

Chapter 10

QUEENSLAND

Structure and context of schooling

Government sector

In 1999, there were 273,710 students in Queensland government primary schools and 152,166 students in government secondary schools.

Catholic sector

The Catholic sector consists of systemic and congregational schools. Systemic Catholic schools are typically administered, staffed and aided by Catholic Education Offices. Congregational schools are essentially independent of the diocesan offices but are assisted in the provision of education by these offices.

Queensland Catholic schools are divided, typically, into primary schools (years 1–7) and secondary schools (years 8–12) though the division between primary and secondary schools is breaking down as a number of preschool to year 12 (P–12) schools are established.

Independent sector

The independent sector includes non-government schools that in general are not affiliated with Catholic dioceses or Catholic orders. However, some Catholic order-owned schools identify with both the Association of Independent Schools, Queensland (AISQ) and the Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC). The following sector data was drawn from the non-Catholic members of the sector.

In 1999, there were 46 primary and 11 secondary independent schools with 91 combined schools which offered instruction from preschool to year 12 or a limited range of year levels which included both primary and secondary.

Table 10.1 Number and percentage of students by category of school and level of education, Queensland, 1999

	<i>Govt</i>	<i>Catholic</i>	<i>Independent</i>	<i>Total</i>
Primary Students	273,710	55,762	29,516	358,988
	76.2%	15.5%	8.3%	100%
Secondary Students	152,166	43,795	39,635	235,596
	64.6%	18.6%	16.8%	100%

Source: ABS Cat. No. 4220.0, *Schools Australia*, 1999

Most schools are affiliated with a religious or theorist group and a significant number have additional membership with a sub-sector. The largest of these are schools that are members of the Christian Schools Association of Queensland. The trend for establishment of 'low fee' schools addressing the schooling of educationally disadvantaged students continued.

Priority objectives

Government sector

For Education Queensland, 1999 was very much a transition year in which there was a comprehensive re-assessment of the goals and purposes of government education.

Over the next decade, the central purpose of schooling in Queensland is to create a safe, accepting and disciplined environment within which young people prepare to be active and reflective Australian citizens with a disposition to lifelong learning. They will be able to participate in and shape community, economic and political life in Queensland and the nation. They will be able to engage confidently with other cultures at home and abroad.

Education Queensland developed objectives and strategies to assist in satisfying the purpose of schooling. These objectives were drawn from the purpose of education. They provided a framework that answered the original questions and gave a model for management of change. Five areas were identified to assist in satisfying the purpose. These are:

- learning
- schools
- school workforce
- school services
- portfolio relationships.

Learning

Central to learning in Education Queensland is the relationship between students and teachers. Communication and information technology both change and emphasise the relationship between teachers and students. Whatever the background or circumstances of students, learning in government schools should give them the opportunity to achieve outcomes at key junctures in their development, particularly the completion of a recognised year 12 course of study.

Schools

Schools are the locus of expertise in learning. They are the focal point for interaction between the government system and parents. Their core business is providing a learning program for students to achieve systemwide and school-based learning outcomes. This expertise and these relationships combine so that the learning program for the students at the school is a local negotiated response to the needs of students.

School workforce

The school workforce is the essence of the value of government schools. Parents want educational leadership from principals and value competent and dedicated teachers. Business skills are needed in the workforce for schools to manage their affairs and marketing professionals are required to support their social role and be part of the learning program. All should be committed to the values and directions of the government system, have a positive attitude to its role and its ability to achieve the best outcomes for students and be advocates for their schools.

School services

Through its central office, Education Queensland provides school services that facilitate the work of government

schools and the learning relationship between significant adults and students. Education Queensland ensures that the services are coordinated, consistent and designed to minimise the administrative load on schools.

Portfolio relationships

Education Queensland develops portfolio relationships that work to benefit diverse student pathways. Education Queensland provides advice to the Minister on all portfolio matters. Its primary responsibility is the outcomes achieved for students with State government funding. This guides its relationships with the non-government school sectors, statutory authorities, post-school educational institutions and other government departments.

Catholic sector

Objectives for the Catholic sector in 1999 included:

- setting targets for the enhancement of literacy and numeracy outcomes for students
- developing expertise in outcomes-based education
- providing information technology in-service training for teachers.

