



Australian Government



**IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY
(PRINCIPAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

LOW SES SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

**Northern Territory
Progress Report 2013
(1 January – 30 June 2013)**

Due 31 October 2013

INTRODUCTION

In April 2013, states and territories provided an Annual Report to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) on Smarter School National Partnerships (SSNP) activity in the 2012 calendar year.

This Progress Report covers SSNP funded activity from 1 January to 30 June 2013. The Progress Report focuses on key highlights, case studies as well as milestone activities, as set out in state and territory Bilateral Agreements/Final Implementation Plans.

The report also provides important information on SSNP funded activities to support the improvement in educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

STRUCTURE OF REPORT

The Progress Report has three sections:

- Section 1 - Improving Teacher Quality
- Section 2 - Low SES School Communities
- Section 3 - Milestones

Sections 1 and 2 will provide a narrative description of the progress and impact to date for each National Partnership.

The third section will include tabulated responses to the relevant milestones indicated in state and territory Bilateral Agreements/Final Implementation Plans.

Where applicable, these milestones will be pre-populated by DEEWR and will also include milestones not reported on, or not achieved, from the 2012 Annual Report.

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Section 1 – Improving Teacher Quality

Significant Achievements/Highlights — 1 January 2009 to 30 June 2013

The Northern Territory has continued to focus effort on attracting, retaining and developing quality teachers, particularly in remote locations. Ensuring suitable teachers are recruited and better prepared and supported to teach in remote contexts will continue to improve staff retention, allowing for continuity and quality teaching and improved outcomes for students.

In addition to supporting new and pre-service teachers, the Northern Territory is building the capacity of the local Indigenous workforce to improve community engagement and participation in schools, through strengthening Indigenous school leadership and increasing the number of qualified local recruits in schools. Through Indigenous teacher scholarships, cadetships and fellowships; regional and systemic support and onsite programs such as the Preparation for Tertiary Success pilot at Maningrida School and the Growing Our Own program in the Catholic sector, Indigenous staff are being supported to obtain educational qualifications to become local educators and mentors for other staff and students.

Principals, school leaders and aspiring leaders are participating in instructional leadership programs aimed at improving the capacity of school leaders to implement reforms. For example, over 150 school leaders and educators from across the Northern Territory attended the annual Leaders' Conference, which focussed on the theme of Driving School Improvement.

Specific progress against the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership is included below.

Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students — 1 January 2009 to 30 June 2013

The Northern Territory's implementation of the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership has continued to focus on building the capacity of the remote teaching workforce, particularly Indigenous staff, to improve support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Local Indigenous staff are an important part of strengthening school and community partnerships and supporting students to achieve educational outcomes. Local and regional support has been provided to increase the number of Indigenous staff with educational qualifications, enabling improved and more inclusive local decision making and building the capacity of communities to support students. Remote practicum placements, teaching schools, orientation and contextualised induction programs are some of the initiatives implemented in the Northern Territory that ensure the teaching workforce is better prepared to support students, particularly Indigenous students in remote schools.

Progress Against TQNP Facilitation Reforms —1 January to 30 June 2013

National Professional Standards for Teachers

The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers came into effect in the Northern Territory from January 2013.

The Teacher Registration Board of the Northern Territory (TRB) continued to deliver information sessions on the standards for teachers, principals and employer representative groups. The workshops target specific career stage groups such as teachers moving from provisional to full registration. The TRB continued work in the field with teachers and principals on aligning processes such as probation, to the standards. In this period, the focus of workshops has moved to supporting schools to embed the standards and harvest evidence from their everyday practices.

Australian Professional Standards for Teachers are embedded in the Teacher Performance and Development Framework for the government school sector. In 2013 an online teacher performance and

development plan was implemented to facilitate ongoing formal and informal performance and development for teachers. This tool enables teachers to access and continue their performance record at any government school site.

The Northern Territory's Assistant Teacher Standards for government sector employees provide a competency based career progression for assistant teachers and use the same domains as the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. These standards continue to be used by teaching teams to clarify the roles, responsibilities and expectations of assistant teachers at their respective qualification level. They are also used as the basis for performance development processes.

