

National School Reform Agreement

Australian Capital Territory Bilateral Agreement: 2024 Progress Report

National School Reform Agreement – Bilateral Agreement Report – ACT – 2024

Executive Summary

The ACT remains committed to driving reform to improve learning outcomes for all children and young people, as outlined in the ACT Government's *Future of Education Strategy* and *Set Up for Success: An Early Childhood Strategy for the ACT*. These strategies are focused on investing in and providing a system that delivers excellent, inclusive and equitable education that supports children and young people to learn, thrive, have agency, participate and achieve high expectations.

ACT Public Schools, Catholic Education and Independent Schools continue to be driven by the vision of the Alice Springs Mparntwe Declaration 'for a world class education system that encourages and supports every student to be the very best they can be' by ensuring that every child and young person has access to a great education and the life opportunities that this affords them. The *Future of Education Strategy: An ACT Education Strategy for the Next 10 Years*, recognises the need to review, amend and modernise the *Education Act 2004* to strengthen student agency, equity, access and inclusion. In 2024, reforms clarified attendance, participation and distance education requirements to better support all students, their families and their communities.

The ACT continues its focus on quality teaching, including in the areas of initial teacher education, curriculum and assessment, cognisant that quality teaching is the most important in-school factor in determining student performance. Initial Teacher Education (ITE) continues to be a high priority of the Teacher Quality Institute (TQI), which engages rigorously in the national ITE standards agenda.

The ACT has a comprehensive approach to teacher professional learning, particularly focused on the Australian Curriculum. This is supported with high quality teacher professional development targeting the interconnectedness between curriculum, assessment and reporting. ACT teachers use formative assessment on a daily/weekly basis to assess student learning and identify required instruction and support. Putting student data at the teachers' fingertips empowers teachers to personalise learning plans and address areas for further growth.

The ACT Board of Secondary Studies (BSSS) maintains a strong partnership across the three schooling sectors. Through a review cycle, the BSSS develops, replaces or updates courses to ensure they are contemporary, relevant and provide pathways for diverse learners. ACT Public, Catholic Education Canberra and Goulburn, Independent Schools,

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and the BSSS and TQI, are collectively committed to ensuring a world class education for every child and young person in the ACT.

In 2024, ACT Public Schools trialled an updated model for school improvement as outlined in the *Student-Centred Improvement Framework* (SCIF). The SCIF places student needs and outcomes at the heart of all improvement efforts, guided by the question: what works, for whom, under what circumstances, and why? This is pursued through ongoing, evidence-based self-evaluation within schools.

Under the SCIF, school leaders engage in continuous cycles of inquiry, collaborate with their network Executive Education Leaders (EELs) through annual *Student-Centred Improvement Visits* (SCIVs), and participate in external reviews every three to five years. The framework equips school leaders with practical tools and access to system-wide data, enabling them to implement evidence-informed strategies that improve student outcomes.

A suite of leadership capability offerings are available to support school leaders with the implementation of the SCIF and respond to the evolving needs of school leaders. These offerings are regularly refined, with initiatives such as cascading Leadership Forums being adapted to better support school leaders in embedding the SCIF across diverse educational contexts.

Together, the SCIF and leadership capability offerings provide ACT Public Schools with structured and impactful approaches that enable the implementation of initiatives aimed to improve student outcomes.

Progress Against Each Reform Direction

Reform Direction A - Support students, student learning and achievement

Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
Develop a cross-sectoral implementation plan to underpin the ACT Government's Future of Education Strategy.	All	2019	<p>Completed in 2019.</p> <p>Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A <p>Catholic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A <p>Independent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A
Implement stage one of the cross-sectoral Future of Education implementation plan.	All	2020	<p>Completed in 2020</p> <p>Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A

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			Catholic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A Independent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
Establish a cross-sectoral reform forum to share progress and challenges.	All	2019	Completed in 2019. Government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A Catholic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A Independent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
Deliver professional learning on the Australian Curriculum General Capabilities.	All	2019	Completed in 2019. Government

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A <p>Catholic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A <p>Independent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A
Develop and implement academic reporting explicitly aligned to Australian Curriculum achievement standards.	Gov	2019 and ongoing	<p>Completed and ongoing</p> <p>Government</p> <p>Since term 1 2024, all ACT public schools K-10 have taught and reported against the Australian Curriculum V9.0. The following changes to academic reports were also made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where appropriate, learning area reporting statements were further delineated to subject level statements. • Attitudes to learning statements were updated to align with the sub-elements from the Personal and Social Capability.

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
<p>Build upon existing ACT Australian Curriculum assessment reform effort to play a lead role in national efforts to refine ACARA's national learning progressions in literacy and numeracy.</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>2019</p>	<p>Completed in 2019 and ongoing.</p> <p>Government</p> <p>As part of the review of the Australian Curriculum V8.4 and the subsequent update to V9.0:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The national literacy and numeracy learning progressions replaced the pre-existing literacy and numeracy continua. • The ACT has provided public schools with access to the literacy and numeracy progressions through the Schools Administration System (SAS), within which schools can monitor individual and cohort progress against the progressions over time. <p>Catholic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Term 1, 2024, strands were adjusted across K-10 to align to v9 of AC; scope and sequences were adjusted to align to V9 of AC; targeted professional development was offered through curriculum working groups.

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
			Independent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
Build upon existing ACT Australian Curriculum assessment reform effort to play a lead role in national efforts to develop the digital formative assessment proof of concept.	All	2019	Completed in 2019 Government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A Catholic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A Independent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
Build upon existing ACT Australian Curriculum assessment reform effort to play a lead role in the development of national learning progressions in general capabilities.	All	2020 and ongoing	Completed in 2020. Government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
			<p>Catholic</p> <p>In 2024 curriculum working groups K-10 continued to work on cross curriculum and general capabilities within the v9 AC.Independent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in this area remains a focus in Member schools, guided through specific support work from the office of AISACT. The AISACT Teaching and Learning subcommittee remains a core networking and strategic development structure in this area.
<p>Play a lead role in the refinement of the digital formative assessment tool, and implement relevant aspects as they become available.</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>2020 and ongoing</p>	<p>Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throughout 2024, the ACT continued to work closely with ACARA and representatives from other jurisdictions to support and advocate for delivery of the National Formative Assessment Resource Bank (NFARB). <p>Catholic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
			Independent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
Conduct a cross-sectoral STEM educators forum (STEMEd ACT) in partnership with a range of professional teacher associations and the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies.	All	2019	Completed in 2019 Government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A Catholic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A Independent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
Implement the Cultural Integrity Continuum and Toolkit in all ACT Public Schools.	Gov	2018 Onwards	Implemented in 2018 Government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
Implement the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures enriched elaborations for Science as part of cross-sectoral curriculum effort.	All	2019 and ongoing	<p>Completed in 2019</p> <p>Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A <p>Catholic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A <p>Independent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support through the office of AISACT has been a focus, and continues to develop.
Meeting the learning needs of students through more and expanded schools for Canberra's growing suburbs.	Gov	2019 and ongoing	<p>Completed and ongoing.</p> <p>Government</p> <p>ACT Government investment in major infrastructure and capital works is continuing, with projects undertaken during 2024 to deliver new ACT public schools, modernise school facilities and better meet the learning needs of communities including:</p>

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New schools: one new school, Shirley Smith High School was delivered and opened at the commencement of the 2024 school year. Construction continued on the new Aunty Agnes Shea High School and, construction commenced on a new ECEC to Year 6 school in the suburb of Strathnairn. With design stages continuing on a new ECEC to Year 6 school in the suburb of Whitlam and a new College in the Gungahlin area. • An expansion of Gungahlin College was completed in 2024, providing upgrades and expanded school capacity. The modernisation of Garran Primary School commenced with the first stage including the construction of new school facilities while the existing school continues to operate. A further three major expansions or modernisations were in various stages of planning / design, at Narrabundah College, Telopea Park School and Majura Primary School. • Relocatable Learning Units were installed at Canberra College, Telopea Park School and Gungahlin College, increasing school capacity / learning spaces during 2024.

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">Feasibility studies continued to inform options to expand and modernise public schools and to identify potential future school sites across the region, informed by demographic analysis and projections.

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Reform Direction B – Support teaching, school leadership and school improvement

Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
Actively contribute to the review of senior secondary education including, pathways to work, further education and training and prerequisites for university entry.	All (through the Board of Senior Secondary Studies)	2019	<p>Completed in 2020, with changes to the <i>National School Reform Agreement</i> Milestones.</p> <p>Board of Senior Secondary Studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A
Implement relevant findings of the review of senior secondary education.	All (through the Board of Senior Secondary Studies)	2020	<p>Completed 2022 and ongoing</p> <p>All decisions and actions referred to in the report have been completed or are ongoing. The following are clarifications or additional information of these initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VET initiatives have been completed with the incorporation of full competency credit to the ACT Senior Secondary Studies (2023). • Discussion and development of the options for learner profiles are ongoing. • Completion of targeted bridging numeracy and literacy courses for those students identified as requiring supported learning

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
			<p>opportunities in these key fundamental areas of knowledge, skills and understanding (2023).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All elements of the ACS phase five development plan have been implemented. Phase five streamlines and improves moderation processes to increase the accuracy and reliability of quality assurance systems and outcomes (2023). • The ACS phase six development plan is underway, including student and teachers apps to support transparency and communications in the senior secondary context. • The curriculum renewal process was completed with the full and updated incorporation of the general capabilities with all courses now reflecting the design specifications that enable schools to adapt to emerging trends in education (2023). • The Board has maintained and expanded consultation with experts and other stakeholders in the development of contemporary quality curriculum, responding to the needs and

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
			<p>interests of students and the expectations of the broader community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The BSSS has an ongoing partnership with the Education Directorate, Catholic Education Canberra and Goulburn and Independent schools in the context of senior secondary curriculum, quality assurance, assessment and certification.
<p>Build off the lead role that the ACT Teacher Quality Institute has had in quality Initial Teacher Education regulation to actively contribute to quality assurance improvements in the national consistency and transparency of Initial Teacher Education regulation.</p>	<p>All (through the Teacher Quality Institute)</p>	<p>2019</p>	<p>Completed in 2021 and ongoing.</p> <p>Accreditation of eight University of Canberra programs will be undertaken in 2025. The ACT TQI Board is in the process of endorsing the panel members and all panel members have refreshed their training ready for the panels in Semester 2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Initial Teacher Education (ITE) program accreditation guidelines and procedures have been reviewed and updated by AITSL and the Australasian Teacher Regulatory Authorities (ATRAs) in consultation with higher education providers. The core content recommended by Teacher Education Expert Panel (TEEP) has been included in the ITE program accreditation

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			<p>guidelines and the University of Canberra's response will be assessed using nationally consistent processes before the end of 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITE preservice teachers are now required to sit Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education (LANTITE) in the first year of their ITE program with support provided by the university should they be unsuccessful. The TQI Board approved the restricted permit to teach pathway which allows final year ITE students to be employed as teachers up to three days per week under prescribed conditions to continue with ongoing support and monitoring. • CatholicArchdiocese, Canberra and Goulburn Education Limited (CAGEL) and the ACT Association of Independent Schools are represented on the TQI Board and contribute to TQI's work in Initial Teacher Registration.
Develop cross-sectoral collaboration in school leadership.	All	2020 onwards	Completed in 2020. Activities ongoing. Government

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in cross-sectoral Australian Council for Education Leadership (ACEL) Breakfast. <p>Catholic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in ACT cross sectoral leadership conferences/seminars. • Participation on the Executive of the Australian Council of Educational Leadership (ACEL), including cross sectoral awards for leadership in the ACT. <p>Independent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remains an ongoing focus through events such as the AISACT Annual Colloquium and the Celebrating Teaching and Learning annual event.

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Reform Direction C – Enhancing the national evidence base

Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
Build upon existing NCCD cross-sectoral moderation activities and strengthen consistency on a year by year basis.	All	2018 onwards	<p>Completed in 2020 and ongoing</p> <p>Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government representatives in 2024 attended cross-sectoral meetings to strengthen and moderate NCCD levels of adjustment. Government schools are actively using the Student Adjustment Matrix scaffold to improve the quality and consistency of NCCD data. <p>Catholic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross sectoral meetings with Gov Officers to strengthen precision of NCCD levels of adjustment. Cross-sectoral conversations and collaboration with Department of Education colleagues continuing to strengthen the NCCD model. Cross-sectoral Moderation meeting between CECG, ACTEDU and AIS staff planned for 2024.

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			<p>Independent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing. In addition, through the provision of AISACT support person to individual AISACT schools and involvement in various cross sectoral meetings/groups.
Provide national leadership in NAPLAN online by maximising implementation in all ACT schools.	All	2018 onwards	<p>Completed in 2021 and ongoing</p> <p>Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACT schools (all sectors) participated in NAPLAN in 2024. The ACT Education Directorate supports all sector participation as the Test Administration Authority (TAA). <p>Catholic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All ACT Catholic schools accessed NAPLAN Online in 2023 <p>Independent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All ACT independent schools accessed NAPLAN Online in 2023

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
Contribute to the ongoing data collection for the Australian Teacher Workforce Data Strategy including amendment of legislation to allow for sharing of data held by the Teacher Quality Institute.	All (through the Teacher Quality Institute)	2019 onwards	<p>Completed 2021 and ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) directly emailed teachers for the first time in 2023 with reminders to complete the survey. The resulting increase in completions provided more data that could be included in the survey. TQI continues to work with AITSL to support the survey in 2024.
Build off the existing ACT cross-sectoral student identifier to actively contribute to the development and implementation of a national Unique Student Identifier.	All	2019 onwards	<p>Completed and ongoing</p> <p>Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During 2024, the ACT continued to engage in national governance to work towards the introduction of USIs for school students, through legislative and data governance reviews, consultation and communication with schools and the community, and working with ICT stakeholders. <p>The ACT Education Directorate continues to actively prepare to connect with the technical implementation of the USI – for ACT Public Schools – once it becomes available.Catholic</p>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A <p>Independent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A
Build upon recent ACT performance measures to actively contribute to the development of new measures of performance particularly student learning gain and general capabilities.	All	2018 onwards	<p>Completed and ongoing</p> <p>Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2024, the ACT continued to engage through the National Assessment, Data, Analysis, and Reporting Reference Group (NADAR) to provide advice on national performance measurement issues, including discussions on potential new measures. <p>Catholic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of progressive achievement testing in literacy and Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy to track literacy learning gain. • Participation rate in DIBELS testing was consistently over 90% in 2023 across all 56 schools, providing a robust baseline for evidenced based claims.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of DIBELS results enables us to strengthen literacy interventions and programs. • CECG contributed to ACT Literacy and Numeracy Inquiry and provided access to schools and performance measures to the Expert Panel. <p>Independent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AISACT actively participates in ongoing discussions on new measures of performance and general capabilities and informs Member schools through a variety of committees and networks.
Implement new national measures of performance particularly student learning gain and general capabilities.	Gov	As available	<p>Completed and ongoing Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2024, the ACT continued to engage through the National Assessment, Data, Analysis, and Reporting Reference Group (NADAR) to provide on national performance measurement issues, including discussions on potential new measures.