Independent sector

Individual independent schools set their own objectives for schooling. In 1999, many schools sought to address the issues of assessment and reporting on educational outcomes. Development of whole-school literacy plans and progression towards the establishment of realistic targets for literacy and numeracy were supported by the completion of literacy audits.

A number of independent schools delivered school-based information and communication technology courses to their staff.

Significant developments

Government sector

New Basics

Education Queensland embarked upon a radical and exciting project of school reform for years 1 to 9. Entitled the New Basics Project, it involves the design of new integrated framework for curriculum, pedagogy and assessment that deals with new communities and complex cultures.

Within the project is a trial over four years, 2000 to 2003, with 38 volunteer schools across Queensland reorganising their curriculum delivery, examining teaching strategies, and developing authentic assessment and reporting processes through the use of Rich Tasks that culminate at key junctures of schooling – years 3, 6 and 9.

The New Basics Framework has four new clusters of transdisciplinary learning:

- life pathways and social futures
- multiliteracies and communications media
- active citizenship
- environments and technologies

Rich Tasks include such activities as the development of a web page, the development of a personal health program, the design, plan and display of a structure, and the presentation of ideas through performance.

The New Basics Project aims to provide Education Queensland's clients with schooling that is intellectually challenging and that guarantees mastery of practices that people need for flourishing in complex, networked societies.

New syllabuses

Two new syllabuses developed by the Queensland Curriculum Council were released in 1999 and implemented by government schools. The syllabuses were the years 1–10 science and years 1–10 health and physical education.

Behaviour management strategies

Education Queensland employed 55 extra behaviour management support staff in 1999 under a \$2.5 million initiative to help schools further address behaviour management issues. The financial boost was part of an extra \$17.5 million allocated over four years to help with programs for school students at risk, including those who leave without having completed their secondary schooling.

In 1999, the work of the Anti-Bullying Taskforce continued to focus on a range of support strategies for schools. During the year schools were required to review their behaviour management plans with a focus on developing strategies for addressing bullying and violence. This followed the 1998 distribution of the *Bullying – No Way!* resource kit to all government schools and the development of the *Workable Solutions* website, featuring examples of a range of effective strategies implemented by schools across Queensland. Education Queensland also initiated the development of a

national framework for sharing good practice in strategies for dealing with bullying and violence.

Indigenous student literacy project

A new program aimed at improving the literacy rates of Indigenous students was launched in 1999. The Teaching English as a Second Language to Indigenous Students (TESLIS) program was developed after four years of collaboration between joint-venture partners Education Queensland and the South Australian Department of Education, Training and Employment.

TESLIS offered quality professional development to teachers of English as a Second Language, as well as teacher aides and indigenous education workers.

2010 project

Queensland's government education system will enter the year 2000 with a new focus. In 1999, Education Queensland published a discussion paper – 'The Next Decade: A Discussion About the Future of Queensland State Education'. The discussion paper was the first step in the development of a strategy for the future of Queensland government education through to 2010. On the basis of the issues raised in the discussion paper, consultations were held with schools and their communities and a range of groups that had some interest in the outcomes and value of State education to Queensland people.

Over 700 meetings were held around the State and just over 10,000 people were involved in the discussions. Groups included teachers, students, parents, principals, district office and central office staff. Outside of Education Queensland community groups, employer organisations, unions, relevant government bodies, portfolio-related bodies and many individuals were involved.

As a result of the discussions, a draft strategy was prepared and circulated for consultation. The Draft 2010 Strategy articulated the purpose for public education relevant to the needs of students, their families and the State's future growth and development within a rapidly changing world. The strategy presented five key areas – learning, schools, school workforce, school services and portfolio relationships.

These objectives were drawn from the *Purposes of Education* and the challenges facing Education Queensland, and the framework around which the model for management of change can be developed. The success of Education Queensland and the 2010 strategy can be assessed and

monitored through a number of key performance measures. The objectives will be achieved through the implementation of a number of strategies and by undertaking a range of projects planned for the next ten years.

School-based management

In July 1999, all Queensland government schools were given the flexibility of governance through the range of school-based management options offered by Education Queensland. The options provided for a high level of support from the District Director through the Standard Flexibility Option to increased accountability through two different models within the Enhanced Flexibility Options. Through the Enhanced Flexibility Option – Accountability Model 1, collaborative planning was made more open and accountable through an optional school advisory committee as well as regular consultation with the District Director, building on the District Director's endorsement role in relation to strategic documents. The Enhanced Flexibility Option – Accountability Model 2 provided for shared local decision-making with staff and parents involved in the approval and monitoring of strategic documents via the school council.