National Certification of Accomplished and Lead Teachers

From 2013, the TRB has taken on the role of accrediting Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers (HALT). Much work has been undertaken nationally to ensure consistency and rigor of processes in each jurisdiction.

Nine Northern Territory assessors from across all education sectors have accessed national training to undertake the assessment at two stages: Stage 1: submission of a portfolio of annotated evidence against the HALT standards and Stage 2: onsite observation of classroom practice. There are currently 39 applicants participating in the assessment process from around the Territory, with 23 applicants applying as part of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) approved deeming process, only requiring participants to complete Stage 2 of the process.

The Centre for School Leadership, Learning and Development continues to provide support and professional learning for Northern Territory teachers who apply for certification in 2013 and beyond, including:

- Development of a HALT information video, now available via the Centre's website.
- Hosting, in conjunction with the TRB, HALT information sessions for prospective applicants and information forums for principals and coaches of prospective HALT applicants. Sessions provide information on the requirements for applying for certification including eligibility and pre-assessment requirements as stipulated by AITSL.
- Development of resources for a HALT professional learning program, including the Learning Together Forum One—a two-day face-to-face support and professional learning forum.

An online site for applications for certification became available to teachers in early June 2013 through the TRB website.

Nationally Consistent Registration of Teachers

From January 2013, the TRB has implemented a nationally consistent approach to teacher registration, based on the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. A national mutual recognition agreement is operational in the Northern Territory, which enables registered teachers from one jurisdiction to apply for registration in another jurisdiction. Teachers applying for mutual recognition can be registered in the Northern Territory quickly, which increases the availability of teachers for schools.

National Consistency in Accreditation of Pre-service Teacher Education Courses

As part of the nationally consistent approach to initial teacher education in Australia, all programs accredited from 2013 have been accredited through the TRB, consistent with the Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures. Graduates of courses will be eligible for registration to teach in schools across all Australian states and territories (subject to meeting other eligibility criteria such as English proficiency and suitability to teach). Four courses relating to secondary teaching were presented towards the end of 2012 and approved for accreditation, with the

delivery of courses commencing at the beginning 2013 academic year. A further three secondary teaching courses have been presented for accreditation.

Professional Development and Support for Principals

In 2012 the Centre for School Leadership, Learning and Development provided programs that had a strong focus on teaching instruction and instructional leadership including:

- The annual Leaders' Conference. The theme for this conference was 'Driving School Improvement'. Over 150 school leaders and educators from across the Northern Territory attended the conference.
- School Leaders in the Making Program. In 2013, 15 principals commenced the 12-month program which:
 - builds participants' skills and knowledge to lead effective schools that improve student learning outcomes
 - enables participants to become familiar with, critically examine and reflect upon the implications of the Australian Professional Standard for Principals for their respective work contexts.
- Developing Excellence in School Leadership. Five participants commenced this 12-month program in 2013. The program develops the capacity of new school principals and provides professional development in building leadership knowledge and skills while supporting recent appointees in their leadership role.

The National Alliance for Remote Indigenous Schools (NARIS) Leaders Conference in Alice Springs attracted 90 participants from across participating jurisdictions to discuss the best ways to improve learning outcomes in their communities to ensure students have every opportunity to succeed at school.

In the independent sector, regular face-to-face meetings for school leaders have been held with links to a leadership development program. As well as offering an opportunity for information sharing, these face-to-face gatherings also provide principals with opportunities to make links with other school leaders both within and outside of the independent schools sector. The Association of Independent Schools of the Northern Territory also provides individual school support for principals through visits and electronic interactions. In some instances this type of support has been offered to small groups of school leaders where there are like issues.

A separate progress report for Principal Professional Development is located in Section 3 of this report.

Improved Performance Management and Continuous Improvement in Schools

Orientation and recall programs provide new teachers in the government sector with professional development opportunities during the first two years of their employment, which ensures ongoing and timely support. Sixty-three teachers attended the orientation program delivered in January 2013. The orientation program provided teachers recently recruited to the Northern Territory Department of Education a solid grounding in their new roles. It also provided an opportunity to establish professional networks and to learn more about the Northern Territory education sector, resources, support services and strategic initiatives. The program included four-wheel drive training for those teachers who will be working in remote communities.

