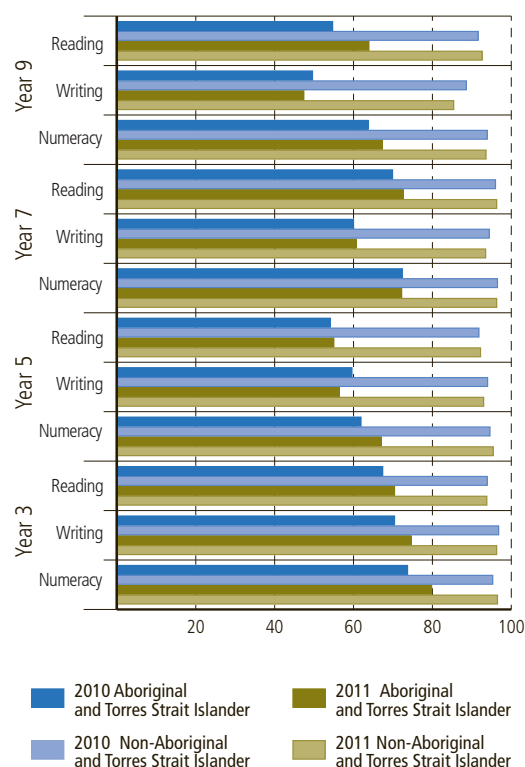
Standardised system data will be collected and analysed to measure student progress. Students will be assessed on the Department's ESL/ESD Progress Map before, during and after the professional learning.

The cross-sectoral Kimberley Success Zone (KSZ) project fosters partnerships between the three education sectors (government, Catholic and independent) across the Kimberley in order to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in every school in the region. The KSZ cross-sectoral forums provided opportunities for educators from each sector to discuss and share practices, ideas and resources. Through KSZ, a number of professional learning opportunities have been brokered, including the First Steps Reading and First Steps Writing programs.

In 2011, Reading Recovery in the Kimberley¹ delivered intensive training to teachers working with 13 schools and 15 teachers. A total of 105 students across the three sectors accessed Reading Recovery. The Kimberley Reading Recovery training model had a positive impact on literacy teaching through: developing teacher knowledge of effective practices to support students in need of early literacy intervention; raising the achievement levels of students participating in the intervention; and supporting teachers and students beyond the intervention as the Reading Recovery teacher is considered to be a whole-school resource.

NAPLAN outcomes

Figure WA5: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Note: A new scale was introduced for writing in 2011. With the break in the time series, the persuasive writing results for 2011 should not be directly compared to the narrative writing results from previous years.

Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished) *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*, ACARA, Sydney.

Table WA6: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, 2010–2011 (per cent)

	2010				2011			
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Gap	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Confidence Intervals	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Gap	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Confidence Intervals
Year 3								
Reading	67.4	93.9	26.5	± 3.5	70.4	93.8	23.4	± 3.0
Writing	70.4	96.8	26.4	± 3.4	74.6	96.3	21.7	± 3.4
Numeracy	73.7	95.3	21.6	± 3.0	79.8	96.5	16.7	± 2.5
Year 5								
Reading	54.1	91.8	37.7	± 3.8	55.0	92.2	37.2	± 3.6
Writing	59.6	94.0	34.4	± 4.1	56.4	93.0	36.6	± 4.0
Numeracy	61.9	94.6	32.7	± 4.3	67.0	95.4	28.4	± 3.5
Year 7								
Reading	69.9	96.0	26.1	± 3.8	72.6	96.3	23.7	± 3.4
Writing	60.0	94.4	34.4	± 4.2	60.7	93.5	32.8	± 4.1
Numeracy	72.4	96.5	24.1	± 3.9	72.2	96.3	24.1	± 3.6
Year 9								
Reading	54.7	91.6	36.9	± 4.6	63.9	92.6	28.7	± 4.6
Writing	49.6	88.6	39.0	± 1.3	47.4	85.4	38.0	± 5.2
Numeracy	63.7	93.9	30.2	± 4.6	67.3	93.6	26.3	± 5.1

Notes:

- A new scale was introduced for writing in 2011. With the break in the time series, the persuasive writing results for 2011 should not be directly compared to the narrative writing results from previous years.
- The 95 per cent confidence intervals for 2010 and 2011 in this table are within year and specifically for Western Australia. Different confidence intervals apply to the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
- Exempt students were not assessed and are deemed not to have met the national minimum standard.

Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished) *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*, ACARA, Sydney.

2011 NAPLAN data by geolocation

Table WA7: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy geolocation summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, 2011 (per cent)

Geolocation	Western Australia		Australia	
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Reading				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	77.3	94.2	84.2	95.2
Provincial	75.6	92.8	81.3	93.9
Remote	64.8	91.5	67.3	92.1
Very Remote	58.6	90.6	45.3	90.2
Year 5				
Metropolitan	69.0	92.9	76.7	93.4
Provincial	65.3	90.7	73.4	91.6
Remote	47.1	90.6	49.4	89.7
Very Remote	32.3	84.9	26.4	86.6
Year 7				
Metropolitan	82.6	96.5	85.0	95.9
Provincial	80.3	96.1	81.8	95.3
Remote	71.5	95.9	63.4	95.3
Very Remote	50.0	92.5	42.5	93.2
Year 9				
Metropolitan	73.1	93.0	78.4	93.7
Provincial	66.9	91.7	75.0	93.0
Remote	57.2	88.7	54.6	91.5
Very Remote	41.7	86.8	29.3	89.5
Writing				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	84.2	96.5	88.1	96.4
Provincial	82.7	96.1	85.9	95.8
Remote	67.9	94.8	70.0	94.6
Very Remote	56.9	93.5	46.0	93.3
Year 5				
Metropolitan	68.9	93.9	79.8	94.6
Provincial	68.9	90.9	75.9	92.1
Remote	48.1	90.9	50.7	90.5
Very Remote	34.2	85.1	28.4	88.1
Year 7				
Metropolitan	72.6	94.0	77.2	93.5
Provincial	69.4	92.6	71.1	90.1
Remote	57.7	92.1	47.4	90.2
Very Remote	35.6	87.2	28.4	87.6
Year 9				
Metropolitan	57.1	86.7	63.4	88.0
Provincial	45.2	82.0	55.0	82.0
Remote	40.1	76.6	33.8	78.6
Very Remote	33.3	73.8	20.6	78.2
Numeracy				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	85.3	96.7	88.6	96.5
Provincial	84.5	96.2	87.2	96.0
Remote	75.3	95.4	77.0	95.7
Very Remote	69.9	93.2	63.3	94.9
Year 5				
Metropolitan	79.5	95.7	83.8	95.7
Provincial	75.4	94.8	80.6	94.8
Remote	63.1	94.6	62.8	94.5
Very Remote	45.7	91.1	42.4	92.4
Year 7				
Metropolitan	83.2	96.5	84.5	95.7
Provincial	82.0	96.2	81.3	95.1
Remote	70.4	95.7	61.7	94.9
Very Remote	46.5	91.9	41.6	93.4
Year 9				
Metropolitan	74.3	93.9	78.4	94.4
Provincial	71.6	93.3	73.9	93.4
Remote	64.7	90.0	58.9	91.9
Very Remote	45.1	84.4	33.5	90.3

- a) Exempt students were not assessed and are deemed not to have met the national minimum standard.
- b) Analysis of differences across jurisdictions or over time requires consideration of relevant confidence intervals. Different confidence intervals are relevant to different analyses.
- c) The method used to identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students varies between jurisdictions.

Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished) *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*, ACARA, Sydney.

2011 NAPLAN data by geolocation

Consistent with results nationally and in 2010, the NAPLAN results for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students tended to decrease as remoteness increased. The gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students also tended to increase with greater geographical remoteness, a trend that was also evident nationally.

2011 NAPLAN data and 2011 progress points for Western Australia

One of the COAG 'Closing the Gap' targets is to halve the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade. To monitor achievement of this COAG target by 2018, progress points for each State and Territory were developed. The progress points for Western Australia are provided in Table WA8.

Western Australia met its 2011 targets for reading in Years 3, 5 and 7, and for numeracy in Years 3 and 5. This represents a considerable improvement, given that Western Australia did not reach any of its numeracy targets in 2010. In addition, there has been a reduction in the target shortfall in many of the areas where Western Australia did not reach its 2011 target. For example, the target shortfall for Year 9 reading has decreased from 8.7 percentage points in 2010, to 0.4 percentage points in

2011, and the target shortfall for Year 9 numeracy has decreased from 3.1 to 0.2 percentage points in 2011.

NAPLAN participation

In 2011, NAPLAN participation rates for Western Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were below the national average for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students for every year level and assessment. The difference in NAPLAN participation rates between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Western Australia ranged from 10.9 percentage points (Year 3 writing) to 25.7 (Year 9 reading). The gap in 2010 ranged from 8.7 percentage points (Year 3 writing) to 21.0 (Year 9 reading).

Leadership, quality teaching and workforce development

Performance indicators

11. Number of professional development hours on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and cultural and linguistic competence training undertaken by principals and teachers.
12. Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals, teachers and education workers (AIEWs and equivalents).
13. Average length of service of principals and teachers in hard-to-staff schools with high enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Table WA8: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy progress points for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, 2008–2011, (per cent)

Year	Reading				Writing				Numeracy			
	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9
2008	57.3	51.8	63.4	62.8	72.0	59.2	59.9	49.9	75.5	61.6	74.2	66.2
2009	57.5	52.0	63.6	63.0	72.1	59.4	60.1	50.1	75.6	61.8	74.3	66.3
2010	58.0	52.6	64.1	63.4	72.5	59.9	60.6	50.7	75.9	62.3	74.7	66.8
2011	58.9	53.7	64.9	64.3	73.2	60.8	61.4	51.7	76.5	63.1	75.2	67.5
2018	75.4	72.8	79.8	79.0	85.0	77.1	76.9	69.8	86.2	78.3	85.8	80.8

Note: A new scale was introduced for writing in 2011. With the break in the time series, the persuasive writing results for 2011 should not be directly compared to the narrative writing results from previous year. The 2018 target was based on the previous narrative writing assessment, not persuasive writing.

Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished) *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*, ACARA, Sydney

Table WA9: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, exemptions, absences/withdrawals and assessed students, in Western Australia and Australia, 2011 (per cent)

	Year 3		Year 5		Year 7		Year 9	
	WA	Aust.	WA	Aust.	WA	Aust.	WA	Aust.
Reading								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	85.0	90.1	85.8	90.8	83.5	88.8	69.6	79.0
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	96.2	96.2	96.8	96.7	96.7	96.5	95.3	93.7
Writing								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	85.4	89.9	85.1	90.7	83.4	89.0	70.2	79.4
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	96.3	96.1	96.8	96.6	96.7	96.6	95.6	94.1
Numeracy								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	84.2	89.0	83.6	89.7	82.5	87.6	69.5	78.0
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	96.1	95.9	96.5	96.3	96.5	96.2	95.0	93.2

Notes:

- Participation rates are calculated on the basis of all assessed and exempt students as a percentage of the total number of students in the relevant year level reported by schools, which includes those absent and withdrawn.
- The method used to identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students varies between jurisdictions.

Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished), *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*, ACARA, Sydney.

Overall progress

The Department of Education does not centrally collect data on professional development; however, the Department is committed to providing a culturally supportive environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students through the continuation of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness Program.

During 2011, principals and teachers within the Catholic education sector undertook a total of 2,900 hours of professional development. The Association of Independent Schools Western Australia (AISWA) does not collect this data.

The Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia (AISWA) have advised that they have no data to contribute for this performance indicator.

The AISWA have indicated that the average length of service by school principals in independent schools has increased significantly over the past few years.

Systemic level actions [41 and 42]

The Department of Education encourages all employees to participate in cultural awareness training programs. Coordinators of Aboriginal Education (CAE) and Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers (AIEOs) undertake a training program to develop regional-specific cultural awareness packages based on the Western Australian Aboriginal Education and Training Council cultural awareness program, *Our Story*. On completion of the training, CAE and AIEOs facilitate the delivery of cultural awareness to staff across schools in their regions.

In 2011, the Department provided professional learning to increase teachers' understanding and competencies in teaching students with English as a Second Language (ESL). This included, but was not limited to, the Literacy and ESL in the Early Years project.

Table WA10: Number and Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff^(a) in the Western Australian government sector, 2011

Staff	Number	FTE
Principals	23	n/a
Teachers	146	n/a
Education Workers (AIEO)	650	416.76 ^(b)
Total	819	

Notes:

n/a not applicable

a) Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff are those who identify themselves to be of Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander origin.

b) 2011 AIEO allocation, as of February 2011 Census.

Source: Western Australia Department of Education, 2011

Table WA11: Number and Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff^(a) in the Western Australian Catholic education sector, 2011

Staff	Number	FTE
Principals	0	n/a
Teachers	26	n/a
Education Workers (AIEO)	131	86.32
Total	157	

Notes:

n/a not applicable

a) Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff are those who identify themselves to be of Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander origin.

Source: Western Australia Catholic Education Office, 2011

Table WA12: Average length of service of principals and teachers in Western Australian Department of Education Focus schools, 2011

Department of Education staff	Average length of service (years)
Principals	2.16
Teachers	2.98

Source: Western Australia Department of Education, 2011

Table WA13: Average length of service of principals and teachers in Western Australian government Focus schools, by education regions

Education region	Average length of service	
	Principals	Teachers
Goldfields	1.75	2.55
Kimberley	1.74	2.01
Mid-West	2.21	3.40
North Metro	2.73	5.02
Pilbara	2.28	2.07
Southwest	1.92	6.48
South Metro	3.55	4.47
Wheatbelt	2.59	4.93

Notes:

a) Current position entry date to calculate service has been used. Where the position entry date is prior to 4 September 1998 (Peoplesoft's historical date) this date becomes the start date for the calculation. This will affect 65 teaching staff who worked prior to 4 September 1998, and as a result, their total service will be understated and therefore, affect the overall average service.

b) Where a principal or teacher has worked in different positions within the school, e.g. principal, deputy principal, head of Department, head of learning area, etc., their service has been calculated in their current position only e.g. If a principal has worked at the school for 20 years and has only been the principal for three years, their service will be counted in the principal position only, ie, three years. This has the potential to affect the average service within the Focus schools where long-term teachers have recently shifted positions.

c) If there have been breaks in service or acting opportunities in the past but they have subsequently returned to the current position, these breaks have not been excluded.

Source: Western Australia Department of Education, 2011

Table WA14: Average length of service of principals and teachers in Catholic Focus schools, 2011

Catholic Education Office staff	Average length of service (years)
Principals	4.5 ^(a)
Teachers	2.22 ^(b)

Notes:

a) Principal appointment process data.

b) Kimberley Calling Data.

Source: Western Australia Catholic Education Office, 2011

Professional learning activities undertaken by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers and support staff covered a wide range of activities including attendance at conferences and workshops that were specific to the work undertaken in schools and the CEO system. They included cultural immersion programs, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies at a school and system level and Best Practice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Aboriginal Teaching Assistant (ATA) network meetings and Listservers were offered as an online professional learning tool when seeking advice and assistance from colleagues, and is ongoing. Listservers is an online tool for a group of educators, such as ATAs, to hit the 'One' button on the email system to communicate with all ATAs simultaneously.

In 2011, Aboriginal Independent Community School Leaders, Governing Body members and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers (AIEWs) all had opportunity to participate in professional learning at both regional and metropolitan conferences.

The Department of Education has a number of incentives to attract and retain staff in schools with a significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student population. The Department provides incentives for teachers and school leaders to work in the Remote Teaching Service (RTS). The development and planning for the Attracting Outstanding Principals trial occurred in 2011 and is due for implementation in 2012.

The National Alliance for Remote Indigenous Schools (NARIS) aims to create a high quality, committed and sustainable remote education workforce for over 170 remote schools. In Western Australia, all 33 schools in the Remote Teaching Service are included in the NARIS initiatives.

The independent school sector does not have a central body that oversees the hiring of principals and teachers.

Local level actions [43 and 44]

Within the Department of Education, the Dare To Lead program has provided professional learning for school leaders through its own networks, the Institute for Professional Learning and Western Australian Primary Principals' Association. In 2011, every government Focus school principal had the opportunity to access a Collegial School Snapshot and the Dare To Lead suite of professional services. By the end of 2011, 54.26 per cent of

government Focus schools had participated in a Collegial School Snapshot to lead improvements in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

In 2011, Catholic Education held forums in the Kimberley and metropolitan areas for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school administrators and teachers with the theme of 'What is Working' in teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Opportunities for principals to participate in leadership programs were made available through working with consultants.

In 2011, principals in Aboriginal Independent Community Schools participated in Leadership Development courses facilitated through the Low SES National Partnership.

The Department encouraged and supported schools to develop innovative approaches to education through a variety of strategies including: the extension of the number of Independent Government Schools; the establishment of Aboriginal Innovation Schools; School Innovation Grants and collaboration with the development of Family and Children Centres.

In the Catholic sector, one-to-one student tuition programs and homework centres were held after school in various locations across the State, with a nominated cohort of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

ESL programs were implemented across all schools in the Catholic sector. Blue Earth Foundation programs to increase students' physical activity were conducted in all Catholic schools across the north of Western Australia. Clontarf sporting programs linking academic and sporting programs were in place in a number of schools across the State.

Pathways to real post-school options

Performance indicators

14. *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20–24 who have attained Year 12 or equivalent or Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate II or above.*

Note: Although the performance indicator for this domain cites a national data source, there is no publicly available national level data for 2011.

Overall progress

Table WA15: The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to achieve a Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE), 2010–2011

	2010	2011
WACE Award – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	423	432
WACE Award – Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	20,373	20,669

Source: School Curriculum and Standards Authority, Western Australia

Table WA16: The number of vocational qualifications completed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, at AQF Certificate II and above, Western Australia, 2010–2011

	2010	2011
AQF Certificate II and Above – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	134	160
AQF Certificate II and Above – Non-Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander students	3,754	4,210

Source: School Curriculum and Standards Authority, Western Australia

In 2011, 432 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieved a Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE), and 160 full-time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Years 10, 11 or Year 12 achieved one or more Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate II, or above, level qualifications.

Systemic level actions [48, 49 and 50]

Participation Coordinators, employed by the Department of Education but servicing all Year 11 and 12 students and school leavers, worked with schools, Youth Connections and other

providers to broker transitions into further education, training or employment.

Follow the Dream: Partnerships for Success is a voluntary program that provides individualised after school tuition, case management and support to high achieving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary school students. In 2011, the program helped students maximise their results at school and achieve a successful transition into post-school university, training or employment opportunities.

Aboriginal Workforce Development Centres (AWDCs) have been established under the Training together – Working together Aboriginal Workforce Development Strategy. They provided locally responsive solutions in linking Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with employers for placement in meaningful and sustainable employment.

The National Partnership Youth Attainment and Transitions project is a joint partnership between the Western Australian Department of Training and Workforce Development; the Western Australian Office of Youth – Department of Communities; AWDCs; the Western Australian Department of Corrections; the AISWA, the Western Australian Department of Education and the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia. This partnership was instrumental in developing cluster arrangements for training to strengthen the relationship between schools and VET providers for post-school pathways for all students.

The Future Footprints program is an additional support structure for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from regional and remote areas of Western Australia attending residential schools in Perth. In 2011, Future Footprints supported students' engagement in education and enhanced their transition to and from school, to further education, employment or training.

The Department of Education employed a variety of initiatives to assist in the development of innovative uses of interactive technologies including: the iPad initiative; School Innovation Grants; Online Teaching and Learning system; Microsoft Partners in Learning program; Centra and the Department's portal to access high quality digital resources.

Through Learning and Teaching Network Days, teachers in the Catholic sector were encouraged to promote the use of web-based technologies and mobile devices in schools for learning and teaching.

Local level actions [51, 52, 53, 54 and 55]

Engagement Programs have a focus on increasing the participation and engagement of students who are at risk of disengaging from mainstream schooling, and are designed to provide flexible, clear pathways that respond to student needs within the context of their school and community. In 2011, participation consultants worked with Engagement and Transitions Managers to support schools to provide relevant learning experiences for all students.

The Ngalang Koondarm (Our Dreaming) program at Coodanup Community College was designed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students – particularly those seeking a TAFE pathway and/or who have been disengaged with schooling. The SHINE (Students Hairdressing Integrating Education) program at John Willcock College, Geraldton, developed a highly successful real-life workplace simulation to engage Year 9 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander female students.

Catholic Education schools offered programs to develop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' confidence by providing assistance in gaining basic skills to be 'work ready' for lifelong learning. Mentoring projects were developed and schools ran after-school literacy and numeracy tutoring programs to give young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students employment options.

The Aboriginal School-Based Training (ASBT) program consists of an institutional pathway for Year 10 students leading to either an institutional or a school based traineeship pathway in Years 11 and 12. The Certificates I and II pathway provides a transition program for those students still at school who are not yet 'work ready'; or students based in regional and remote areas whose access to employment-based training arrangements is limited.

Students have been able to include successfully completed units of competency towards their achievement of the Western Australian Certificate of Education. Under the ASBT – Traineeship Pathway, all commencing school-based trainees must be employed by group training organisations. Additional funding was available for extra mentoring for ASBT students

at 'high risk' of disengaging. These students were identified by the Department of Training and Workforce Development, in conjunction with the education sectors.

The case management for ASBT students was provided by additional mentoring support from the Group Training Organisation. The Group Training Organisations are contracted by the Department of Training and Workforce Development as part of the program, and were paid to provide this support as part of their contract with the Department of Training and Workforce Development. This mentoring support was done in partnership with the student's school.

Strong links were made with industry groups including ERTECH, Action Mining, ANZ, CBA AFL Sportsready, Cannington Police Station and BHP, and TAFE to assist students to become work ready.

The Department of Training and Workforce Development has five specific Aboriginal Workforce Development Centres across the State that work with school students to provide targeted career advice and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in their transitions post-school.

The Western Australian Guidelines for Career Development Services and Transition, developed in partnership with Western Australian education sectors, advocates access to career services for all students including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families to support informed career and study choices. In 2011, schools were supported by providing funding and professional development and network days to school-based practitioners assisting students in schools. Specialised programs were facilitated, e.g., Guiding Circles, The Real Game Series and Career Coaching Programs to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

The School Business Community Partnerships are funded by DEEWR. In 2011, the extent of their interaction with schools varied across the State.

Opportunities were offered to students in a Curriculum and Re-engagement (CARE) school through a link with the School Business Community Partnership to enter into school-based accredited training. This partnership was valuable in assisting students achieve a Western Australian Certificate of Education.

Good practice snapshots

School and community partnerships

The Department of Education in Western Australia actively supports the development of formal partnership agreements between government schools and their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Through the School and Community Partnerships project, agreements are being designed to enhance the achievement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents to have greater involvement in school decision making and the education of their children.

Aboriginal Education teams in the regions and staff from the Department of Education's Aboriginal Education Branch support schools and their communities to develop partnerships by providing practical information, resources and facilitating the negotiations. This support is prioritised towards Focus schools. Schools have been provided with an Aboriginal School and Community Partnerships Resource Kit, produced by the Department in 2009, which contains practical planning tools, strategies and guidelines. Managers of Aboriginal Education and consultants of Aboriginal Education hold workshops with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parent and community groups that contribute to the development of partnership agreements.

The Department has identified phases in the process of developing school and community partnerships that require community participation. Each phase involves sharing of information (such as attendance, literacy and numeracy data) and working with parents and community members to explore and raise their expectations of schools and school staff, and address barriers to education. Subsequent forums explore and undertake capacity building with parents to increase their capacity to be engaged in the school and community partnership process and to challenge school staff to engage parents in their children's education.

Following the development of a partnership agreement, schools, parents and community members develop an implementation plan. The implementation plans are developed in partnership

with school staff and the parent group. The implementation plans identify areas of responsibility, agreed timelines and actions required for school staff, parents, community and, where involved, external agencies.

Independent contractors, chosen by the school and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, have also been engaged and funded by the Department of Education to facilitate partnerships in 19 regional and remote government Focus schools in the Pilbara, Kimberley, Goldfields and Midwest regions in need of additional or specific support that cannot be provided within existing resources.

In consultation with the Department of Education, the Western Australia Aboriginal Education and Training Council have also been actively supporting parents and community members by conducting a series of capacity building workshops throughout Western Australia. These workshops have included topics such as: leadership; financial management; early childhood education; anger management; cultural awareness and cultural identity for parents; understanding NAPLAN; reading and homework help, and mental health. The Western Australia Aboriginal Education and Training Council's community capacity building forums help contribute to the development of partnership agreements.

The Aboriginal Innovation Schools in Western Australia are also developing school and community partnerships. The aim of the Aboriginal Innovation Schools initiative is to improve the learning outcomes and life chances of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in government schools. The Aboriginal Innovation Schools will develop new and innovative practices that focus on curriculum delivery, early childhood, attendance, transition between phases of schooling and pathways to post-school options. Extensive use of partnership approaches with families, community, business and support agencies underpins these strategies. Facilitators have been contracted to develop school and community partnership agreements with the six Aboriginal Innovation Schools. These facilitators will develop strong partnerships with families, community, agencies and business, based on a common vision and an overarching agreement.

Tri-Border Attendance Strategy

The Western Australian Department of Education manages the Tri-Border Attendance Strategy. The strategy was launched

in June 2008 and initiated to improve the enrolment and attendance of transient Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who move across State and Territory borders. It aims to address the issue of absenteeism and significant mobility amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and provide smoother transitions for students between schools. After three years of development and trials, the system was fully operational in April 2011.

The strategy involves the use of a data system, the Central Schools System (CSS) to enable the sharing of attendance, enrolment and learning information across government, Catholic and independent education sectors, and across the State borders of South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

The CSS has the ability to consolidate and merge 'real time' student information from all individual system and sector databases. Participating schools are able to view and monitor the attendance and enrolment histories of students enrolling in their schools, regardless of the State, Territory or school sector, in which they have previously been enrolled. This comprehensive sharing of 'live' data across sectors and jurisdictions is a first in Australia.

The student data is now starting to provide evidence of the realities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' mobility within and across States. The transience patterns of these students are now more visible and instructive for educators in closing performance gaps.

As of December 2011, the CSS has enrolment and attendance information for over 80,000 students across 278 Western Australian, South Australian and Northern Territory government, Catholic and independent schools as follows: Western Australia 91 (government sector, Goldfields Region 40, Kimberley Region 22, Pilbara Region 29; Catholic sector, 12; and in the independent sector, 6); Northern Territory (government sector, 155); and South Australia (government sector, 14).

The data gathered for the period February 2009 to December 2011 reveals that 2,968 of these students experience high levels of mobility. During this period:

- one student attended nine schools
- one student attended eight schools
- two students attended seven schools
- 21 students attended six schools

- 121 students attended five schools
- 552 students attended four schools
- 2,270 students attended three schools.

Students were identified as being enrolled in multiple schools across the three borders:

- 527 students were identified as being enrolled in schools in Western Australia and Northern Territory
- no students were identified as being enrolled in schools in Western Australia and South Australia
- 55 students were identified as being enrolled in schools in South Australia and Northern Territory
- 106 students were identified as being enrolled in both Kimberley Catholic and Western Australian government schools.

The Tri-Border Attendance Strategy helps education providers develop a better understanding of the complex factors influencing attendance and gather improved data on attendance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Schools are using the data for improved decisions and practices to support student learning. Strategies include developing common teaching and learning approaches across a number of schools and establishing 'mobility classes'.

The Tri-Border Attendance Strategy has received both national and international recognition for the successful application of technology that addresses significant educational challenges and has the greatest return on the financial investment. In December 2011, the strategy won the Australian Regional Winner and the Australian Regional People's Choice at the national Instructional Management Systems (IMS) Learning Impact Awards. In May 2012, it won a Silver Award at the International Learning Impact Awards in Toronto.

Reading Recovery in the Kimberley²

Reading Recovery is an early literacy intervention initiative, underpinned by the belief that expert, quality teachers are critical in supporting the learning needs of children who are falling behind their peers in literacy learning. Western Australian education cross-sectoral bodies are committed to working

together to provide high quality, strategic teacher professional development through the provision of Reading Recovery .In 2006, Patricia Bremner, a Kimberley Literacy Project teacher and Reading Recovery tutor, working at St Mary's College, Broome, and Janet Scull, a Lecturer in Language and Literacy Education at The University of Melbourne and Reading Recovery Trainer, undertook a research project to develop a remote Reading Recovery teacher-training model. In 2006, Reading Recovery began in the Kimberley, using the Bremner and Scull remote training model. From 2006, Reading Recovery in the Kimberley has continued to grow and reap the rewards of lifting the educational standards of students across 20 remote and isolated schools.

To date, the cross-sectoral implementation of Reading Recovery in the Kimberley has trained 25 teachers in 20 schools, and three of these teachers are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. These teachers have taught a total of 381 students, 328 of whom are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Two hundred and thirty one Year 1 and 2 students, who were identified as being at risk, have now become successful readers and writers.

In 2011, Reading Recovery in the Kimberley delivered intensive training to teachers working with 13 schools and 15 teachers. A total of 105 students across the three sectors accessed Reading Recovery .During 2011, 82 students received a complete series of lessons. Of these students, 60 became successful readers and writers, and the program was discontinued for them. These are the students who were identified by their teachers as being the lowest achievers in literacy after approximately one year at school. Twenty-two low-achieving students made some progress, but could not be considered as independent operators within the average group in their classrooms. These students were 'referred' for further evaluation and may be considered for other forms of longer-term support.

The Kimberley Reading Recovery training model has had a positive impact on literacy teaching in the following ways by:

- a) developing teacher knowledge of effective practices to support students in need of early literacy intervention
- b) raising the achievement levels of students participating in the intervention
- c) supporting teachers and students beyond the intervention as the Reading Recovery teacher is considered to be a whole-school resource.

Western Australian Aboriginal Education and Training Council's (WAAETC) feedback

The Western Australian Aboriginal Education and Training Council (WAAETC) was established in 1995 in response to recommendation 139 of the *Task Force on Aboriginal Social Justice* (1994). There are ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives on the Council, of whom six were endorsed by Cabinet in May 2009. In addition, the Council has an Ex-Officio membership made up of the heads of key education and training systems/sectors.

One of the key roles of the WAAETC is to facilitate the delivery of more effective education and training services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Western Australia through advising the relevant ministers on policies relating to education and training, and to coordinate the development and monitoring of the Aboriginal Education and Training Plan in Western Australia.

The *Western Australian Strategic Plan for Aboriginal Education and Training 2010 – 2015* is a high-order plan prepared by the WAAETC and endorsed by the State Government, through the Minister for Education and the Minister for Training and Workforce Development. This strategic plan is the one plan that focuses on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students that spans both education and training in Western Australia.

Reporting of progress on the Strategic Plan is another key function of the WAAETC, done through its Annual Implementation Report. The report provides the Western Australian Government with a comprehensive and authoritative overview of the educational and training outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

The priorities of the *Western Australian Strategic Plan for Aboriginal Education and Training 2011 – 2015* are aligned with the national *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010 – 2014* and include:

- Priority 1 – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages, Culture, Perspectives and History

- Priority 2 – Early Childhood Development and Readiness for Schooling
- Priority 3 – Enrolment, Attendance, Participation and Achievement
- Priority 4 – Quality Teaching and Strong Leadership
- Priority 5 – Community Capacity Building for Leadership and Engagement in Decision-Making
- Priority 6 – Training and Workforce Development for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

The WAAETC provides a valuable and independent voice in the education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. The strength of the WAAETC is its community base, through its membership, networks and other established relationships, and it provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a critical voice in the education of their children. The WAAETC ensures that effective consultation occurs with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities on matters concerning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. It provides strategic advice to State and Commonwealth agencies about the development of policies and programs that relate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

Readiness for school (National Actions 1–4)

In the Western Australian Aboriginal Education and Training Council's *2010 Annual Implementation Report*, reference is made to the alarming statistics that, on average, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children commence school at a level equivalent to two years behind their non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander counterparts. While there is reason to believe that some – albeit small – progress is being made, it is worth reiterating that:

'... unless Indigenous children have access to appropriate and high quality early childhood education the disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous educational outcomes will remain and continue to widen as Indigenous children progress through primary school.'

Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) (2006)
Australian Directions in Indigenous Education
 2005 – 2008, p.19.

The WAAETC shares the concerns of the Western Australian education systems and sectors about using the ERP and the Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education to calculate the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending a preschool program. The accuracy of the information is questioned by the WAAETC. Progress on the outcomes in this domain is evident in remote communities, as it is easily identifiable, and the WAAETC has more involvement with communities and their schools in these settings.

The lack of access to relevant comprehensive data, together with a small staffing component, means that the WAAETC does not have an accurate picture of what is happening in all schools, which makes input into the development of effective programs and meaningful progress reporting difficult. The WAAETC is also aware that there is some quality Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific research occurring in early childhood education in other States and Territories, and would like to be kept informed and consulted.

The WAAETC believes on-entry assessment needs to be inclusive of the cultural and linguistic knowledge and background of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to make a more accurate picture of these students.

Engagement and connections (National Actions 9–14)

The WAAETC is very supportive of the School and Community Educational Partnership Agreements, which schools with significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student populations are required to have in place by the end of 2010. It is disappointing to note that so few schools have implemented this national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education direction, and therefore the WAAETC understands the sensitivities many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have due to the constant rhetoric they hear in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

The WAAETC believes that School Community Partnership Agreements and Personalised Learning Plans are complementary and both strategies engage students and their parents/caregivers in the education process.

The WAAETC has facilitated over 115 workshops through its Parent and Community Engagement (PaCE) project. The PaCE project aims to contribute to the achievement of the overall

Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) targets of closing the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. It invests in strengthening the capacity of parents and community members through training forums and workshops designed specifically to develop the confidence of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, so that they can confidently engage in schools to bring about improvement in their children's education.

The WAAETC see the benefits of the PaCE program, and would like to see the funding for this program maintained and guaranteed on a long-term basis. It should be noted that the current funding model has significant proportions of PaCE funding going to non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations that are often not in touch with the local community.

The WAAETC commends the system and sectors on the work being done and the program related to mental health and wellbeing. Youth suicide and bullying are becoming more prevalent in our communities, so there is an acute demand to address this immediately.

There needs to be more cross-agency collaboration to better identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with disabilities and strengthen connections to help assist families of students, in terms of awareness of support available, and training in how best to support the education of children with special needs.

Attendance (National Actions 22–24)

The WAAETC believes that the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the learning program, along with high expectations and quality teaching, are crucial elements to improving student outcomes and closing the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student attendance and achievement. The WAAETC acknowledges that education systems and sectors are implementing a number of strategies to address those students who are chronic non-attendees.

A lot of emphasis is placed on the Tri-Border Attendance Project, and WAAETC would like to know what other projects are being implemented in order to address attendance and mobility of students across State and Territory borders.

Literacy and numeracy (National Actions 27–29)

The WAAETC notes with some disappointment that, whilst improvements have been made in recent years, the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students continues to be substantial for all tests, both in Western Australia and nationally.

Child and Family Centres (CFC) contribute to family literacy, and are an excellent incentive that have grown out of the concept of the Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services (MACS) and are progressing well. It would be positive to see CFCs expanded across the country, and also to have MACS expanded and enhanced to offer a similar suite of services directed at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities. Care should be taken to ensure these services are culturally welcoming and appropriate.

Whilst there is NAPLAN data provided, which shows improvement in a number of areas, the WAAETC would like to see performance targets stipulating specific training and professional development of teachers leading to students' accelerated achievement and competency in literacy and numeracy.

Leadership, quality teaching and workforce development (National Actions 33–40)

In order to close the current gap in teacher knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories, the WAAETC recommends that all pre-service teachers should undertake both mandatory and elective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies as part of their studies to qualify as teachers. Nearly all teachers will come into contact with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student and their family, and therefore need to be culturally competent.

The WAAETC were concerned about the low level ongoing training of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support staff, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officers (AIEOs) and Aboriginal Teacher Assistants (ATAs) in schools as they play a pivotal role in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in school. There needs to be ongoing coordinated training for these employees.

Pathways to real post-school options (National Actions 45–47)

The WAAETC believes that the cornerstone of advocacy is the acknowledgement that some individuals or groups in society require, from time to time, representation of their views and their interests by another agency. This function is a necessary recognition of the imbalance of power between an institution and an individual, made more intense and

problematic when individuals or groups, from culturally different backgrounds to those who design and administer the intuitions/ systems, attempt to interface with them to secure their own needs. It is imperative that educational and training providers and/or institutions engage more in advocacy in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, training and employment, and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are given appropriate support and counselling in their pursuit of post-school options.

Footnotes

1. The Kimberley Reading Recovery Advisory Committee acknowledges St Mary's College Broome, six Catholic schools and the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia for the initial trial of Reading Recovery in the Kimberley. The Committee acknowledges the Kimberley Land Council, Mary Ward International Australia, the Western Australian Department of Education and Training, the Aboriginal Independent Community Schools Support Unit, the University of Melbourne and the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) for their advocacy and support in extending the program beyond trial schools and across education sectors.
2. *ibid*

Focus school information

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments Semester 2	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments Semester 2	Lit/Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
Ashfield Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	95	33	X		
Baler Primary School	Gov.	Remote	603	191	X		
Bayulu Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	136	135		X	
Beachlands Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	157	90		X	
Bluff Point Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	451	174		X	
Boulder Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	379	138	X		
Broome Primary School	Gov.	Remote	395	200		X	
Broome Senior High School	Gov.	Remote	511	205		X	
Burringurrah Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	40	38		X	
Cable Beach Primary School	Gov.	Remote	472	248		X	
Carey Park Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	373	56		X	
Carnarvon Primary School	Gov.	Remote	163	137		X	
Carnarvon Senior High School	Gov.	Remote	203	98		X	
Cassia Primary School	Gov.	Remote	294	90	X		
Coolbellup Community School	Gov.	Metropolitan	229	47		X	
Cosmo Newberry Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	11	11			
Dawul Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	32	32		X	
Derby District High School	Gov.	Very Remote	556	445		X	
Djugerari Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	20	20		X	
East Carnarvon Primary School	Gov.	Remote	333	174		X	
East Kalgoorlie Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	108	107		X	
East Kenwick Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	422	71	X		
Fitzroy Valley District High School	Gov.	Very Remote	232	216		X	X
Halls Creek District High School	Gov.	Very Remote	405	388		X	X
Jigalong Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	100	94		X	
Jungdranung Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	12	12		X	
Kalumburu Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	136	136		X	
Kununurra District High School	Gov.	Very Remote	875	440		X	
La Grange Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	193	188		X	
Laverton School	Gov.	Very Remote	80	56		X	
Leonora District High School	Gov.	Remote	158	102		X	
Looma Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	111	109		X	
Maidens Park (formerly Withers) Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	229	41		X	
Marble Bar Primary School	Gov.	Very Remote	49	37		X	
Medina Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	161	74		X	
Meekatharra District High School	Gov.	Very Remote	155	134		X	
Midvale Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	321	80		X	

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments Semester 2	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments Semester 2	Lit/Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
Moorditj Noongar Community College	Gov.	Metropolitan	113	112		X	
Mount Magnet District High School	Gov.	Very Remote	128	96		X	
Mullewa District High School	Gov.	Remote	94	89		X	
Muludja Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	36	36		X	
Newman Primary School	Gov.	Very Remote	324	106			
Newman Senior High School	Gov.	Very Remote	234	52			
Ngalapita Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	25	25		X	
Norseman District High School	Gov.	Remote	151	55		X	
Northampton District High School	Gov.	Provincial	116	31		X	
Nullagine Primary School	Gov.	Very Remote	49	43		X	
Nulsen Primary School	Gov.	Remote	339	127	X		
One Arm Point Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	114	106		X	X
Onslow Primary School	Gov.	Very Remote	134	75		X	
Pia Wadjarra Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	12	12		X	
Port Hedland Primary School	Gov.	Remote	412	61			
Rangeway Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	495	319		X	
Roebourne District High School	Gov.	Remote	195	192		X	
South Hedland Primary School	Gov.	Remote	246	219	X		
South Newman Primary School	Gov.	Very Remote	488	84	X		
Southwell Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	95	40		X	
The Ngaanyatjarra Lands School#	Gov.	Very Remote	310	307		X	
Tjuntjuntjara Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	40	37		X	
Tranby Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	147	70	X		
Wananami Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	43	43		X	
Wangkatjungka Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	76	76		X	
West Northam Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	156	87		X	
Wickham Primary School	Gov.	Remote	336	128			
Wilson Park Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	107	40		X	
Wiluna Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	72	60		X	
Wyndham District High School	Gov.	Very Remote	169	116		X	
Yalgoo Primary School	Gov.	Very Remote	35	35		X	
Yintarri Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	7	7			
Yulga Jinna Remote Community School	Gov.	Very Remote	20	20		X	
Birlirr Ngawiyiwu Catholic School	Cath.	Very Remote	42	42		X	
Christ The King Catholic School (Formerly Djarindijin Lombadina Catholic School)	Cath.	Very Remote	88	84	X	X	
Holy Rosary School	Cath.	Very Remote	213	117	X	X	
John Pujajangka Piyirn School	Cath.	Very Remote	43	43		X	X

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments Semester 2	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments Semester 2	Lit/Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
Kururrungku Catholic Education Centre	Cath.	Very Remote	64	64		X	X
Lurnpa Catholic School	Cath.	Very Remote	112	112		X	X
Ngalangangpum School	Cath.	Very Remote	120	120		X	
Sacred Heart School	Cath.	Very Remote	116	110	X	X	
St Brigid's School	Cath.	Metropolitan	472	27			
St John's School	Cath.	Provincial	224	50		X	
St Joseph's School (Wyndham)	Cath.	Very Remote	81	73		X	
St Joseph's School (Kununurra)	Cath.	Very Remote	169	86		X	
St Joseph's School (Moora)	Cath.	Provincial	165	51	X	X	
St Mary's School	Cath.	Remote	608	275	X	X	
Warlawurru Catholic School	Cath.	Very Remote	69	60		X	
Christian Aboriginal Parent-Directed School: Coolgardie	Ind.	Remote	101	92		X	
Christian Aboriginal Parent-Directed School: Kurrawang Community School	Ind.	Remote	17	17		X	
Christian Aboriginal Parent-Directed School: Wongutha	Ind.	Provincial	72	72		X	
Karalundi Aboriginal Education Centre	Ind.	Very Remote	47	44		X	
Kulkarriya Community School	Ind.	Very Remote	65	65		X	
Nyikina Mangala Community School	Ind.	Very Remote	41	41		X	
Purnululu Independent Community Aboriginal School	Ind.	Very Remote	23	23		X	
Rawa Community School	Ind.	Very Remote	49	49		X	
Strelley Community School	Ind.	Very Remote	81	81		X	
Wulungarra Community School	Ind.	Very Remote	26	26		X	
Yakanarra Community School	Ind.	Very Remote	67	67		X	
Yiyili Aboriginal Community School	Ind.	Very Remote	68	68		X	

Notes:

- In 2011, The Ngaanyatjarra Lands Schools comprises the following campuses: Warakurna Remote Community School; Blackstone Remote Community School; Jamieson Remote Community School; Wingellina Remote Community School; Kiwirrkurra Remote Community School; Wanarn Remote Community School; Warburton Ranges Remote Community School; Tjirrkari Remote Community School and Tjukurla Remote Community School. Cosmo Newberry Remote Community School was a campus of the Ngaanyatjarra Lands Schools in 2010, but became a campus of Laverton School from 2011.
- Christ The King Catholic School was previously called Djarindijin Lombadina Catholic School.

Source: Western Australia Department of Education, School Census Collection: August 2011

Chapter 9

South Australia report on activities and outcomes

Introduction

South Australia is the southern, central State on the mainland of Australia. It has an area of 983,482 square kilometres and is the driest of the Australian States and Territories. When South Australia was colonised in 1836, it was home to more than 50 different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language speaking groups.

In 2011, over half of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in South Australia (51.2 per cent), were enrolled in schools in metropolitan locations; 32.4 per cent were enrolled in schools in provincial locations; 11.3 per cent were enrolled in schools in very remote locations; and 5.1 per cent were enrolled in schools in remote locations.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children comprise 6.8 per cent (1,275 of 18,771) of all preschool enrolment in South Australia. In the South Australian Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) schooling context, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people comprise 5.2 per cent (8,661.6 of 165,899.3) of all school enrolments.

There are currently 752 schools in South Australia, which include 555 government and 197 non-government schools. As at Term 3, 2011, there were 165,899.3 student enrolments within government schools (comprising 64 per cent of students) and 93,022.0 student enrolments within non-government schools. There were 8,661.6 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments within government schools (comprising 88 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments), and 1,133.0 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments within non-government schools. Of the 1,133.0 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments within non-government schools, 587.6 were from Catholic schools and 536.4 were from independent schools. Nine were enrolled in other schools.

The need to accelerate improved outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students is a State priority and is clearly articulated in South Australia's Strategic Plan (SASP) and the DECD Aboriginal Strategy. South Australia has identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' school attendance as a major focus, and acknowledges the importance of community and school partnerships in addressing non-attendance through shared responsibility and creating high expectations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student learning outcomes.

Profile of Focus schools

There are 91 Focus schools within South Australia, 82 in the government school sector, three in the Catholic sector and six in the independent sector. Of these schools, 47 are primary, 18 are Aboriginal/Anangu, 10 are combined R-12 (Reception to Year 12), nine are secondary and seven are area schools.

Focus schools had 4,605.4 full-time equivalent (FTE) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled at the time of the 2011 Term Three Census, comprising 15 per cent of the total enrolment in these schools. These students represent 47 per cent of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

There are 4,288.4 FTE Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander government students within Focus schools, comprising 16.7 per cent of total enrolment in these schools and 49.5 per cent of all government Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Of the 91 Focus schools, 84 are part of the Smarter Schools National Partnership Focus schools, with seven involved with the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership, 73 with the Low Socio-Economic Status (SES) National Partnership only, four schools involved in both National Partnerships, and two Remote Service Delivery schools who are also involved in the Low Socio-Economic Status (SES) National Partnership.

Figure SA1.1: Map of South Australian Focus schools in metropolitan areas, 2011
(Focus schools are listed at the end of this chapter.)

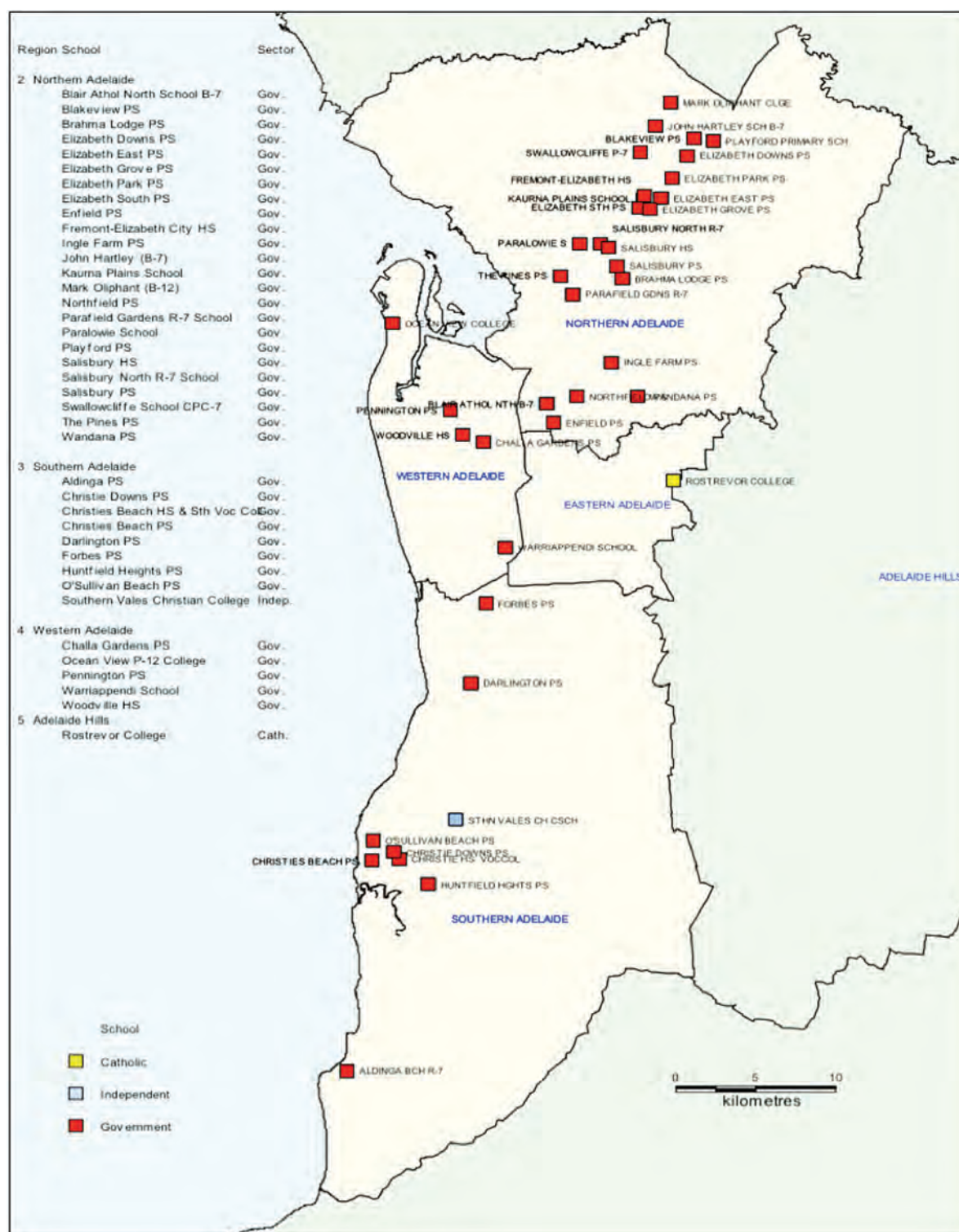
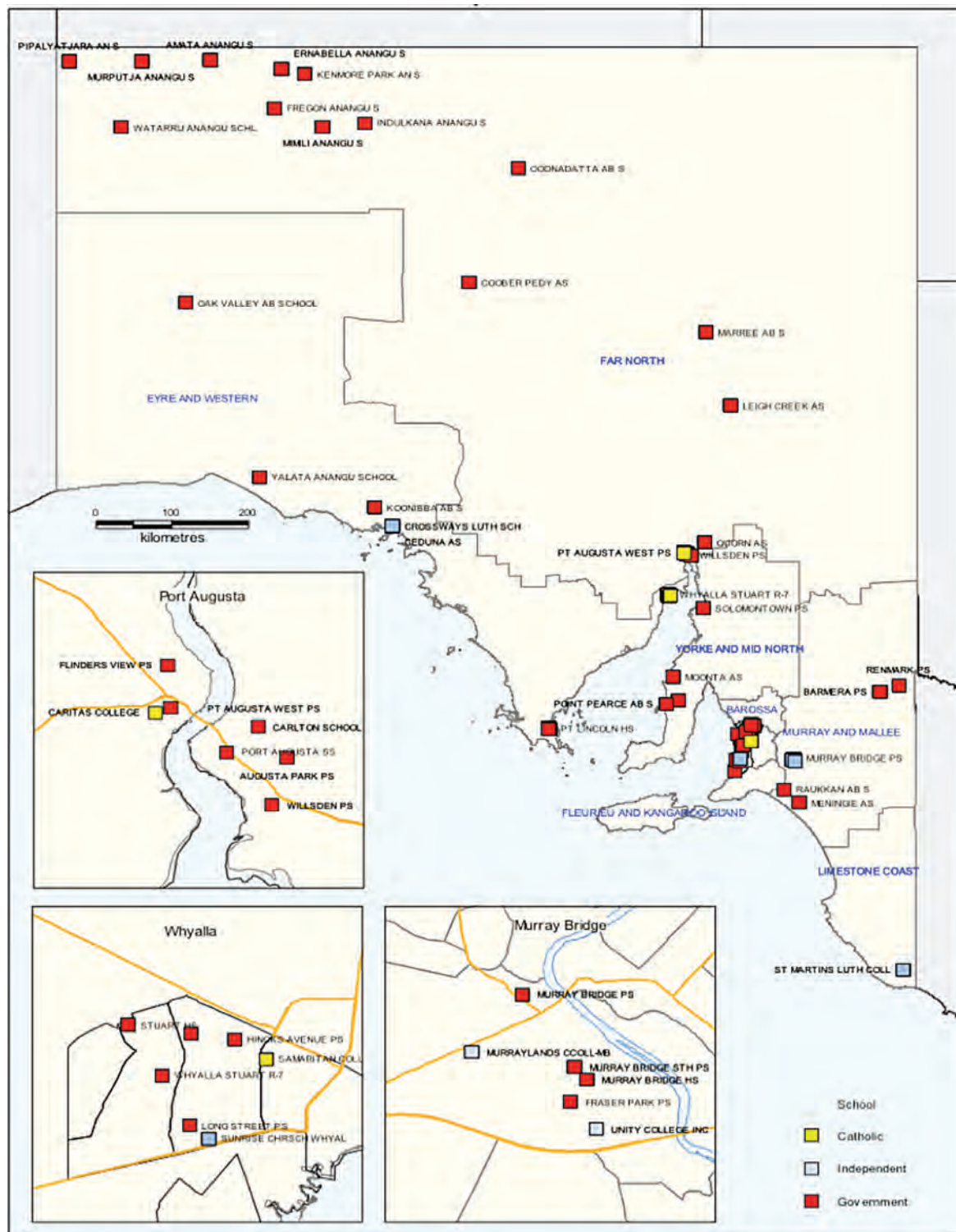


Figure SA1.2: Map of South Australian Focus schools in regional and remote areas, 2011
(Focus schools are listed at the end of this chapter.)



South Australia report on progress by domains

Readiness for school

Performance indicators

1. *The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending (where possible to measure) a preschool program.*
2. *The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students assessed as ready for the first year of full-time schooling by State and Territories' measures.*

Overall progress

Preschool programs

In 2011, 96.9 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in preschool attended, compared to 99.2 per cent of all children, representing a 2.2 percentage point difference. The Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) deems that a child has attended preschool if he/she has attended at least one hour of preschool out of a two hour reference period for the Annual Census of Children's Services.

The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in South Australian preschools continues to increase, going from 994 in 2003 to 1,275 in 2011, with the percentage of total enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children increasing from 5.5 per cent in 2003 to 6.8 per cent in 2011.

The AEDI data shows that in South Australia, there are a lower proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are developmentally on track in four or more domains, than for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Australia.

Systemic level actions [5, 6 and 7]

The South Australian Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) Strategic Plan, and the recently released discussion paper, *Every Chance for Every Child*, firmly places all children from the ages of birth to 18 at the centre of service development and delivery.

South Australia provides the secretariat for the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) Early Childhood Development Working Group (ECDWG), a group that provides advice on early childhood development issues referred to it by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). South Australia is taking a lead role in implementing two national partnerships: the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care, and the Early Childhood Education (Universal Access) and has the lead jurisdictional responsibility for national collaborative actions under the Plan: Domain 1 – Readiness for School.

The South Australian Government is establishing 38 Children's Centres for Early Childhood Development and Parenting across the State for early childhood development and parenting. The centres are developed in accordance with local community needs and provide easy access for families to the following: family support programs; childcare and education; and health services for children from birth to eight years. The centres support close collaboration with other agencies and regional office staff.

This includes four Aboriginal Children and Family Centres that will be developed through the Indigenous Early Child Development National Partnership. The centres will be located at: Ceduna Area School; Hincks Avenue Primary School in Whyalla; Christies Beach Primary School; and Ernabella Anangu School in Pukatja.

The Department continues to resource policy that enables all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to attend preschool for up to four sessions per week from three years of age; and assists in effective transition to school.

South Australia has completed three rounds of implementation of 15 hours of preschool delivery to 199 DECD preschools, completing the targeted rollout in areas of high disadvantage

Table SA1: Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending a preschool program, South Australia and Australia, 2011

	South Australia		Australia	
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	All children	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	All children
Number of children enrolled	719	17,326	10,167	233,128
Children enrolled (per cent)	103.2	87.9	75.7	80.8
Number of children attending	697	17,178	9,536	225,886
Percentage of children enrolled that are attending ^(a)	96.9	99.1	93.8	96.9
Percentage of children attending ^(b)	100.0	87.1	71.0	78.3

Notes:

- a) Calculated as the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled.
- b) Calculated as the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over the Estimated Resident Population (ERP). The ERP of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 4 year-olds at June 2011, South Australia = 697; Australia = 13,306.
- c) Due to data collection limitations South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland have not reported on unique counts of children in preschool. However, episodes - counts of the instances of preschool program provided to a child without accounting for duplication - are available for these jurisdictions. For information on methodologies and concepts of the preschool enrolment data please refer to explanatory notes in the ABS publication, *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates 2011* (Cat.No.4240.0).
- d) Because early childhood education is not compulsory, and children can be enrolled in multiple preschool programs, the collection of unit record level (URL) data on preschool programs is seen to be fundamental in addressing data quality issues, both to eliminate duplication and to gain an accurate count of records at the child level. An episode is a term used in the National ECEC Collection to refer to an 'instance of learning' that a child has received. When one child is attending two different preschool programs, the same child is attending two episodes of preschool (i.e. may be double-counted).
- e) While there have been improvements in consistency of reporting across jurisdictions, it should be noted that Preschool Education Estimates have not yet achieved complete alignment with nationally agreed standards.
- f) Some figures are over 100 per cent. This is due primarily to variability around the base count (denominator) of children because of the size and quality of the ABS estimated population of four year-olds, which is problematic especially for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- g) For information on adjustments for Census undercount and the methods used to calculate projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, see explanatory notes in the ABS publication, *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991–2021* (Cat.No.3238.0).
- h) Estimates for the total population are sourced from ABS, Estimated Population by Age and Sex, June 2011 (Cat. No. 3101.0).

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates 2011* (Cat.No. 4240.0); *Estimated Population by Age and Sex*, June 2011 (Cat.No. 3101.0 DO002); *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991–2021* (Cat.No. 3238.0).

Table SA2: Proportion of children in South Australia assessed as 'developmentally on track' in four or more domains of the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), 2009 (per cent)

	South Australia	Australia
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (per cent)	40.8	42.5
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (per cent)	68.0	68.6

Notes:

- a) The AEDI population comprises children with at least one valid domain score.
- b) Children are deemed to be developmentally 'on track' if they scored above the 25th percentile of the national AEDI population in four or more AEDI domains.
- c) Where Standard Australian English is not the child's first language, there may be an over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are assessed as developmentally vulnerable in the 'language and cognitive skills' or the 'communication skills and general knowledge' domains of the AEDI. Cultural differences in the child's mode of communication and general knowledge needs to also be acknowledged and taken in consideration when reviewing the AEDI data.

Source: Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), 2009 AEDI Census Data

and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations. The rollouts have benefited approximately 36 per cent (or 6,208) of all children enrolled in the year before full-time schooling in Department funded preschools (based on annual Census) and includes 79 per cent (or 566) of all year before full-time schooling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments.

School Entry Assessment (SEA) is a DECD assessment for children on entry to school, which is undertaken during their first school Term. There are 8 domains within this assessment, and a sample of 85 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and 1,151 non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reception students was taken in 2011. The SEA found that 28 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were at or above the inquiry level in six or more domains, compared to 58 per cent of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. (*Source: South Australia DECD Centralised Education Department School Administrative System*)

Individual independent schools use their own measure for assessing readiness for school entry. Most independent schools implement an early entry assessment program within the child's first Term in Reception or early learning centre attendance. Schools have been encouraged to use AEDI data to assist with determining readiness.

Local level actions [8]

For departmental and school-based preschools, a summative report is written as part of the child's transition to school. The summative report incorporates the Early Years Learning Framework and describes the child's learning and development during their attendance at preschool. The report is used in Reception for planning the Literacy and Numeracy focus when developing the child's Individual Learning Plan.

All preschool educators in DECD are required to implement the Early Years Learning Framework. A significant component of this mandated curriculum is cultural competence. Implementation of the *South Australian Government Cultural Inclusion Framework* supports the increased cultural competence of educators and challenges staff to critically reflect on their practice in order to change and improve the way they work. The framework is available online: http://www.premcab.sa.gov.au/dpc/publications_aard.html.

Engagement and connections

Performance indicators

3. *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with personalised learning strategies in place.*
4. *Proportion of Focus schools with a school – community partnership agreement in place.*

Overall progress

Learning plans in place

This data is reliant on schools to document students with a personalised learning plan within a school's system. It is believed that the actual percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with a personalised learning plan is higher, and schools will be urged in 2012 to document these students.

In South Australia, a learning plan can include an Individual Learning Plan (for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students), an Individual Education Plan (for Guardianship of the Minister students) or a Negotiated Education Plan (for students with disabilities).

There are 6,861 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Years 1 to 10 within government schools. Of these, 3,933 or 57.3 per cent have a personalised learning plan in place.

Within the Catholic sector, 51 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have a Personalised Learning Plan in place. This plan, and associated documentation and system, target both student wellbeing and academic targets, with specific goals for literacy and numeracy itemised. Implementation of Individual Learning Plans commenced in 2011 and is a high priority. The Individual Learning Plans are reviewed with parents and students, along with teachers and any other allied health support personnel, where appropriate.

At the end of 2011, approximately 10 per cent of students attending independent schools had personalised learning plans in place with most schools still in the introductory phase and working towards establishing personal learning plans for their students throughout 2012.

Systemic level actions [15, 16, 17 and 18]

The Department is continuing to work towards a service delivery model encompassing integrated family services. DECD is working in close partnership with the Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara Education Committee (PYEC) and Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands communities on the development of a 'blueprint' to develop a whole-of-region approach to education and service delivery, and the use of a coordinated interagency approach to service delivery.

The APY Lands Community Programs operate Family Centres in Amata, Fregon, Mimili and Pipalyatjara. New Children and Family Centres are opening in Indulkana and Pukatja (Ernabella).

The Department provides flexible enrolment and support programs for students who are pregnant or parents. The Flexible Learning Options (FLO) enrolment is a case management process to develop individualised learning pathways to re-engage students with learning and successfully return to school, or move to further education, training or employment. The Innovative Community Action Networks (ICANs) is a program to help address local issues faced by young people who are having difficulty staying on at school, or finding pathways into further education and training. The Department also offers pregnant students or young parents the option of attending adult learning campuses that provide flexibility, crèche facilities, and parental/family support and development programs. The Whyalla Young Mothers program operates at the John Eyre High School in regional South Australia, and provides support to young mothers and pregnant students who are still at school, by providing a flexible learning environment that also welcomes their children into a designated suite of rooms at the school. The Department is reviewing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific site resourcing, particularly in relation to the employment of Aboriginal Education Teachers and Aboriginal Community Education Officers to redirect resources to target the greatest need. Aboriginal Community Education Officers undertake accredited qualifications in Community Development or Community Services to further support the capacity of the workforce through accredited and non-accredited training pathways in education support, mental health support, mentoring, community engagement and cultural inclusion.

As part of the DECD Improvement and Accountability Framework, the Department demonstrates accountability in performance reporting through transparent reporting to

stakeholders on school performance and operations. At a site level, Annual Reports are endorsed by the school governing body, and are provided to the community to report on learner achievement, site priorities and resource management.

Local level actions [19, 20 and 21]

Of the 82 government Focus schools 24 schools, or 29 per cent, commenced a School Community Partnership Agreement and 18 schools, or 22 per cent, had completed the agreement as at November 2011.

Catholic Education school communities are being supported by Catholic Education South Australia to develop partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and local communities. All three Catholic Education Focus schools have an action plan for Indigenous Education in place which outlines five key strategic reform areas - Cultural Competency/ Intelligence, Effective Teaching and Learning, Well-Being and Resilience, Personalised Learning and Community Engagement and Connection.

In the independent sector, formal agreements are being developed in preparation for implementation in 2012 – 2013.

Critical to improving student outcomes is the acknowledgement of parents as the primary nurturers of their child's learning. The Department strives to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents with schools and staff through a number of methods including: conducting Regional Aboriginal Community Voice Forums and Parent satisfaction surveys; providing executive support for the South Australian Aboriginal Education and Training Consultative Body (SAAETCB) and staffing resources specifically dedicated to supporting the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and families; and implementing programs to support parents in their role as primary caregivers. All government schools are encouraged to create welcoming school environments that are culturally inclusive and encourage parental development.

Individual Learning Plans (ILP) are mandated in South Australian government schools for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students as a practical working document that underpins challenging and interesting learning experiences and enables students, teachers and families to work together to achieve the best possible health, wellbeing and learning outcomes. The ILP is monitored, regularly reviewed and used as a discussion point with parents in parent-teacher interviews.

Attendance

Performance indicators

5. *Attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in schools.*
6. *Enrolment to population ratio of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians compared to other Australians.*
7. *Retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*
8. *Grade progression ratios for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*

Overall progress

Attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander preschool children in South Australia have remained steady since 2003, and are currently at 85.1 per cent for Term Two, 2011. The gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children has fluctuated since 2003. In 2011, the gap is at 4.0 percentage points. In the schooling sector, the attendance rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students within government schools remained steady from 78.4 per cent in 2009, to 78.5 per cent in 2011, with the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students remaining the same at 12.1 percentage points.

Table SA3: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, South Australia, 2011 (per cent)

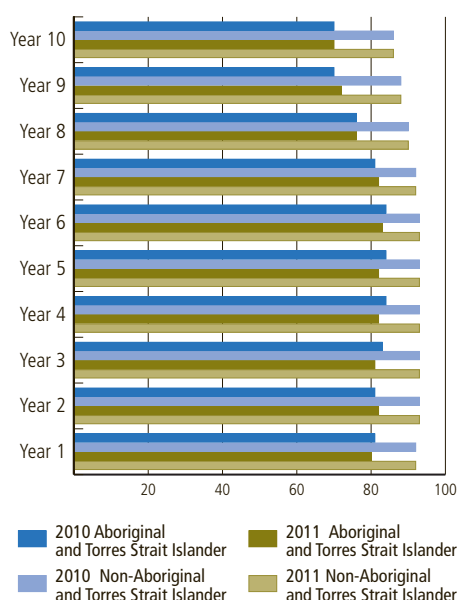
	Year level										Ungraded	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Prim.	Sec.
Government												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	80	82	81	82	82	83	82	76	72	70	81	74
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	92	93	93	93	93	93	92	90	88	86	92	90
Total	92	92	92	92	92	92	92	89	87	85	91	89
Catholic												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	92	92	90	91	87	92	92	87	85	89	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95	94	95	95	95	95	95	94	93	93	96	96
Total	94	94	95	95	95	95	95	94	93	93	96	96
Independent												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	88	87	88	89	90	90	86	85	90	87	n/a	83
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95	95	95	94	95	94	94	94	94	93	90	81
Total	95	95	95	94	95	94	94	94	94	93	90	81

Note: Definitions and methodologies used by jurisdictions and sectors to collect attendance data are not uniform. As such, direct comparisons of attendance rates between jurisdictions and sectors cannot currently be made. Nor can attendance data for 2011 be aggregated or averaged at the national or state level. Variations in methodology between jurisdictions are described in the explanatory notes for the 2011 attendance data contained in the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), *National Report on Schooling in Australia: 2011*.

n/a not available

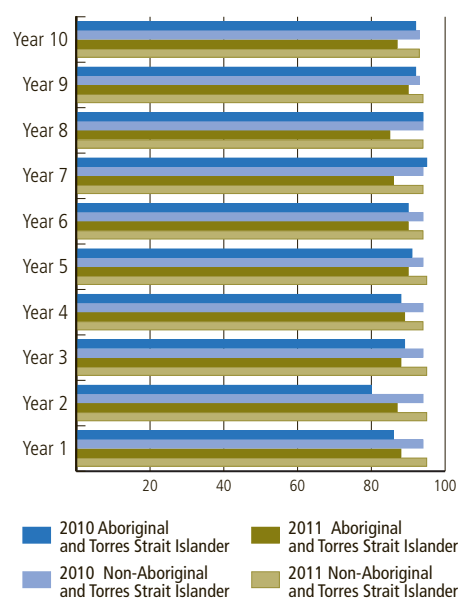
Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection*, 2011, (unpublished)

Figure SA 2.1: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, government sector, 2010–2011 (per cent)



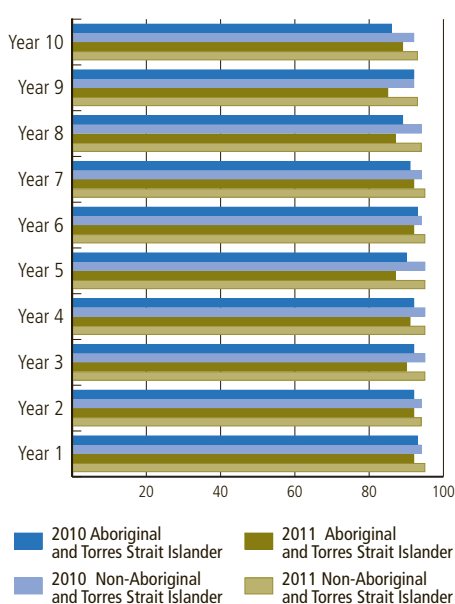
Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished).

Figure SA 2.3: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, independent sector, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished).

Figure SA 2.2: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, Catholic sector, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished).

Attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students within government schools are between 80 to 83 per cent in Years 1 to 7, and at a low of 70 per cent in Year 10. The gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students within government schools is at the highest in Years 9 and 10, at 16 percentage points, and the lowest in Years 6 and 7, at 10 percentage points.

Of the school sectors, Catholic schools have the highest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attendance rates for the majority of the year levels except in Years 5 and 9, where the independent schools have the highest attendance rate. The gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' attendance rates is less within Catholic and independent schools than within government schools.

Attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students within government schools have increased or remained the same in Year 2 and Year 7 to 10. Attendance rates have

increased or remained the same for independent school students in Years 1, 2, 4 and 6, and attendance rates for Catholic students have increased or remained the same for Years 2, 7 and 10.

Enrolment to population ratio

For 2011, school participation rates have not been published by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status due to concerns with the quality of the indicator. Specifically, the rates for most States and Territories exceed 100 per cent, primarily as a result of modal differences in the data sources. The denominator is sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Estimated Resident Population series, itself drawn from the Population Census, while the numerator is sourced from the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC). The Australian Bureau of Statistics is working to provide a substitute measure.

Apparent retention rates

Table SA4: Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, from Year 8 to Year 10 and Year 8 to Year 12, South Australia, 2010–2011 (per cent)

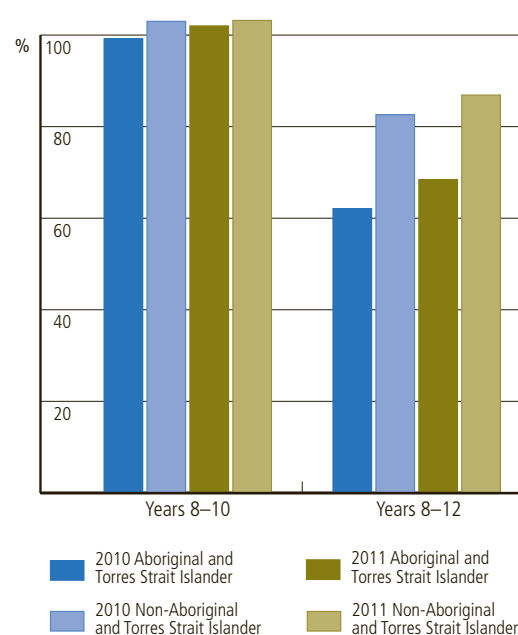
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Year 8– Year 10	102.0	103.2
Year 8 – Year 12	68.4	86.9

Notes:

- This data is for full-time students only.
- The apparent retention rate measures the number of full-time school students in a designated level/year of education as a percentage of their respective cohort group. Ungraded students not included.
- Apparent retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students can be inflated by an increased propensity to identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over time.
- Caution should be taken in interpreting the data for apparent retention rates at the State and Territory level, which can be inflated by a net increase in interstate migration. Small numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students can also affect results from the State and Territory level and may produce apparent variations from year to year that may not accurately reflect the long-term trend.

Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia, 2011*, (Cat.No. 4221.0)

Figure SA3: Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, from Year 8 to Year 10 and Year 8 to Year 12, South Australia, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia, 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0)

South Australian schools have over a 100 per cent apparent retention rate from Year 8 to Year 10 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The reason for this is due to a higher number of students enrolled in Year 10 in 2010, compared to Year 8, two years earlier. As this measure is apparent, it does not track individual students. Therefore, the same students may not be included in 2008 to 2010, which means that more students have enrolled in 2010 from interstate or overseas than have left since 2008. From Year 8 to Year 12 there is a 68.4 per cent apparent retention rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, a gap of 18.5 percentage points from non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

The Year 8 to Year 10 apparent retention rate for South Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students increased from 99.2 per cent in 2010, to 102.0 per cent in 2011. The Year 8 to Year 12 apparent retention rate for South Australian and Torres Strait Islander students increased from

62.1 per cent in 2010, to 68.4 per cent in 2011. The Year 8 to 12 apparent retention rate gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students has decreased, from 20.5 percentage points in 2010 to 18.5 percentage points in 2011.

Apparent grade progression ratios

South Australia has over 100 per cent progression ratio for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from Year 8 to 9 and Year 9 to 10, which then decreases to 89.2 per cent from Year 10 to 11, and to 77.0 per cent from Year 11 to 12. The reason for the over 100 per cent apparent grade progression ratio is due to a higher number of students enrolled in 2011, compared to the previous year for these year levels. As this measure is apparent, it does not track individual students and, therefore, the same students may not be included in 2010 to 2011, and more students have enrolled in these schools from interstate or overseas than have left.

Table SA5: Grade progression ratios of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 2011 (per cent)

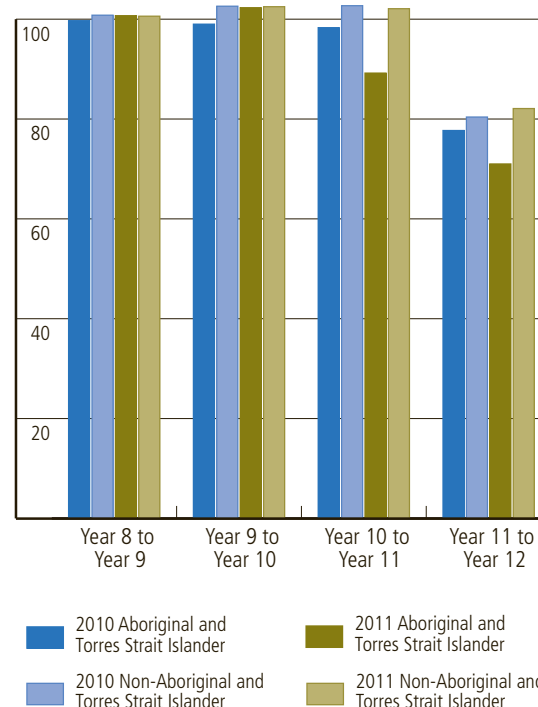
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Year 8 to Year 9	100.7	100.6
Year 9 to Year 10	102.3	102.5
Year 10 to Year 11	89.2	102.1
Year 11 to Year 12	71.0	82.1

Notes:

- Grade progression rates show the number of students at a) Grade progression rates show the number of students at each year level as a percentage of the number enrolled in the previous year.
- This data is for full-time students only.
- Care should be taken when interpreting these rates since a range of factors affecting the calculation are not taken into account, such as students repeating a year of schooling, movements between schools and systems or States/Territories and net changes to a school or system's population. There is also the effect of ungraded students – they are not included in the calculations of rates.

Source: ABS, *Schools Australia, 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0)

Figure SA4: Grade progression ratios of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia, 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0)

There has been an increase in the Year 8 to 9 progression ratio, going from 99.7 per cent in 2010 to 100.7 per cent in 2011, and in Year 9 to 10, going from 99.0 per cent in 2010 to 102.3 per cent in 2011. There has been a decrease in the Year 10 to 11 progression ratio, going from 98.3 per cent in 2010 to 89.2 per cent in 2011, and in Year 11 to 12, going from 77.7 per cent in 2010 to 71.0 per cent in 2011.

The gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from 2010 to 2011 has decreased in Years 8 to 9 and Years 9 to 10 but increased in Years 10 to 11 and Years 11 to 12.

Systemic level actions [25]

In South Australian government schools, attendance has been escalated to a key priority for all regions and is embedded in

regional and site improvement plans. The enrolment, attendance, participation and performance outcomes of individual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students in the government system are monitored through the Indigenous Student Support System – database (ISSS).

Local level actions [26]

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Turn Around teams program has been developed in four regions: Northern Adelaide Region; Eyre and Western Region; Far North region and Western Adelaide region. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Turn Around program team provides intensive intervention and case management service for Aboriginal students at high risk, and who are most disengaged from education.

In the Catholic education sector in South Australia, schools have their own strategies to support regular attendance, which include the employment of Indigenous Education Officers and Indigenous Education consultants.

Strategies implemented by Focus schools in the independent schools sector to support regular attendance include the employment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Liaison Officer who works with parents and community members.

Literacy and numeracy

Performance indicators

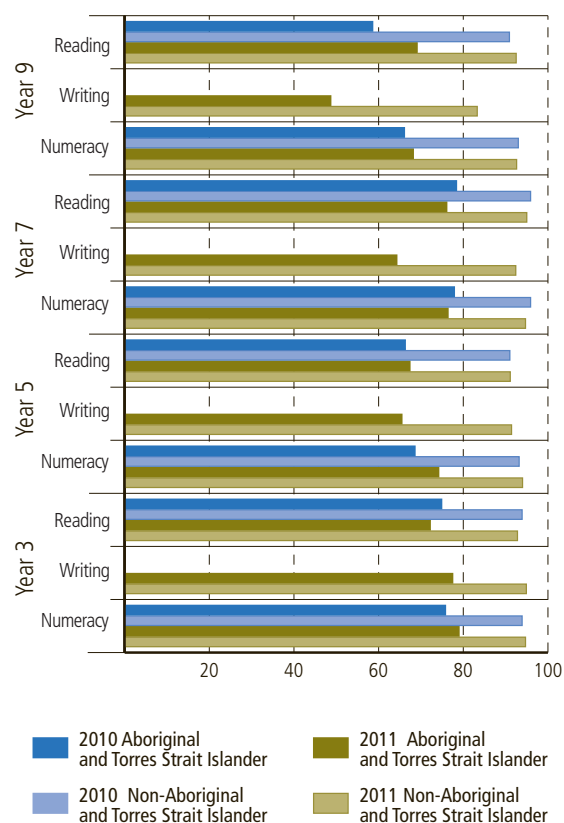
9. *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in NAPLAN testing.*
10. *Participation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in NAPLAN.*

Overall Progress

NAPLAN outcomes

In 2011, South Australian Year 3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students had the highest percentage at or above the national minimum standard in numeracy, at 79.0 per cent. Similarly, in Year 5, with 74.2 per cent and for Year 7 at

Figure SA5: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, South Australia, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Note: A new scale was introduced for writing in 2011. With the break in the time series, the persuasive writing results for 2011 should not be directly compared to the narrative writing results from previous years.

Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished) *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*, ACARA, Sydney.

76.4 per cent. For Year 9, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' reading is the highest percentage with 69.1 per cent.

The smallest gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students for 2011 occurred in Year 3 numeracy at 15.7 percentage points. The greatest gap occurred in Year 9 writing at 34.6 percentage points.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in South Australia have increased their percentage at or above the national minimum standard in 5 out of 8 domains from 2010 to 2011 (excluding writing). The gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students has decreased in five out of eight domains from 2010 to 2011. These are the same five domains, namely, Year 3 numeracy, Year 5 reading and numeracy, and Year 9 reading and numeracy.

Table SA6: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, South Australia, 2010–2011 (per cent)

	2010				2011			
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Gap	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Confidence Intervals	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Gap	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Confidence Intervals
Year 3								
Reading	74.9	93.9	19.0	± 4.6	72.2	92.8	20.6	±5.1
Writing	80.1	96.3	16.2	± 4.6	77.5	94.9	17.4	±5.5
Numeracy	75.8	93.9	18.1	± 4.8	79.0	94.7	15.7	±4.8
Year 5								
Reading	66.3	91.0	24.7	± 4.8	67.4	91.1	23.7	±5.3
Writing	71.7	93.5	21.8	± 5.2	65.5	91.4	25.9	±5.5
Numeracy	68.6	93.2	24.6	± 5.0	74.2	94.0	19.8	±4.6
Year 7								
Reading	78.4	95.9	17.5	± 4.9	76.1	95.0	18.9	±4.6
Writing	70.9	94.4	23.5	± 5.6	64.3	92.4	28.1	±5.5
Numeracy	77.9	95.9	18.0	± 4.5	76.4	94.7	18.3	±4.8
Year 9								
Reading	58.6	90.9	32.3	± 6.0	69.1	92.5	23.4	±5.8
Writing	55.0	88.0	33.0	± 5.9	48.7	83.3	34.6	±6.1
Numeracy	66.1	93.0	26.9	± 6.2	68.2	92.6	24.4	±5.6

Notes:

- The confidence intervals for 2010 and 2011 in this table are specifically within the year for South Australia.
- A new scale was introduced for writing in 2011. With the break in the time series, the persuasive writing results for 2011 should not be directly compared to the narrative writing results from previous years.
- Exempt students were not assessed and are deemed not to have met the national minimum standard.
- The method used to identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students varies between jurisdictions.

Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished) *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*, ACARA, Sydney.

2011 NAPLAN data by geolocation

Table SA7: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy geolocation summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, South Australia and Australia, 2011 (per cent)

Geolocation	New South Wales		Australia	
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Reading				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	79.4	93.2	84.2	95.2
Provincial	70.5	92.1	81.3	93.9
Remote	n.p.	90.9	67.3	92.1
Very Remote	48.3	89.4	45.3	90.2
Year 5				
Metropolitan	74.3	91.6	76.7	93.4
Provincial	66.5	90.1	73.4	91.6
Remote	n.p.	87.1	49.4	89.7
Very Remote	42.5	88.7	26.4	86.6
Year 7				
Metropolitan	82.4	95.1	85.0	95.9
Provincial	75.6	94.7	81.8	95.3
Remote	81.0	95.4	63.4	95.3
Very Remote	42.9	93.8	42.5	95.2
Year 9				
Metropolitan	75.6	92.5	78.4	93.7
Provincial	70.2	92.2	75.0	93.0
Remote	n.p.	94.0	54.6	91.5
Very Remote	30.6	93.5	29.3	89.5
Writing				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	85.7	94.8	88.1	96.4
Provincial	81.1	95.4	85.9	95.8
Remote	n.p.	92.7	70.0	94.6
Very Remote	40.9	96.2	46.0	93.3
Year 5				
Metropolitan	74.8	92.2	79.8	94.6
Provincial	66.0	89.6	75.9	92.1
Remote	n.p.	87.0	50.7	90.5
Very Remote	27.9	82.9	28.4	88.1
Year 7				
Metropolitan	72.4	93.1	77.2	93.5
Provincial	64.3	90.4	71.1	90.1
Remote	66.7	91.5	47.4	90.2
Very Remote	21.3	82.5	28.4	87.6
Year 9				
Metropolitan	53.6	84.6	63.4	88.0
Provincial	47.8	79.7	55.0	82.0
Remote	n.p.	81.4	33.8	78.6
Very Remote	25.3	85.3	20.6	78.2
Numeracy				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	86.6	94.7	88.6	96.5
Provincial	75.5	94.9	87.2	96.0
Remote	n.p.	94.5	77.0	95.7
Very Remote	58.9	95.0	63.3	94.9
Year 5				
Metropolitan	79.9	94.1	83.8	95.7
Provincial	74.8	93.6	80.6	94.8
Remote	n.p.	93.6	62.8	94.5
Very Remote	49.4	92.6	42.4	92.4
Year 7				
Metropolitan	81.7	94.8	84.5	95.7
Provincial	77.3	94.6	81.3	95.1
Remote	73.8	94.8	61.7	94.9
Very Remote	47.8	96.3	41.6	93.4
Year 9				
Metropolitan	73.5	92.8	78.4	94.4
Provincial	69.2	92.1	73.9	93.4
Remote	n.p.	92.6	58.9	91.9
Very Remote	36.2	94.4	33.5	90.3

- 'n.p.' indicates data not published as there were no students tested or the number of students was less than 30.
- A new scale was introduced for writing in 2011. With the break in the time series, the persuasive writing results for 2011 should not be directly compared to the narrative writing results from previous years.
- Exempt students were not assessed and are deemed not to have met the national minimum standard.
- The method used to identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students varies between jurisdictions.

Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished), *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*, ACARA, Sydney.

For all year levels and domains in 2011 the metropolitan Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in South Australia held the highest percentage at or above the national minimum standard across geolocations, but below the metropolitan percentage for Australia.

South Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in very remote geolocations in South Australia had a higher percentage achieving at or above the national minimum standard than the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander very remote percentage, across all year levels and domains except in Year 3 numeracy and Years 3, 5 and 7 writing.

The smallest gap in 2011 between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in South Australia occurred for metropolitan students in Year 3 numeracy, at 8.1 percentage points, and the largest gap occurred for very remote students in Year 9 reading, at 62.9 percentage points. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students within the very remote geolocation had the greatest gap for each year level and domain, which varies from 36.1 to 62.9 percentage points.

The greatest increase from 2010 to 2011 occurred in Year 5 numeracy within the very remote geolocation, which increased from 34.7 per cent in 2010 to 49.4 per cent in 2011, representing a 14.7 percentage point increase. The greatest decrease from 2010 to 2011 occurred in Year 3 reading within the very remote geolocation, which decreased from 61.3 per cent in 2010 to 48.3 per cent in 2011, a 13 percentage point decrease.

2011 NAPLAN data and 2011 progress points for South Australia

One of the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) 'Closing the Gap' targets is to halve the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade. To monitor achievement of this COAG target by 2018, progress points for each State and Territory were developed. The progress points for South Australia are provided in TableSA8.

For 2011, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in South Australia met all nine of the progress points along the trajectories. Due to the change in scale for writing for 2011, it is not appropriate to compare writing outcomes against the writing progress points as these were set against the 2008 narrative outcomes.

Overall NAPLAN outcomes

Numeracy was the domain with the highest percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard for Year 3, at 79.0 per cent; Year 5, at 74.2 per cent and Year 7, at 76.4 per cent, respectively.

Disaggregating the data by geolocation, the percentage of South Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in very remote areas achieving at or above the national minimum

Table SA8: Reading, writing and numeracy progress points for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, achieving at or above the national minimum standard, 2008–2011 (per cent)

Year	Reading				Writing				Numeracy			
	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9
2008	71.5	60.6	69.6	62.5	82.5	69.0	67.5	57.4	79.2	68.5	75.9	68.7
2009	71.6	60.8	69.7	62.7	82.6	69.1	67.6	57.6	79.3	68.6	76.0	68.8
2010	71.9	61.2	70.1	63.1	82.8	69.5	68.0	58.1	79.5	69.0	76.3	69.2
2011	72.5	62.0	70.8	64.0	83.1	70.1	68.7	58.9	79.9	69.6	76.8	69.9
2018	82.4	76.6	82.5	78.6	89.4	81.4	81.0	73.8	87.2	80.6	86.0	81.7

Note: A new scale was introduced for writing in 2011. With the break in the time series, the persuasive writing results for 2011 should not be directly compared to the narrative writing results from previous years.

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2011

standard is higher than the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander very remote areas percentage, across all year levels and domains, except in Year 3 numeracy and Year 3, 5 and 7 writing.

In 2011, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in South Australia met all 9 progress points along the trajectories (excluding writing).

NAPLAN participation

In 2011, participation rates for South Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were below the Australian rate, for all year levels and domains except Year 7 writing, and below the non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rate. Participation rates in Year 9 were well below the other year levels for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, ranging from 70.7 per cent for reading to 73.8 per cent for writing.

Absentee rates are higher in South Australia for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students than for Australia across all domains in Years 5 and 9. Absentee rates for Year 7 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students decreased from 2010, and are now below the Australian absentee rate. Absentee rates for

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in South Australia ranged from 13.9 to 14.8 per cent in Year 3, and 11.2 to 12.1 per cent in Year 5, with the rates in Year 7 at 8.0 to 10.8 per cent, and 24.1 to 27.2 per cent in Year 9.

Participation rates for South Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have increased and the gap from non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students decreased from 2010 to 2011 in Year 7 and 9 for all domains.

Systemic level actions [30]

At the Term 3 2011 Enrolment Census, the Department supported 3,184 full-time equivalent (FTE) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander English as a Second Language (ESL) enrolments, that were identified through school-based assessment of language need using the ESL Scales. Students required various intervention supports to develop the Standard Australian English required at their respective year level of schooling. NAPLAN results in 2011 for ESL students achieving at or above the national minimum standard were positive.

In government schools, teaching ESL students in mainstream classrooms allowed around 130 participants to engage in 25

Table SA9: Reading, writing and numeracy participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, exemptions, absences/withdrawals and assessed students, South Australia and Australia, 2011 (per cent)

	Year 3		Year 5		Year 7		Year 9	
	SA	Aust.	SA	Aust.	SA	Aust.	SA	Aust.
Reading								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	80.8	90.1	85.0	90.8	88.5	88.8	70.7	79.0
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94.3	96.2	95.5	96.7	95.9	96.5	91.7	93.7
Writing								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	79.8	89.8	84.4	90.7	89.4	89.0	73.8	79.4
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94.3	96.1	95.5	96.6	96.1	96.6	92.5	94.1
Numeracy								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	81.1	89.0	84.4	89.7	86.6	87.6	73.3	78.0
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93.9	95.9	95.2	96.3	95.4	96.2	91.3	93.2

Note: The NAPLAN participation data provided reflects students who were exempted, absent/withdrawn and assessed.

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2011

hours of professional learning around supporting ESL learners to develop language and literacy skills to access the curriculum.

Within the Catholic and independent schools sectors, professional learning in applying the ESL scales was provided for Indigenous Education Focus school teachers in 2011.

Local level actions [31 and 32]

The Department has specific initiatives in place to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' literacy and numeracy learning that provide supplementary and direct assistance to regions and schools. Initiatives include: tutorial and mentoring support; Home Work Centres; and the Keys to Unlocking the Future program – an Early Years literacy program for Reception to Year 3.

The Keys to Unlocking the Future initiative aims to improve literacy outcomes for Reception to Year 3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by improving pedagogical practices and by developing and implementing consistent whole-school literacy approaches. The program also supports the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents to support the literacy development of their children, with 62 government Focus schools involved in this initiative.

During 2011, the Early Years literacy and numeracy program funded a range of initiatives for 303 preschools and 506 schools.

On the APY Lands, playgroups, Health, and Early Childhood programs are being run as bilingual programs with bilingual resources and materials being developed to support these programs. In schools, Anangu Education Workers are working with non-Anangu staff about Pitjantjatjara language teaching strategies.

Leadership, quality teaching and workforce development

Performance indicators

11. *Number of professional development hours on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and cultural and linguistic competence training undertaken by principals and teachers.*

12. *Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals, teachers and education workers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workers (AIEWs) and equivalents).*

13. *Average length of service of principals and teachers in hard-to-staff schools with high enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*

Overall progress

In South Australian schools, professional development around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, and cultural linguistic competence is provided to school staff and leaders; however, data on completions is not collected centrally.

A new professional development system is currently being developed in the Department that will be progressively rolled-out over the next 12 months. This system has the capacity to collect relevant data on professional development directly from schools.

The number and FTE of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals and teachers employed in government schools has remained steady from 2010 to 2011, while the number of

Table SA10: Number and Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals, teaching staff and education workers (AIEWs and equivalents), 2011

Employment type	FTE
Principals	5.0
Teaching staff	69.0
AIEWs and equivalents	206.9

- a) Excludes Temporary Relief Teachers, staff on four or more weeks' leave, and staff on workcover.
- b) Principal and teacher profile is based on staff in schools or support units who spend the majority of their time in contact with students (ie, they support students either by direct class contact, or on an individual basis) and have teaching duties (ie, are engaged to impart the school curriculum). This also includes leadership positions.
- c) Education Worker profile includes staff based in school and non-school locations, with a classification of 'Aboriginal Education Worker'.

Source: ABS, *National Schools Statistics Collection* (NSSC), unpublished data, 2011

Education Workers has increased, from 286 in 2010, to 299 in 2011, representing a 4.5 per cent increase.

In the Catholic sector in 2011, there were three Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teaching staff and four Indigenous Education Officers.

In 2011, within the independent sector, there were three Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers and seven Indigenous Education Officers.

The average length of service for principals and teachers within South Australian government Focus schools has remained steady, between 2010 and 2011. In 2011, teachers have a longer average length of service, at 69 months, or 5.75 years, compared to principals, at 44 months, or 3.67 years.

Systemic level actions [41 and 42]

In government schools, professional development around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and cultural linguistic competence is provided to school staff, but is not collected centrally. A new professional development system is currently being developed in the South Australian Department for Education and Child Development (DECD), which will be progressively rolled out over the next 12 months. This system has the capacity to collect relevant data on professional development directly from schools.

DECD implements policies and strategies that support inclusive practices and approaches, and the development of cultural competency in staff. Strategies include:

- the implementation of the Cultural Inclusion Framework for South Australia (available online at: http://www.premcab.sa.gov.au/dpc/publications_aard.html#inclusion); the DECD Aboriginal Strategy; Cultural Competency Training;
- Aboriginal Cultural Studies being incorporated into the South Australian Curriculum Framework and into the Australian Curriculum as general capabilities;
- employment programs to employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, children and families;
- cultural awareness programs, and professional learning around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in schools being provided that supports all nine South Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages currently taught in government schools.

Workshops are provided to corporate, regional, school and preschool-based staff around 'cultural competence' of their workgroup, and how to provide better quality and more appropriate services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In 2011, 523 corporate, regional, school, or preschool staff attended one of these workshops.

Table SA11: Average length of service of principals and teachers within Focus schools, 2010–2011

Year	Principals			Teachers		
	Number	Total service as a principal at site (months)	Average length of service as a principal at site (months)	Number	Total service as a teacher at site (months)	Average length of service as a teacher at site (months)
2010	94	4,047	43	1,959	139,273	71
2011	93	4,097	44	2,007	137,940	69

Note: Profile was taken of staff members who were principals or teachers, as at the last day of Term 4 for each year. Only staff members with accumulated service at the site, working as at the last day of Term 4, have been included. Any leave from the site has been ignored, ie, if an employee took twelve months' leave, this has been included in the total service as a principal or teacher.

Source: South Australian Department for Education and Child Development, Valeo Payroll System, 2011

As part of regional leadership days for principals and regional leaders, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education is a regular feature on the agenda. Also, Aboriginal Community Education Officers (ACEO)/Aboriginal Education Teacher (AET) network days have a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

Aboriginal Cultural Studies curriculum resources and professional development is provided to teachers and is available via an online repository, at: <http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/northernadelaide/pages/AbEd/39019/>.

A new five-year project was implemented in the second half of 2011, whereby the Department will support local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to take an increasingly lead role in providing language and cultural expertise and training to leadership and staff of local schools and school clusters.

Local level actions [43 and 44]

DECD is reviewing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific site resourcing (AETs and ACEOs) under the Student Centred Funding Model, to redirect resources to target the greatest need.

South Australia has partnered with the Stronger Smarter Institute to support the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership in communities and to engage in Stronger Smarter Initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. The Stronger Smarter Institute comprises two main project areas, Stronger Smarter Leadership Programs (SSLP) and the Stronger Smarter Learning Communities Project. These two project areas work closely together and schools can only engage with the SSLC project after they have participated in a Stronger Smarter Leadership Program. There were a total of 24 hub and affiliate schools involved in the Stronger Smarter Learning Communities project in South Australia.

Principals are able to access additional support to suit local needs, including data to assist with improvement strategies, resources including access to the Aboriginal Turn Around Team, regional Community Education Officers, Aboriginal Education Managers, and Aboriginal Inclusion Officers, and allied services.

DECD is working in close partnership with the Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara Education Committee (PYEC) and APY Lands communities, on the development of a 'blueprint' to transform

education and child development services and delivery. The blueprint has a focus on community engagement using a whole-region approach to issues, and the use of a coordinated interagency approach to service delivery.

Pathways to real post-school options

Performance indicators

14. *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20 – 24 who have attained Year 12 or equivalent or Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate II or above.*

Note: Although the performance indicator for this domain cites a national data source, there is no publicly available national level data for 2011.

Overall progress

Table SA12: Nineteen year-old persons with Year 12 or equivalent, South Australia, as reported for the South Australian State Strategic Plan, 2010 to 2011 (per cent)

	2010	2011
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons (per cent)	31.4	39.4
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons (per cent)	63.9	70.0
Gap (in percentage points)	33	31

Note: South Australian Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology (DFEEST) data was extracted from TAFE sources as at 20 April 2011, and features a count of students that received certificates. Students were counted once on the highest LOE certificate that was issued to them in one given year. Grouping of the data by Aboriginality is available only on TAFE data due to limitation of the collection student details on Client Qualifications Register. International Baccalaureate is not available by Aboriginality, therefore, is not included in this calculation.

Source: South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) Board of South Australia; South Australian DFEEST; Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) *Estimated Resident Population*, and *Census of Population and Housing*, 2011 (Cat.No. 2911.0.55.003)

The proportion of 19 year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with Year 12 or equivalent (including SACE and DFEST data only) increased from 31 per cent in 2010, to 39 per cent in 2011, with the gap from non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people decreasing by two percentage points.

South Australian SACE completion rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students increased from 78 per cent in 2010, to 83 per cent in 2011, with the gap from non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander decreasing by 3 percentage points.

Systemic level actions [48, 49 and 50]

Among the strategies to maximise opportunities and strengthen pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, the Innovative Community Action Networks program is designed to help address local issues faced by young people who are having difficulty staying on at school, or finding pathways into further education and training. Flexible enrolment is available

Table SA13: South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) completion rates, South Australia, 2010 to 2011 (per cent)

	2010	2011
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons (per cent)	78	83
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons (per cent)	90	92
Gap (in percentage points)	12	9

Note: Completion rates are calculated from the number who completed SACE, compared to the number of potential completers. From 2011, a potential SACE completer can be defined as a student who is enrolled in, or has a completed enrolment in, the following:

- the Personal Learning Plan (PLP) or PLP modified at Stage 1
- at least 20 credits of an English subject at Stage 1 and/or Stage 2
- at least 10 credits of a mathematics subject at Stage 1 and/or Stage 2
- the Research Project or Research Project Modified at Stage 2
- at least 60 credits in a Stage 2 subject, and
- at least 200 credits in total, 150 of which may be gained through VET recognition arrangements.

Source: SACE Board of South Australia, 2010 and 2011

via the Flexible Learning Options (FLO) program, which provides case management support and individualised learning pathways for students. An intensive intervention and case management service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who are at high-risk, and who are most disengaged from education is available through the Aboriginal Turn Around Teams that operate across four regions in South Australia.

South Australia provides multiple pathways to secondary students to achieve their South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) that include tertiary and vocational pathways into training and employment. The Trade Schools for the Future program provides opportunities for school-based apprenticeships and traineeships for students in a range of vocational fields. Schools are supported to develop and implement vocational education and training (VET) industry pathway programs, and upgrade their vocational facilities through Australian Government funding.

The Department has implemented the Marree Arabunna Language and Culture program. Students from Marree Aboriginal School were involved in the development of digital resources that support the revival of the Arabunna language and culture. Although the community support remains vital to this process, Marree Arabunna Elders and community have identified an ongoing focus on student involvement as critical to the ongoing success of the initiative. Plans are underway to map the sustainable growth of Arabunna language skills and deep understanding of culture by building students' filmmaking skills.

Local level actions [51, 52, 53, 54 and 55]

In South Australia, the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) allows students to undertake learning to suit their chosen career pathway. The Personal Learning Plan (PLP) is a compulsory 10-credit subject undertaken at Stage 1 SACE, which helps students to plan their personal and learning goals for the future, and make informed decisions about their personal development, education, and training.

The Aboriginal WorkAbout Centres engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth in education and employment pathways, and help build relationships between education providers, industry, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and

other organisations. A similar program is being developed for primary school students.

The Aboriginal Program Assistance Scheme (APAS) provides funding to schools to support improved Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student academic improvement. APAS programs include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student tuition, mentoring and coaching, counselling, cultural awareness and support for emotional wellbeing. Aboriginal Student Mentoring is available to provide individual support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across Years 5 to 9 who may not be reaching their full potential, and/or are on the cusp of disengaging.

The Enter for Success program enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students transitioning from Year 7 to Year 8 to enrol in any South Australian government school of their choice. Since 2007, 618 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have been successfully placed in the secondary school of their choice, with 138 of those students commencing secondary school in 2012.

The Keeping Them on Track strategy ensures that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander senior secondary enrolments are monitored at key transitional points of secondary schooling with an aim to improve retention to Year 12 and SACE completion. In 2011, 1,839 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary students were supported through this initiative in 129 government education sites.

Within the Catholic school sector, the Choices for Indigenous Secondary Students program (CISS) is specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary students in Years 8 to 12 in South Australian Catholic schools. The program provides mentoring support for students, and enhanced career planning for students with a particular focus on teaching/early childhood education as a career.

Independent schools in South Australia offer the Career Pathways program, which provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and teachers who work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students information about career and post-school study options, including: university and TAFE pathways; scholarships; accommodation for rural students; and assistance to those still completing their SACE.

Good practice snapshots

The Aboriginal Turn Around Team is a program within the Communities Making a Difference (Low SES) National Partnership. The program provides crisis intervention and intensive case management support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and their families who are at high risk of long-term disengagement from their education. The program aims to develop cohesive health and education family support approaches for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with additional and complex needs.

The service focuses on a model which responds to educational performance, behaviour, physical, mental and psychological health and contributes to the creation of a healthier, enhanced educated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, proud of their heritage and pursuing a rich and rewarding lifestyle.

The Turn Around Teams work with schools to facilitate regional service delivery for individual students, their families and their enrolled schools and centres by responding to critical incidents and coordinating community, non-government and government agency groups to provide a single coordinated response to the social and wellbeing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students.

The Aboriginal Turn Around Teams work closely with the school, family and significant others, to identify and respond to the circumstances that disrupt the student's capacity to participate in their education. Students at risk are identified by a number of factors including: difficulties participating in their learning, high suspension and exclusion experiences and high unexplained absences.

Staff in the Turn Around Team are experienced and have a proven record of working in transition, community action and parent/student support programs. They are required to bring excellent negotiation skills and the ability to work positively with a diverse range of clients and needs. The teams have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professionals within the group. They consist of one Social Service Coordinator and two Aboriginal Inclusion Officers, and report to the Regional Director in the region to which they are appointed.

In 2011, the Aboriginal Turn Around Teams provided support for 28 families and 94 students within the families. Outcomes include: an improvement in school attendance, literacy, and retention rates, and a reduction in suspensions and in the length of suspensions. There were also improvements in students' behaviour while in school. Data that confirms these positive outcomes includes attendance rates between 90 to 100 per cent for 11 students, and the re-engagement of two students from one family who had not attended school for approximately three years.

Due to the success of the program, funding has recently been extended until December 2015.

IECB's feedback – South Australian Aboriginal Education and Training Consultative Body (SAAETCB)

The South Australian Aboriginal Education and Training Consultative Body (SAAETCB) notes that South Australia appears to be moving forward in many areas, and would like to provide the following comment.

The SAAETCB supports the work of South Australia in establishing Children and Family Centres. The centres provide an effective model for the seamless transition that supports both families and children with the move to preschool and school, further assisted by a cross-agency approach to service provision in response to the needs of the family and child. The SAAETCB identifies the need for greater community education processes and awareness raising for parents of young children to the services available, including the preschool three year-old enrolment program.

The SAAETCB notes the requirement for Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) in South Australian government schools, but has concerns about the quality, approach and consistency of ILPs. There is a need to ensure parental involvement in the development of ILPs, and for regular reviews of the ILP. The

ILP should provide the tool for developing and implementing a teaching and learning plan that supports each individual student's learning. Strategies to support attendance and engagement of the student can also be addressed with parents, the student and the school through the appropriate engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents in the process. Catholic Education in South Australia provides the opportunity for input to the ILP process by allied health workers, where appropriate. This approach should be considered across all sectors.

The SAAETCB requests that all education providers seek and develop solutions to overcome the perceived difficulties with the development of Local School and Community Partnership Agreements (LSCPs). There are many ways that LSCPs can be developed and several South Australian schools have LSCPs that others can learn from.

The SAAETCB notes the attendance rates across all South Australian education sectors, and the lower gap in attendance rates of students in the Catholic and independent school sectors. The South Australian government school sector has experienced a decrease in Years 3 and 5 attendance rates, which could be addressed through the development of LSCP Agreements.

The decrease in the retention rate of South Australian students from Year 10 is concerning. However, quality destination data could provide further information for this decline. The SAAETCB recommends that information and data be collected to determine the role of gender in the Apparent Grade Progression ratios.

It is encouraging to note the increase in participation rates for NAPLAN testing in Years 7 and 9 for all domains, and the resulting decrease in the gap. Further attention and focus should be placed by education providers on the gap in all aspects of literacy and numeracy, and across all geolocations.

The preparation of new and beginning teachers is an area that requires attention. In particular, university education courses and induction programs should focus on working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities, particularly in remote and very remote locations.

Greater community awareness and community education programs are required to inform parents, students and families of what education offers, and ways that parents and families can

support their children with learning. It would also be useful for parents to know what support is available, and how to access that support. The information flow and support appears to be more effective in primary schooling, as it drops off in secondary schooling. Education providers should actively seek ways to improve this flow of information, particularly at the key transition points from preschool to school, and then from primary to secondary education settings.

The SAAETCB notes a disconnect between the strategic intent or purpose of programs and initiatives, and their implementation in schools at the local level. Schools need to engage more effectively, and as a matter of course, with parents when students are accessing additional programs and resources such as mentoring, tutorial support, flexible learning options and employment and training pathways. Additional resources and learning options should not be viewed as a way of passing over the responsibility for a student's learning. Any additional support or pathways provided should be clearly identified in the student's ILP, and agreed to by the student, the parent and education staff.

The SAAETCB notes the good practice example of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Turn Around Team initiative, and the difference that the initiative has made for the families that the teams have worked with. The SAAETCB suggests that an expansion of the Turn Around Team initiative should be considered to support families in crisis, or with assisting students with chronic poor attendance to re-engage with an education program designed to suit the individual student's needs.

JoAnne Ashford
Deputy Chair
South Australian Aboriginal Education and Training
Consultative Body

South Australia DECD's response

South Australia acknowledges the valuable contribution of the South Australian Aboriginal Education and Training Consultative Body (SAAETCB) in providing a voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Department for Education and Child Development supports the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents, families and communities in the education and care of their children. The Department also acknowledges the valuable work of the SAAETCB as the peak Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultative group, with representatives from across South Australia.

The Department supports the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents with relevant schools and staff through a number of methods including:

- regional Aboriginal Community Voice forums
- parent satisfaction surveys
- staffing resources specifically dedicated to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and families including regionally-based Aboriginal Inclusion Officers, and at a school level, Aboriginal Education Teachers, Aboriginal Community Education Managers and Aboriginal Community Education Officers
- student attendance counsellors to work with students and families to support increased engagement and attendance.

The feedback from the SAAETCB is acknowledged and welcomed. The Department looks forward to consulting and working in partnership with the SAAETCB to address the concerns raised, and to seek further input into policy direction and the continued implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan in South Australian schools, places of training and higher education settings.

Program summary

South Australian programs discussed in this chapter are summarised below. Further information can be obtained from the South Australian Department for Education and Child Development website, at: <http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/>.

The Enter for Success program enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students transitioning from Year 7 to Year 8 to enrol in any South Australian government school of their choice. Since 2007, 618 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have been successfully placed in the secondary school of their choice, with 138 of those students commencing secondary school in 2012.

Aboriginal Student Mentoring provides tailored mentoring support for individual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across Years 5 to 9 who may not be reaching their full potential and/or are on the cusp of disengaging.

Innovative Community Action Networks (ICANs) is a program addressing local issues faced by young people who are

having difficulty staying on at school, or finding pathways into further education and training.

Flexible Learning Options (FLO) provides a case management process to develop individualised learning pathways for students to re-engage with learning and successfully return to school, or move towards further education, training or employment.

The Aboriginal Turn Around Teams provide an intensive intervention and case management service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at high risk, who are most disengaged from education.

The Keeping Them On Track program monitors all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander senior secondary enrolments at key transitional points of secondary schooling, with an aim to improve their retention to Year 12 and SACE completion. In 2011, 1,839 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander senior secondary students were supported through this initiative in 129 government education sites.

The WorkAbout Centre engages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth in education and employment pathways, and builds relationships between education providers, industry,

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and other organisations. A similar program is being developed for primary school students.

The Aboriginal Program Assistance Scheme (APAS) provides funding to schools to support improved Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student academic improvement. APAS programs include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student tuition, mentoring and coaching, counselling, cultural awareness and support for emotional wellbeing.

Focus school information

Note: Gepps Cross Primary School and Kilburn Primary School closed at the end of 2010. Swallowcliffe Primary School has changed to Swallowcliffe School CPC-7. Blair Athol North School B-7 (Birth to 7) was opened in 2011 and included as a Focus school.

Total and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments were taken at the Term 3 2011 School Enrolment Census.

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enrolments	Lit/Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
Aldinga Beach R–7 School	Gov.	Metropolitan	615	23	X		
Amata Anangu School	Gov.	Very remote	123	122		X	X
Augusta Park Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	252	130		X	
Barmera Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	261	42		X	
Blair Athol North School B–7	Gov.	Metropolitan	349	42			
Blakeview Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	486	31	X		
Brahma Lodge Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	189	14		X	
Caritas College	Cath.	Provincial	626.1	49	X		
Carlton School	Gov.	Provincial	68	68		X	
Ceduna Area School	Gov.	Very remote	558.9	146.2		X	
Challa Gardens Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	371	48		X	
Christie Downs Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	248.8	34		X	
Christies Beach HS and Southern Vocational College	Gov.	Metropolitan	1,188.8	111.6		X	
Christies Beach Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	432	49		X	
Cooper Pedy Area School	Gov.	Very remote	250.2	98.4		X	
Crossways Lutheran School	Ind.	Very remote	82	79	X	X	
Darlington Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	243	47	X	X	
Elizabeth Downs Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	254	25		X	
Elizabeth East Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	263	20		X	
Elizabeth Grove Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	276	39		X	
Elizabeth Park Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	334	47		X	
Elizabeth South Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	242	25		X	
Enfield Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	207	26		X	
Ernabella Anangu School	Gov.	Very remote	138	138		X	
Fisk Street Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	106	35		X	
Flinders View Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	192	126		X	
Forbes Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	290	27		X	
Fraser Park Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	67	23		X	
Fregon Anangu School	Gov.	Very remote	64	64		X	
Fremont–Elizabeth City High School	Gov.	Metropolitan	897	72		X	
Hincks Avenue Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	187	36		X	
Huntfield Heights Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	93	8		X	
Indulkana Anangu School	Gov.	Very remote	83	80		X	
Ingle Farm Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	352	28		X	
John Hartley School (B–7)	Gov.	Metropolitan	455	76		X	
Kaurna Plains School	Gov.	Metropolitan	73	69		X	
Kenmore Park Anangu School	Gov.	Very remote	10	10		X	
Kirton Point Primary School	Gov.	Remote	305	62		X	
Koonibba Aboriginal School	Gov.	Very remote	28	28		X	
Leigh Creek Area School	Gov.	Remote	134.7	38.2			
Lincoln Gardens Primary School	Gov.	Remote	75	53		X	
Long Street Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	315	28		X	
Maitland Area School	Gov.	Provincial	233	62		X	
Mark Oliphant College (B–12)	Gov.	Metropolitan	1,058	96		X	
Marree Aboriginal School	Gov.	Very remote	18.4	15.4		X	
Meningie Area School	Gov.	Provincial	201.6	66		X	

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enrolments	Lit/Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
Mimili Anangu School	Gov.	Very remote	60	60		X	X
Moonta Area School	Gov.	Provincial	488.5	42		X	
Murputja Anangu School	Gov.	Very remote	19	19		X	
Murray Bridge High School	Gov.	Provincial	899.2	85		X	
Murray Bridge Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	333.4	29		X	
Murray Bridge South Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	291	56		X	
Murraylands Christian College–Murray Bridge	Ind.	Provincial	86	21	X	X	
Northfield Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	299	34		X	
Oak Valley Aboriginal School	Gov.	Very remote	19	19		X	
Ocean View P–12 College	Gov.	Metropolitan	782.6	96		X	
Oodnadatta Aboriginal School	Gov.	Very remote	41.4	38.4		X	
O’Sullivan Beach Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	174	18		X	
Parafield Gardens R–7 School	Gov.	Metropolitan	457	21		X	
Paralowie School	Gov.	Metropolitan	1,263.8	69.8		X	
Pennington Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	289	33		X	
Pipalyatjara Anangu School	Gov.	Very remote	50	49		X	
Playford Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	691	14			
Point Pearce Aboriginal School	Gov.	Provincial	10	10		X	
Port Augusta Secondary School	Gov.	Provincial	530.5	185.4		X	
Port Augusta West Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	268.4	38		X	
Port Lincoln High School	Gov.	Remote	741.9	109			
Quorn Area School	Gov.	Provincial	223.9	34		X	
Raukkan Aboriginal School	Gov.	Provincial	18	17		X	
Renmark Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	274	20		X	
Rostrevor College	Cath.	Metropolitan	1,017	43			
Salisbury High School	Gov.	Metropolitan	917.4	74		X	
Salisbury North R–7 School	Gov.	Metropolitan	370	48		X	
Salisbury Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	427	33		X	
Samaritan College	Cath.	Provincial	1,017	29	X		
Solomontown Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	258.4	40		X	
Southern Vales Christian College	Ind.	Metropolitan	710	29	X		
St Martins Lutheran College	Ind.	Provincial	518.6	14			
Stirling North Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	267	51			
Stuart High School	Gov.	Provincial	299	47		X	
Sunrise Christian School Whyalla	Ind.	Provincial	103	13		X	
Swallowcliffe School CPC–7	Gov.	Metropolitan	370	44		X	
The Pines Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	285	17		X	
Unity College Inc	Ind.	Provincial	924	40	X	X	
Wandana Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	209	40		X	
Warriappendi School	Gov.	Metropolitan	43	42		X	
Watarru Anangu School	Gov.	Very remote	14	14		X	
Whyalla Stuart Campus R–7	Gov.	Provincial	125	48		X	
Willsden Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	164	93		X	
Woodville High School	Gov.	Metropolitan	998	124		X	
Yalata Anangu School	Gov.	Very remote	48	48		X	

Tasmania report on activities and outcomes

Introduction

In 2011, there were 5,770 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in full-time and part time schooling (Prep to Year 12) in Tasmania, representing 6.9 per cent of Tasmania's student population. Of the 5,770 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 4,908 were enrolled in government schools (85 per cent).

There are 255 schools operating across Tasmania. Of this total, 190 are government schools, 37 are Catholic schools, and 28 are independent schools. Of the 255 schools, there were 156 primary schools, 36 secondary schools, 58 combined schools and five special schools. The majority of schools are located in metropolitan and provincial areas, with only a small proportion classified as remote and very remote. (Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Schools Australia, 2011* (Cat.No. 4221.0))

In 2011, the Tasmanian Department of Education was structured into four Learning Services responsible for early childhood education and schooling (from Kindergarten to Year 10). There are eight senior secondary colleges catering for students in Years 11 and 12.

Catholic education in Tasmania is delivered by the Systemic Catholic Schools Governing Council with delegation to the Director of Catholic Education, who is responsible for the overall leadership of the system of Catholic schools and colleges.

There were 31 independent schools in Tasmania in 2011.

Profile of Focus schools

In Tasmania, there are 73 Focus schools (63 government, nine Catholic and one independent), which together account for 85 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments.

Focus schools in the Catholic and independent systems remained unchanged from those identified in 2010.

The following government Focus schools: Bridgewater High School, East Derwent Primary School, Gagebrook Primary School and Herdsmans Cove Primary School were amalgamated, becoming the Jordan River Learning Federation. Individual schools became campuses of the federation.

Tasmania report on progress by Domains

Readiness for school

Performance indicators

1. *The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending (where possible to measure) a preschool program.*
2. *The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students assessed as ready for the first year of full-time schooling by State and Territories' measures.*

Overall progress

In 2011, 102.6 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were enrolled in a preschool program, with 101.5 per cent attending a preschool program at least once in the reference period. The equivalent figures for the overall kindergarten cohort are 95.8 per cent and 94.9 per cent respectively. (Source: *Universal Access to Early Childhood Education: 2011 Annual report*, Tasmania). Tasmania has had a kindergarten program with very high participation rates for over 20 years.

Figure TAS1: Map of Tasmanian Focus schools

(Focus schools are listed in a table at the end of this chapter.)

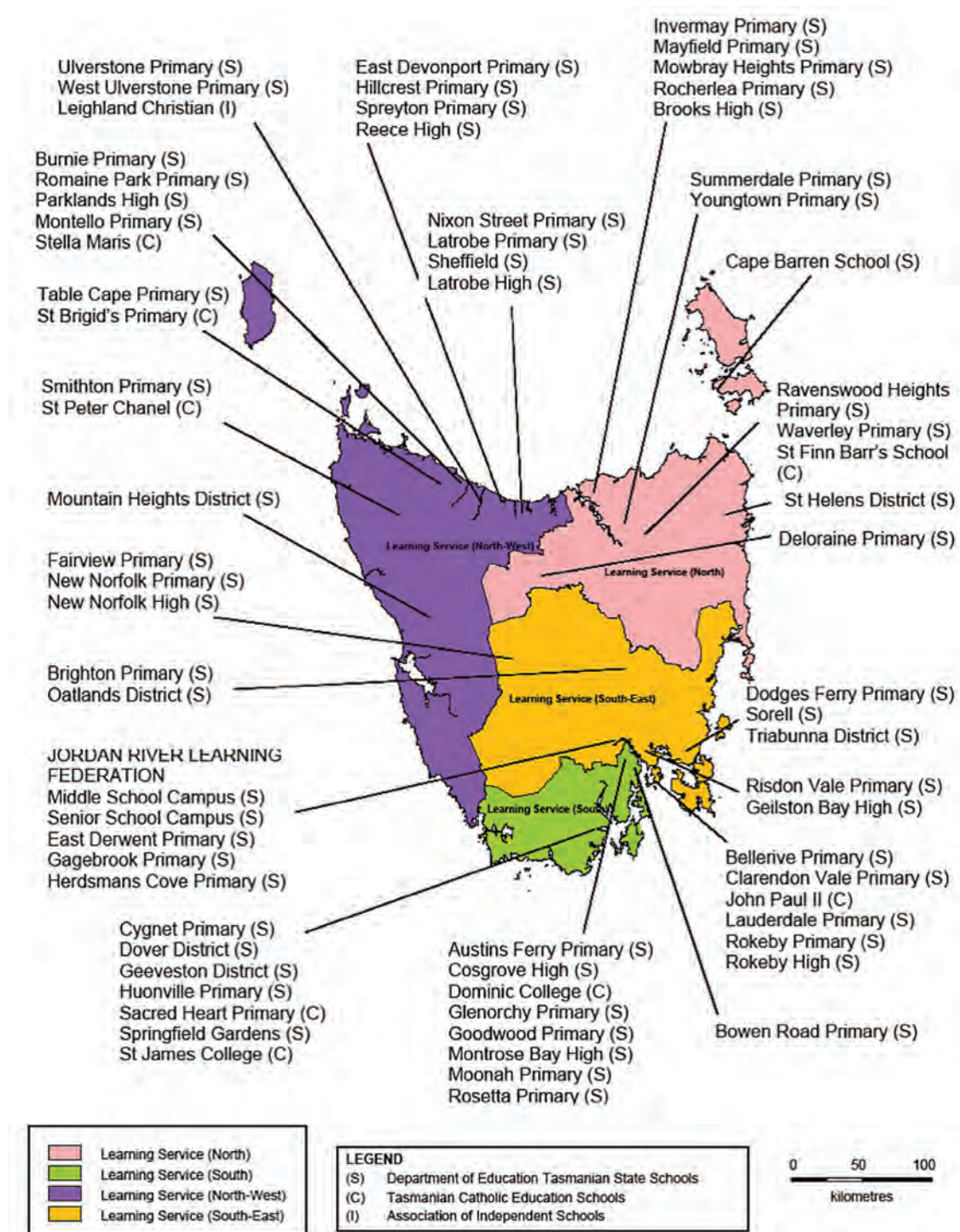


Table TAS1: Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending a preschool program, Tasmania and Australia, 2011

	Tasmania		Australia	
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	All children	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	All children
Number of children enrolled	481	6,536	10,167	233,128
Children enrolled (per cent)	102.6	95.8	75.7	80.8
Number of children attending	476	6,476	9,536	225,886
Percentage of children enrolled that are attending ^(a)	99.0	99.1	93.8	96.9
Percentage of children attending ^(b)	101.5	94.9	71.0	78.3

Notes:

- a) Calculated as per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled.
- b) Calculated as per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over Estimated Resident Population (ERP). ERP Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 4.5 year olds at June 2011, Tasmanian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander = 469; Tasmania All children = 6,825; Australia = 13,427.
- c) Due to data collection limitations, South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland have not reported on unique counts of children in preschool. However, episodes – counts of the instances of preschool programs provided to a child without accounting for duplication – are available for these jurisdictions. For information on methodologies and concepts of the preschool enrolment data please refer to explanatory notes in the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) publication, *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates 2011* (Cat. No. 4240.0).
- d) Because early childhood education is not compulsory, and children can be enrolled in multiple preschool programs, the collection of unit record level (URL) data on preschool programs is seen to be fundamental in addressing data quality issues, both to eliminate duplication and to gain an accurate count of records at the child level. An episode is a term used in the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection to refer to an 'instance of learning' that a child has received. When one child is attending two different preschool programs, the same child is attending two episodes of preschool (i.e. may be double-counted). This affects the Australia totals but not the New South Wales figures. New South Wales provided URL data so children enrolled in a preschool program in New South Wales are not double-counted in Table 1.
- e) While there have been improvements in consistency of reporting across jurisdictions, it should be noted that Preschool Education Estimates have not yet achieved complete alignment with nationally agreed standards.
- f) For information on adjustments for 2006 Census undercount and the methods used to calculate projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, see explanatory notes in the publication, *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991–2021* (Cat.No.3238.0).
- g) Estimates for the total population are sourced from ABS, *Estimated Population by Age and Sex, June 2011* (Cat.No. 3101.0). The Australia total includes 'Other territories' including Jervis Bay and Norfolk Island. However, Jervis Bay and Norfolk Island are excluded from Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales totals. Therefore, State and Territory Estimated Resident Population numbers will not add to Australia totals.
- h) In the absence of population estimates by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status for inter-censal years, non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population figures are calculated by subtracting projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population from estimates of the total population.

Source: ABS, *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates 2011* (Cat.No.4240.0) *Estimated Population by Age and Sex, June 2011* (Cat.No. 3101.0 DO002); *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991–2021* (Cat.No.3238.0)

Due to the relatively small population at the cohort level, the reported figures can vary significantly from year to year due to variation in the ABS Experimental Estimates of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.

The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Tasmania considered to be developmentally on track across four

or more domains is 56.3 per cent, compared to 42.5 per cent nationally.

Tasmania's good performance in this area is a reflection of the State's investment in the early years including, for example, the Launching into Learning program, as well as programs that provide a link between community and school, such as the

Table TAS2: Proportion of children in Tasmania assessed as 'developmentally on track' in four or more domains of the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), 2009 (per cent)

	Tasmania	Australia
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (per cent)	56.3	42.5
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (per cent)	68.9	68.6

Notes:

- a) The AEDI population comprises children with at least one valid domain score.
- b) Children are deemed to be developmentally 'on track' if they scored above the 25th percentile of the national AEDI population in four or more AEDI domains.
- c) Where Standard Australian English is not the child's first language, there may be an over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are assessed as developmentally vulnerable in the 'language and cognitive skills' or the 'communication skills and general knowledge' domains of the AEDI. Cultural differences in the child's mode of communication and general knowledge need to also be acknowledged and taken in consideration when reviewing the AEDI data.

Source: Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), unpublished Australian Early Development Index data, 2009 data collection

Aboriginal Early Years Program. Also, as stated above, Tasmania has a long history of well-attended kindergarten.

Systemic level actions [5, 6 and 7]

Launching into Learning (LiL) is an evidenced-based early childhood initiative that recognises the importance of learning and development in the early years of life. LiL aims to provide children with the best possible start in life. The philosophy of LiL is to support caregivers as their child's first, ongoing and often most influential teachers.

The Aboriginal Early Years Program works collaboratively with LiL teachers to support them to engage with caregivers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged from birth to 4 years. In addition, the Aboriginal Early Years program supports LiL teachers to establish learning environments and experiences that are culturally appropriate. A key focus of the program is home visits. This involves engaging with families and providing a range of resources to support and enhance early literacy and numeracy skills, as well as providing a strong cultural context for learning through cultural practices.

The Aboriginal Early Years Program also plays an important role in connecting families with their local LiL program. To date, the program has been successful in supporting caregivers of

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to access and engage with LiL programs.

LiL also facilitates interagency links through partnerships with child health services, Aboriginal Health, and Child and Family Centres (CFCs).

The construction of a further 10 State funded CFCs, targeting high-need students including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families, commenced in 2011. Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents, Community, and Local Enabling Groups had input into the design of these centres.

In 2011, universal access to 15 hours per week kindergarten was rolled out to all Focus schools.

Local level actions [8]

During 2011, the Commonwealth funded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander CFC located in the town of Geeveston was completed and the CFC at Bridgewater neared completion. Services provided by CFCs focus on meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. Community consultation will continue in determining which services are most required at each location.

The program at John Paul II School, Engaging the Learning Community, which is designed to extend and enrich the lives of all children including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from birth to 5 years of age continued in 2011. This program is being rolled out to other schools within the Catholic system.

Engagement and connections

Performance indicators

3. *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with personalised learning strategies in place.*
4. *Proportion of Focus schools with a school – community partnership agreement in place.*

Overall progress

For Tasmanian government schools, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with, or working towards completing, a Personalised Learning Plan (PLP) is 42 per cent. The Department's *Closing the Gap in Aboriginal Outcomes 2010-2014: A Tasmanian Strategy for Aboriginal Student Success through School Improvement* outlines the requirement for all students to have a PLP by 2014.

Additional support is available to schools through a Closing the Gap Coordinator and Aboriginal Education staff such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers (AIEWs), Aboriginal Early Years Liaison Officers (AEYLO) and Aboriginal Education Officers (AEO) to support schools in developing PLPs.

During 2011, the 73 Focus schools across the government, Catholic and independent sectors in Tasmania worked towards establishing formal school–community partnership agreements with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities.

The Department recognises that any action towards the establishment of a successful school–community partnership needs to be genuine and authentic. Schools have been encouraged to use flexible and innovative approaches to address the educational needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Principals and school leadership teams have

worked with their community to build shared ownership and responsibility within their local context.

School–community partnerships have been further addressed, in part, through Commonwealth initiatives such as: Next Steps, the Literacy and Numeracy Indigenous Extension program, as well as through the Department's commitment to employ more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.

Of the 73 Focus schools in Tasmania, 59.7 per cent of schools have commenced the establishment of a formal school–community partnership and 2.7 per cent have completed a formal school–community partnership. The remaining 37.6 per cent of schools have yet to commence a formal school–community partnership, although all schools are ensuring that effective teaching and learning strategies for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are in place.

Systemic level actions [15, 16, 17 and 18]

The Tasmanian Closing the Gap Strategy reflects the priority actions of the national *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan* (the Action Plan), which aims to build the capacity of schools to meet the educational needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and to accelerate performance through whole-of-school approaches to personalised learning, literacy and numeracy improvement and community engagement.

The Department has committed to supporting pregnant and parenting students through a Retaining and Supporting Pregnant and Parenting Students policy. The policy addresses the inclusion of, and support for, pregnant and parenting students in education. The policy recognizes that pregnant or parenting students are at risk of leaving education, and are among the most vulnerable students in relation to retention. This includes developing links with other government and community agencies to ensure that the health, welfare, financial, social and childcare needs of pregnant and parenting students are met in ways that increase the chances of them completing their education.

A feature of the Closing the Gap Strategy is the identification of 63 government Focus schools, based on high Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolment and high educational need. These schools receive specialised support through

Aboriginal Education Services to support inclusive teaching and community engagement.

Five Focus schools have been funded to incorporate the Raising the Bar Closing the Gap (RTBCTG) strategy into their school – Raising the Bar Closing the Gap Indigenous extension.

In 2011, Aboriginal Education Services supported maana 'Future' RTBCTG schools in developing a process for developing PLPs – a process connecting teachers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families in the development of the PLPs.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers (AIEWs), Aboriginal Early Years Liaison Officers (AEYLOs) and Aboriginal Education Officers (AEOs) are employed across targeted Focus Schools to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and community engagement, learning and pathways development. Aboriginal Education Services supports schools to draw on the unique skill set that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers bring with them to their positions.

Some schools have established Aboriginal Education Advisory Groups (AEAGs). In some instances, AEAGs advise networks of schools. The East Tamar Federation is currently developing AEAGs and has been working on strategies to develop authentic partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The Jordan River Federation is undertaking a similar process. This work is supported by a full-time Aboriginal Education Officer in each federation.

Ten government schools across the State have completed a five-day Cultural Understandings Training Package developed and delivered by Aboriginal Education Services in collaboration with local Aboriginal Elders and Aboriginal community educators. Much of the cultural understandings training focused on supporting schools to increase their capacity to respond to the specific cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families, particularly factors impacting on attendance, connections and educational outcomes.

Focus Schools involved in low Socio-economic Status (SES) National Partnerships have closely monitored and reported on the attendance and literacy and numeracy performance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students both at a system

level and through conveying information to parents through school reporting and PLP processes.

Local level actions [19, 20 and 21]

A number of government Focus schools have completed, or are in the process of negotiating, community partnership agreements.

This also includes family forums, and schools are actively engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and Aboriginal Education staff in community partnership agreements. Forums have focused on engaging families in the school environment and providing opportunities for discussion about what is happening in schools; PLP processes; and looking at ways to ensure that the curriculum is culturally responsive.

Schools are actively engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in schools, parents and students to develop personalised learning strategies for students to support individual educational outcomes. Where applicable, this includes consultation with relevant health professionals.

Attendance

Performance indicators

5. *Attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in schools.*
6. *Enrolment to population ratio of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians compared to other Australians.*
7. *Retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*
8. *Grade progression ratios for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*

Tasmania has the highest attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across Australia. In addition, the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students is one of the smallest observed for all jurisdictions.

Attendance rates

Table TAS3: Student attendance rates, Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, by sector, 2011
(per cent)

	Year level										Ungraded	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Prim.	Sec.
Government												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93	93	92	93	93	93	87	87	81	79	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	94	94	94	94	93	90	89	87	n/a	n/a
Total	94	94	94	94	94	94	92	90	88	86	n/a	n/a
Catholic												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	92	94	96	92	93	95	92	90	90	94	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	94	94	94	94	94	93	92	92	n/a	n/a
Total	93	94	94	94	94	94	94	93	92	92	n/a	n/a
Independent												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	91	97	95	93	97	91	92	91	88	87	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	94	94	95	94	93	93	92	91	90	100
Total	94	94	94	94	95	94	93	93	92	91	90	100

Notes:

- Definitions and methodologies used by jurisdictions and sectors to collect attendance data are not uniform. As such, direct comparisons of attendance rates between jurisdictions and sectors cannot currently be made. Nor can attendance data for 2011 be aggregated or averaged at the national or state level. Variations in methodology between jurisdictions are described in the explanatory notes for the 2011 attendance data contained in the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) *National Report on Schooling in Australia 2011*.
- n/a not available.
- Due to the very small numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in non-government schools all data should be interpreted with caution.

Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011

In the primary years of schooling the gap is relatively small but widens in the later years of schooling.

Given the small numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in Catholic and independent schools, year-on-year comparisons are difficult to make.

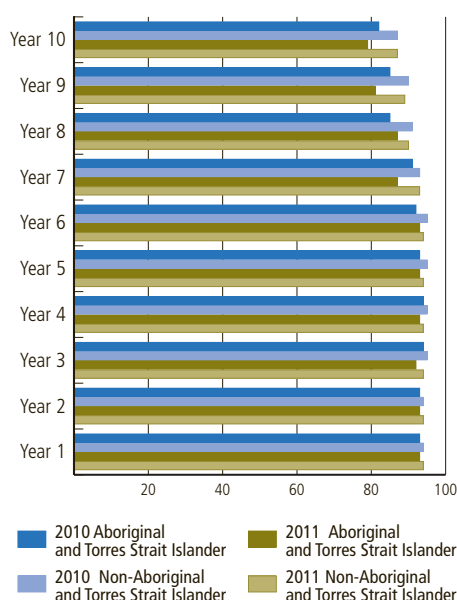
In terms of a comparative analysis of the data in 2010 and 2011, it is apparent that there has been a slight widening of the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. However, it should be noted, as discussed above, that Tasmania's attendance rates are still

high compared to the national rates. Moreover, cohort effects and small populations can lead to some variation in the data.

Enrolment to population ratio

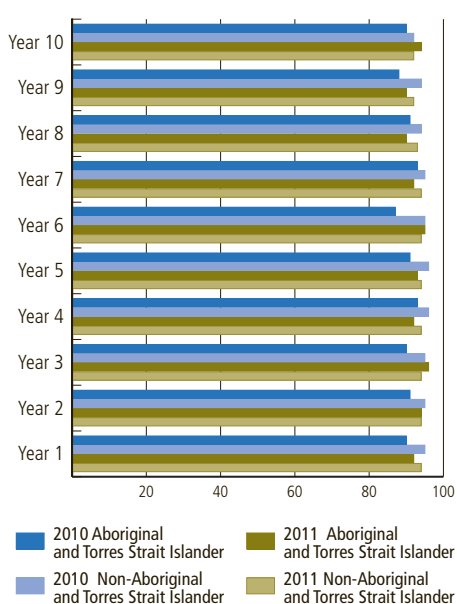
For 2011, school participation rates have not been published by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status due to concerns with the quality of the indicator. Specifically, the rates for most States and Territories exceed 100 per cent, primarily as a result of modal differences in the data sources. The denominator is sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Estimated

Figure TAS2.1: Student attendance rates, Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, government sector 2010–2011 (per cent)



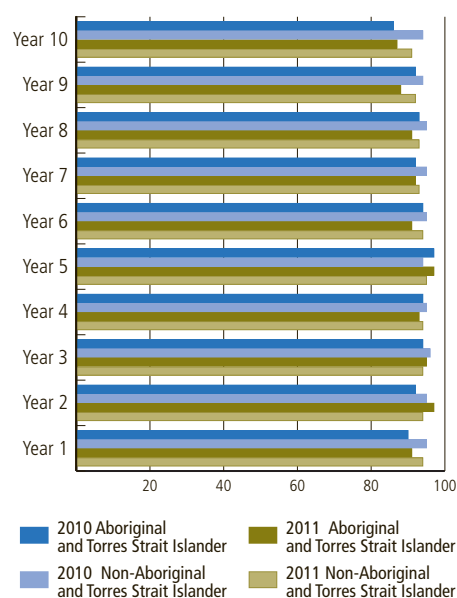
Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished).

Figure TAS2.2: Student attendance rates, Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, Catholic sector 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished).

Figure TAS2.3: Student attendance rates, Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, independent sector 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished).

Resident Population series, itself drawn from the Population Census, while the numerator is sourced from the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC). The Australian Bureau of Statistics is working to provide a substitute measure.

Apparent retention rates

Year 7 to Year 10 apparent retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Tasmania were greater than 100 per cent. This increase is mostly the result of parents changing their child's identity to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander during the secondary school years. There is a gap of 26.9 percentage points between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander apparent retention rates for Year 7/8 to Year 12. This represents a gap closure of 2.7 percentage points on 2010. Due to the small sample size, the gap closure must be interpreted with caution.

Table TAS4: Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, from Year 7 to Year 10 and Year 7 to Year 12, 2011 (per cent)

	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Year 7 – Year 10	115.2	100.3
Year 7 – Year 12	44.7	71.6

Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia, 2011*, (Cat. No. 4221.0)

Performance indicator 8: Grade progression ratios for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

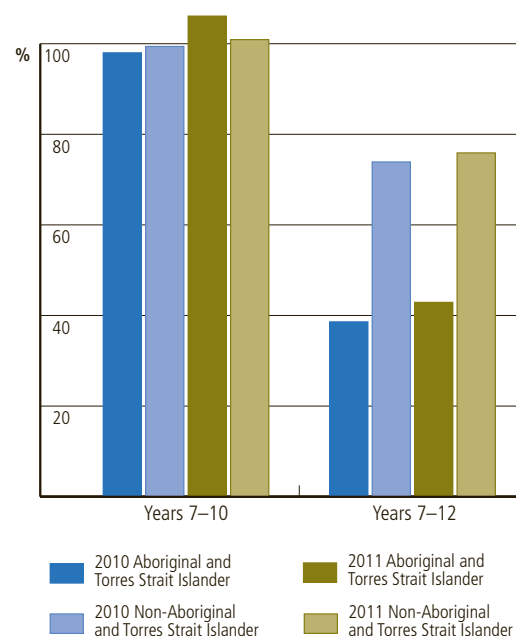
Apparent grade progression rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Tasmania were greater than 100 per cent for Year 8 to Year 9, and for Year 9 to Year 10. This increase is mostly the result of parents changing their child's identity to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander during the secondary school years. Apparent grade progression for Year 10 to Year 11 showed a gap of 28.0 per cent between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Tasmania's *Retention and Attainment Strategy Years 10–12* is part of the Department's strategic direction for government schools. The strategy aims to guide the work of the Department in improving the transition of students from Year 10 to further education and training, and on engaging students so they stay in education and training to gain a meaningful Year 12 or equivalent qualification.

Systemic level actions [25]

The Department has developed a multi-faceted approach to address declining student attendance and promote engagement. This work is based on national and international best practice for engagement of students. It involves schools making significant and sustainable changes at a system level to: become engaging schools; develop supportive cultures; implement school-wide evidenced based strategies, and implement student-focused strategies.

Figure TAS3: Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, from Year 7 to Year 10 and Year 7 to Year 12, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia, 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0)

This work is supported through the Smarter School National Partnerships, the Professional Learning Institute and the work of the Principals Network Leaders.

The Department is in the process of developing a Student Support System. Through a cyclical process of goal setting, action planning, monitoring and evaluation, this system will help schools to support all students in their academic, social, emotional, and behavioural needs. Teachers and support staff will use the Student Support System to help them to monitor student welfare, and to plan and implement support strategies in an efficient and timely manner, so that the engagement and success of all students is improved.

The Department also has systemic processes in place for monitoring and tracking attendance and facilitating follow-up where required. Schools have focused on the provision of a more culturally responsive curriculum, and building relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families' engagement and attendance has improved.

National Partnership schools reported on their attendance data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and at a system level, attendance data is closely monitored and strategies and processes put in place where required.

Strategies to improve attendance and retention in schools have targeted at-risk students including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Strategies have included close liaison between schools, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and families in supporting attendance and engaging students through, for example, home visits and regular meetings between families and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

PLPs have served as a useful strategy in emphasising the importance of attendance, and in facilitating home and school collaboration in encouraging attendance. Evidence is emerging that where PLPs are in place that attendance rates are improving.

Local level actions [26]

As part of individual School Improvement Plans, where applicable, schools identify targets around attendance rates and develop specific strategies to address this. Schools are also required to continually monitor and evaluate their attendance targets. Schools are required to report annually on their progress.

Apparent grade progression ratios

Literacy and numeracy

Performance indicators

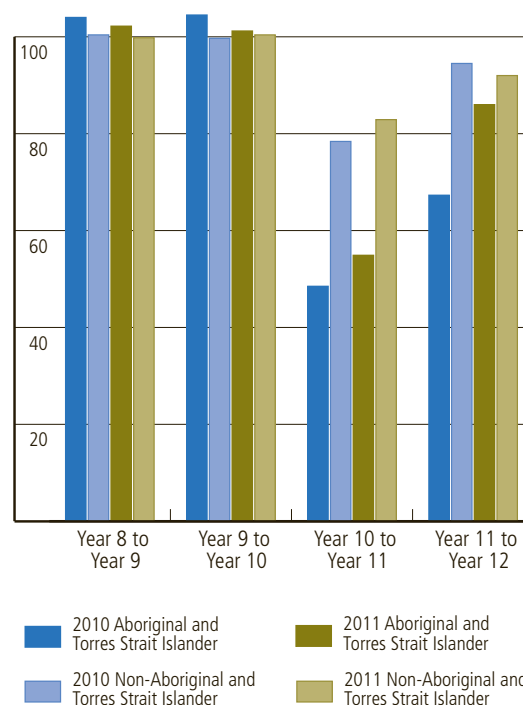
9. *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in NAPLAN testing.*
10. *Participation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in NAPLAN.*

Table TAS5: Grade progression ratios of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 2011 (per cent)

	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Year 8 to Year 9	102.2	99.8
Year 9 to Year 10	101.2	100.4
Year 10 to Year 11	54.9	82.9
Year 11 to Year 12	86.0	92.0

Source: ABS Schools, Australia, 2011, (Cat. no. 4221.0)

Figure TAS4: Grade progression ratios of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ABS, Schools, Australia, 2011, (Cat.No.4221.0)

NAPLAN outcomes

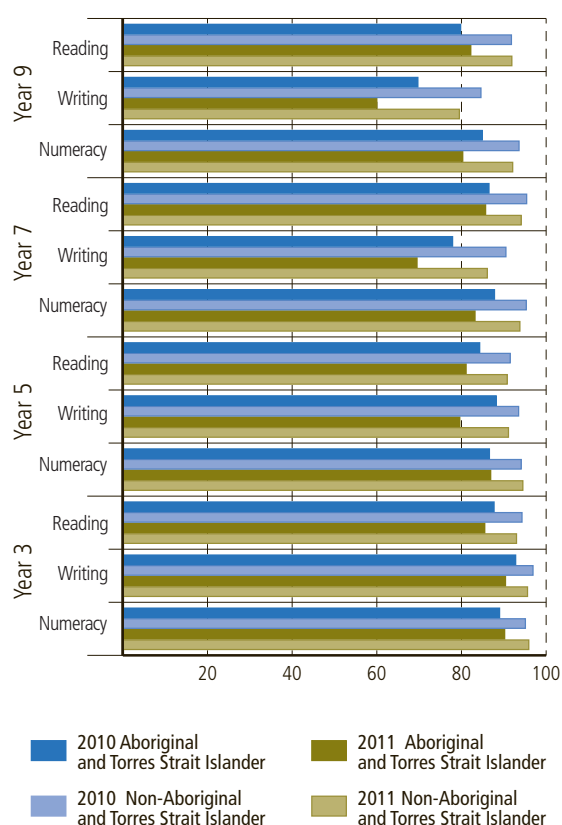
Table TAS6: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, by State, 2010–2011 (per cent)

	2010				2011			
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Gap	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander confidence intervals	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Gap	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander confidence intervals
Year 3								
Reading	87.7	94.3	-6.6	5.2	85.5	93.0	-7.5	4.3
Writing	92.8	96.9	-4.1	3.4	90.4	95.6	-5.2	3.7
Numeracy	89.0	95.1	-6.1	4.0	90.2	95.9	-5.7	4.5
Year 5								
Reading	84.3	91.5	-7.2	4.8	81.1	90.8	-9.7	4.3
Writing	88.2	93.5	-5.3	3.6	79.6	91.1	-11.5	4.3
Numeracy	86.6	94.1	-7.5	4.6	86.9	94.5	-7.6	4.4
Year 7								
Reading	86.5	95.4	-8.9	4.1	85.7	94.1	-8.4	4.1
Writing	77.9	90.5	-12.6	4.7	69.5	86.1	-16.6	6.3
Numeracy	87.8	95.3	-7.5	4.2	83.2	93.8	-10.6	5.1
Year 9								
Reading	79.8	91.8	-12	6.5	82.2	91.9	-9.7	5.3
Writing	69.7	84.6	-14.9	5.2	60.0	79.5	-19.5	6.8
Numeracy	84.9	93.6	-8.7	6.5	80.3	92.1	-11.8	5.4

Note: The confidence intervals for 2010 and 2011 in this table are specifically for Tasmania.

Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished) *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*, ACARA, Sydney.

Figure TAS5: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, by State, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished), *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*.

Overall progress

Tasmania has the smallest gaps in the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students compared to non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard for all test domains and year levels in the 2011 NAPLAN testing. On average, however, the performance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students is

lower than for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. As a consequence, improving the performance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students remains a system priority.

In Tasmania, the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students is around 5 to 12 percentage points in Years 3 and 5. This compares to gaps of 16 to 27 percentage points nationwide. In Years 7 and 9, the gap is somewhat larger at 8 to 12 percentage points in reading and numeracy, 17 percentage points in Year 7 writing, and 19.5 percentage points in Year 9 writing. The gaps for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students nationwide are substantially greater: at 19 to 22 percentage points in reading and numeracy, 26 percentage points in Year 7 writing, and 31 percentage points in Year 9 writing.

Bearing in mind the relatively large confidence intervals involved, there is little difference in the gaps between Tasmanian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from 2010 to 2011. There is perhaps weak evidence of a slight widening in the gap from 2010 to 2011 for Year 7 and Year 9 numeracy. No comment can be made on the time series data for writing due to the change in writing genre in 2011.

2011 NAPLAN data by geolocation

As shown in Table TAS7, in general, Tasmanian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students do as well as, or better than, their counterparts nationwide.

2011 NAPLAN data and 2011 progress points for Tasmania

One of the COAG 'Closing the Gap' targets is to halve the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade. To monitor achievement of this COAG target by 2018, progress points for each State and Territory were developed. The progress points for Tasmania are provided in Table TAS8.

Table NSW7: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy geolocation summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, New South Wales and Australia, 2011 (per cent)

Geolocation	Tasmania		Australia	
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Reading				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	83.8	93.1	84.2	95.2
Provincial	86.5	92.9	81.3	93.9
Remote	n/a	90.6	67.3	92.1
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	45.3	90.2
Year 5				
Metropolitan	81.8	91.5	76.7	93.4
Provincial	80.4	90.3	73.4	91.6
Remote	n/a	90.5	49.4	89.7
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	26.4	86.6
Year 7				
Metropolitan	84.6	93.5	85	95.9
Provincial	86.4	94.5	81.8	95.3
Remote	n/a	n/a	63.4	95.3
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	42.5	93.2
Year 9				
Metropolitan	80.6	92.5	78.4	93.7
Provincial	83.7	91.4	75	93
Remote	n/a	87.7	54.6	91.5
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	29.3	89.5
Writing				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	88	95.8	88.1	96.4
Provincial	91.9	95.4	85.9	95.8
Remote	n/a	98.1	70	94.6
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	46	93.3
Year 5				
Metropolitan	81.1	92.2	79.8	94.6
Provincial	78.4	90.3	75.9	92.1
Remote	n/a	90.5	50.7	90.5
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	28.4	88.1
Year 7				
Metropolitan	66.4	87.2	77.2	93.5
Provincial	71.6	85.4	71.1	90.1
Remote	n/a	n/a	47.4	90.2
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	28.4	87.6
Year 9				
Metropolitan	54.1	81.2	63.4	88
Provincial	64.2	78.1	55	82
Remote	n/a	64.1	33.8	78.6
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	20.6	78.2
Numeracy				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	87.1	95.9	88.6	96.5
Provincial	92.1	95.8	87.2	96
Remote	n/a	95.6	77	95.7
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	63.3	94.9
Year 5				
Metropolitan	87	94.7	83.8	95.7
Provincial	86.6	94.5	80.6	94.8
Remote	n/a	88.5	62.8	94.5
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	42.4	92.4
Year 7				
Metropolitan	79	93.1	84.5	95.7
Provincial	85.9	94.3	81.3	95.1
Remote	n/a	n/a	61.7	94.9
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	41.6	93.4
Year 9				
Metropolitan	74.9	92.1	78.4	94.4
Provincial	83.9	92.1	73.9	93.4
Remote	n/a	92.8	58.9	91.9
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	33.5	90.3

n/a not applicable

Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished) *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*, ACARA, Sydney.

In 2011, Tasmania met all its progress points in reading and numeracy except reading in Year 9, and numeracy in Year 7 and Year 9. Tasmania notes that the prescribed gap closure target for Tasmania is ambitious. The gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Tasmania is, in general, the smallest in the nation. In addition, the gaps for Tasmania observed in 2008 have been the lowest observed for many domains and year levels in all NAPLAN testing.

NAPLAN participation

In general, the participation of Tasmania's Year 3 and Year 5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students is 5 to 6 percentage points higher than the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students nationwide. In Year 7 and Year 9, Tasmania's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student participation is around 2 to 3 percentage points higher than for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students nationwide.

Table TAS8: Reading, writing and numeracy progress points for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, achieving at or above the national minimum standard (2008–2011) (per cent)

Year	Reading				Writing				Numeracy			
	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9
2008	88.4	84.5	89	90.7	94.2	83.8	81.9	68.9	94.5	87.8	92.4	88.5
2009	88.4	84.5	89	90.7	94.2	83.9	81.9	69	94.5	87.8	92.4	88.5
2010	88.5	84.6	89.1	90.8	94.3	84	82.1	69.2	94.5	87.9	92.5	88.6
2011	88.6	84.8	89.3	90.8	94.4	84.3	82.3	69.7	94.6	88	92.5	88.7
2018	90.8	87.7	91.8	92.2	95.9	89	86.7	77.6	95.7	90.5	94	90.9

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2008–2011

Table TAS9: Reading, writing and numeracy participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, exemptions, absences/withdrawals and assessed students, in Tasmania and Australia, 2011 (per cent)

	Year 3		Year 5		Year 7		Year 9	
	Tas.	Aust.	Tas.	Aust.	Tas.	Aust.	Tas.	Aust.
Reading								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95.2	90.1	96.6	90.8	89.1	88.8	81.5	79.0
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	97.5	96.2	97.3	96.7	96.5	96.5	92.3	93.7
Writing								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94.9	89.8	96.2	90.7	90.6	89.0	82.6	79.4
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	97.4	96.1	97.3	96.6	96.3	96.6	92.8	94.1
Numeracy								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94.3	89.0	95.4	89.7	89.3	87.6	80.6	78.0
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	97.0	95.9	96.9	96.3	95.8	96.2	91.3	93.2

Source: ACARA (2011) *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*, ACARA, Sydney.

Systemic level actions [30]

The Raising the Bar, Closing the Gap Strategy is a continuing program with funding targeted for schools most in need to enable further support for children to finish primary school with functional literacy and numeracy skills.

An ongoing State government commitment of \$8 million per annum, targeted for 28 primary and combined schools in 2012, is supported by an evaluation by the University of Tasmania in 2011, which suggested that the Raising the Bar, Closing the Gap initiative is building the capacity of school leaders and teachers to assist students to achieve positive results.

Schools will be using their student outcome data and their knowledge of their students' learning needs to monitor success. Through the school improvement planning process, and specifically in the development of school-based Literacy and Numeracy Plans, principals and teachers will regularly revisit, review, refine and refocus priorities and action in classrooms.

In response to the NAPLAN 2011 results, a strategy has been developed and implemented. The strategy will see each school carefully analysing their school data to identify specific aspects of literacy and numeracy that require further focus. Schools have also been provided with additional data to assist with their analysis, as well as direct access to web-based teaching resources and strategies and support. In addition, the Curriculum and Educational Performance Services teams are providing further school level support, including help desk assistance to aid their analysis and planning.

Principals and teachers are translating their findings into revised Literacy and Numeracy Plans at the school level, and implementing teaching and learning strategies to address the identified areas of future focus.

Local level actions [31 and 32]

Focus schools continue to use a range of data sources to inform intensive literacy and numeracy support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the first three years of schooling and, where applicable, are provided with ongoing support throughout schooling. In addition, schools liaise closely with the Department's data service to monitor and guide their literacy and numeracy programs and inform teaching practice.

A number of Focus schools have participated in professional learning to inform teaching practice, as well as develop a whole-of-school approach to teaching Standard Australian English literacy and numeracy.

Leadership, quality teaching and workforce development

Performance indicators

11. *Number of professional development hours on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and cultural and linguistic competence training undertaken by principals and teachers.*
12. *Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals, teachers and education workers (AIEWs and equivalents).*
13. *Average length of service of principals and teachers in hard-to-staff schools with high enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*

Overall progress

States and Territories agreed to provide a descriptive statement for Performance Indicator 11 for the 2011 Report.

A total of 1,500 hours of professional development on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and cultural and linguistic competence was delivered to principals and teachers.

Table TAS10: Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals, teachers and education workers (AIEWs and equivalents), Tasmania, 2011 classification

	Number	FTE
Teachers	39	31.8
Principals	2	2
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers	43	35.8

Source: Department of Education, Tasmania, unpublished data.

Table TAS11: Average length of service of principals and teachers in Focus schools with high enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, Tasmania, 2011

Classification	Average length of service (years)
Teachers	14.8
Principals	24.7

Source: Department of Education, Tasmania, unpublished data.

According to the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) commissioned Australian Council for Education *Staff in Australia's Schools 2010: Main Report* (Table A7.4, p. 193), (available online at: <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/Documents/SiASMainReport.pdf>) the average number of years of teaching experience for teachers at Focus Schools nationwide was 15.3 and 15.8 at primary and secondary schools respectively. The average number of years of teaching experience at Focus schools for principals was 24.3 at primary schools and 22.7 at secondary schools. The figures for Tasmania, as presented in Table TAS11, are very similar to the national statistics.

Systemic level actions [41 and 42]

The Department is committed to developing its leaders and supporting its workforce through professional learning embracing cultural understandings and high expectations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Work to increase the degree to which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are embedded into, and across, the Australian Curriculum for all schools has continued. This is supported in schools through the implementation of Tasmanian Cultural resources developed by Aboriginal Education Services. Eight schools statewide received targeted support in 2011.

During 2011, the Dare to Lead program conducted seven new and two return snapshots with government schools, and one new and one return snapshot with Catholic schools. Snapshots continue to inform school planning. The Dare to Lead

program also provided all schools with a variety of professional development opportunities.

In collaboration with Dare to Lead and the Professional Development Institute, three days of inclusive leadership training focusing on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education was provided for 25 teachers statewide.

Planning processes were also put in place to ensure principals and leadership teams from a number of Focus schools will be able to participate in a leadership program focusing on improving learning outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students during 2012.

The Department allocates funding directly to Focus Schools to assist with the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers (AIEWs). AIEWs assist schools in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and families. An additional five AIEWs were employed as part of the *maana* schools initiative in 2011.

In 2011, AEYLOs and AEOs continued to assist schools to build their capacity to provide culturally responsive and inclusive learning environments and actively promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and family engagement, attainment and successful transitions, from birth to five years-of-age and students in Years 8 to 12.

Information relating to this domain in independent schools was unable to be obtained.

Local level actions [43 and 44]

Cultural understandings training was provided by Aboriginal Education Services to the leaders and key teachers in five Raising the Bar, Closing the Gap *maana* schools and schools in the East Tamar Federation over a five-day period of spaced learning. Day One of this training was provided to the five Next Steps schools.

Educational Performances Services staff were involved in a 'From Gumnuts to Buttons' Professional Learning session – providing an interactive walk through Tasmanian history from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective.

In 2011, the Department continued its commitment to participation in the Stronger Smarter Schools Program. Rokeby Primary School was a Stronger Smarter Learning Communities

hub school and Clarendon Vale Primary School and Rokeby High School its affiliates.

Pathways to real post-school options

Performance indicators

14. *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20 – 24 who have attained Year 12 or equivalent or Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate II or above.*

Note: Although the performance indicator for this domain cites a national data source, there is no publicly available national level data for 2011.

Overall progress

Tasmania has reported two measures against this performance indicator. Table TAS12 shows the proportion of the relevant

cohort that received the Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE). To receive the TCE, students must have achieved at a significant level, including completion of a significant amount of learning, as well as meeting 'everyday adult' standards in reading, writing and communication, mathematics, and use of computers and the Internet. Students are also required to have submitted a pathway plan, which includes their career goals and the education and training they need to reach them. Table TAS13 shows the proportion of the relevant cohort that has completed the equivalent of two years of full-time, post-Year 10 study.

While there is still a substantial gap in the attainment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students compared to non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, there is evidence of a gap closure in recent years. In 2011, 21 per cent of the relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cohort received a Tasmanian Certificate of Education, compared to 45 per cent of the non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cohort – representing a gap of 24 percentage points. The relevant figures from 2010 are 18 per cent and 44 per cent respectively – representing a gap of 26 percentage points.

Table TAS12: Persons aged 15 to 19, Australian Citizens or permanent residents, completing some education or training in a given year (student counts and percentages of estimated resident 18 year-old population (ERP)) who met the standards required for the award of the Tasmanian Certificate of Education, in 2010 and 2011

	2010		2011	
	Count of students	Per cent of ERP	Count of students	Per cent of ERP
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	81	18	96	21
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	2,742	44	2,766	45

Source: Tasmanian Qualifications Authority, unpublished data

Table TAS13: Persons aged 15 to 19, Australian Citizens or permanent residents, completing some education or training in a given year, who have attained at least 120 credit points (equivalent of at least two years full-time study) – student counts and percentage of estimated resident 18 year-old population (ERP), 2010 and 2011

	2010		2011	
	Count of students	Per cent of ERP	Count of students	Per cent of ERP
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	140	30	168	37
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	3,791	60	4,013	65

Source: Tasmanian Qualifications Authority, unpublished data

Similar gap closure is evident in the proportions of students completing the equivalent of two years full-time in post-Year 10 education, where the gap was 30 percentage points in 2010 and 28 percentage points in 2011.

Systemic level actions [48, 49 and 50]

Youth Connections services in Tasmania are targeted at young people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, aged 11 to 17, with service delivery primarily focused on early intervention, particularly at the transition points of Year 6 to Year 7 and, to a lesser extent, Year 10 to Year 11. In each region, the Department's Learning Service Management Team works with providers to identify specific schools or federation of schools as focus areas for Youth Connections. Close links between the Youth Connections program and Tasmanian education sectors has led to strategic joint planning.

Regional Advisory Committees have been established to guide the implementation of the Youth Connections and Partnership Brokers programs in Tasmania. Each Committee is chaired by a local representative from the Department's Learning Services, who is nominated by Learning Service General Managers. Membership includes Youth Connections and Partnership Brokers providers and local education stakeholders from the Department, Tasmanian Polytechnic, Tasmanian Academy, Catholic and independent school sectors and Australian Government DEEWR representatives. Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people is a key focus for committees.

The story of a Tasmanian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student's involvement with the Youth Connections program was showcased as part of the Youth Connections Success Stories, profiled on the DEEWR Youth Connections website, at: <http://transitions.youth.gov.au/sites/transitions/successstories/pages/youthconnectionssuccessstoriesrollup>.

The Alma Lily Stackhouse Scholarship was launched in 2008 to honour Aunty Alma's commitment to the education of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. The scholarship offers a two-year bursary of \$3,000 per annum to support an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student from a remote or rural area to complete their Year 11 and 12 studies. The goal of the scholarship is to facilitate the attainment of the tertiary entry requirement to enter university, or other tertiary

level study. The scholarship is administered by the Department's Aboriginal Education Services.

The initiative was chosen to feature as one of the 19 case studies DEEWR commissioned the production of, in 2011, to share some of the innovative, tailored and supportive options that are helping more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to attain Year 12, or an equivalent qualification.

The Department's Retention and Attainment Strategy (Years 10 to 12) is part of the Department's strategic plan for government schools in Tasmania. The focus of this strategy is what needs to be done in the senior secondary years of schooling. The strategy aims to improve the transition of students from Year 10 to further education and training, and to engage students so they stay in education and training to gain a meaningful Year 12 or equivalent qualification. The strategy also outlines the partnership with the University of Tasmania on the project, Student Retention Beyond the Compulsory Years in Rural, Regional and Disadvantaged Communities.

The Department is committed to increasing the use of all technologies across schools. This is achieved through eLearning, which is a suite of coordinated services that supports flexible and eLearning approaches across the Department. Many schools are adopting these approaches in order to provide more flexible, responsive and engaging programs for students.

This is further supported through the deployment of a Virtual Learning Environment across schools, colleges and the Tasmanian Polytechnic. The eCentre team, based in Curriculum Services, manages communication and collaboration tools for Tasmanian teachers and students to further support quality online teaching and learning. The eLearning Programs service of the Tasmanian eSchool manages the coordination and delivery of a suite of online programs to students throughout Tasmania, and the Flexible Learning Network provides services to college students.

Local level actions [51, 52, 53, 54 and 55]

Tasmania's commitment to improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Year 12 attainment is informed by Tasmania's Closing the Gap strategy.

During the course of 2011, government schools worked within the guidelines of this strategy in implementing initiatives towards improving pathways to further education, training and employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

Each Year 10 student in government secondary schools is provided with an opportunity to develop a Pathway Plan, in consultation with Pathway Planning Officers and teaching staff. All schools were expected to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, their families and community to develop students' individual Personal Learning Plans, as a recognised factor that contributes to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student success and engagement.

Schools provide individual learning opportunities, mentoring and case management strategies to increase retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to Year 12. Case management includes mentoring and linking with post-Year 10 options, school-based traineeships and employment services.

Aboriginal Education Officers have a specific role in actively promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student engagement, attainment and successful transitions, through Years 8 to 12. Aboriginal Education Officers are part of a school-based network of staff who support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and community engagement, learning and pathways development. These services are provided through the Department's Aboriginal Education Services.

In 2011, Aboriginal Education Services developed a proposal to offer a pilot Junior Ranger program in 2012 that would involve a group of 16 Year 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from around Tasmania. The proposal was successful, and was funded through the Australian Government's Working on Country Program, through the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities. The aims of the program are:

- that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the program will learn about the pathway into becoming a Parks Ranger (and/or pathways into other careers in the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service) and
- that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the program work with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisation, or other workplace within the land and sea management and conservation space.

The Junior Ranger program directly relates to the priorities and actions for Aboriginal Education Services in implementing the Closing the Gap in Aboriginal Educational Outcomes 2010–2014 Operational Plan Priority Area: Pathways to Real Post-school Options.

In 2011, planning commenced for a pilot program focused on high achieving Year 8 to Year 12 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families, aimed at promoting and supporting Year 12 or equivalent attainment. An initiative of Tasmania's Low SES School Communities National Partnership PY10 Transition Strategy, the program will be undertaken at three senior secondary colleges (Years 11 and 12) and their feeder secondary schools. This pilot program is also a key engagement strategy of the Department's Retention and Attainment Strategy, Years 10 to 12.

The Springboard to College Bursary is open to Year 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students for study in Years 11 and 12, and is aimed at redressing retention rates and encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to continue with their education from secondary school to college and then on to university. The Bursary is administered through the Tasmanian University Foundation, and the Tasmania Scholarships Office, and is an initiative of the Riawunna Centre, located on the various campuses of the University of Tasmania, to provide academic and cultural support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and degree programs in Aboriginal Studies for all students. Successful applicants are also provided with access to mentoring and campus visits.

The Tasmanian Catholic Education Office employs support personnel including mentors to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Catholic schools in pathway planning.

As part of their senior secondary studies in 2011, a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students undertook school-based apprenticeships and traineeships in a range of industry areas including banking, retail and automotive. Some students undertook their school-based traineeship through the Aboriginal School-Based Traineeship Program. Through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), a number of college students (in Years 11 and 12) undertook work placements with the national broadcaster in 2011.

Career development services are provided to Years 10 to 12 secondary school students, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families, in government schools through such initiatives as the Guaranteeing Futures Initiative. The Guaranteeing Futures Initiative supports Year 10 students to develop and implement a personalised pathway plan, which is reviewed in Years 11 and 12. Young people are also provided with opportunities to engage in vocational learning experiences.

The provision of career development services will be a key component of a pilot program initiated through Tasmania's Low SES School Communities National Partnership PY10 Transition Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Years 8 to 12 in targeted senior secondary colleges (Years 11 and 12) and their feeder secondary schools.

Secondary schools in Tasmania are working with the School Business Community Partnerships program to increase student engagement and improve educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

The Herbs for Culture Project, which won a 2012 National Australia Bank (NAB) Schools First Seed Funding Award, is an example of such a partnership. The partnership has been brokered by the Partnerships Brokers provider in the north-west of Tasmania, Tasmanian Life Long Learning.

In collaboration with the partners (Romaine Primary School, Burnie; LINC Tasmania; the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens and the Tasmanian Polytechnic), Parklands High School will establish an Indigenous herb garden, and students and their parents will have the opportunity to engage in accredited learning and adult literacy support through the project.

LINC Tasmania (online site: <http://www.linc.tas.gov.au/>) will provide library resources, adult literacy tutors and trained support staff to assist adult learners. The Tasmanian Polytechnic will provide student support, pathway and career planning and identify opportunities for vocational education and training. The Royal Botanical Gardens will provide horticultural advice. Students and parents will undertake the research, designing, planning and development of the herb garden with guidance from the partners.

The project aims to improve students' literacy and numeracy skills, increase their cultural understandings, improve school attendance, increase self esteem, confidence and pride, as

well as supporting transition pathways between primary and secondary schools.

Good practice snapshots

Connecting Community, Country and Culture

Under the banner of Cultural Programs, Aboriginal Education Services continues to provide innovative and relevant initiatives in order to achieve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across all six domains as identified in the Action Plan.

Shared understandings between all Tasmanian education sectors and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and a commitment from each to fulfill their shared obligations to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are critical and will ultimately enrich educational outcomes for all students.' (Source: Working draft, White Paper, *Closing the Gap in Aboriginal Education: 2.3 Cultural Context*, p.5).

Each project directly relates to the priorities and actions for Aboriginal Education Services in implementing the Closing the Gap Strategy Operational Plan 2011–2014 and the Department of Education's Strategic Plan 2012–2015.

The scope of the Cultural Programs is not limited to program delivery. While Cultural Education Programs (both on and off campus) have been an integral part of Connecting Community, Country and Culture, a number of key outcomes have been achieved as a result. Not only have the Cultural Education Programs increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural understandings of participants and support staff alike, a range of outstanding, and award winning, Tasmanian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific educational resources have been produced by Aboriginal Education Services.

The resources incorporate photographic and film materials taken during Cultural Education programs, in a sense, acknowledging the participation and achievement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, support staff and community members who participated in the programs.

The resources support schools to meet the requirements of the relevant COAG National Partnership Agreements, and support teachers in including Tasmanian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific content across all learning areas within the Australian Curriculum and the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

The resources are in high demand by teachers across all education sectors. Aboriginal Education Services now enjoys strengthened relationships with the Department of Education (including the Curriculum and Leadership teams), and across agencies such as: Lady Gowrie (Early Years and childcare provider); the Tasmanian Early Years Foundation; the Dare to Lead program; Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania; the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery; the Aboriginal Children's Centre; and Education Services Australia (ESA).

The Tasmanian Aboriginal Education Resource Sets 1 and 2 have been digitized, and are available (via Scootle) to all education jurisdictions around Australia through the National Digital Learning Resource Network, as part of the Resources to Accelerate Learning for Indigenous Students Shared Content Project (RALIS).

IECB's feedback

The Department of Education is committed to working with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation for Education (TACE) and the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) to support the implementation of the various national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reforms in Tasmanian schools.

Work on a Memorandum of Understanding for 2011–2012 commenced in 2010. The Memorandum of Understanding is designed around the National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA) and the Action Plan. The MoU further supports efforts in Aboriginal Education Services and across Learning Services and schools to improve the participation and achievement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

During 2010, TACE engaged in consultations with the Aboriginal Community in Tasmania, and ensured that messages from those consultations informed the advice given from TACE to the Department of Education.

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Lit/Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
Austins Ferry Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	449	38			
Bellerive Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	345	21			
Bowen Road Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	299	33		X	
Brighton Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	679	47	X		
Brooks High School	Gov.	Provincial	631	76	X	X	
Burnie Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	373	35			
Cape Barren Island School	Gov.	Remote	7	6		X	
Clarendon Vale Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	100	31	X	X	
Cosgrove High School	Gov.	Metropolitan	250	44	X	X	
Cygnets Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	243	41			
Deloraine Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	332	40			
Dodges Ferry Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	409	38			
Dover District High School	Gov.	Provincial	95	19		X	
East Devonport Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	286	39		X	
Fairview Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	278	29	X	X	
Geeveston District High School	Gov.	Provincial	122	34		X	
Geilston Bay High School	Gov.	Metropolitan	173	35	X	X	
Glenorchy Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	429	55	X	X	
Goodwood Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	99	21	X	X	
Hillcrest Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	253	27		X	
Huonville Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	487	85			
Invermay Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	270	11	X	X	
Jordan River Learning Federation - East Derwent Campus	Gov.	Metropolitan	332	56	X	X	
Jordan River Learning Federation - Gagebrook Campus	Gov.	Metropolitan	175	36	X	X	
Jordan River Learning Federation - Herdsmans Cove Campus	Gov.	Metropolitan	156	28	X	X	
Jordan River Learning Federation - Middle School Campus	Gov.	Metropolitan	421	89			
Jordan River Learning Federation - Senior School Campus	Gov.	Metropolitan	n/a*	n/a*			
Latrobe High School	Gov.	Provincial	466	44			
Latrobe Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	326	33			
Lauderdale Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	554	29	X		
Mayfield Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	207	30	X	X	
Montello Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	292	35	X	X	
Montrose Bay High School	Gov.	Metropolitan	766	99	X	X	
Moonah Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	239	33	X	X	
Mountain Heights School	Gov.	Remote	243	44		X	
Mowbray Heights Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	497	57	X	X	
New Norfolk High School	Gov.	Metropolitan	353	42	X	X	
New Norfolk Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	274	38	X	X	
Nixon Street Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	567	39			
Oatlands District High School	Gov.	Provincial	329	17		X	
Parklands High School	Gov.	Provincial	472	74	X	X	
Ravenswood Heights Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	305	36	X	X	

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Lit/Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
Reece High School	Gov.	Provincial	621	58		X	
Risdon Vale Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	177	20	X	X	
Rocherlea Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	170	17	X	X	
Rokeby High School	Gov.	Metropolitan	216	37	X	X	
Rokeby Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	239	51	X	X	
Romaine Park Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	499	69			
Rosetta Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	382	35	X		
Sheffield School	Gov.	Provincial	467	37		X	
Smithton Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	251	57		X	
Sorell School	Gov.	Metropolitan	774	82			
Spreyton Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	449	48			
Springfield Gardens Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	315	44	X	X	
St Helens District High School	Gov.	Provincial	551	52		X	
Summerdale Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	608	41			
Table Cape Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	333	54		X	
Triabunna District High School	Gov.	Provincial	166	30		X	
Ulverstone Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	397	48			
Waverley Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	155	15	X	X	
West Ulverstone Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	241	59		X	
Windermere Primary School	Gov.	Metropolitan	421	45			
Youngtown Primary School	Gov.	Provincial	334	19			19
Leighland Christian School	Ind.	Provincial	615	37			
Dominic College	Cath.	Metropolitan	884	27	X		
John Paul II School	Cath.	Metropolitan	143	26		X	
Sacred Heart School Geeveston	Cath.	Provincial	157	24			
Sacred Heart School Ulverstone	Cath.	Provincial	260	18			
St Brigid's School	Cath.	Provincial	171	14			
St Finn Barr's School	Cath.	Provincial	260	18	X		
St James Catholic College	Cath.	Provincial	244	80			
St Peter Chanel School	Cath.	Provincial	128	15			
Stella Maris Primary School	Cath.	Provincial	419	13			

* Jordan River Learning Federation - Senior School numbers counted at Jordan River Learning Federation - Middle School

Australian Capital Territory report on activities and outcomes

Introduction

At the beginning of 2011, a total of 66,144 students were enrolled in a school in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). That figure represented an increase of 732 (1.1 per cent) since February 2010. The overall change in the number of enrolments was a result of increases of 711 (2.0 per cent) in primary schools and 106 (1.1 per cent) in colleges and decreases of 78 (0.4 per cent) in secondary schools and seven (2.0 per cent) in special schools.

In this period, there were 39,010 students enrolled in government schools. This figure was up by 157 students since 2010. The increase in total government school enrolments continued the trend of the previous two years.

The increase in government school enrolments in 2011 was accompanied by an increase of enrolments in the non-government sector. Non-government schools recorded increases in enrolments across all stages of schooling. In 2011, government schools accounted for 59.0 per cent of the total student population, with over eight in 10 (83.4 per cent) preschool level enrolments in government schools.

The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 2011 increased by 89 students (6.0 per cent) to a total of 1,569 students. Government schools increased by 75 students, while non-government schools increased by 14 students. The government sector continued to have the highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (1,283 or 81.8 per cent of total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school enrolments).

The Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn in the Australian Capital Territory supported 28 schools. Five of the primary schools within the Catholic education sector had an Early Learning Centre (ELC).

Profile of Focus schools

There were 31 primary Focus schools in the Australian Capital Territory. All Focus schools were government sector schools

and provided an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolment of 329, enrolled in Years preschool to Year 6.

Ten Focus schools were Smarter Schools National Partnership schools, with six literacy and numeracy schools and four low SES schools. All Focus schools in the Australian Capital Territory are classified as metropolitan with the exception of Jervis Bay School, which is classified as provincial.

In 2011, one Focus school was selected to participate in the Focus Schools Next Steps Initiative, which was coordinated by the Stronger Smarter Institute of the Queensland University of Technology.

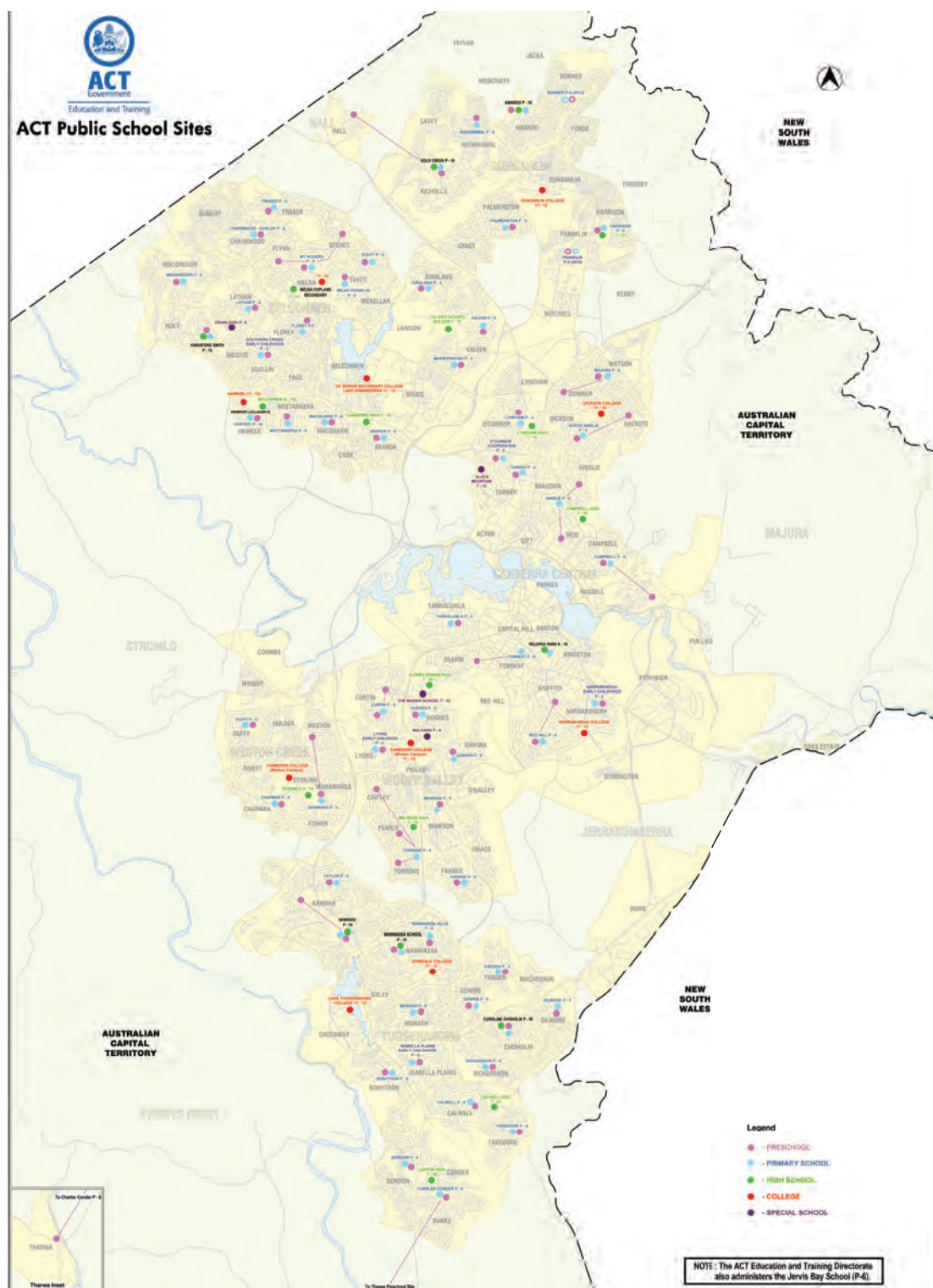
Thirty Focus schools were members of the Dare to Lead program and regularly participated in leadership activities and events in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. These included, Accepting the Challenge – Improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, a program aimed at enhancing the skills of leadership teams in schools to focus on the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

In 2011, schools in the North Canberra and Gungahlin School Network identified transition support as a priority for all schools and students. The ten Focus schools in that network approached the work by paying particular attention to the ways that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students could best be supported at key transition points in their schooling. This work involved parents and caregivers, as well as key people working in schools putting in place a range of strategies to assist students.

Similarly, the three other School Networks adopted key priorities in the areas of literacy, attendance and vocational education and training (VET) which allowed Focus schools to look at strategies through an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective.

In the latter part of 2011, the Tuggeranong Network of schools agreed that all schools would improve the attendance rates of all students from preschool to Year 12. The ten Focus schools in this network concentrated on strategies to improve attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

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Australian Capital Territory report on progress by Domains

Readiness for school

Performance indicators

1. *The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending (where possible to measure) a preschool program.*
2. *The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students assessed as ready for the first year of full-time schooling by State and Territories' measures.*

Overall progress

The Australian Capital Territory has experienced a steady improvement in the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in preschool programs during the past four years.

The continuation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific, Koori Preschool Program, offered on five sites across the Australian Capital Territory was one key strategy that actively promoted the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents in the education of their children from an early age. This program provided opportunities for parents and caregivers of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children to participate in a structured learning program from birth to five years of age. By enrolling in the Koori Preschool Program, parents and caregivers were able to access up to a total of 21 hours of preschool for their children each week. In August 2011, it was reported that a total of 76 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were enrolled in and attending the Koori Preschool programs offered.

Systemic level actions [5, 6 and 7]

All students in government preschool programs in the Australian Capital Territory are assessed on their readiness for schooling

using the Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (PIPS) assessment tool. This tool assesses readiness in the areas of reading and mathematics.

Progress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students during their kindergarten year was, on average, less than their non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peers, particularly in reading. This is reflected in the lower mean-scaled score and the lower proportion of students making expected or better progress.

Being able to identify those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who made less than expected progress in either reading or mathematics allowed resources to be allocated to schools, or redirected from existing school resources, to deliver intensive literacy or numeracy focused support to those students.

An early childhood learning program specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from birth to five years of age, the Koori Preschool Program, was delivered at five of the Focus schools. Children under three years of age attended with a parent or caregiver. All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged four, by 30 April each year, could access nine hours per week in the Koori Preschool program, in addition to 12 to 15 hours in a local preschool program.

Parents and caregivers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were three years old (by 30 April each year) could apply for early entry into local preschool programs. Early entry gave these children access to 21 to 24 hours per week in a preschool program (nine hours in the Koori Preschool program, and 12 to 15 hours in the local preschool program) over an 18 month-period prior to their commencement in kindergarten.

Five primary schools in the Catholic education sector had an Early Learning Centre. In 2011, there were no Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in these centres. The Early Learning Centres were regionally based within the Australian Capital Territory and available to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. The Early Learning Centres and all schools had access to the Catholic Education Office appointed Aboriginal Education Officer, and the three school-based Aboriginal Education Assistants for advice and assistance. The Aboriginal Education Assistants were able to work with families, liaising with health and family support groups.

Table ACT1: Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending a preschool program, Australian Capital Territory and Australia, 2011

	Australian Capital Territory		Australia	
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	All children	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	All children
Number of children enrolled	116	5,309	10,167	233,128
Children enrolled (per cent)	97.5	112.7	75.7	80.8
Number of children attending	107.0	4,598	9,536	225,886
Percentage of children enrolled that are attending ^(a)	95.5	98.0	93.8	96.9
Percentage of children attending ^(b)	90.0	96.3	71.0	78.3

- a) Calculated as per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled.
- b) Calculated as per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over Estimated Resident Population (ERP). ERP Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 4 year olds at June 2011, New South Wales = 4,027; Australia = 13,427.
- c) Due to data collection limitations, South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland have not reported on unique counts of children in preschool. However, episodes – counts of the instances of preschool programs provided to a child without accounting for duplication – are available for these jurisdictions. For information on methodologies and concepts of the preschool enrolment data please refer to explanatory notes in the ABS publication, *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates 2011* (Cat. No. 4240.0).
- d) Because early childhood education is not compulsory, and children can be enrolled in multiple preschool programs, the collection of unit record level (URL) data on preschool programs is seen to be fundamental in addressing data quality issues, both to eliminate duplication and to gain an accurate count of records at the child level. An episode is a term used in the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection to refer to an 'instance of learning' that a child has received. When one child is attending two different preschool programs, the same child is attending two episodes of preschool (i.e. may be double-counted). This affects the Australia totals but not the New South Wales figures. New South Wales provided URL data so children enrolled in a preschool program in New South Wales are not double-counted in Table 1.
- e) While there have been improvements in consistency of reporting across jurisdictions, it should be noted that Preschool Education Estimates have not yet achieved complete alignment with nationally agreed standards.
- f) For information on adjustments for 2006 Census undercount and the methods used to calculate projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, see explanatory notes in the ABS publication, *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991–2021* (Cat.No.3238.0).
- g) Estimates for the total population are sourced from ABS, *Estimated Population by Age and Sex, June 2011* (Cat.No. 3101.0). The Australia total includes 'Other territories' including Jervis Bay and Norfolk Island. However, Jervis Bay and Norfolk Island are excluded from Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales totals. Therefore, State and Territory Estimated Resident Population numbers will not add to Australia totals.
- h) In the absence of population estimates by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status for inter-censal years, non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population figures are calculated by subtracting projections of the Indigenous population from estimates of the total population.
- i) Enrolment data for enrolled children in the Australian Capital Territory includes the count for non-government school programs, obtained from a separate source. ACT attendance data includes children attending government and long day-care programs only. Attendance data for non-government schools is not available.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates 2011* (Cat.No.4240.0) *Estimated Population by Age and Sex, June 2011* (Cat.No. 3101.0 DO002); *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991–2021* (Cat.No.3238.0)

Local level actions [8]

Whilst there was no Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) undertaken in 2011, system-based literacy and numeracy assessment is implemented at the beginning and end of kindergarten. Student growth in literacy and numeracy was recorded at a system level. In individual cases, linguistically and culturally appropriate on-entry assessment programs were implemented.

All Focus schools in the Australian Capital Territory provided education programs for children from preschool. One of the Focus schools is an early childhood school providing learning programs for children to Year 2. Three schools provided learning programs for children and young people up to Year 10, while the remaining 26 schools were preschool to Year 6.

Table ACT2: Proportion of children in the Australian Capital Territory assessed as 'developmentally on track' in four or more domains of the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), 2009 (per cent)

	Australian Capital Territory	Australia
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (per cent)	53.5	42.5
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (per cent)	68.0	68.6

Notes:

- The AEDI population comprises children with at least one valid domain score.
- Children are deemed to be developmentally 'on track' if they scored above the 25th percentile of the national AEDI population in four or more AEDI domains.
- Where Standard Australian English is not the child's first language, there may be an over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are assessed as developmentally vulnerable in the 'language and cognitive skills' or the 'communication skills and general knowledge' domains of the AEDI. Cultural differences in the child's mode of communication and general knowledge also needs to be acknowledged and taken in consideration when reviewing the AEDI data.

Source: Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), unpublished *Australian Early Development Index data*, 2009 data collection

One Focus school, which hosted the Koori Preschool, participated in a network-wide initiative to develop strategies that supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at key transition points in their schooling. In the same school network, nine other Focus schools participated in this initiative to develop and implement effective strategies to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. A key element of that work was positive and flexible strategies to engage with the parents and caregivers of students to develop transition plans. The outcome of the work will be evaluated and reported on at the end of a validation period in 2012.

Engagement and connections

Performance indicators

- Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with personalised learning strategies in place.*
- Proportion of Focus schools with a school – community partnership agreement in place.*

Overall progress

The Archdiocese at Goulburn has made a strategic commitment to the development and implementation of personal learning plans (PLPs) since 2010. The Catholic Education Office has developed a template for the plans to be written using Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-related (SMART) goals at the school level in consultation with: parents and caregivers; students; classroom teachers; Aboriginal Contact Teachers; Aboriginal Assistants and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, if requested.

In our National Partnership schools there was a commitment to creating school – community partnerships through Cultural Immersion programs and the development of cultural competency through professional learning.

Government schools in the Australian Capital Territory embarked on the process of working with their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to develop both formal and informal agreements at the beginning of 2008. Since that time, the process has evolved and throughout 2011, schools

and communities either worked together to develop cluster or individual school documents articulating the commitment that will be made to improve learning outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. These documents were either in the form of Reconciliation Action Plans or School and Community Partnership Agreements.

Throughout 2011, a total of 31 schools, participating either in clusters or individually, launched their Reconciliation Action Plan or School and Community Agreement. One cluster of schools, involving ten schools and their families, released the third iteration of its agreement in August 2011.

In addition to involving the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Consultative Group, schools also worked with the United Ngunnawal Elders Council, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body, and other key community organisations including: Gudan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation; Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service; and the Australian Capital Territory Aboriginal Sporting Corporation, to engage with parents and caregivers around specific education and other relevant services which all contributed to encouraging young people to remain connected to, and involved with, education programs to Year 12 and beyond.

Systemic level actions [15, 16, 17 and 18]

The Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn through the Aboriginal Education Officer, the Aboriginal Contact Teacher and the Aboriginal Assistants liaised with schools and community as to the availability of early childhood education, health, welfare, family support and youth and community services. The Aboriginal Contact Teacher was appointed from within the teaching staff of each school.

The roles of Aboriginal Contact Teachers included:

- liaising with Aboriginal Education Assistants
- coordinating activities such as liturgies and excursions
- providing advice and authentic resources and programs to assist classroom teachers in implementing the Aboriginal Cross-Curriculum Priority in the Australian Curriculum in their school

- coordinating an audit of the school using the National Dare to Lead Framework to inform planning
- completing reports required to measure achievements towards targets established by COAG and the Catholic Education Office
- attending cluster meetings twice a year for professional learning, to cover topics which included: writing of PLPs; use of SMART goals and the implementation of the 'Yarning Strong' resource in schools.

The Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn liaised with Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Services, Gudan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation and Australian Capital Territory Child and Family Centres to: support the provision of culturally safe holistic health services; enhance the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth; and assist families concerning early intervention strategies.

The role of the Aboriginal Education Assistant in Catholic schools in the Australian Capital Territory was regularly reviewed and developed to meet the needs of individual schools. Assistants participated in ongoing professional learning in literacy and numeracy with the goal of improving student outcomes.

School accountability was enhanced through the implementation of personal learning plans. The submission of Term reports by the Aboriginal Contact Teacher documented the progress against essential elements of the plan to enhance student outcomes, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cross-curriculum priorities and cultural competence.

In the government school sector, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were employed in two discrete roles. In secondary schools there were seven Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Officers, whose roles were to: assist staff connect and build relationships with parents and caregivers of students; monitor attendance of students; and work with staff to deliver programs that aim to improve key areas of learning. In the primary school sector, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers work specifically in classrooms to assist teachers to deliver quality learning programs to students, support the specific learning needs of students and advise on ways to develop more culturally inclusive curriculum plans for

implementation across the school. This involved the facilitation of meetings with local and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as well as fostering ongoing relationships with members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Consultative Group.

Positions were established to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the early years of learning, as well as continuing to implement strategies to involve parents and caregivers on a regular basis in the education of their children. These officers supported the transition of students from preschool to their next stage in schooling, and worked with parents and teaching staff to develop and monitor the progress personalised learning plans.

In 2011, a total of twenty young parents, the majority of whom were mothers, were enrolled in a program that allowed these young people to continue to remain engaged in, or complete, their education. The curriculum for these young parents was strongly connected to the regular provision at colleges, as well as tailored to respond to individual plans concerning post-school options.

Local level actions [19, 20 and 21]

Whilst the Community Partnership Agreement and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family forum were not been formally implemented, conversations between community, families and schools were ongoing through the meetings related to personal learning plans and cultural programs.

The personal learning plans for students are written in Term One using SMART goals and reviewed at the end of Semester One. This was linked to parent–teacher interviews. These plans were reviewed and enhanced in Term Four, in preparation for the new school year.

Throughout 2011, 13 schools, from a total of 31 schools that had developed either a school and community partnership agreement or a Reconciliation Action Plan, were Focus primary schools. The relationships that were established with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and community members contributed to the development of priorities focusing on

the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, specifically and clearly articulated in local school plans.

Ongoing collaboration with secondary schools and colleges meant that the articulated commitment allowed for the allocation of subject-specific support. This support was used locally to employ teachers to work with students to successfully complete requirements for their academic year.

At the beginning of 2011, the Australian Capital Territory commenced the rollout of more comprehensive pathways planning for students in Years 7 to 12. This will be extended from the beginning of 2012 to include pathways planning for students from Year 5 through to Year 12. Since 2008, government primary schools have been implementing processes to develop effective personalised learning plans for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. A challenge for schools was to identify ways that will successfully involve parents and caregivers of all students in monitoring, reviewing and planning their child's education.

Throughout 2011, the Australian Capital Territory commenced the development of clear guidelines for use by teachers and parents to assist with the development of transparent plans. That work will be completed in draft form in 2012. It is planned that an accompanying document will be developed to promote and clarify the myths around personalised learning plans.

Attendance

Performance indicators

5. *Attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in schools.*
6. *Enrolment to population ratio of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians compared to other Australians.*
7. *Retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*
8. *Grade progression ratios for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*

Attendance rates

Overall progress

Attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the Australian Capital Territory improved slightly during 2011, compared with results for 2010. This was the result of an improvement in attendance for students in Years One to Six.

Attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students remained significantly lower than for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Attendance continued to drop in later school years for all students, with the decrease greater for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students than for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Caution is advised in the interpretation of attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the Australian Capital Territory due to the small number of students.

Enrolment to population ratio

For 2011, school participation rates have not been published by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status due to concerns with the quality of the indicator. Specifically, the rates for most States and Territories exceed 100 per cent, primarily as a result of modal differences in the data sources. The denominator is sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Estimated Resident Population series, itself drawn from the Population Census, while the numerator is sourced from the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC). The Australian Bureau of Statistics is working to provide a substitute measure.

Table ACT 3: Student attendance rates Years 1 to 10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, by sector, 2011 (per cent)

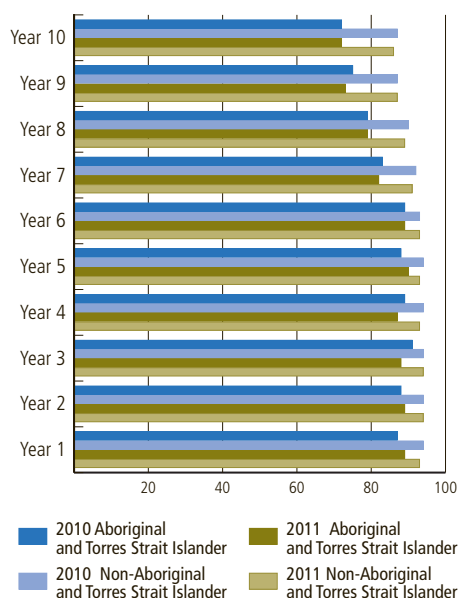
	Year level										Ungraded	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Prim.	Sec.
Government												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	89	89	88	87	90	89	82	79	73	72	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93	94	94	93	93	93	91	89	87	86	n/a	n/a
Total	93	93	94	93	93	93	91	89	87	86	n/a	n/a
Catholic												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	91	85	90	86	93	95	90	89	88	92	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	93	94	94	94	94	94	91	91	90	n/a	n/a
Total	94	93	94	94	94	94	94	91	91	90	n/a	n/a
Independent												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95	96	94	93	90	99	95	91	100	98	n/a	n/a
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	95	94	94	95	94	95	94	94	93	n/a	n/a
Total	94	95	94	94	95	94	95	94	94	93	n/a	n/a

Note: Definitions and methodologies used by jurisdictions and sectors to collect attendance data are not uniform. As such, direct comparisons of attendance rates between jurisdictions and sectors cannot currently be made. Nor can attendance data for 2011 be aggregated or averaged at the national or State/Territory level. Variations in methodology between jurisdictions are described in the explanatory notes for the 2011 attendance data contained in the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) *National Report on Schooling in Australia 2011*.

n/a not applicable

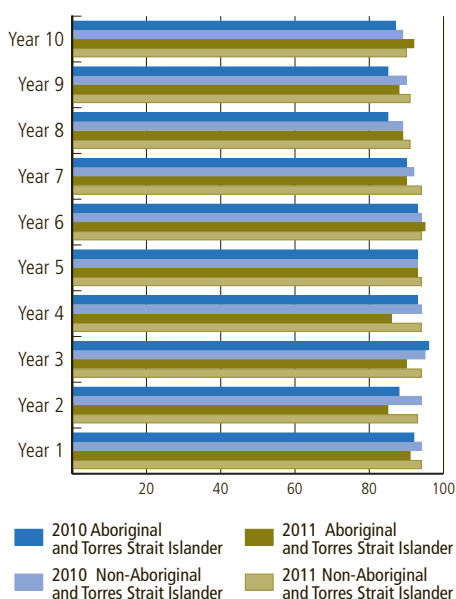
Source: ACARA, *Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011* (unpublished)

Figure ACT2.1: Student attendance rates Years 1 to 10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, government sector, 2010 and 2011 (per cent)



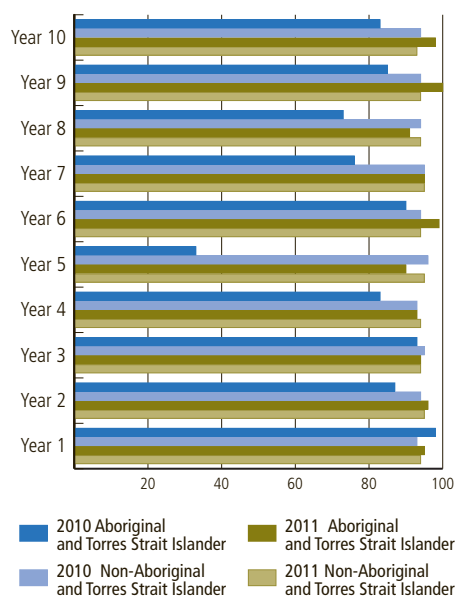
Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished).

Figure ACT2.2: Student attendance rates Years 1 to 10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, Catholic sector, 2010 and 2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished).

Figure ACT2.3: Student attendance rates Years 1 to 10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, independent sector, 2010 and 2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished).

Apparent retention rates

Apparent retention rates amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the Australian Capital Territory improved both over time and against non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander retention rates.

The apparent retention rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from Year 7 to Year 10 in 2011 exceeded that for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Apparent grade progression ratios

Apparent grade progression ratios for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 2011 were slightly lower than 2010. Caution is advised in the interpretation of apparent grade progression ratios for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students due to the small number of students.

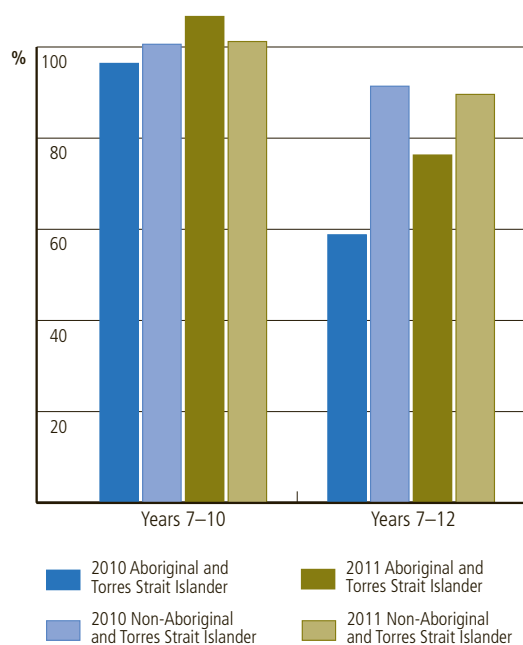
Table ACT4: Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, from Year 7 to Year 10 and Year 7 to Year 12, 2011 (per cent)

	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Year 7 – Year 10	106.7	101.2
Year 7 – Year 12	76.3	89.6

* Includes all affiliations

Source: ABS, National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC), Table 64a – Apparent Retention Rates (ARR). Schools, Australia (Cat. No.4221.0)

Figure ACT3: Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from Year 7 to Year 10 and Year 7 to Year 12, government schools, 2010 and 2011 (per cent)



Source: ABS, Schools, Australia, 2011, (Cat.No.4221.0)

Table ACT5: Grade progression ratios of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 2011 (per cent)

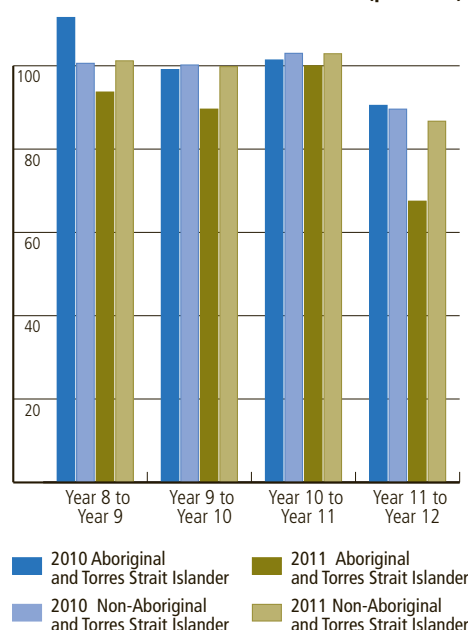
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Year 8 to Year 9	93.7	101.2
Year 9 to Year 10	89.6	99.8
Year 10 to Year 11	100.0	102.9
Year 11 to Year 12	67.5	86.7

Notes:

- Grade progression rates show the number of students at each year level as a percentage of the number enrolled in the previous year.
- Full-time students only.
- Care should be taken when interpreting these rates since a range of factors affecting the calculation are not taken into account, such as students repeating a year of schooling, movements between schools and systems or States and Territories and net changes to a school or system's population. There is also the effect of ungraded students – they are not included in the calculations of rates.
- Components may not add due to the rounding.
- Issues that may affect comparability over time can be found in Explanatory Notes, ABS, Schools, Australia, 2011 (Cat.No.4221.0).

Source: ABS, Schools, Australia 2011 (Cat.No.4221.0)

Figure ACT4: Grade progression ratios of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 2010 and 2011 (per cent)



Source: ABS, Schools, Australia, 2011, (Cat.No.4221.0)

Systemic level actions [25]

Similar to other jurisdictions, attendance policies were in operation in all education and training sectors in the Australian Capital Territory and are reviewed and updated regularly. There was a high priority given to the attendance of all students enrolled in schools across the Australian Capital Territory. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, attendance patterns and overall retention to Year 12 was supported by individual initiatives at the school level, as well as systemic approaches involving the strategic placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Officers in secondary schools to work with the school staff and parents and caregivers of students.

The inclusion and delivery of initiatives focusing on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' culture has contributed to regular attendance patterns in some schools, while in other schools, the relationships with parents and caregivers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who have become involved in the life of the school had more visible effects. This was evident in schools that worked closely with parents and caregivers, as well as students to develop Reconciliation Action Plans and more culturally inclusive curriculum plans.

Local level actions [26]

Within the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn, schools located in the Australian Capital Territory reported students with high levels of engagement with education throughout their schooling years. The retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are well above the equivalent national average.

In late 2011, principals in one network of government schools identified improved attendance for all students as a priority from preschool to Year 12. Those principals were provided with information relating to attendance rates for all schools in the network. An immediate result of making that information available was an agreement by the Focus schools in the network to concentrate their efforts specifically on improving attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. A project plan was developed in collaboration with the Network Leader and key principals to commence as early as possible in 2012.

Whilst enrolling children in preschool programs is not compulsory, every effort is made to engage with parents and caregivers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in a preschool program. This strategy contributes to ongoing participation of parents in their children's education and the overall life of the school.

Individual schools do not develop local school attendance plans and strategies specifically targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. A broader approach is taken to encourage and maintain regular attendance of all students. Schools that report concerns relating to attendance patterns of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are provided with assistance to meet with individual families and where appropriate, strategies are developed to support the family.

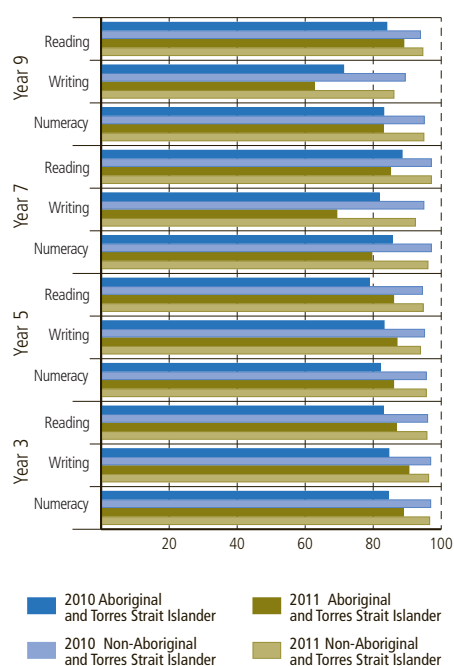
Literacy and numeracy

Performance indicators

9. Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in NAPLAN testing.
10. Participation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in NAPLAN.

NAPLAN outcomes

Figure ACT5: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, Australian Capital Territory, 2010 and 2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished), *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*.

Table ACT6: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, Australian Capital Territory, 2010 and 2011 (per cent)

	2010				2011			
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Gap	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Confidence Intervals	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Gap	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Confidence Intervals
Year 3								
Reading	83.0	96.0	13.0	±9.0	86.8	95.8	9.0	±8.7
Writing	84.6	96.9	12.3	±6.7	90.5	96.3	6.2	±5.3
Numeracy	84.4	96.9	12.3	±12.5	88.9	96.6	7.7	±7.8
Year 5								
Reading	78.9	94.5	15.6	±9.6	86.0	94.7	8.7	±8.3
Writing	83.2	95.1	11.9	±8.5	87.0	93.9	6.9	±7.3
Numeracy	82.1	95.6	13.5	±9.3	86.0	95.6	9.6	±9.2
Year 7								
Reading	88.5	97.1	8.6	±6.4	85.1	97.1	12.0	±7.1
Writing	81.8	94.9	13.1	±8.6	69.3	92.4	23.1	±11.6
Numeracy	85.6	97.1	11.5	±7.5	79.6	96.1	16.5	±8.6
Year 9								
Reading	84.0	93.9	9.9	±10.8	89.0	94.6	5.6	±8.5
Writing	71.3	89.4	18.1	±11.5	62.7	86.1	23.4	±13.4
Numeracy	83.1	95.0	11.9	±9.1	83.0	94.9	11.9	±8.5

Note: The confidence intervals for 2010 and 2011 in this table are specifically for ACT.

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2010 and 2011

2011 NAPLAN data by geolocation

The Australian Capital Territory has no remote or very remote locations, and a very small number of people living in provincial areas.

Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander results were similar to those for metropolitan areas in other jurisdictions. With the exception of Year 7, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the ACT achieved better results than those in metropolitan areas of other jurisdictions.

Having said this, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the Australian Capital Territory continued to perform at a lower

level than non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander metropolitan students in both the Australian Capital Territory, and for Australia as a whole.

2011 NAPLAN data and 2011 progress points for the Australian Capital Territory

One of the COAG 'Closing the Gap' targets is to halve the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade. To monitor achievement of this COAG target by 2018, progress points for each State and Territory were developed. The progress points for the Australian Capital Territory are provided in Table ACT8.

Table ACT7: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy geolocation summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, Australian Capital Territory and Australia, 2011 (per cent)

Geolocation	Australian Capital Territory		Australia	
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Reading				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	88.6	95.8	84.2	95.2
Provincial	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.
Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Year 5				
Metropolitan	85.7	94.7	76.7	93.4
Provincial	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.
Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Year 7				
Metropolitan	86.1	97.1	85.0	95.9
Provincial	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.
Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Year 9				
Metropolitan	89.0	94.6	78.4	93.7
Provincial	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.
Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Writing				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	90.7	96.3	88.1	96.4
Provincial	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.
Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Year 5				
Metropolitan	87.6	93.9	79.8	94.6
Provincial	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.
Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Year 7				
Metropolitan	69.3	92.4	77.2	93.5
Provincial	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.
Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Year 9				
Metropolitan	62.7	86.1	63.4	88.0
Provincial	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.
Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Numeracy				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	89.7	96.6	88.6	96.5
Provincial	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.
Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Year 5				
Metropolitan	86.1	95.6	83.8	95.7
Provincial	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.
Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Year 7				
Metropolitan	79.6	96.1	84.5	95.7
Provincial	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.
Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Year 9				
Metropolitan	83.0	94.9	78.4	94.4
Provincial	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.
Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Very Remote	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

n/a not applicable

n.p. not available for publication

Source: ACARA, National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), 2011

Table ACT8: Reading, writing and numeracy progress points for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, achieving at or above the national minimum standard, 2008–2011 (per cent)

Year	Reading				Writing				Numeracy			
	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9
2008	84.9	81.1	94.3	84.2	89.5	82.1	84.1	73.4	88.4	82.3	90.3	83.8
2009	83.5	77.4	86.5	78.1	88.2	79.4	76.0	71.3	83.3	83.6	84.0	81.9
2010	83.0	78.9	88.5	84.0	84.6	83.2	81.8	71.3	84.4	82.1	85.6	83.1
2011	86.8	86.0	86.1	89.0	90.5(a)	87.0(a)	69.3(a)	62.7(a)	88.9	86.0	79.6	83.0

(a) 2011 NAPLAN writing genre changed from narrative to persuasive writing, so no comparison should be made with previous results.

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2011

Overall NAPLAN outcomes

All students in the Australian Capital Territory continued to achieve at a high level in literacy and numeracy assessments. There remained challenges for different cohorts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students when compared with the rest of the student population.

In the Australian Capital Territory, professional development was available for classroom teachers to enable them to support the learning outcomes of students enrolled in all sectors of education.

In 2011, government schools were supported by literacy and numeracy officers located in primary and secondary schools. Additional support was allocated to Focus primary schools to allow the employment of relief teaching staff to work specifically with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students whose performance in reading, writing or numeracy was below the national minimum standards. Allocations were made on the basis of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolment, which meant that some schools were able to employ a casual teacher for up to three days per week to work with identified students. Allocation of funds to secondary schools enabled subject specific support to be delivered to students during class time, rather than compete with students' after-school priorities.

NAPLAN participation

Table ACT9: Reading, writing and numeracy participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, exemptions, absences/withdrawals and assessed students, Australian Capital Territory and Australia, 2011 (per cent)

	Year 3		Year 5		Year 7		Year 9	
	ACT	Aust.	ACT	Aust.	ACT	Aust.	ACT	Aust.
Reading								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	87.4	90.1	93.0	90.8	85.1	88.8	69.5	79.0
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93.5	96.2	95.8	96.7	95.7	96.5	92.5	93.7
Writing								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	86.4	89.8	94.0	90.7	86.8	89.0	74.3	79.4
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93.6	96.1	95.7	96.6	95.7	96.6	92.3	94.1
Numeracy								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	86.4	89.0	93.0	89.7	86.0	87.6	73.3	78.0
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93.3	95.9	95.1	96.3	95.3	96.2	92.2	93.2

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2011

Systemic level actions [30]

All schools in the Australian Capital Territory are classified as metropolitan schools, with the exception of Jervis Bay School, which is classified as provincial. Whilst there were professional development opportunities offered to teachers of students who required English as a Second Language (ESL) support, there were no specific programs delivered for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 2011. Discussions occurred throughout 2011 with Jervis Bay School and members of the Jervis Bay and Wreck Bay Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to identify ways to develop a series of teaching and learning strategies to include the local Aboriginal language in whole-school learning plans. That work will continue throughout 2012.

Local level actions [31 and 32]

In 2011, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in National Partnership schools participated in programs in literacy and numeracy. Those programs provided guidance to assist in targeting resources to meet the specific learning needs of individual students.

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn further supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by implementing the Pearson and Gallagher *Gradual Release of Responsibility Model* to provide instruction to students in literacy. The instruction was skill-based, explicit and systematic, through the guided and applied approach of the model. The model places emphasis on an integrated and balanced approach to literacy, and supports embedding literacy blocks into school practice.

In 2011, a strong research-based approach was adopted to support the teaching of mathematics. This involved synthesising a number of models aimed at achieving effective and consistent approaches to the teaching of mathematics. Teachers were required to develop common understandings and language around pedagogical approaches, and provided students with a contextual, relevant and effective learning environment.

Teaching staff, in schools across the Australian Capital Territory, were committed to using data to inform their teaching practices and the selection of developmentally appropriate teaching and learning activities. More rigorous analysis of

NAPLAN, kindergarten and Year 1 assessment, and based upon the priority of individual schools, PAT R (Reading) and PAT Mathematics, Neale Analysis and Nelson Mathematics were the focus.

Monitoring of individual students and cohorts of students was done across all schools with an emphasis on 'putting faces on the data'.

The Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn delivered professional learning to classroom teachers in Catholic schools on an ongoing basis, particularly in First Steps, Count Me In Too, Primary Connections, cultural competency and the development of personalised learning plans for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

In the government school sector, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Officers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers were employed in schools to support staff and students. Education Officers have a primary role of assisting the school to establish or strengthen relationships with parents and caregivers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Years 7 to 10, while the Education Workers were based in primary schools to specifically work in classrooms with students and teachers. Professional learning was offered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Officers and Education Workers in 2011 to enhance their skills in supporting students.

Leadership, quality teaching and workforce development

Performance indicators

11. *Number of professional development hours on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and cultural and linguistic competence training undertaken by principals and teachers.*
12. *Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals, teachers and education workers (AIEWs and equivalents).*
13. *Average length of service of principals and teachers in hard-to-staff schools with high enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*

Overall progress

States and Territories agreed to provide a descriptive statement for Performance Indicator 11 for the 2011 Report.

Throughout 2011, the Australian Capital Territory provided opportunities for members of school leadership teams to attend and participate in discussions focusing on improving learning outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. This also promoted discussion and planning amongst school leadership teams on ways to continue to embed key elements of their work in all aspects of the schools, from preschool to Year 12.

With the support of the School Network Leaders, government school principals in the Australian Capital Territory identified work from three domains of the Action Plan as a focus for all schools. Focus schools in each network undertook a leadership

Table ACT10: Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals, teachers and education workers (AIEWs and equivalents), in the Australian Capital Territory, by sector, 2011

	FTE
Government	
Principals	1
Teaching staff	25
AIEWs and equivalents	14
Catholic	
Principals	n/a
Teaching staff	n/a
AIEWs and equivalents	n/a
Independent	
Principals	0
Teaching staff	1
AIEWs and equivalents	2

n/a not applicable

Source: Australian Capital Territory, Human Resources administrative records.

Table ACT11: Average length of service of principals and teachers in hard to staff schools with high enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (operationally defined as Focus schools), Australian Capital Territory, 2011

Classification	Average length of service (in months)		
	Government	Catholic	Independent
Principals	60	n/a	n/a
Teachers	48	n/a	n/a

n/a not applicable

Source: Australian Capital Territory, Human Resources administrative records.

role to concentrate their efforts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. That information was shared with other schools in their network to promote discussions about ways in which successful strategies could be further applied to all students.

School leadership teams actively promoted the involvement of teachers and school leaders in a practitioner-based enquiry program which enabled schools to explore one major area that either resulted in, or could result in, improving learning outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

In 2011, the Australian Capital Territory commenced work with aspiring school leaders by offering a series of one-day workshops to introduce elements of leadership in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

As part of an ongoing commitment to develop and nurture school leaders the Australian Capital Territory worked in partnership with schools to sponsor the participation of members of school leadership teams in the Stronger Smarter Leadership in Indigenous Education program, provided through the Stronger Smarter Institute.

Ongoing participation in professional development and learning programs delivered through Principals Australia saw

the attendance of 50 members of school leadership teams at national conferences provided by the Dare to Lead program.

A focus of the Australian Capital Territory in 2011 was the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers and Education Officers in Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificates III and IV Indigenous Education Assistant program delivered through the Canberra Institute of Technology.

Catholic schools are located in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn. These schools have made significant progress in 2011 in improving evidence-based teaching, whole-school engagement in literacy and numeracy and performance monitoring through a range of activities based on whole-school intervention and leadership training, professional development, mentoring and program support.

Systemic level actions [41 and 42]

The Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn had an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contact teacher who was allocated relief days to assist in developing and implementing programs. This initiative was in its third year, and professional learning was an instrumental component of the contact teachers' development. Professional learning courses delivered included topics on cultural competency, literacy and numeracy and quality teaching.

In government schools across the Australian Capital Territory, the Education and Training Directorate introduced a program aimed at improving or enhancing leadership in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. The program's content was delivered by key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from different States and Territories, who presented information about their experiences in education. It suggested challenges that schools should be working to resolve. Key amongst these are establishing and/or strengthening relationships with parents and caregivers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Consultative Group participated in these activities and provided invaluable advice and suggestions about how to access Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations.

Local level actions [43 and 44]

The Australian Capital Territory commenced an initiative in 2008 titled, *Accepting the Challenge – Improving learning outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students*. The initiative provided high-level training in leadership to improve learning outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The target group for the first two years of this initiative was school principals of government schools and managers in central office. In 2008 and 2009, the overall participation rates were 100 per cent.

In 2010 and 2011, the program was adjusted to include deputy principals of all government schools. The participation rate of deputy principals was 100 percent. At the end of the 2011 school year, a total of five of the deputy principals were successfully appointed to positions as principals of government primary schools and secondary schools.

The program was delivered by key nationally recognised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and covered topics including inclusive curriculum and the importance of establishing sustainable relationships with parents and caregivers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

To continue the work aimed at supporting school leaders in schools in all sectors across the Australian Capital Territory, the Education and Training Directorate agreed to promote future activities amongst other education and training providers. This approach will assist schools to deliver ongoing support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who move between sectors at different stages of their schooling.

Participation in the *Accepting the Challenge – Improving learning outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students* initiative provided school leaders with opportunities to meet with and establish meaningful relationships with key community groups, which also provide support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families. Members of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Consultative Group and former students of schools in the Australian Capital Territory regularly participate in and contribute to these events.

During 2011, secondary schools in the Australian Capital Territory began offering homework and study support to students after school hours. Staffing and supervision for these

activities was provided by the schools, which also endeavoured to provide students with opportunities to access subject specific academic support by inviting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from local universities to contribute as tutors.

The range of external services offered in the Australian Capital Territory that were frequently accessed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members was diverse and community-based. Examples of these included: the Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Medical Service; Gudan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation; and Child and Family Centres, which were strategically located across the Australian Capital Territory. For the two key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities located in Jervis Bay, there are local service agencies situated at Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community.

The priorities, performance measures and key actions outlined in the Action Plan provide a framework for committed action by every school principal and provide innovative responses to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and their communities. Catholic schools in the Canberra and Goulburn Archdiocese have tailored operations to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by providing access to health services and youth and community programs.

A program has been established to facilitate professional discussions by principals from all education and training sectors in the Australian Capital Territory and region.

The team leadership for school improvement was implemented in each of the National Partnership schools in 2011. This was a professional learning initiative that focuses on the development, implementation and evaluation of whole-school planning. This program provides support for school teams through the process of achieving targets associated with their school's priority areas. Seven key concepts provide a scaffold for improved student outcomes.

In 2011, the Catholic education sector reviewed teacher induction and support programs with a focus on strengthening teacher mentoring. A new educator training program for mentor teachers was offered to experienced teachers in 2011. The Teacher Education Committee approved the development of a formal Mentor Program and will be offered in 2012 as a unit contributing to a Masters Degree or Graduate Certificate.

Principals and deputy principals in the Catholic education sector were offered a coaching program during 2011. The leadership program for government schools, which commenced in 2010, was completed in early 2011 by 140 school leaders and executive staff. Thirteen senior Catholic school principals completed a similar program during 2011.

In 2011, the Catholic education sector commenced delivery of a cultural competence program. This program was available for all school leaders and teachers in schools that have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled.

Pathways to real post-school options

Performance indicators

14. *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20 – 24 who have attained Year 12 or equivalent or Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate II or above.*

Note: Although the performance indicator for this domain cites a national data source, there is no publicly available national level data for 2011.

Overall progress

In the Australian Capital Territory all students are required to attend school until they reach 17 years-of-age, or they complete Year 12. The three education providers offer education courses up to, and including, Year 12. The range of courses in the senior years of schooling include those that aim to prepare students for further education at university, as well as a range of Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses as part of the Australian School-Based Apprenticeship program and other Certificate II courses associated with the Australian Qualifications Framework.

In 2011, the Australian Capital Territory commenced discussions with key stakeholders, including parents and caregivers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and careers and vocational education and training groups, to develop a set of guiding principles for pathways planning. The initial discussions focused on students and young people in the secondary years of schooling to support the development of student pathways plans. The information that schools obtained from those plans

Table ACT12: The number of Year 12 Certificates completed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, Australian Capital Territory, 2011

Qualification	Students
Year 12 Certificate	45
Year 12 Certificate and VET Certificate	8
VET Certificate but no Year 12 Certificate	1
Neither Year 12 nor VET Certificate	2

Source: ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies

Table ACT13: The number of vocational qualifications completed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at AQF Certificate II and above, Australian Capital Territory, 2010 and 2011^(a)

	2010	2011 ^(a)
Certificate II and Above – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	206	n/a
Certificate II and Above – Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	5,945	n/a

Note:

- (a) Data for qualifications completed in 2011 are based on preliminary data submissions. The 2011 data will be revised upwards in the 2012 VET Provider Collection to accommodate further notification of qualifications completed.
- (b) The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status 'not stated' for the Australian Capital Territory was 2,645 in 2010.
- n/a not available

Source: National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), VET Provider Collection, 2011

identified areas where a diverse range of subject specific academic support was required to assist students.

Government secondary schools and colleges in the Australian Capital Territory were provided with funding on a per capita basis to support the subject specific academic needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by employing casual teaching staff, university students and graduates to work during school hours with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

students, particularly in the areas of English and mathematics. This approach provided opportunities for students to discuss aspects of their class work with the tutors employed under this arrangement and contributed to the completion and submission of course work.

To further support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students successfully complete secondary school to Year 12, Student Aspiration Coordinators worked closely with the 56 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and relevant school-based personnel to advise students about post-school options and the requirements for applying for entry to training and further education programs.

An initiative introduced by the Australian Capital Territory government provided scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in their final years of schooling who expressed an interest in pursuing teaching as a career. In 2011, there were ten scholarship recipients: five Year 11 students and five Year 12 students. In addition to this initiative, the Year 12 students were encouraged to apply for a tertiary scholarship for teacher education upon gaining acceptance to the University of Canberra.

The Canberra Region Pathways Trade Training Centre (CRPTTC) has provided an integrated approach to education that supported the range of academic and vocational pathways opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The CRPTTC derived value from partnerships with industry practitioners, vocational educational and higher education providers and the community for the benefit of participants. The CRPTTC assisted students to establish a vocational career pathway in conjunction with school studies, and provided them with employment opportunities in the construction and hospitality industries.

Systemic level actions [48, 49 and 50]

Each of the colleges in the Australian Capital Territory appointed a Moving Forward Officer whose role was to work closely with all Year 11 and Year 12 students to their successful completion of Year 12. These officers coordinated a range of activities and support for students including Australian School-Based Apprenticeships (ASBAs), VET programs and tertiary courses.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were further supported by Aspirations Coordinators, who collaborated with

the Moving Forward Officer to develop relationships with students, gather information about students' career aspirations and facilitate external activities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, relative to their prospective career choice.

Parents and caregivers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were invited to be involved in as many activities as they choose, which provided them with information and assisted in enhancing their capacity to support their child through their final years of schooling.

Students of the four Catholic colleges participating in the CRPTTC programs had the opportunity to complete their senior secondary studies with a Year 12 Certificate and AQF Certificate III level qualifications in hospitality, and an advanced pathway into AQF Certificate III in Carpentry and Joinery. This substantially increased the students' ability to secure employment in their chosen industry. Students also gained valuable industry experience, developed industry networks, gained an insight into tertiary education via their participation in Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) programs and further qualifications. All courses were endorsed and recognised by the Australian Capital Territory Office of the Board of Senior Secondary Studies.

Local level actions [51, 52, 53, 54 and 55]

During this reporting period, four government secondary school students who received the Australian Capital Territory Education and Training Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Scholarship received an offer to university, while a fifth student took up employment with the view to returning to tertiary study in the future.

In 2011, 56 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students completed Year 12. Forty-five of these students received a Year 12 Certificate, while eight achieved a Year 12 Certificate and a Vocational Education and Training (VET) Certificate. Table ACT12, supplied by the Australian Capital Territory Board of Senior Secondary Studies, provides detail of the results achieved.

In the Australian Capital Territory, all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students had access to the training opportunities that were on offer. All colleges in the Australian Capital Territory had provision in place to support students in their learning, and also provided extended opportunities for those who were passionate

about the industry area, or who wished to pursue further qualifications. Students in Years 11 and Year 12 had access to the Australian National University Secondary College program. Assistance in the academic requirements of each course was available through the Tjabal Indigenous Higher Education Centre located at the Australian National University.

The four Catholic Education Colleges also offered a wide variety of vocational courses as Registered Training Organisations. The communication and collaboration required for CRPTTC had a positive impact on the broader operation of vocational education and training in schools, particularly in the areas of: training pathways; CIT liaison officer; inter-school liaison and collaboration; procurement of teacher training upgrades; and opportunities provided to students. The key characteristics of CRPTTC – flexibility, partnerships and quality teaching – ensured the positive direction of the Canberra Region Pathways Trade Training Centre into the future. The designated Careers Advisor in each college provided support and information through regular meetings, emails, pastoral care classes, forums and expos.

The use of the learning management system, Studywiz/Moodle, enabled students to access relevant training. The development of flexible learning areas where students could meet with each other and different trainers, independently of scheduled lessons, enabled them to keep up to date with training and discuss any issues or challenges that they may have had. These areas were staffed and/or resourced so that students were provided with opportunities to meet their goals. The use of ICT in the curriculum allowed students to access course information and courses across the colleges, which they might not otherwise have accessed. These approaches contributed to a more flexible timetable to support students and staff in the delivery of quality learning programs.

Since 2010, the Australian Capital Territory has offered a program of Australian School Based Apprenticeships (ASBAs) specifically designed to target Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and delivered by the Indigenous Social Inclusion Company. During this reporting period, the program was based at a government college and worked with 35 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in Years 11 and 12. The students undertook study and work related activities in AQF Certificate II in Community Recreation and Certificate III in Community Activity.

The Priorities Support Programs (PSP) funding provided access to quality vocational education and training to target groups including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The funding supported vocational education and training courses, which provided real opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians to have their skills recognised and to move back in to the workforce or to change careers. This was achieved through an extensive process of recognition of prior learning, gap training for existing workers and up-skilling of people not in the workforce, and who may have required additional skill sets to add to their previous work experience.

Good practice snapshots

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Aspirations Program, established in 2009 as an elective program that supports the successful completion of Year 12 and the transition to tertiary education for middle to high achieving students in Australian Capital Territory government schools, continued to grow in 2011. In 2011, 131 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students actively participated in the program. Students were selected based on their NAPLAN results and in consultation with school principals and families. In 2011, the program offered a range of activities and experiences, designed to enhance, engage and enrich each student's schooling life.

A goal of the program is to increase the number of students successfully transitioning to higher education. From Year 5 to Year 10, students had the opportunity to explore tertiary institutions in the Australian Capital Territory through events, campus visits, enrichment programs and 'come and try' days. This was done in partnership with the Tjabal Centre at the Australian National University and the Ngunnawal Centre at the University of Canberra. In Years 11 and 12, students had the opportunity to participate on a three-day excursion to visit Sydney or Melbourne universities. Support was also offered to assist students with university applications, scholarship applications and through liaison with university support centres with alternate entry programs.

The Australian Capital Territory Education and Training Directorate offered five scholarships per year for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The scholarships totalled \$10,000

over Years 11 and 12, for students who were interested in studying teaching at the completion of Year 12. In 2011, a total of ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students received scholarships, five in Year 11 and five in Year 12.

In addition to the Years 11 and 12 scholarships, the Directorate awarded three scholarships – totalling up to \$20,000 per year – for students who were studying education at the University of Canberra and the Australian Catholic University (Signadou Campus).

IECB's feedback

Australian Capital Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Consultative Group

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Consultative Group consult with Australian Capital Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to provide advice to all levels of government in working to achieve the Action Plan goals. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Consultative Group holds at least four community forums per year, and during these forums, articulates the goals of the Action Plan and works with the community to identify community priority areas.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Consultative Group also consults with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the Australian Capital Territory regarding current education initiatives across all education sectors. The consultation includes developing partnerships with preschool, school and tertiary education providers across all sectors in the Australian Capital Territory to enhance the delivery of education to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Whilst there have been achievements demonstrated against the Action Plan in this reporting period, there is still considerable work that remains, across all education sectors in the Australian Capital Territory. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Consultative Group will continue to work with the three education sectors and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the Australian Capital Territory to achieve the actions outlined in the Action Plan.

Australian Capital Territory Education and Training Directorate's response

The Education and Training Directorate is committed to supporting the actions of the Action Plan to continue to close the gap in educational outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the Australian Capital Territory. The Directorate acknowledges the strong partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Consultative Group, without which, these actions cannot be progressed.

The Australian Capital Territory Government recognises the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Consultative

Group as a peak Territory group representing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities regarding education and training matters in the Australian Capital Territory. The Directorate acknowledges the group's achievements in working to progress the education agenda in the Australian Capital Territory. The group has demonstrated a clear commitment to improving outcomes for children and families, whilst advocating and collaborating across education sectors and governments.

The Directorate is looking forward to continuing the strong collaborative relationship established with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Consultative Group to ensure all students in the Australian Capital Territory learn, thrive and are equipped with the skills to lead fulfilling, productive and responsible lives.

Focus school information

School name	Sector	Geolocation	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Lit/Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
Jervis Bay	Primary	Provincial	76	57	X		
Ngunnawal	Primary	Metropolitan	576	46			
Richardson	Primary	Metropolitan	227	46		X	
Charles Conder	Primary	Metropolitan	406	26	X		
Gilmore	Primary	Metropolitan	238	25			
Taylor	Primary	Metropolitan	217	17			
Theodore	Primary	Metropolitan	304	22			
Torrens	Primary	Metropolitan	484	17			
Arawang	Primary	Metropolitan	447	14			
Wanniassa	P-10	Metropolitan	289 (P-10)	41			
Wanniassa Hills	Primary	Metropolitan	416	14		X	
Kingsford Smith	P-10	Metropolitan	583 (P-10)	24			
Kaleen	Primary	Metropolitan	536	18			
Narrabundah	P-2	Metropolitan	131	39			
Gold Creek	P-10	Metropolitan	531 (P-10)	14			
Namadgi	P-10	Metropolitan	398	29			
North Ainslie	Primary	Metropolitan	353	21			
Curtin	Primary	Metropolitan	432	6			
Red Hill	Primary	Metropolitan	676	15			
Latham	Primary	Metropolitan	293	12	X		
Fraser	Primary	Metropolitan	425	13			
Macgregor	Primary	Metropolitan	407	11	X		
Monash	Primary	Metropolitan	458	12			
Majura	Primary	Metropolitan	549	11			
Lyneham	Primary	Metropolitan	404	9			
Florey	Primary	Metropolitan	429	8		X	
Charnwood-Dunlop	Primary	Metropolitan	325	13			
Amaroo	P-10	Metropolitan	976 (P-6)	7			
Ainslie	Primary	Metropolitan	463	14			
Weetangera	Primary	Metropolitan	417	7			
Caroline Chisholm	P-10	Metropolitan	233	9			

Northern Territory report on activities and outcomes

Introduction

In the 2011 school year, 43,646 students were enrolled in Northern Territory schools. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students comprised 40.9 per cent of total student enrolments with 17,861 students identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

A high proportion of schools in the Northern Territory span very remote and remote regions, with 53.5 per cent of students enrolled in schools located in provincial areas, 21.2 per cent enrolled in schools in remote areas and 25.3 per cent of students enrolled in schools located in very remote areas (based on agreed Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA), 2006, Northern Territory school geolocation categories).

In the Northern Territory in 2011, 82 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students attended government schools, 10 per cent attended Catholic schools and 8 per cent attended independent schools.

When examining the results of the Northern Territory, it is important to consider that this jurisdiction differs markedly from any other State or Territory. It has the lowest population with the highest proportion of the population living in the most socio-economically disadvantaged areas. It has by far the largest proportion of the population living in remote and very remote areas, with by far the largest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, most of whom live in these areas.

The Northern Territory does not have any areas classified as metropolitan (which includes locations such as Sydney and Melbourne). Darwin, Palmerston and rural areas are classified as provincial, Katherine and Alice Springs areas are classified as remote, and all other areas, including Tennant Creek and Nhulunbuy, are classified as very remote.

The Northern Territory has an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student cohort that is 40.9 per cent of the total school population, which is over six times greater than the next

largest proportion from any other State or Territory. Nearly half of Northern Territory students live in remote and very remote areas. Furthermore, a vastly higher proportion of these students are speakers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages from very remote communities, than occurs in any other State or Territory. These contextual factors are reflected in the overall results achieved by Northern Territory students and have a large impact on the variability in these results.

Profile of Focus schools

Of the 154 government schools and 36 non-government schools in the Northern Territory in 2011, 61 are focus schools, including 55 government schools, five Catholic schools and one independent school.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in these schools represent almost two-thirds of all Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students in the Northern Territory, and almost a quarter of all enrolments. Thirty-nine of the Northern Territory's Focus schools are classified as very remote, 12 are remote and 10 provincial (based on agreed MCEECDYA, 2006, Northern Territory school geolocation categories).

Northern Territory report on progress by Domains

Readiness for school

Performance indicators

1. *The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending (where possible to measure) a preschool program.*
2. *The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students assessed as ready for the first year of full-time schooling by State and Territories' measures.*

Overall progress

Table NT1: Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in, and attending, a preschool program, Northern Territory, and Australia, 2011

	Northern Territory		Australia	
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	All children	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	All children
Number of children enrolled	1,306	3,229	10,167	233,128
Children enrolled (per cent)	84.5	90.5	75.7	80.8
Number of children attending	1,001	2,826	9,536	225,886
Percentage of children enrolled that are attending ^(a)	76.6	87.5	93.8	96.9
Percentage of children attending ^(b)	64.8	79.2	71.0	78.3

Notes:

- a) Calculated as percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled.
- b) Calculated as percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over Estimated Resident Population (ERP). ERP Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 4 year olds at June 2011, Northern Territory = 1,545; Australia = 13,427.
- c) Due to data collection limitations, South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland have not reported on unique counts of children in preschool. However, episodes - counts of the instances of preschool programs provided to a child without accounting for duplication - are available for these jurisdictions. For information on methodologies and concepts of the preschool enrolment data please refer to explanatory notes in the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) publication, *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates 2011* (Cat. No. 4240.0).
- d) Because early childhood education is not compulsory, and children can be enrolled in multiple preschool programs, the collection of unit record level (URL) data on preschool programs is seen to be fundamental in addressing data quality issues, both to eliminate duplication and to gain an accurate count of records at the child level. An episode is a term used in the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection to refer to an 'instance of learning' that a child has received. When one child is attending two different preschool programs, the same child is attending two episodes of preschool (i.e. may be double-counted).
- e) While there have been improvements in consistency of reporting across jurisdictions, it should be noted that Preschool Education Estimates have not yet achieved complete alignment with nationally agreed standards.
- f) For information on adjustments for 2006 Census undercount and the methods used to calculate projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, see explanatory notes in the ABS publication, *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991–2021* (Cat.No.3238.0).
- g) Estimates for the total population are sourced from ABS, *Estimated Population by Age and Sex, June 2011* (Cat.No. 3101.0). The Australia total includes 'Other territories' including Jervis Bay and Norfolk Island. However, Jervis Bay and Norfolk Island are excluded from Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales totals. Therefore, State and Territory Estimated Resident Population numbers will not add to Australia totals.
- h) In the absence of population estimates by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status for inter-censal years, non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population figures are calculated by subtracting projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population from estimates of the total population. Further disaggregation of data by single year of age introduces a higher level of uncertainty, therefore caution should be exercised when interpreting this data.
- i) Excludes 3 year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in preschool programs in remote and very remote communities.
- j) Data are derived from the ABS publication, *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates 2011* (Cat.No.4240.0), and therefore includes preschool enrolments from services in the Long Day Care sector that are not recognised as registered preschool programs under the *Northern Territory Education Act*.

Source: ABS, *Preschool Education Australia, Experimental Estimates 2011* (Cat.No.4240.0) *Estimated Population by Age and Sex, June 2011* (Cat.No. 3101.0 DO002); *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991–2021* (Cat.No.3238.0)

Table NT2: Proportion of children, in the Northern Territory and Australia, assessed as 'developmentally on track' in four or more domains of the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), 2009 (per cent)

	Northern Territory	Australia
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (per cent)	24.1	42.5
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (per cent)	69.3	68.6

Notes:

- a) The AEDI population comprises children with at least one valid domain score.
- b) Children are deemed to be developmentally 'on track' if they scored above the 25th percentile of the national AEDI population in four or more AEDI domains.
- c) Where Standard Australian English is not the child's first language, there may be an over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are assessed as developmentally vulnerable in the 'language and cognitive skills' or the 'communication skills and general knowledge' domains of the AEDI. Cultural differences in the child's mode of communication and general knowledge needs to also be acknowledged and taken in consideration when reviewing the AEDI data.

Source: DEEWR, unpublished *Australian Early Development Index data, 2009 data collection*

In 2011, 84.5 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the Northern Territory were enrolled in a preschool program. Of these children enrolled, 76.6 per cent attended during the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection reference week (see notes for Table NT1).

The Assessment of Student Competency (ASC) Tool was developed to measure competencies identified as the minimum requirement for a child entering full-time schooling, in order for them to make appropriate progress in their learning. In Term 1, 2011, there were 1,284 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in their first year of full-time schooling in the Northern Territory. Sixty-one per cent of these students were assessed in the areas of literacy and numeracy awareness using the ASC. Of these groups, 20 per cent were deemed ready for their first year of full-time schooling in literacy awareness, and 15 per cent were deemed ready for their first year of full-time schooling in numeracy awareness.

The Families as First Teachers – Indigenous Parenting Support Services (FaFT – IPSS) learning and parenting support programs are operating in 21 communities across the Northern Territory to provide mentoring for families to support their children's early literacy and numeracy development. In 2011, 1,470 children and 850 parents participated in FaFT — IPSS programs.

A transition to preschool strategy was introduced in each FaFT — IPSS site to help early identification of the potential preschool

cohort, collection of enrolment details, increased school readiness of children and initial participation.

System level actions [5, 6 and 7]

Ninety-seven per cent of Northern Territory communities were able to access Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) data on their children in 2011, and 24.1 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children assessed were deemed to be developmentally on track in four or more domains.

In 2011, ongoing development of public information and educational resources has aimed to increase understanding on the influences of early childhood and the AEDI for the Northern Territory. This included a series of television advertisements, an educational DVD and a Northern Territory AEDI Report. The Menzies School of Health Research, Centre for Child Development and Education, was awarded the contract to undertake the AEDI Local Champions implementation, and worked closely with the Department of Education and Training to finalise an action plan.

Approximately 68 per cent of the 2011 Focus schools provided 15 hours or more of preschool for 40 weeks each year, at little or no cost to parents, meeting most of the major Universal Access requirements. In 2012, approximately 82 per cent of the Focus schools will be providing 15 hours of preschool to children in their year before full-time schooling.

Where possible, school principals are encouraged to deploy early childhood qualified teachers to their preschool classes. Up to 50 scholarships will be available for teachers wishing to upgrade to four-year trained and early childhood qualified in 2012. They will be available to teachers in all locations within the Northern Territory, via online and distance learning modes.

The Northern Territory Assessment of Student Competencies (ASC) Tool has been mandated for use in all Northern Territory government schools. Non-government schools have been offered access to the ASC.

Local level actions [8]

The FaFT – IPSS program is a place-based, integrated, universal services program that has been rolled out across most Focus schools in remote areas. The program builds on family knowledge of early learning through active engagement in quality early childhood education programs. Play-based programs support families through modelling, side-by-side engagement and discussion. Resources have been developed to give families information about how young children learn, and how parents can make the most of everyday opportunities.

Preschool engagement officers are now embedded in urban Focus schools. Readiness for school is also being addressed individually in each community through School Community Partnership Agreements.

Engagement and connections

Performance indicators

3. *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with personalised learning strategies in place.*
4. *Proportion of Focus schools with a school – community partnership agreement in place.*

Overall progress

The Northern Territory is building the capacity of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce to improve community engagement and participation in schools, through strengthening Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school leadership and increasing the number of qualified local recruits in schools.

In 2011, new reporting guidelines were introduced intended to maximise the proportion of students with personalised learning strategies.

Of the 55 Northern Territory government Focus schools in the Northern Territory, 38 have signed School Community Partnership Agreements, four are in draft format, 11 are in progress and two are awaiting negotiations with communities.

A range of related activity has been in train in 2011, including the development and implementation of a departmental Reconciliation Action Plan and the pilot of the Girls' Academy: Girls Engagement Mentoring and Support (GEMS) Program.

Systemic level actions [15, 16, 17 and 18]

The Northern Territory Department of Education and Training, through its Integrated Family Services initiative, has implemented strategies to connect with early childhood education, health, welfare, family support, and youth and community services at both local and system levels. At a system level, the Integrated Family Services Working Group (comprising Australian and Northern Territory government agencies, non-government and Northern Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak agencies) is leading the integration of child and family services across the Territory Growth Towns. At a local level, seven Territory Growth Towns have child and family leaders responsible for leading the integration of services. Child and family leaders are employed at Groote Eylandt, Gunbalanya, Ngukurr, Ntaria, Maningrida, Galiwin'ku and Yuendumu. Child and Family Leaders are working with community and service providers to develop a place-based integrated service model that will build on existing service provision and address gaps in services. This will be achieved through developing a shared vision that will shape an action plan to improve outcomes for children and families.

The Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments' partnership provide over \$8 million per annum for the implementation of the Families as First Teachers (FaFT) programs in the 21 Territory Growth Towns. The program is a key strategy of the Department of Education and Training's Early Years focus. Professional and local staff work in communities to develop and deliver place-based programs aimed at giving children the best start in life. FaFT staff work in collaboration with health, education, child protection and other community organisations to provide culturally appropriate service models.

Primary strategies of the program include: dual generational playgroups; parent workshops; books in homes; parent coaching and transition to preschool programs. The FaFT program is currently implementing the Abecedarian Approach strategies of Conversational Reading and Learning Games, alongside the Early Years Learning Framework. The program employs over 40 remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members. 15 Family Liaison Officers and playgroup leaders have successfully completed Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate III in Community Services Work.

The Northern Territory Department of Education and Training's Student Services Branch is engaged in consultation with other service providers, such as: childcare providers, FaFT, Health Promoting Schools Nurses, and the Department of Health and Families, to develop a project to support the needs of students who are pregnant, or are parents. The data collection phase of the project has been completed and a project reference committee is being established for the consultation stage.

Efforts are underway to review and strengthen the role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers (AIEWs) to maximise their ability to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, their parents and teachers, to improve educational outcomes in 2012.

Reporting on student achievements and progress to families and school councils takes place through a variety of approaches, in addition to the traditional written reports and parent-teacher interviews. This includes open days, displays in local newsletters, information provided at school events, teachers going to families to discuss reports, and school council meetings. Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers (AIEWs) and other staff also assist, in many cases, to ensure assessment data/information reaches the desired person. This is achieved through home visits, personal and phone contact.

Local level actions [19, 20 and 21]

All Focus schools in the Northern Territory had School Community Partnership Agreements that were either signed off or under development in 2011. The agreements encompass the key areas of attendance, community engagement and early childhood. School Community Partnership Agreements are living documents and are updated regularly.

All schools with a School Community Partnership agreement have a family forum or reference group. Schools yet to finalise their School Community Partnership Agreements each have a community reference group, which is used to drive community engagement initiatives. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents from the community comprise the majority of membership on remote schools' school councils.

Personalised learning strategies are embedded within teaching and learning programs for students at all schools. Most schools have a close working relationship with their corresponding health services. In Alice Springs, for example, there is close collaboration between the schools and the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress.

Attendance

Performance indicators

5. *Attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in schools.*
6. *Enrolment to population ratio of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians compared to other Australians.*
7. *Retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*
8. *Grade progression ratios for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*

Attendance rates

Overall progress

Whilst retention within stages of schooling is improving, improving daily attendance across all Northern Territory schools remains a challenge. At the school level, there are many instances of schools responding to local needs and adopting flexible and innovative approaches to the delivery of education. Student attendance is improving at some sites, showing that positive change in this challenging area can and does occur. For example, in Alekarenge, Nyirripi and Woolanang Schools, the average attendance over either Semester 1 or 2 in 2011 increased by more than 20 per cent, as compared to the same semester in 2010.

Table NT3: Student attendance rates, Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, by sector, 2011 (per cent)

	Year level										Ungraded	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Prim.	Sec.
Government												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	69	72	72	72	73	74	70	65	61	60	79	66
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	92	93	93	93	92	93	92	90	88	85	92	90
Total	81	83	83	83	83	84	81	79	77	76	84	89
Catholic												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	67	65	69	76	79	69	69	75	71	55	n/a	47
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	91	91	91	92	91	90	88	89	87	87	n/a	n/a
Total	82	79	83	86	87	83	81	84	82	74	n/a	47
Independent												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	74	65	74	76	68	67	81	82	85	80	n/a	54
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93	94	94	93	95	92	95	93	93	92	n/a	n/a
Total	91	90	91	91	90	88	91	90	91	88	n/a	54

Note: Definitions and methodologies used by jurisdictions and sectors to collect attendance data are not uniform. As such, direct comparisons of attendance rates between jurisdictions and sectors cannot currently be made. Nor can attendance data for 2011 be aggregated or averaged at the national or State or Territory level. Variations in methodology between jurisdictions are described in the explanatory notes for the 2011 attendance data contained in the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), *National Report on Schooling in Australia 2011*.

n/a not available

Source: ACARA Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011

In 2011, a key initiative to address attendance included adapting flexible school timetables to account for community activities and regular movements between towns and communities. These included loading core curriculum content earlier in the week; providing flexible school year programs to deliver more of the school term in the wet season; and extending the hours of operation of the school to provide older students with access to learning outside of the traditional school hours.

Other site-based attendance programs include a 'frequent attenders' club for students, and incentives for families who improve school attendance for all of their children.

While attendance is its focus, the Northern Territory Government's Every Child, Every Day strategy encompasses 36 initiatives across five priority action areas and improving engagement features strongly.

There is no significant change in attendance rates between 2010 and 2011. The variations that do exist can be attributed to the volatility caused by the small size of the cohort and the challenging factors outlined elsewhere in this chapter.

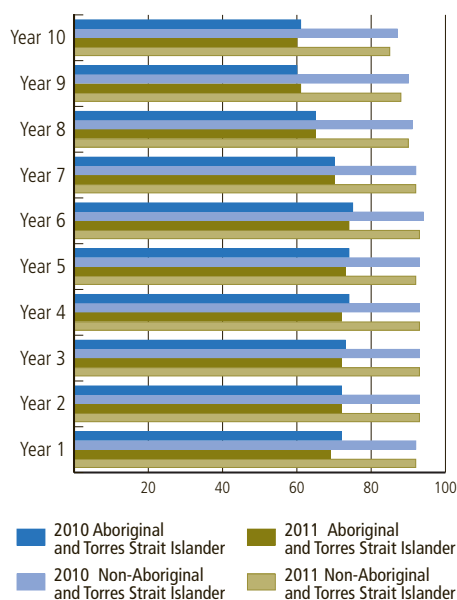
Enrolment to population ratio

For 2011, school participation rates have not been published by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status due to concerns with the quality of the indicator. Specifically, the rates for most States and Territories exceed 100 per cent, primarily as a result of modal differences in the data sources. The denominator is sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Estimated Resident Population series, itself drawn from the Population Census, while the numerator is sourced from the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC). The Australian Bureau of Statistics is working to provide a substitute measure.

Apparent retention rates

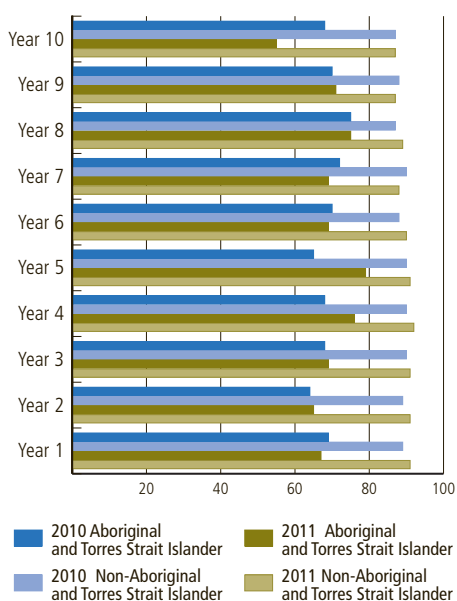
There has been a small but significant increase in retention rates to both year 10 and year 12. This may be attributed to factors such as the success of the Clontarf and Girls' Academy: Girls Engagement Mentoring and Support (GEMS) Programs, and an increased focus on Vocational Education and Training (VET).

Figure NT1.1: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, government sector, Northern Territory, 2010–2011 (per cent)



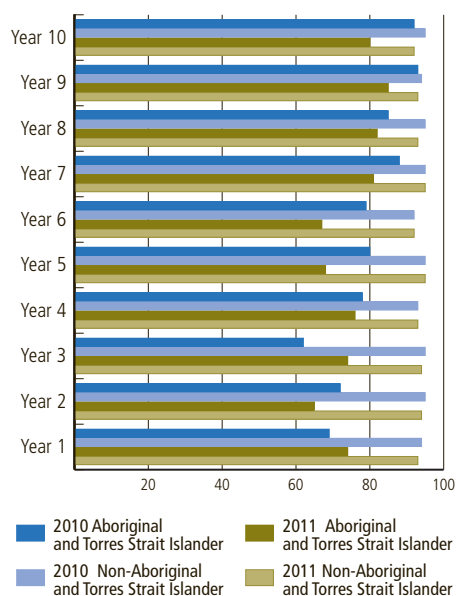
Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished).

Figure NT1.2: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, Catholic sector, Northern Territory, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished).

Figure NT1.3: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, independent sector, Northern Territory, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA, Student Attendance Data Collection, 2011 (unpublished).

Apparent grade progression ratios

An explanation for the increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student retention rates and the decrease in grade progression rates from 2010 to 2011 amongst the same cohort may be that more students are spending more than one year in a year level to consolidate their learning.

Systemic level actions [25]

The Every Child, Every Day Strategy commenced implementation in 2011 with amendments to the *Education Act* regarding enrolment, attendance and participation introduced in June 2011. An Attendance and Truancy team was created to support schools to manage chronic non-attenders within a new legislative framework with penalties for non-attendance.

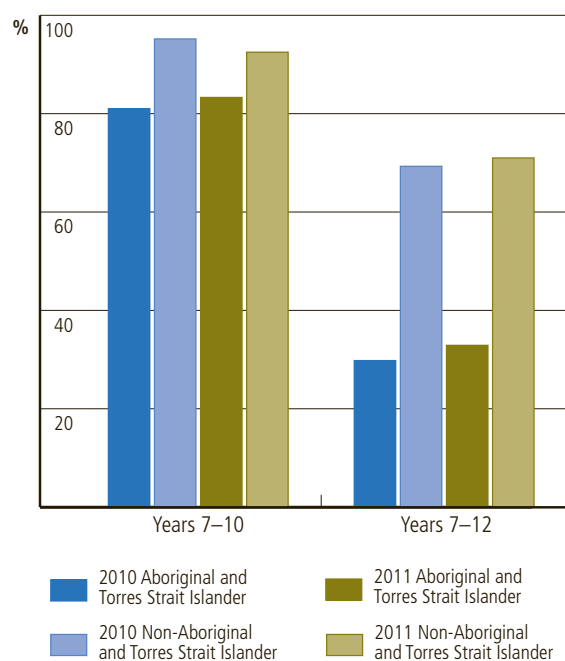
In 2011, almost 1,200 students were enrolled in programs such as Clontarf and Girls' Academy: Girls Engagement Mentoring and Support (GEMS) Programs, aimed at improving their engagement and attendance.

Table NT4: Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, from Year 7 to Year 10 and Year 7 to Year 12, government schools, 2011 (per cent)

	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Year 7– Year 10	83.3	92.5
Year 7 – Year 12	32.9	71.0

Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia, 2011* (Cat.no. 4221.0)

Figure NT2: Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, from Year 7 to Year 10 and Year 7 to Year 12, government schools, 2010–2011 (per cent)



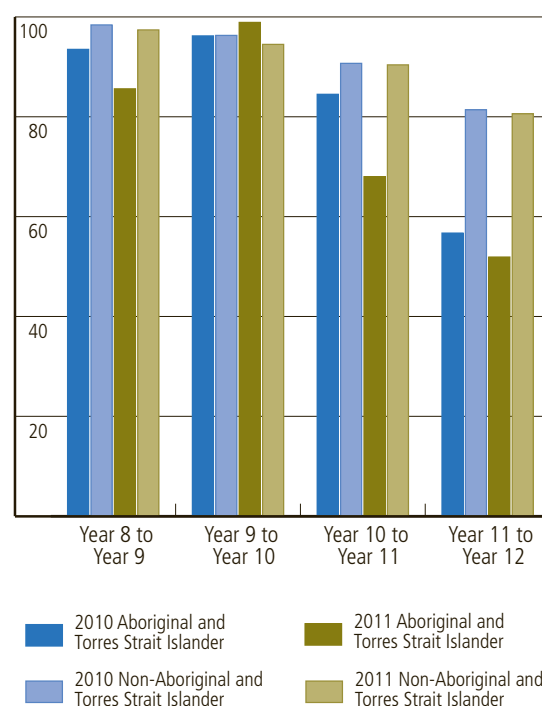
Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia, 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0)

Table NT5: Grade progression ratios of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 2011 (per cent)

	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Year 8 to Year 9	85.6	97.4
Year 9 to Year 10	98.9	94.5
Year 10 to Year 11	68.0	90.4
Year 11 to Year 12	51.9	80.6

Source: ABS, *Schools Australia, 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0)

Figure NT3: Grade progression ratios of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia, 2011*, (Cat.No.4221.0)

Local level actions [26]

All schools have attendance strategies articulated in their school plans. Schools with existing parental reference groups develop their strategies in consultation with the community group. Agreements with local shops are also assisting, for example, at Walungurru, the store does not serve fuel to cars with school-aged children as passengers during school hours.

Literacy and numeracy

Performance indicators

9. *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in NAPLAN testing.*
10. *Participation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in NAPLAN.*

Overall progress

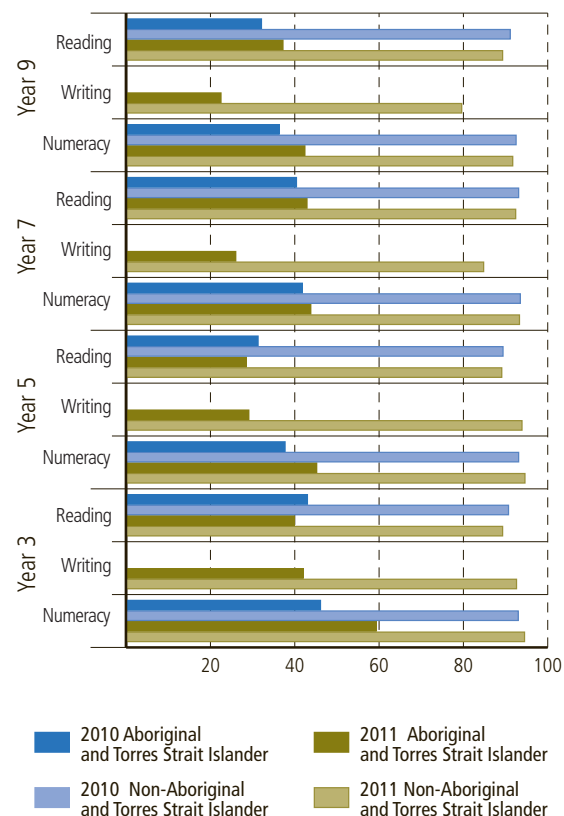
Several influences impact on student outcomes, particularly in the Northern Territory. The Northern Territory has an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student cohort that is 40.9 per cent of the total school population, which is over six times greater than the next largest proportion from any other State or Territory, and nearly half of Northern Territory students live in remote or very remote areas. Furthermore, a vastly higher proportion of these students are speakers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages from very remote communities, than in any other State or Territory. These challenges are further compounded by fact that the majority of the Northern Territory's low SES students are also Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and live in remote or very remote locations.

National and international research shows a long-standing relationship between education outcomes and student background (especially SES, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status and, to a lesser extent, geolocation). However, more recent education research demonstrates that this is not an inevitable relationship. The research shows that education systems that put in place coherent, consistent and comprehensive reform agendas, which prioritise supporting schools to undertake rigorous evidence-based whole-school improvement, can disrupt this relationship, given time. The evidence also suggests that the most significant barriers to achieving this are the beliefs and expectations of teachers, parents, principals and system administrators.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the Northern Territory are showing improvements in both test participation, as well as the number achieving at, or above, the national minimum standard. In 2011, gains in the Northern Territory cohort (e.g. Year 3 students in 2009 becoming Year 5 students in 2011) in mean scale scores exceeded the Australian average cohort gains in all test domains and year levels except Years 5 and 7 numeracy. The Northern Territory also exceeded the average Australian progress over time of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in 9 of 16 possible areas, for the period 2008 to 2011.

NAPLAN outcomes

Figure NT4: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, Northern Territory, 2010–2011 (per cent)



Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished), *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*.

Table NT6: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, Northern Territory, 2010–2011 (per cent)

	2010				2011			
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Gap	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Confidence Intervals	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Gap	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Confidence Intervals
Year 3								
Reading	43.0	90.7	47.7	±6.5	39.9	89.3	49.4	±6.5
Writing	45.3	94.2	48.9	±8.0	42.0	92.6	50.6	±6.5
Numeracy	46.1	93.0	46.9	±6.5	59.3	94.5	35.2	±5.8
Year 5								
Reading	31.3	89.4	58.1	±6.4	28.5	89.1	60.6	±6.2
Writing	30.2	89.3	59.1	±6.9	29.1	93.9	64.8	±6.2
Numeracy	37.7	93.1	55.4	±6.8	45.2	94.6	49.4	±6.6
Year 7								
Reading	40.4	93.1	52.7	±9.3	42.9	92.4	49.5	±8.3
Writing	27.5	86.6	59.1	±8.5	26.0	84.8	58.8	±7.5
Numeracy	41.8	93.5	51.7	±8.5	43.8	93.3	49.5	±8.4
Year 9								
Reading	32.1	91.1	59.0	±8.5	37.2	89.3	52.1	±9.1
Writing	24.1	82.0	57.9	±8.1	22.5	79.6	57.1	±6.7
Numeracy	36.3	92.5	56.2	±8.0	42.4	91.7	49.3	±8.6

Note: The confidence intervals for 2010 and 2011 in this table are specifically for Northern Territory.

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2011

NAPLAN outcomes

Northern Territory cohort gains (e.g. year 3 students in 2009 becoming year 5 students in 2011) in mean scale scores exceeded the Australian average cohort gains in all test domains and year levels except Years 5 to 7 numeracy. This represents a total of 11 of 12 domains reportable in 2011. Northern Territory

has the highest cohort gains in mean scale scores of all States and Territories in Years 3 to 5 numeracy, Years 5 to 7 reading; Years 5 to 7 and Years 7 to 9 grammar and punctuation and Years 7 to 9 spelling.

2011 NAPLAN data by geolocation

Table NT7: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy geolocation summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, Northern Territory and Australia, 2011 (per cent)

Geolocation	Northern Territory		Australia	
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Reading				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Provincial	68.5	88.1	81.3	93.9
Remote	59.3	92.4	67.3	92.1
Very Remote	25.2	92.9	45.3	90.2
Year 5				
Metropolitan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Provincial	66.9	87.8	73.4	91.6
Remote	47.0	92.8	49.4	89.7
Very Remote	10.8	92.3	26.4	86.6
Year 7				
Metropolitan				
Provincial	76.7	91.8	81.8	95.3
Remote	49.9	94.6	63.4	95.3
Very Remote	24.8	93.3	42.5	93.2
Year 9				
Metropolitan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Provincial	67.3	88.3	75.0	93.0
Remote	42.3	94.1	54.6	91.5
Very Remote	13.4	85.4	29.3	89.5
Writing				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Provincial	75.9	92.0	85.9	95.8
Remote	59.5	94.4	70.0	94.6
Very Remote	26.2	92.9	46.0	93.3
Year 5				
Metropolitan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Provincial	69.8	88.7	75.9	92.1
Remote	44.4	89.1	50.7	90.5
Very Remote	11.4	91.4	28.4	88.1
Year 7				
Metropolitan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Provincial	61.7	85.0	71.1	90.1
Remote	31.4	85.5	47.7	90.2
Very Remote	7.8	78.8	28.4	87.6
Year 9				
Metropolitan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Provincial	44.0	79.3	55.0	82.0
Remote	24.1	82.0	33.8	78.6
Very Remote	6.7	74.9	20.6	78.2
Numeracy				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Provincial	83.5	93.6	87.2	96.0
Remote	70.3	96.3	77.0	95.7
Very Remote	48.5	97.8	63.3	94.9
Year 5				
Metropolitan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Provincial	78.6	93.8	80.6	94.8
Remote	60.9	97.0	62.8	94.5
Very Remote	29.9	96.8	42.4	92.4
Year 7				
Metropolitan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Provincial	79.4	93.0	81.3	95.1
Remote	50.1	94.5	61.7	94.9
Very Remote	25.2	94.8	41.6	93.4
Year 9				
Metropolitan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Provincial	66.5	90.6	73.9	93.4
Remote	52.9	96.3	58.9	91.9
Very Remote	20.3	90.1	33.5	90.3

n/a not available – there are no schools in the Northern Territory classified as metropolitan.

Source: ACARA (2011 and unpublished) *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*, ACARA, Sydney.

For all year levels and domains, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in provincial areas have the highest percentage who are achieving at or above the national minimum standard across geolocations, followed by students in remote areas, and then students in very remote areas.

2011 NAPLAN data and 2011 progress points for the Northern Territory

One of the COAG 'Closing the Gap' targets is to halve the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade. To monitor achievement of this COAG target by 2018, progress points for each State and Territory were developed. The progress points for Northern Territory are provided in the table below.

The Northern Territory exceeds the average Australian 2008 to 2011 progress, over time, of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in nine out of 16 possible areas. These are: Year 3 reading, numeracy and grammar and punctuation; Year 5 numeracy and grammar and punctuation, Year 7 reading, spelling, grammar and punctuation and Year 9 spelling. The Northern Territory exceeds the average Australian 2008 to 2011 progress, over time, with regard to mean scale score in seven out of 12 possible areas. These are: Year 3 reading, grammar and punctuation, Year 7 reading, spelling and grammar and punctuation and Year 9 spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Overall NAPLAN outcomes

Across all year levels and assessment areas, the proportion of the Northern Territory students achieving at the national minimum standard remains consistently lower than other States and Territories, and the Australian average. This difference in performance was greater for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students than non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Across Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students did not perform as well as non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Northern Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students had the lowest performances in Australia as a cohort, although Northern Territory provincial Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Years 3, 5 and 7 in numeracy performed comparably to Australian provincial Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the Northern Territory performed comparably with non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across Australia. Northern Territory non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Years 3 and 5 remote and very remote students performed slightly better than the Australian average in reading and numeracy.

Year 3 numeracy students were the highest achievers in the Northern Territory, with 79.1 per cent of students achieving at the national minimum standard (16.5 percentage points lower than the Australian average of 95.6 per cent). Year 9 writing students were the lowest achievers in the Northern Territory, with 57.5 per cent of students achieving at the national minimum

Table NT8: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy progress points for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, 2008–2011 (per cent)

Year	Reading				Writing				Numeracy			
	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9
2008	30.4	25.8	32.4	37.9	46.6	32.8	29.9	32.8	52.4	38.3	50.2	46.1
2009	32.8	28.4	34.9	40.2	48.6	35.2	32.5	35.0	54.2	40.5	52.1	48.1
2010	35.2	31.0	37.5	42.4	50.6	37.6	35.2	37.1	56.1	42.7	54.0	50.1
2011	37.6	33.7	40.0	44.7	52.7	40.0	37.8	39.3	57.9	45.0	55.9	52.0
2018	60.5	58.6	64.2	66.1	71.9	62.6	60.7	59.7	75.3	66.0	73.8	70.8

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2008–2011

standard (27.3 percentage points lower than the Australian average of 84.8 per cent).

Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieved their best results in Year 5 numeracy with 94.6 per cent achieving at the national minimum standard (only 0.9 percentage points lower than the Australian average of 95.5 per cent).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieved their best results in Year 3 numeracy with 59.3 per cent achieving at the national minimum standard. This is substantially lower than the Australian average of 83.6 per cent for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in this test. The lowest achievement rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was in Year 9 writing, with 22.5 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at the national minimum standard. Again, this is a substantially lower rate than the Australian average of 55.0 per cent for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in this test.

NAPLAN participation

In 2011, average participation rates by Northern Territory students, across all year levels and assessment areas ranged

between 84.9 to 89.4 per cent, compared to a national range of between 92.4 to 96.4 per cent. Year 5 spelling, grammar and punctuation and writing students had the highest participation rate with 89.4 per cent of students participating. While Year 9 numeracy students had the lowest participation rate in the Northern Territory, with 84.9 per cent of students participating in the test, they were the closest to the Australian average, with a 7.5 percentage point difference between Northern Territory and Australian participation rates.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 2011, Year 5 writing had the highest participation rate with 82.6 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students participating in the test, while Year 9 numeracy had the lowest participation, with 68.4 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students participating in the test. Participation rates for 2011 were very similar to those for 2010.

Systemic level actions [30]

Two units of a Graduate Certificate in Education (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages [TESOL] for Indigenous Learners) were developed in 2009–2010. All teachers in remote schools are offered this professional learning. So far, 170

Table NT9: NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, exemptions, absences/withdrawals and assessed students in Northern Territory and Australia, 2011 (per cent)

	Year 3		Year 5		Year 7		Year 9	
	NT	Aust.	NT	Aust.	NT	Aust.	NT	Aust.
Reading								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	80.5	90.1	80.7	90.8	76.1	88.8	69.5	79.0
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95.8	96.2	95.8	96.7	96.6	96.5	95.3	93.7
Writing								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	82.1	89.8	82.6	90.7	78.6	89.0	72.2	79.4
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	96.1	96.1	96.0	96.6	97.0	96.6	95.7	94.1
Numeracy								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	78.8	89.0	79.7	89.7	75.2	87.6	68.4	78.0
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95.6	95.9	95.1	96.3	96.1	96.2	95.1	93.2

Source: ACARA, (2011) *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2011*, ACARA, Sydney.

teachers have completed the first five-day Intensive (Unit 1). The course content covers intercultural teaching and learning; team teaching with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff; and teaching and assessing spoken and written English. Teachers of multilingual students use the Northern Territory Curriculum Framework (NTCF) ESL levels to monitor, assess, and report English language acquisition.

Local level actions [31 and 32]

All Northern Territory government schools are required, as part of the Schools Accountability and Performance Improvement Framework, to articulate whole-school approaches to literacy and numeracy within their Four Year Strategic Improvement Plans and Annual Operational Plans.

Literacy and Numeracy Coaches work in the schools to provide support for teachers and education workers in terms of curriculum advice, support materials, planning and preparation.

Leadership, quality teaching and workforce development

Performance indicators

11. *Number of professional development hours on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and cultural and linguistic competence training undertaken by principals and teachers.*
12. *Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals, teachers and education workers (AIEWs and equivalents).*
13. *Average length of service of principals and teachers in hard-to-staff schools with high enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*

Overall progress

States and Territories agreed to provide a descriptive statement for Performance Indicator 11 for the 2011 Report.

In 2011, principals and teachers in the Northern Territory undertook 16,154 hours of professional development training on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and cultural and linguistic competence.

The average length of service in Northern Territory government Focus schools between 2010 and 2012 was 1.7 years for teachers, and 2.6 years for principals. The National Alliance for Remote Indigenous Schools (NARIS), led by the Northern Territory, was established in 2011 to drive the attraction, retention and development of quality teachers and leaders across remote schools located in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia.

The Northern Territory Department of Education and Training, in partnership with Charles Darwin University, has established the Centre for School Leadership, Learning and Development (CSLLD) to develop and deliver a suite of high quality, relevant and motivating learning programs for teachers, aspiring leaders in schools, principals, educational staff and remote school leaders. All of the Centre's programs are designed to ensure that they meet the needs of teachers in remote schools and those with students of low SES status. In 2011, 52 per cent of the Centre's school-based program participants were from remote and very remote schools.

Table NT10: Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals, teachers and education workers (AIEWs and Full-time Equivalents) in Northern Territory, by sector, 2011

	FTE
Government	
Principals	2.6
Teaching staff	340.7
AIEWs and equivalents	310.6
Catholic	
Principals	1
Teaching staff	46.3
AIEWs and equivalents	75.8
Independent	
Principals	0
Teaching staff	11.8
AIEWs and equivalents	27.5

Source: Northern Territory, Human Resources administrative records.

In 2011, there were 997 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals, teachers and education workers in the Northern Territory across government and non-government schools.

In 2011, efforts to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers included 65 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Territorians currently being supported through a suite of cadetships, scholarships, fellowships and other programs to undertake teacher education studies. Through the More Indigenous Teachers program, the Department of Education and Training has made a commitment to a target of 200 additional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers by 2018. The Department of Education and Training is also targeting 15 per cent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation across every level of employment. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers currently represent 3.9 per cent of the Department of Education and Training's teaching workforce.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander presence in remote schools continues to be developed through the roles of Assistant Teachers, Home Liaison Officers and Cultural Advisors. There are now career pathways for the Indigenous Education Workforce to advance through to more senior levels. Programs such as Growing Our Own are enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to finalise their teaching qualifications to become local teachers and mentors for other staff and students.

Systemic level actions [41 and 42]

Professional learning and development programs provided by the Centre for School Leadership Learning and Development give priority to attracting school leaders and teachers from Focus schools. The Centre incorporates cultural understanding across all of its leadership programs, from raising cultural awareness to developing cultural competence.

The Department of Education and Training has implemented a rigorous program of recruiting high performing teachers to remote schools. Teach Remote is the flagship initiative of the National Alliance for Remote Indigenous Schools. It aims to provide a strong, co-ordinated strategy to attract, retain and support exceptional teachers and leaders in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander schools across Australia. The ultimate goal is to create a high quality, committed and sustainable remote teaching workforce.

The Teach Remote program supports and connects remote teachers and leaders; providing a virtual and face-to-face network where staff can support each other and share the professional and personal complexities and challenges that are unique to life in a remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school.

Local level actions [43 and 44]

Group School Principals are currently involved in the Principals as Literacy Leaders in Indigenous Communities Program to build capacity and provide support for local teachers in remote schools.

Programs offered through the Centre for School Leadership, Learning and Development are specific to a Northern Territory context, which includes a heavy emphasis on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learning, engagement and participation in education.

All remote schools have flexibility in their operating hours adapting to seasonal changes. Large schools like Yuendumu offer after standard hours schooling which is also open to adults. All schools are making their facilities available for community activities, varying from gym programs to sewing classes. Gunbalanya School has varied the school calendar to maximise student attendance.

Pathways to real post-school options

Performance indicators

14. *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20 – 24 who have attained Year 12 or equivalent or Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate II or above.*

Note: Although the performance indicator for this domain cites a national data source, there is no publically available national level data for 2011.

Overall progress

In 2010, the Northern Territory Government made a 'Jobs Guarantee' commitment, providing the guarantee of an offer

of a job or further training within the Northern Territory Public Service, to any young person living in a Territory Growth Town who successfully completes their Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET). Since the announcement, there have been 25 offers of employment/training with the Northern Territory Public Service. Seven of these offers were accepted. Every effort is made to make the placement of the offer of employment or training in the young person's home community.

Systemic level actions [48, 49 and 50]

The Northern Territory Department of Education and Training, as part of the Strategic Plan and Every Child, Every Day Strategy, also has the 'Beyond School Guarantee', which is the guarantee of a service for young people who successfully gain an NTCET, regardless of location/community, to assist them to identify an appropriate pathway to employment or training, should they require the assistance. Every community in the Northern Territory is covered by either the 'Jobs Guarantee' or the 'Beyond School Guarantee'.

The Northern Territory Department of Education and Training has implemented an Industry Engagement and Employment Pathways program focusing on providing Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) advice and expertise, industry engagement assistance and pathways mapping for targeted schools (Territory Growth Town schools and regional centres, such as Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine and Nhulunbuy). The program has been in operation since the beginning of 2011, and is gaining traction with students.

A formal referral process for identifying and directing disengaged youth to access the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) funded Youth Connections service, provided through Mission Australia and STEPS Disability Services, is being developed by the Northern Territory Department of Education and Training.

Close relationships are being established between schools in the 21 Northern Territory Growth Towns and corporate industry, through the VET in Schools program. A Corporate Engagement and Partnerships team has been established with the priority to negotiate agreements with industry for greater engagement with schools. A Remote Pathways Model has been developed that encompasses pre-VET programs, VET courses and Structured Work Placements linking directly into industry. Key industry

relationships have been negotiated with mining companies, pastoral properties and construction companies to support VET in Schools in remote towns.

The new VET on Demand and Ready to Run projects are delivering a range of study options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, focusing on quality contextualised materials, systems and delivery options. The first 'On Demand' online vocational subject is AQF Certificate I and II in Hospitality: Kitchen Operations. This delivery is supported by the Ready to Run project that aims to develop online SACE Stage 1 and 2 subjects, in a flexible mode. Integrated in these projects is the Transition to Year 9 (T-9) literacy and numeracy continuum, vocationally contextualised and developed with online tools and resources.

Local level actions [51, 52, 53, 54 and 55]

The Northern Territory Open Education Centre is assisting students to complete Year 12 in remote areas with flexible delivery arrangements. VET programs are being tailored to locations to assist with achieving the maximum uptake and retention of students to Year 12 level.

Trade Training Centres are being established at a number of Focus schools, providing opportunities for career-based vocational training. In Wadeye, Land Management is being offered through the Trade Training Centre. Indigenous Student Pathways' coordinators in schools provide assistance and guidance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students undertaking school-based traineeships.

The Guiding Circles program was implemented in 2011 to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the process of self-exploration and career exploration from a culturally sensitive and community inclusive perspective. Participants included Career Advisors, Indigenous Education Coaches and Higher Education Indigenous Training Coordinators from Darwin, Alice Springs, Nhulunbuy and eight remote communities.

University Indigenous engagement programs and scholarships are supporting informed career and study choices, in addition to employment forums and expos specially designed to cater for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Indigenous

Employment Officers connected with Clontarf and Girls Academy: Girls Engagement Mentoring and Support Program (GEMS) have also assisted with career study choices support.

Group Training Northern Territory is assisting in brokering School Business Partnerships between schools and potential employers in the Northern Territory.

Good practice snapshots

In 2011, the Northern Territory's extended service delivery model, Strong Start Bright Future (SSBF), was in operation at West Arnhem College (Gunbalanya and Jabiru Schools); Ngakwurra Langwa College (Alyangula, Angurugu, Umbakumba and Milyakburra Schools); and Shepherdson College (Galiwinku). Two more sites, Warlpiri-patu Kurlangu Jaru College (Yuendumu, Lajamanu, Willowra and Nyirripi Schools); and N'taria College (Hermannsburg) are currently being established, with planning underway for the next two sites at Ngukurr and Maningrida. The Ngakwurra Langwa College video on the Smarter Schools National Partnership (SSNP) website provides more information on this initiative at their college. A text transcript of this video is available online, through the Department of Education and Training website: http://www.det.nt.gov.au/smarterschools/videos/ngakawurra-langwa-college/transcript-ngakawurra-langwa-college-video?SO_DESIGN_NAME=printer_friendly.

Strong progress is being seen at these sites through community involvement and leadership. Extended school programs, such as 3–9 programs and after-hours libraries, are engaging community members in adult learning and students who were previously disengaged with traditional schooling. The development of pathways beyond school, through partnerships with local business and industry, as well as the expansion of VET offerings, is positioning colleges as the means through which young people can enter into job and career pathways. This is increasing student engagement, in particular for male students in the secondary years of schooling. Recognising the necessity for place-based approaches to education, Gunbalanya School (part of the West Arnhem College) set up a trial for a flexible school year to be delivered in 2012. This provides schooling aligned to community movement in the wet and dry seasons, and ceremonial events.

A key component to engaging communities in education is the development of positive relationships with families from the early years. The Child and Family Leaders in six of the SSBF locations (Groote Eylandt, Ngukurr, Gunbalanya, N'taria, Maningrida and Galiwin'ku) are working to integrate early years services through bringing service providers together to improve service delivery and ultimately outcomes for young children and their families. These positions are bringing together, often disparate, services provided across three levels of government and non-government agencies, through a range of engagement mechanisms, such as the Early Childhood Reference Group on Groote Eylandt. Early signs of success are starting to emerge at Gunbalanya and Ngukurr, where there has been re-establishment of childcare and education services in 2011.

IECB's feedback

Northern Territory Indigenous Education Council feedback

Readiness for school

There is a need for greater involvement and consultation with the Northern Territory Indigenous Education Council (NTIEC) on the development of the Early Years Workforce Strategy. In addition, appropriate cultural practices need to be taken into consideration and embedded into the Framework in order to effectively build a diverse, highly skilled workforce that provides high quality services for children.

The lack of access to comprehensive data means that the NTIEC are unable to compile an accurate picture of what is happening in all schools and makes input into the development of effective programs and meaningful progress reporting difficult.

Engagement and connections

The NTIEC believe that School Community Partnerships and Personalised Learning Plans benefit students not only in their engagement with education, but in establishing their post-school pathways.

The NTIEC would like to see more support for children who are doing well. Often the focus is on the deficit group of students

who are underperforming, and acknowledgement should be given to those who are doing well.

Hearing problems for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are not just restricted to those in remote or desert locations. Hearing difficulties are a genuine issue for students and have a significant effect on the student's ability to engage and learn in the classroom.

There is a need for more cross-agency collaboration, to better identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with disabilities and to strengthen connections to help assist families of students, in terms of awareness of what support is available to them, and training in how to best support the education of children with special needs.

The NTIEC see the benefits of the Parental and Community Engagement program and would like to see the funding for this program maintained and guaranteed on a long-term basis.

All Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies (IECBs) propose that funding for Parental and Community Engagement (PaCE) programs go directly from the Commonwealth to IECBs, who are best placed to administer the funding to local community service providers and projects. This will empower local providers and ensure greater transparency of funds.

All IECBs need to be more closely consulted with, and involved in, strategies aimed at community engagement and connections, especially in the delivery of cultural awareness programs, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies and languages curriculum development.

All IECBs should be utilised to ensure any language studies or programs have the support and endorsement of the local language group where the school is located.

Attendance

This indicates that engagement, rather than attendance, is the crucial factor to improving student outcomes in school.

There is no standardised attendance data collection, making it difficult to form meaningful comparisons and analysis of attendance patterns.

Literacy and numeracy [National Actions 27–29]

The NTIEC believe that all literacy and numeracy assessments need to be administered in a culturally appropriate way; recognising the existence of Aboriginal English and Creole, and taking into account the distinctive language backgrounds and cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

All IECBs would like to know if English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers mark the NAPLAN tests, to ensure that qualified people are considering the literacy skills of students that have English as a second, third or fourth language.

Leadership, quality teaching and workforce development [National Actions 33–40]

Teachers need to expand their knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories; therefore, all pre-service teachers should undertake both mandatory and elective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies units as a part of their studies to qualify as teachers. The development of compulsory study units by universities should be in close partnership with the local community, and with the support of the IECBs and government.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies need to be solidly embedded in the curriculum, in line with the Australian Curriculum's priority to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across all learning areas.

All IECBs suggest that the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educator Workforce Strategy be developed in line with the Early Years Workforce Strategy, and believe that this should have progressed further by now.

The NTIEC are satisfied with the More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative.

Pathways to real post-school options [National Actions 45–47]

IECBs note that there has been a steady increase in Year 12 participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. In some jurisdictions, a 'service guarantee' is in place for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who complete

Year 12. This program ensures that students are supported to gain employment, undertake training or engage in further education on completion of Year 12.

There needs to be more flexible learning environments and culturally relevant curriculum for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Students who choose to move into the VET sector also need to be supported during this transition to attain relevant qualifications leading to local employment opportunities.

More comprehensive information about good practice in the Northern Territory can be obtained from the following links:

For more information on Early Childhood Services in the Northern Territory go to:

<http://www.det.nt.gov.au/parents-community/early-childhood-services>

<http://www.det.nt.gov.au/teachers-educators/ec/early-years-educators/early-years-framework>

http://www.det.nt.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/22146/NT_EarlyChildhoodWorkforcePlan.pdf

For more information on programs supporting students and learning in the Northern Territory go to:

<http://www.det.nt.gov.au/parents-community/students-learning>

For further information on enrolment and attendance in the Northern Territory go to:

<http://www.det.nt.gov.au/teachers-educators/school-management/enrolment-attendance/every-child-every-day>

For further information about literacy and numeracy strategies in the Northern Territory go to:

<http://www.det.nt.gov.au/teachers-educators/literacy-numeracy/literacy-and-numeracy-strategy>

For further information on professional development opportunities in the Northern Territory, go to the Charles Darwin University Centre for School Leadership, Learning and Development website:

<http://www.csllld.edu.au/>

For more information on post-schooling pathways in the Northern Territory go to:

<http://www.det.nt.gov.au/parents-community/beyond-school>

For more information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education in the Northern Territory go to:

<http://www.det.nt.gov.au/teachers-educators/students-learning/indigenous-education>

Focus school information

School name	Sector	Geolocation (based on MCEECDYA 2006 NT school geolocation categories)	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Lit/Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
Alekarenge School	Gov.	Very Remote	83	83		X	
Alpurrurulam Schoo	Gov.	Very Remote	87	87		X	
Alyarrmandumanja Umbakumba School	Gov.	Very Remote	96	96		X	X
Ampilatwatja School	Gov.	Very Remote	100	100		X	
Angurugu School	Gov.	Very Remote	263	263		X	X
Arlparra School 1, 2	Gov.	Very Remote	156	156		X	
Bakewell Primary School	Gov.	Outer Regional	555	91			
Batchelor Area School	Gov.	Remote	127	76	X	X	
Borrooloola School	Gov.	Very Remote	261	249		X	
Bradshaw Primary School	Gov.	Remote	294	151	X	X	
Braitling Primary School	Gov.	Remote	263	161	X		
Clyde Fenton Primary School	Gov.	Remote	200	123	X		
Driver Primary School	Gov.	Outer Regional	370	98	X		
Elliott School	Gov.	Very Remote	69	69		X	
Gapuwiyak School	Gov.	Very Remote	220	214		X	X
Gillen Primary School	Gov.	Remote	245	173	X	X	
Gray Primary School	Gov.	Outer Regional	297	137	X	X	
Gunbalanya School	Gov.	Very Remote	344	342		X	X
Humpty Doo Primary School	Gov.	Outer Regional	349	77	X		
Jabiru Area School	Gov.	Remote	265	165		X	
Jilkminggan School	Gov.	Very Remote	90	89		X	
Kalkaringi School	Gov.	Very Remote	142	142		X	
Karama Primary School	Gov.	Outer Regional	215	100	X		
Katherine South Primary School	Gov.	Remote	270	86	X		
Lajamanu School	Gov.	Very Remote	152	151		X	X
Larapinta Primary School	Gov.	Remote	240	114	X		
Ltyentye Apurte Catholic School	Non-Gov.	Remote	137	137		X	
MacFarlane Primary School	Gov.	Remote	209	182		X	
Malak Primary School	Gov.	Outer Regional	225	92	X		
Maningrida School	Gov.	Very Remote	626	605		X	X
Manunda Terrace Primary School	Gov.	Outer Regional	209	107	X	X	
Milikapiti School	Gov.	Very Remote	66	65		X	
Milingimbi School	Gov.	Very Remote	295	291		X	X
Millner Primary School	Gov.	Outer Regional	214	92		X	
Minyerri School	Gov.	Very Remote	134	134		X	
Moulden Primary School	Gov.	Outer Regional	370	219		X	
Murrupurtiyanuwu Catholic Primary School	Non-Gov.	Very Remote	211	207		X	X
Nganmarriyanga School	Gov.	Very Remote	124	121		X	
Ngukurr School	Gov.	Very Remote	223	223		X	X
Nhulunbuy Primary School	Gov.	Very Remote	515	116	X		
Ntaria School	Gov.	Very Remote	161	159		X	X

School name	Sector	Geolocation (based on MCEECDYA 2006 NT school geolocation categories)	Total enrolments	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	Lit/Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
Numbulwar School	Gov.	Very Remote	184	181		X	X
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Thamarrurr Catholic College	Non-Gov.	Very Remote	440	434		X	X
Papunya School	Gov.	Very Remote	96	96		X	
Ramingining School	Gov.	Very Remote	213	211		X	
Robinson River School	Gov.	Very Remote	55	55		X	
Sadadeen Primary School	Gov.	Remote	139	104		X	
Shepherdson College	Gov.	Very Remote	533	521		X	X
St Francis Xavier Catholic School	Non-Gov.	Very Remote	53	47		X	
Tennant Creek Primary School	Gov.	Very Remote	396	295		X	
Ti Tree School	Gov.	Very Remote	78	76		X	
Wagaman Primary School	Gov.	Outer Regional	291	71	X		
Walungurru School	Gov.	Very Remote	60	60		X	
Warruwi School	Gov.	Very Remote	124	124		X	
Wugularr School	Gov.	Very Remote	140	138		X	
Xavier Catholic College	Non-Gov.	Very Remote	99	91		X	X
Yarralin School	Gov.	Very Remote	59	59		X	
Yipirinya School	Non-Gov.	Remote	95	95		X	
Yirrkala Homeland School	Gov.	Very Remote	175	175		X	
Yirrkala School	Gov.	Very Remote	134	134		X	X
Yuendumu School	Gov.	Very Remote	154	147		X	X

Notes:

- Students formerly at 'Utopia School' are all now included in 'Arparra School'.
- *Mulga Bore school was formerly included as a homeland school and is currently excluded. In 2011, Mulga Bore School had 30 students enrolled, all of whom were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*

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Glossary and acronyms

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ABST	Aboriginal School-Based Training program (Western Australia)
ABSTUDY	The ABSTUDY scheme is an ongoing special measure to assist in addressing the educational disadvantage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Financial assistance can facilitate access to secondary schooling for students who may otherwise not be able to access an appropriate level of education. In addition to the primary benefit, living allowance, the ABSTUDY scheme includes a number of supplementary benefits, which recognise the unique circumstances of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and are provided to address particular areas of disadvantage.
ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
ACC	Australian Curriculum Connect project
ACEO	Aboriginal Community Education Officer (South Australia)
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
ACG	Access Community Group – Youth Connections program (New South Wales)
Action Plan	the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014
AEAG	Aboriginal Education Advisory Group (Tasmania)
AECG	Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated (New South Wales)
AEDI	Australian Early Development Index
AEYSOC	Australian Education, Early Childhood and Youth Systems Officials Committee, directly responsible to the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) for the execution of SCSEEC Council decisions.
AEIO	Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer program (Western Australia)
AEO	Aboriginal Education Officer
AET	Aboriginal Education Teacher (South Australia)
AEYLO	Aboriginal Early Years Liaison Officer (Tasmania)
AICS	Aboriginal Independent Community Schools (Western Australia)
AIEW	Aboriginal and Islander Education Worker
AISWA	Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
ALSS	Aboriginal Language Speaking Students Program (Western Australia)
APAS	Aboriginal Program Assistance Scheme (South Australia)
APY	Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands (South Australia)
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
ARR	Apparent Retention Rates
ASBA	Australian School-Based Apprenticeships
ASBT	Aboriginal School-Based Training program (Western Australia)
ASC	Assessment of Student Competency Tool to assess literacy and numeracy aptitudes of preschool children (Northern Territory)
ATA	Aboriginal Teacher Assistant (Western Australia)
AWDC	Aboriginal Workforce Development Centre (Western Australia)

BLUE EARTH	Blue Earth Foundation (a national, not-for-profit organisation that works in more than 300 schools nationwide to increase the levels of physical activity amongst Australians, particularly school-aged children)
CAE	Coordinators of Aboriginal Education (Western Australia)
CARE	Curriculum and Re-engagement (schools, Western Australia)
CATH.	Catholic sector of schooling
CBIT	Community-Based Indigenous Trainer program (Northern Territory)
CECV	Catholic Education Commission of Victoria
CEOWA	Catholic Education Office of Western Australia
CFC	Child and Family Centre
CGS	Commonwealth Grants Scheme
CISS	Choices for Indigenous Secondary Students program (South Australia)
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CRPTTC	Canberra Region Pathways Trade Training Centre (Australian Capital Territory students' vocational pathways provider)
CSLLD	Centre for School Leadership, Learning and Development (Northern Territory)
CSS	Central Schools System (Western Australia)
DECD	Department for Education and Child Development (South Australia)
DEECD	Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (Victoria)
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (Australian Government)
DFEEST	Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology (South Australia)
E4KIDS	Effective Early Educational Experiences for Kids study
EAL/D	English as an Additional Language or Dialect
EATSIPS	Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in Schools strategy (Queensland)
ECDWG	Early Childhood Development Working Group (SCSEEC), a group that provides advice on early childhood development issues referred to it by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG)
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care
ECOMAN	Economics and management and life-skills program for senior secondary students (Queensland)
ELC	Early Learning Centre (ACT Catholic education sector preschools)
EMU	Extending Maths Understanding (numeracy program)
ERIK	Enhancing Reading Intervention Knowledge (literacy program)
ERP	Estimated Resident Population
ESA	Education Services Australia
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESL/D	English as a Second Language or Dialect
EYLF	Early Years Learning Framework
F–10	Foundation to Year 10
FaFT – IPSS	Families as First Teachers – Indigenous Parenting Support Services (Northern Territory parental support program for early literacy and numeracy development)
FaHCSIA	the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
FLO	Flexible Learning Options program (South Australia)
FOGS	Former Origin Greats (not-for-profit organisation assisting rugby league, communities and charities in Queensland)

FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GEMS	Girls' Academy: Girls Engagement Mentoring and Support Program (Northern Territory)
GOV.	Government sector of schooling
HEPPP	Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program
HIPPY	Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters
HSC	Higher School Certificate (New South Wales)
IAS	Indigenous Access Scholarship
ICANS	Innovative Community Action Networks program (South Australia)
ICAS	Indigenous Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarship
ICECS	Indigenous Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarship
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
ICTP	Indigenous Career Transitions Pathway Strategy (Queensland)
IECAS	Indigenous Enabling Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarship
IECB	Indigenous Education Consultative Body
IECD NP	Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership Agreement (Australian Government led)
IECECS	Indigenous Enabling Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarship
IEP	Indigenous Employment Program (Australian Government led)
IHEAC	Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council
ILP	Individual Learning Plans (South Australia)
IND.	Independent sector of schooling
ISQ	Independent Schools Queensland
ISSS	Indigenous Student Support System database (South Australia)
ITAS-TT	Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme – Tertiary Tuition
KEC	Koorie Education Co-ordinator (Victoria)
KELP	Koorie Education Learning Plan (Victoria)
KESO	Koorie Engagement Support Officer (Victoria)
Kindergarten	First year of primary schooling (New South Wales)
KPaCE	Koorie Parental and Community Engagement Program (Victoria)
KSZ	Kimberley Success Zone project (Western Australia)
LAECG	Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (Victoria)
LiL	Launching into Learning initiative (Tasmania)
LINC Tasmania	A statewide network which brings together the services of the State Library of Tasmania, the Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office, Adult Education and online access centres.
LLEN	Local Learning and Employment Network (Victoria)
LLNP	Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program (Australian Government led)
Low SES	Low Socio-Economic Status
LSAC	the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children
LSCP	Local School and Community Partnership Agreement (South Australia)
LSIC	the Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children
MACS	Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services
MATSITI	More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative (Australian Government led)

MCEECDYA	Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (from 2009 to 2012. Prior to MCEECDYA, it was the Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA). In 2012, MCEECDYA became the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC))
MOODLE	Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment (an e-learning software platform)
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (managed by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA))
NARIS	National Alliance for Remote Indigenous Schools
NCECEC	National Collection on Early Childhood Education and Care
NCVER	National Centre for Vocational Education Research
NDLRN	National Digital Learning Resources Network
NEA	National Education Agreement
NON-GOV.	Non-government (Catholic or independent) sector of schooling
NP IECD	National Partnership for Indigenous Early Childhood Development
NPC	National Preschool Census
NSIP	National Schools Interoperability Program
NSSC	National Schools Statistics Collection (Australian Bureau of Statistics)
NTCET	Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training
NTCF	Northern Territory Curriculum Framework
NTIEC	Northern Territory Indigenous Education Council
NTOEC	Northern Territory Open Education Centre
NVEAC	National VET Equity Advisory Council
OP	Overall Position (Queensland), presenting a student's position in a statewide rank order, based on their overall achievement in Queensland Studies Authority approved subjects, indicating how well a student has done in comparison to other OP-eligible students in Queensland, and is used for tertiary entrance purposes only.
PaCE	Parental and Community Engagement Program (Australian Government led)
PaL	Parents and Learning (literacy) program (developed for parents and family members to use with their preschool and primary school aged children from 4 to 6 years of age)
PALLIC	Principals as Literacy Leaders with Indigenous Communities program (Queensland)
PAT	Progressive Achievement Tests for Reading and Mathematics (assessment tool for literacy and numeracy aptitude for students, administered by the Australian Council for Education Research (ACER))
PIPS	Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (assessment tool for literacy and numeracy aptitude for kindergarten students)
PLP	Personal Learning Plan (South Australia, ACT, Tasmania)
Prep.	Preparatory year of primary schooling (Victoria, Queensland)
Prim.	Primary (level of schooling)
PSP	Priorities Support Programs (Australian Capital Territory)
PYEC	Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara Education Committee (South Australia)
QIECC	Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Committee
RALIS	Resources to Accelerate Learning for Indigenous Students Shared Content project (online teaching resource package prepared by Education Services Australia (ESA))
RATEP	Remote Area Teacher Education Program (Queensland)
Reception	First year of primary schooling (South Australia)

RIS	Regulatory Impact Statement
RSD	Remote Service Delivery
RTBCTG	Raising the Bar, Closing the Gap Strategy
RTS	Remote Teaching Service (Western Australia)
SAAETCB	South Australian Aboriginal Education and Training Consultative Body
SACE	South Australian Certificate of Education
SACOL	Supporting the Australian Curriculum Online
SAE	Standard Australian English
SASP	South Australia's Strategic Plan
SCLO	School Community Liaison Officer (Western Australia)
SCOTese	Standing Council on Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment
SCOTese	Standing Council on Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment
SCP	School Community Partnership (Western Australia)
SCPA	School Community Partnership Agreement (Western Australia)
SCSEEC	Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (formerly the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA). In 2012, MCEECDYA became the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC))
SEA	School Entry Assessment (South Australia)
SEAM	Improving School Enrolment and Attendance through Welfare Reform Measure (Australian Government led)
SEARCH	Study of Environment of Aboriginal Resilience and Child Health
Sec.	Secondary (level of schooling)
SEHQ	School Entrance Health Questionnaire (Victoria)
SET	Senior Education and Training plan (Queensland)
SHINE	Students Hairdressing Integrating Education program (Western Australia)
SIDE	Schools of Isolated and Distance Education (Western Australian distance education provider)
SIF	Systems Interoperability Framework
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-related goals at the school level (Australian Capital Territory)
SONNIE	Senior Officers National Network of Indigenous Education (membership comprising directors and managers of Indigenous Education and Training directorates in all Australian States and Territories)
SSBF	Strong Start, Bright Future (Northern Territory strategy to support families in 20 growth towns to journey with their children from birth through the early years, schooling years, along training pathways and ultimately, into a real job)
SSNP	Smarter Schools National Partnership
TACE	Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation for Education
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TCE	Tasmanian Certificate of Education
TESOL	Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
TPLP	Tailored Professional Learning Package (Victoria)
Transition	The first year of full-time schooling in the Northern Territory
TTC	Trade Training Centre
URL	Unit Record Level (student attendance measure)

USI	Unique Student Identifier
VAEAI	Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated
VCAL	Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning
VCE	Victorian Certificate of Education
VELS	Victorian Essential Learning Standards
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VETiS	Vocational Education and Training in Schools
WAAETC	Western Australian Aboriginal Education and Training Council
WACE	Western Australian Certificate of Education