The options provided schools with differential models for school management and their principals with enhanced opportunities for exercising increased authority and responsibility.

Access to computer-based learning

Education Queensland provided access to computer-based learning through four current, complementary programs – Schooling 2001, Connect-Ed, School Local Area Network (LAN) project and School Management Systems project.

The Schooling 2001 initiative was a three-year \$80 million project that commenced in 1997–98 and was designed to:

- ensure all students from preschool to year 12 have access to the necessary resources for an education appropriate for the 21st century
- improve the professional skills of the teaching workforce to meet the challenges of the new century
- introduce information and communication services to Education Queensland's classrooms.

The Connect-Ed project provided the basis of an enterprise-wide area network connecting all schools and business units of Education Queensland and provided students and teachers with access to the Internet in a managed, safe and secure environment.

The School LAN project provided a basic local area network to government schools to maximise student and staff access to the information and services delivered by Connect-ED. This was a staged project that commenced in 1997 and will gradually extend to all schools by October 2001.

The School Management Systems project provided all government schools with a standardised operating system for administrative use and a standardised software package for recording student information for school use and collection of corporate data.

The Education Queensland's vocational education and training program targeted emerging areas such as information and telecommunications technologies and had 70 students undertaking traineeships in information technology (IT). Furthermore, some high schools introduced IT programs that lay outside the apprenticeship and traineeship program and involved partnerships with the school and IT companies.

Education Queensland identified opportunities for senior schooling students to undertake communication and information technology careers and articulation between these courses/traineeships and those offered at TAFE level occurred.

Education Queensland continued to promote best practice in the use of information and telecommunications technologies. Education Queensland's future orientation will focus on the Virtual School service and the establishment of a Digital Resource Centre.

Plans for 2000

The Strategic Initiatives Fund will provide almost \$250,000 in seed money for 15 innovative projects that support the emerging directions in the draft 2010 strategy. The projects are designed to improve teaching and learning, develop distinctive school options and improve schooling completion rates. The initiatives are expected to produce a range of outcomes, including enhanced use of information technology across whole school communities; development of innovative approaches to early childhood education and intervention and behaviour management; and the undertaking of major strategic planning processes in light of the draft 2010 strategy.

Education Queensland's Framework Project will see 37 trial schools combine new ways of learning with current teaching strategies. The project stems from the draft 2010 strategy and has surveyed national and international attempts to develop 'futures oriented' knowledge and

practice frameworks. Through the framework, teachers will be leaders in building new essential learning areas and developing productive pedagogical approaches, student outcomes and modes of assessment and reporting. The project will encourage teachers to be educational leaders and envision a proactive approach to build generational change within schools. As a result of the framework, education will be repositioned in relation to reading and writing new kinds of text and using arithmetic and scientific skills to design innovative environments and technologies.

Catholic sector

An information literacy program has been developed which provides Indigenous students, their families and other members of their communities with the information technology and the necessary skills to access resources that are usually unavailable.

The Brisbane Catholic Education Office hosted a conference in September which enhanced professional development for school communities by providing them with the opportunity to gain a broader view of current research and perspectives on literacy learning and teaching.

Independent sector

The commitment of the independent sector was demonstrated by the significant contribution of teacher and administrator time to the activities of the three Queensland statutory bodies – Queensland Board of Senior Secondary School Studies (QBSSSS), Queensland School Curriculum Council (QSCC) and the Board of Teacher Registration (BTR). Through this process the independent schools were included in many of the initiatives generated by Education Queensland or the non-government sector. The resulting networks and professional growth were well documented.

Professional development and teacher education

Government sector

The following professional development activities occurred during 1999:

- provision of support by Tertiary In-service Support for teachers undertaking postgraduate study in priority areas so that they could acquire new skills and move into new

career areas, for example guidance and counselling, learning support and impairment

- development of CD-ROMs for every teacher of science and health and physical education to assist them with the introduction of the new syllabuses in these curriculum areas
- production of a video and professional development activities related to the introduction of an outcomes approach to the new syllabuses
- provision of vacation schools for teachers focused on boys and literacy, use of learning technology, behaviour management, multi-age schooling, assisting students with learning difficulties, and an outcomes approach to learning
- training in Literacy and Numeracy for teacher aides who work on intervention with students
- week-long practicums for teachers relating to the use of technology across the curriculum, which were held each fortnight at Springfield State School in conjunction with the Apple Classrooms of Tomorrow project
- development of a spelling CD-ROM and a numeracy CD-ROM for teacher professional development in the early years of schooling under the National Literacy and Numeracy Plan.

Teacher Education Satisfaction Survey

In 1999, Education Queensland conducted a Teacher Education Satisfaction Survey. The purpose of the survey was to seek feedback about the quality of teacher education courses from recent graduate teachers and from the principals of the schools in which they taught. The focus was on the effectiveness of teacher education courses in preparing graduates for the task of teaching in schools.

Catholic sector

Professional development activities were conducted in a number of areas. Most frequently these activities focused on literacy and numeracy learning and teaching. Also prominent were professional development activities in information technology across the curriculum. The education of Indigenous students and gender equity also received attention.

Independent sector

To assist independent schools with school-based curriculum decisions in the adaptation or adoption of the new

Queensland Schools Curriculum Council outcomes-based key learning area syllabuses, AISQ produced two series of Facilitated Conversations for use by schools in their professional development activities for teachers.

Independent schools participated in professional development programs organised by the QCEC and Education Queensland, programs generated on an intersystemic basis and those delivered by professional associations. The sector has a major commitment to ongoing professional development of school staff.

AISQ facilitated a number of professional development programs including the use of FELIKS (Fostering English Language in Kimberley Schools), a code-switching program that assists Indigenous students to move from home language to academic English, and training in the vocational education programs which address Indigenous students' needs. Case studies of the development of vocational literacy and numeracy through enterprise projects and other such projects were compiled for dissemination to the sector.

Capital projects

Government sector

In 1999, the Commonwealth provided \$40.949 million towards capital projects in Queensland.

Of the 36 capital projects funded by the Commonwealth and completed both physically and financially during 1999, the most common types of construction and upgrade work were facilities which supported practical learning such as home economics, music and business studies in secondary schools; and other general learning facilities, student covered areas and amenities in both primary and secondary schools.

Catholic sector

Commonwealth capital grants program funding in 1999 to the Queensland Catholic school sector totalled \$9.219 million.

During the reporting year, 38 capital projects funded by the Commonwealth were deemed to be totally completed. A significant amount of capital works continued to be devoted to new student place projects to satisfy the demand for places particularly in growth areas. Other works undertaken were aimed at improving the quality of education outcomes

and at meeting changing curriculum requirements, particularly in the areas of vocational education training and information technology.

In 1999, the State Government also provided a total of \$16.376 million to Queensland Catholic sector schools for capital-related projects. Of this amount, \$14 million was provided under the Capital Assistance Program and \$2.376 million under the Cool Schools Program. The Capital Assistance Program funded the type of school projects funded by the Commonwealth Capital Grants Programme. The Cool Schools Program was used to assist schools (in Central and North Queensland) to improve their learning environment through measures designed to improve thermal comfort.

Independent sector

Commonwealth Capital Grants Programme

In 1999, the Commonwealth provided \$5.35 million towards the cost of capital projects at non-Catholic non-government schools that are affiliated with the Independent Schools of Queensland Block Grant Authority.

Of the 22 capital projects completed both physically and financially in 1999, the most common type of work undertaken and facilities provided were for the construction of classrooms for primary and secondary students; home economics, science, music, drama, art and computer facilities; libraries; administration areas and staff facilities. There was some upgrading and conversion work undertaken as well. The amount of \$4,144,293 from the General element was used to assist in the funding of these projects.

State Capital Assistance Program

In 1999, the State provided \$7.63 million towards the cost of capital projects at non-Catholic non-government schools that are affiliated with the Independent Schools of Queensland Block Grant Authority. Of the 40 capital projects completed both physically and financially in 1999, the most common type of work undertaken and facilities provided were for the construction of classrooms for primary and secondary students; home economics, science, music, drama, art and computer facilities; libraries; administration areas and staff facilities. There was some upgrading and conversion work undertaken as well. The amount of \$5,689,057 from the State Capital Assistance Program was used to assist in the funding of these projects.