Work to embed coaching in practice to sustain a culture of learning in schools and regional structures continues to be a focus. The Coaching Accreditation Program designed for school leaders who want to substantially develop their coaching skills and knowledge continued to be delivered in 2013. Twenty-three participants completed the nine-month long (three phase) program in Semester 1, 2013. Successful completion of an additional phase of the program (phase four) allows participants to obtain accreditation as a leadership/executive coach, and can be used as credit towards an educational

Master Degree at three universities in Australia. Supporting this program, an online community of practice forum is established to enable past and present participants to share their coaching practice. Of the 36 participants who completed the Coaching Accreditation Program in 2011 and 2012, 14 are now fully accredited, 18 more are in the process of completing accreditation and are progressing through the final phase.

In the independent sector, the Association of Independent Schools of the Northern Territory, has worked closely with its New South Wales counterpart and the Independent Schools Council of Australia to provide schools with opportunities to be involved in workshops, meetings and electronic exchanges focussed on improved performance management and continuous improvement. Both Nyangatjatjara College and Tiwi College have introduced the New South Wales Apprettio tool for the management of teacher professional development, with staff receiving training in the use of the tool. These schools are also using approved self-management tools to inform their directions and improvements.

New Pathways into Teaching

Under NARIS, the Northern Territory has developed the Teacher Mobility Program, designed to promote remote teaching as a career pathway by encouraging high quality and experienced teachers with the right skills to teach in remote Indigenous communities for two or three years. The program is being piloted in 2013, and supports the mobility of teachers between jurisdictions with a right of return to their permanent role in their home jurisdiction. The NARIS Mobility Program has been endorsed by Australian Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Senior Officials Committee.

Better Pathways into Teaching

The Northern Territory offers a range of programs to increase the teaching workforce. The Teacher Education Scholarship and the More Indigenous Teachers cadetships, scholarships and fellowships, continued in 2013 with no new intakes.

The More Indigenous Teacher program has a total of 46 local Indigenous people studying Teacher Education at Charles Darwin University (CDU) or Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE).

The Teacher Education Scholarship Program had a total of 43 local Territorians studying Teacher Education at CDU in Semester 1, 2013. In this period 10 students graduated with a teaching qualification. During the 2012–13 period a total of 27 Teacher Education Scholarship recipients graduated with a teaching qualification.

Improved Quality and Availability of Teacher Workforce Data

The Northern Territory has continued to focus on increasing the availability of workforce data to improve the quality, coverage and completeness of staff demographics, occupancy and payroll information within the government sector. Quarterly reporting of summary level and trend information for a range of human resource metrics and performance indicators has been developed. A wide range of measures and consolidated data from a number of systems is included in the report to support workforce planning and decision-making. Schools are now able to access regular workforce reports to assist in the strategic and operational management of their human resources.

One system that contributes to the increased availability of data is the professional learning system. The system enables all professional learning to be captured and reported centrally. Almost 400 professional learning events were captured during Semester 1, 2013, enabling teachers to demonstrate learning outcomes that contribute to teacher registration requirements. A number of self-service reports from the system have been developed and published for staff to use as required. These reports can be used for

employee's own records of professional learning, as well as to provide evidence to the TRB to support applications for full registration or re-registration.

Tracking and monitoring of Remote Teaching Service teachers has also continued to assist with identifying reasons for resignation or movement from remote schools, to better inform the selection and induction process and monitor success.

Indigenous Education Workforce Pathways

Over 40 per cent of students enrolled in Northern Territory schools are Indigenous and in many remote and very remote communities Indigenous students make up 100 per cent of school enrolments. Building the local education workforce provides the best opportunity to deliver quality teaching by teachers with experience and understanding of the local environment, and to maintain the continuity of program delivery. For further information see the building the local teacher workforce showcase in this section.

Under the Local Teachers in Local Schools strategy, over 40 Indigenous Territorians were studying teacher education through More Indigenous Teacher cadetships, scholarships and fellowships.

Focused efforts to enable Indigenous employees to increase their qualification levels and further their careers in the education sector resulted in over 60 Indigenous employees graduating from a Vocational Education and Training (VET) course, inclusive of education support and children's services qualifications.

Negotiations also continued through the Teachers and Educators Enterprise Agreement to establish an additional assistant teacher level (level five), including complementary work on the development of the Advance Diploma of Education—a qualification requirement associated with the proposed additional level.

In this period a pilot program was undertaken between Maningrida School, BIITE and the Department of Education to deliver the Preparation for Tertiary Success on site for community members interested in teacher education. This is a supported pathway into higher education setting people up for success. An initial group of 12 students nominated to participate. Four students commenced the Preparation for Tertiary Success program and two students have successfully completed the program in Semester 1, 2013.

In the Catholic sector, the Growing Our Own teacher education partnership with CDU continued during this period, including transitioning to new funding arrangements under Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory. Activity during the transition phase has included:

- extending the service delivery agreement with CDU
- consolidating the third cohort of students from Nauiyu/Katherine
- working with the student cohort at both Santa Teresa and Wurrumiyanga
- establishing a further cohort of students at Wadeye, and
- introducing refined mentor arrangements arising from a 2012 internal review.

Quality Placements

In collaboration with CDU, the Teaching School program continued with accredited schools aiming to prepare employment ready graduates. Teaching Schools work in partnership with the CDU School of Education to align the academic learning and professional experience of pre-service teachers, including the provision of mentoring support. In 2013 approximately 400 pre-service teachers were placed in schools, across all sectors. For further information see the showcase in this section on pre-service teacher programs.

In April 2013, school based professional learning leaders and mentors attended the Teaching Schools 'Working as Partners' workshop with staff from CDU and pre-service teachers to facilitate the on-going collaboration within the partnership. Feedback from the workshop was very positive. A research workshop/forum is planned for later in the year to build connections between CDU higher education courses and research focus for mentors and professional learning leaders.

School Centres of Excellence

Two Remote Centres of Excellence located at Katherine High School and Barkly College in Tennant Creek are delivering the Teach for Australia program. The program aims to:

- develop high potential experienced teachers into quality mentors through an accreditation course
- provide quality supervision, mentoring and support to Teach for Australia Associates and other pre-service teachers and new teachers, and
- provide scholarships for pre-service teachers to undertake final year practicum placements at the centres.

The program provides these schools with access to quality staff with specialist knowledge in hard to fill subject areas and is expected to build the capacity of the schools by providing effective and high quality mentoring and support for teachers.

All Teach for Australia associates employed at Katherine High School and Barkly College in 2012 continue for the second year of the program until December 2013.

Showcase Examples—1 January to 30 June 2013

Principal capacity

Strong school leadership is central to improving educational outcomes for Territory students. In order to support school leaders to drive improvement a number of revised frameworks and processes have been implemented in the government sector, alongside the extension of quality training opportunities.

The government sector worked with the Department of Education Queensland to scope and develop a school review program relevant to the context and needs of Northern Territory schools. The program, implemented in 2012–13, is similar to the Australian Council for Education Research (ACER) program developed for Department of Education Queensland and aligns with the National Professional Standards for Principals and findings of the Northern Territory's Masters' Review. It assesses the core aspects of education services, which are shown to lead to improved student outcomes.

The school review process was the focus of the annual School Leaders' Conference in April 2013 which included training workshops to introduce the framework and ensure a solid understanding of the matrix. Eighty-seven principals attended the conference and the school review training workshops. Forty-seven school reviews have been conducted in the past year with another 22 scheduled for the remainder of 2013. Principals and review teams continue to receive mentoring and support to engage in strong school review, planning and implementation processes.

Alongside the school review process, an updated Principal Performance and Development Framework, aligned to the Australian Professional Standard for Principals, has been implemented. Implementation of these new frameworks will continue to support schools to target their efforts to improve student outcomes.

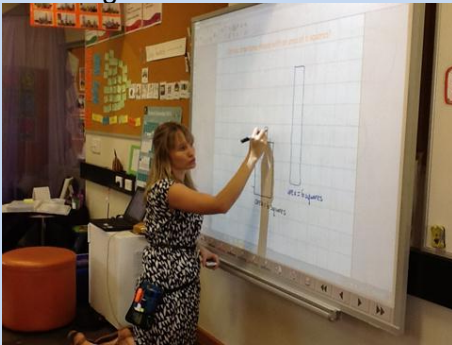
Complementing this framework, professional learning and development programs and activities that target aspiring leaders, early career principals and established school leaders are delivered through the Centre for School Leadership, Learning and Development. In addition to the annual school leaders' conference, these programs include the:

- twelve-month Early Career Principals Program
- twelve-month School Leaders in the Making Program
- Leaders in Education Program International, offered by the National Institute of Education in Singapore

The revised frameworks, coupled with quality professional learning and development programs, are working to enhance principal capacity and accountability for delivering quality education services.

Pre-service teacher programs

A suite of undergraduate and post graduate programs are offered by CDU to support people wanting to undertake a teaching qualification. The Teaching Schools Program, coordinated by the Centre for School Leadership, Learning and Development in partnership with the School of Education, supports the collaboration between CDU and participating schools to prepare pre-service teacher graduates for the varied demands of the teaching profession from day one of employment. In 2013, pre-service teacher professional experience placement began in April with approximately 400 NT pre-service teachers placed into government, independent and Catholic teaching schools across the Territory, including 12 schools involved in the SSNP.



Feedback from schools and pre-service teachers has been consistently positive which indicates a high level of satisfaction with the program meeting its outcomes.

'The support, advice and wisdom shared with me during placement have left me feeling confident and ready to teach on my own. My mentor teacher and host school were always able to answer my queries and I was included in all aspects of the daily role of a teacher.' Pre-service teacher.

'My 40-day placement ...was invaluable in helping me to access my learning and turn the theory into practice.' Pre-service teacher

'I have thoroughly enjoyed my final teaching placement I found the school and staff to be both welcoming and encouraging of my learning journey. I have participated in several professional learning opportunities, including, Kagan cooperative learning, visible learning and Jolly Grammar/Phonics— which I have been able to effectively implement into my classroom practice. I have developed into a

confident classroom teacher and am thankful for the continued support and feedback I have received from my professional learning leader, mentor and co-teachers' Pre-service teacher

Building the local teacher workforce

The Teacher Education Scholarships supported 43 students in 2012-13 to study an education qualification full-time, with 27 successfully completing their teacher training through CDU. Fifty students who had received the Teacher Education Scholarship were subsequently employed in the government school sector.

In 2012, a program to support Indigenous Territorians become 'study ready' to undertake their teaching qualifications was piloted. Run over 16 weeks, the training program was a joint initiative of the Northern Territory Government and BIITE. The program incorporated accredited vocational training, work readiness development and work based induction and learning. Of the six participants involved in the pilot, three successfully completed the academic requirements and two were offered teaching scholarships under the More Indigenous Teachers Initiatives. Through the More Indigenous Teachers initiative, a range of schools provided support to 46 Indigenous students enrolled in a teaching qualification to increase the number of Indigenous teachers in Territory schools. These students will continue to be supported until they complete their studies.

There has been a strong focus across the Arnhem region schools to increase employment of Indigenous staff as cultural advisors, tutors and home liaison officers. At Yirrkala Homelands School a senior cultural advisor is employed to work with the school leadership team to design and coordinate training and professional development for assistant teachers to undertake accredited training in education support at the Certificate III, IV and diploma level. The school co-facilitates onsite training in partnership with BIITE, with training materials contextualised to the local school and community context. In the 2012 school year three assistant teachers graduated with a diploma in Education Support.



In Galiwinku, Shepherdson College continues to provide a range of employment and development opportunities for the local workforce. The school employs a cultural advisor who supports the partnership between the school, CDU and BIITE to deliver training to Indigenous school staff. