

# **National School Reform Agreement**

## **South Australia Bilateral Agreement: 2024 Progress Report**

# National School Reform Agreement – Bilateral Agreement Report – SA – 2024

## Executive Summary

In 2024, South Australia's schooling sectors have continued to progress all agreed actions under the bilateral agreement of the National School Reform Agreement. Highlights against the three reform directions of the agreement are noted below.

### Reform Direction A: Supporting students, student learning and student achievement

- Continued delivery of the State Government's capital works program providing new and improved learning areas, including 10 upgrades completed in 2024. Construction commenced on a further 3 new technical colleges at Port Augusta, Mount Gambier and Modbury Heights, while planning commenced for new schools in Mount Barker and Adelaide's northern suburbs.
- Catholic Education South Australia (CESA) Diocesan schools successfully participated in the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check, with plans for a Year 2 re-test in 2025 to support students who did not meet the initial benchmark. Additionally, half of CESA schools undertook the Year 1 Number Check to assess numeracy proficiency. CESA continued to provide opportunities for literacy assessments and trials for expanded use of Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). The Literacy and Numeracy Strategy was implemented with targeted support and professional development for teachers.
- Support to independent schools in implementing Version 9 of the Australian Curriculum saw workshops and online networking hubs provided for teachers and leaders of each of the eight learning areas and for each stage of schooling. In addition, primary and secondary teachers investigated strategies and models for initiating and leading change in Mathematics and English in their schools. Expert input and protocols for reflection, discussion and action planning supported school-based change management approaches.

### Reform Direction B: Support teaching, school leadership and school improvement

- Over 3,100 leaders and teachers undertook professional learning programs (face-to-face, hybrid and online models) at Orbis, the department's professional learning institute for leaders and teachers. A further 1,906 leaders and teachers participated in online sessions so that, overall, more than 5,000 leaders and teachers engaged with Orbis offerings in 2024. Orbis launched a new leadership offering to support early career preschool leaders, and a new program for mentors of early career teachers.

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- For the Catholic sector, the development of a working document to provide further guidance for deepening practices in curriculum, assessment and pedagogy to further support teachers in improving literacy and numeracy outcomes was a priority. This practical framework for improvement encapsulates a data informed approach, evidence based practice and explicit teaching, and will be formally launched in 2025.
- The cross sector South Australian Teacher Certification Committee streamlined the maintenance process used to certify a teacher's ongoing performance at the Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher career stage. Used by teachers in all South Australian education sectors, certification and maintenance of certification has recognised teacher quality and strengthened teacher practice.
- The Association of Independent Schools of South Australia (AISSA) Leadership Institute supported school leaders to navigate change, undertake strategic leadership development and implement school-based innovation projects. Complementary to this work, middle and senior leaders deepened their understanding of using evidence and data effectively to drive decision-making, enhance their comprehension of the learning process and design both large and small-scale school initiatives for optimal outcomes.

## **Reform Direction C: Enhancing the national evidence base**

- All sectors continued to pursue reforms to improved NCCD collections.
- Independent schools were provided with relevant and timely information regarding the local and wider education agenda, supporting the successful implementation of key national reform areas.

## 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)
<b>School Improvement Model</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>All schools are provided a suite of tailored guides to support improvements in literacy and numeracy</li></ul>	Government	2019	Action status: Completed in 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>N/A</li></ul>
<b>STEM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Deliver 500 'expert' teachers in primary schools across South Australia, including regional and rural locations</li></ul>	Government	2020	Action status: Completed in 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>N/A</li></ul>
<b>Literacy and numeracy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Deliver phonics-based literacy and numeracy screening for all Year 1 students</li><li>Literacy Guarantee Unit operational</li></ul>	Government	2019	Action status: Completed in 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>N/A</li></ul>

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
<p><b>Schools Capital Program</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A program to revitalise ageing infrastructure and increase capacity</li> </ul>	Government	Year TBC (Life of Agreement)	<p>Action status: Ongoing</p> <p>The state government continued its significant investment in education capital works, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• completing 10 capital works projects, providing enhanced learning environments for staff and students, which included a major expansion of Adelaide Botanic High School to cater for an additional 700 students and the new Findon Technical College</li> <li>• commencing construction on new technical colleges at Modbury Heights, Mount Gambier and Port Augusta that will provide industry training programs for students in years 10 to 12. In total, 5 will be delivered, with work also continuing on a new technical college at Tonsley</li> <li>• commencing planning for a new preschool and primary school in Mount Barker and a new secondary school in Adelaide's northern suburbs.</li> </ul>

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
<b>South Australian Government schools' year 7 transition into high school</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 7 transition into high school completed</li> </ul>	Government	Life of Agreement	Action status: Completed in 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N/A</li> </ul>
<b>Improved Student Learning and Wellbeing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the Living Learning Leading Framework</li> </ul>	Catholic	Life of Agreement	Action status: Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The LLL framework and Leadership standards have now been implemented in all diocesan schools and form a key component of the suite of documents that underpin the strategic and operational intent of CESA.</li> </ul>
<b>STEM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build System Capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct an annual STEM Forum</li> <li>Improve access and equity to quality STEM education for schools and students (particularly girls and ATSI) in low socio-economic areas</li> <li>Provide science consultancy to schools</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Catholic	Life of Agreement	Action status: Ongoing <b>Build System Capacity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A 2024 STEM MAD showcase incorporating a Design Thinking masterclass and curriculum design workshops was held to promote and celebrate STEM learning in Years 3 to 12.</li> <li>The STEM MAD Showcase at the University of South Australia was attended by 169 students</li> </ul>

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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"> <li>• Build Teacher and Leader Capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ STEM professional learning for primary and middle years teachers</li> <li>◦ Provide high quality STEM professional learning based on real world inquiry and integrated interdisciplinary approach</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Build Dynamic and Sustainable Partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Develop partnerships and networks with industry, universities and other education providers</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			<p>and 50 teachers from 26 schools across primary, secondary and regional sites.</p> <p><b>Build Teacher and Leader Capacity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional Learning on Designing Learning for STEM. Teacher responses indicated that the professional learning significantly increased their confidence and understanding of how to design, plan and assess STEM MAD curriculum using the Australian Curriculum.</li> </ul> <p><b>Build Dynamic and Sustainable Partnerships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnerships established in 2023 continued in 2024; of particular mention is Makers' Empire.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Literacy and Numeracy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement Catholic Education South Australia (CESA) Literacy Learning Strategy</li> </ul>	Catholic	2021 Complete, with implementation of the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check and	<p>Action status: Complete, with Implementation Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2024, all CESA Diocesan schools participated in a mandated Year 1 Phonics Screening Check.</li> </ul>

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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"> <li>○ Deliver phonics screening to Catholic Schools for all Year 1 students</li> <li>● Implement CESA Numeracy Learning Strategy</li> <li>○ Design and deliver numeracy screening to Catholic Schools for students in the Early Years</li> </ul>		Year 1 Number Check, ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CESA communicated plans for a Year 2 re-test of students who did not meet the minimum benchmark for the Year 1 Phonics Screening check. This has been designed to take place in 2025, following a period of intervention for these students.</li> <li>● In 2024, CESA expanded the offering of the Year 1 Number Check through Education Services Australia. This was undertaken by 48 schools, providing early indicators of numeracy proficiency.</li> <li>● In 2024, CESA continued to provide opportunities for schools to undertake Foundations of Early Literacy Assessment; Learning English: Achievement and Proficiency (LEAP) Oral Language; Leap Writing. In addition, a trial to expand the use of DIBELS was implemented.</li> <li>● CESA continued to implement the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy in 2024 through provision of</li> </ul>

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			<p>targeted support to schools, along with professional development aligned to key areas of the strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CESA developed a working document to provide further guidance for deepening practices in curriculum, assessment and pedagogy to further support teachers in improving literacy and numeracy outcomes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Catholic Schools transition of Year 7 into secondary school</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete transition of Year 7 into secondary settings</li> </ul>	Catholic	2022	Action status: Complete
<p><b>Improving Student Learning and Achievement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence informed improvement practices that meet the cultural and contextual needs of students</li> </ul>	Independent	Life of Agreement	<p>Action status: Complete, with Implementation Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A range of evidence-informed practices continued to build practices that were responsive to student</li> </ul>

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<p>in Independent schools are provided through the use of the High Impact School Improvement Tool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will explore the Australian Curriculum Literacy and Numeracy Learning Progressions as a means of identifying student learning and achievement to enable teachers to respond appropriately to student learning needs</li> </ul>		2019-20	<p>need, including inclusive practice, Gifted Education and instructional coaching.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In addition to ongoing support for implementation of the Australian Curriculum v9, primary and secondary teachers were supported to investigate strategies and models for initiating and leading change in Mathematics and English in their schools. Expert input from learning area specialists and protocols for reflection, discussion and action planning supported school-based change management approaches.</li> </ul>
<p><b>STEM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore and implement opportunities for STEM Education through the Association of Independent Schools South Australia (AISSA) STEM Task Force <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit tool</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Independent	2019/20	Action status: Completed in 2020

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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"> <li>○ Local and international research bank</li> <li>○ Industry and tertiary partnerships</li> <li>○ School-based STEM strategies</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Literacy and numeracy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide access for all Independent schools to phonics based literacy screening</li> <li>● Implementation of the ReSolve mathematical inquiry project in participating schools</li> </ul>	Independent	2019/20	Action status: Completed in 2019
<p><b>Middle years Schooling Improvements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Responding to Early Adolescent Learners Committee will investigate and scale best practice in Middle Schooling, including schools required to transition Year 7 students to secondary contexts</li> </ul>	Independent	2019/22	<p>Action status: Complete, with Implementation Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The AISSA provided early intervention training for secondary leaders and teachers on youth mental ill-health, including depression, anxiety, eating disorders, substance misuse, and psychosis. Foundational skills were explored and advice was provided for developing evidence-based school action plans.</li> </ul>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A professional learning series was initiated to educate and empower schools in engaging with AI as a tool for learning. Insights, case studies and evidence of achievements were shared, fostering a collaborative environment for educators to develop cohesive, ethical approaches to AI integration.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Indigenous Secondary Student Mentoring</b></li> <li>Providing Indigenous secondary students with mentoring support, building cultural connections and educational aspiration</li> </ul>	Independent	2018/19	Action status: Completed in 2019

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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)
<b>Aboriginal Education Strategy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Release Aboriginal Education Strategy supported by governance arrangements that involve and support transparency to Aboriginal People</li><li>Launch of rolling public implementation plan</li></ul>	Government	2019	Action status: Completed in 2019
<b>Supporting Teacher Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Teacher and Leadership Academy is established and delivering high quality professional learning</li></ul>	Government	Life of Agreement	Action status: Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Orbis, the department's professional learning institute for leaders and teachers, was launched in April 2019 and provides a comprehensive suite of capability programs throughout an educator's career trajectory.</li><li>More than 5,000 teachers and leaders engaged with professional learning at Orbis in 2024.</li><li>Measures to increase access for regional teachers and leaders included:</li></ul>

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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"> <li>○ Funding for travel expenses provided to 344 teachers and leaders from 170 regional sites</li> <li>○ Online access to Early Career Teacher Development, Middle Leadership and English 7-9 programs</li> <li>○ Select cohorts of some programs delivered locally in regions such as Mount Gambier, Berri, Whyalla and Port Lincoln</li> <li>○ The launch of a range of online learning options, and the introduction of streaming capability for live events, to ensure access for all.</li> <li>● Orbis expanded capacity for the Leading Future Learning program, co-designed with South Australian education leaders and the University of Melbourne, continued programs to support site-leaders' wellbeing and coaching skills, and introduced new programs; Preschool Leadership,</li> </ul>

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
			Restorative Practices and Mentoring Early Career Teachers.
<b>Entrepreneurial Education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entrepreneurial specialist programs implemented in 4 high schools (2 in regional/rural areas and 2 in metropolitan areas)</li> <li>New business and entrepreneurship focussed SACE subjects developed</li> <li>Establish a new technical college in the western suburbs of Adelaide to support young South Australians to develop high level trade, STEM and entrepreneurial skills so they are well equipped for careers in defence, shipbuilding and other maritime industries</li> </ul>	Government	2019	Action status: Completed in 2019
<b>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy</b>	Catholic	2020	Action status: Complete with Implementation Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Release of the CESA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy was significantly delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic.</li> </ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Release reviewed CESA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During 2023 the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools approved all recommendations of the CESA Aboriginal Education Strategy.</li> <li>In Late 2023, an 'Action Plan Working Group' formed, with representatives including principals from Catholic schools (regional and metropolitan), Aboriginal education focus teachers, Aboriginal school staff, as well as an external Aboriginal academic as a 'critical friend' from Flinders University. A draft 'Action Plan' was prepared and reviewed in mid-2024 by the Learning Wellbeing and Inclusion Standing Committee and the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools, and approved later in 2024.</li> <li>Additional Strategy recommendations were scoped, planned, developed, and implemented for trial in 2024: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A cohesive Aboriginal Focus Teachers Network program</li> </ol> </li> </ul>

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Regular Network meetings</li> <li>3. Doubling the amount of Aboriginal student cultural opportunities</li> <li>4. The development of a Cultural Learning Plan (part of the suite of new plans via the development of an updated Personalised Plan for Learning (PPL))</li> </ol> <p>In 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Learning Wellbeing and Inclusion Standing Committee approved the CESA Aboriginal Education Action Plan 2025 – 2035</li> </ul>
<p><b>Continuous Improvement Framework for Catholic Schools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the 2014 Continuous Improvement Framework for Catholic Schools to reflect the Living Learning Leading Framework</li> <li>• Extend external evaluation process to all catholic schools</li> </ul>	Catholic	2020	Action status: Completed in 2020

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
<p><b>Leadership Institute</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The AISSA Leadership Institute supports governing councils, leaders and leadership teams to govern and lead in a rapidly changing education landscape <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governing Council Conference and workshops</li> <li>Leadership Legal series</li> <li>School Impact Hubs</li> <li>Leadership seminars, conferences and in-school development programs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Independent	Life of Agreement	<p>Action status: Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Innovative New Models for Recognition of Holistic Learning Project, led by the AISSA Leadership Institute, connected SA Independent schools to a global learning network. Collaborating with international thought leaders, participants explored new ways to recognise holistic learning and use the Learning Impact Tool, designed to assess and enhance student learning through narrative and digital storytelling.</li> <li>A four-part series of human resources and legal workshops was delivered for Principals, Business Managers, and Human Resource professionals, reinforcing the AISSA's commitment to equipping schools with the knowledge to make informed and legally sound decisions while fostering a fair and compliant environment.</li> </ul>

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Actions	Sector(s)	Timing	Progress towards implementation of actions (including progress of non-government sector actions)
<b>Early Career Teacher Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inducting early career teachers to the profession through the provision of professional learning and mentoring</li> </ul>	Independent	Life of Agreement	Action status: Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The long-standing early career and mentor teacher program utilised a coaching approach to support teacher induction into the profession, with a focus on practice-focused mentoring, establishing safe and productive learning environments and teacher wellbeing.</li> </ul>
<b>ChallenGE Project</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ChallenGE project uses a Design Thinking methodology to develop context specific responses to the needs of highly able learners. Schools will prototype and scale locally developed initiatives.</li> </ul>	Independent	2019	Action status: Completed in 2019
<b>Centre for Innovation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The AISSA Centre for Innovation will support schools to implement improvement initiatives through programs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School Impact Hubs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Independent	2019/21	Action status: Completed in 2021

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o Learning Design and Moderation			

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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)
<p><b>School Improvement Model</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Continue to implement agreed improvements to the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability</li></ul>	All Sectors	Life of Agreement	<p>Action status: Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The department continues to provide schools support and advice on the NCCD and the Disability Standards for Education through a two-tiered approach including Site Support Function meetings, which are tailored meetings with schools, and NCCD online training and Q&amp;A sessions based on frequently asked questions collated across the state principal team.</li><li>Departmental officers participated in the Student with Disability Loading Review Reference Group that acted upon the recommendations from the National Schools Resourcing Board review of the national disability loadings.</li><li>To ensure data collected across the department is as robust as possible, a three-tiered quality</li></ul>

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			<p>assurance approach has been adopted consistent with prior years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Within the context of staffing reductions due to the loss of Reform Support Funding, the AISSA continued to support schools to meet their obligations of the NCCD and the Disability Standards for Education.</li> </ul>
<b>School Improvement Model</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School improvement Dashboard developed and provided to schools</li> </ul>	Catholic	2020	Action status: Completed in 2020
<b>School Improvement Model</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each independent school is supported to meet both national obligations and strategic school improvement initiatives, through the provision of expert support and advice</li> </ul>	Independent	Life of Agreement	Action status: Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AISSA staff continued to partner with schools to further their educational goals through mechanisms of customised and context-specific support, alongside a carefully designed program of professional learning opportunities. AISSA staff also provided accurate, relevant and timely information</li> </ul>

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			regarding the local and wider education agenda, supporting the successful implementation of key national reform areas.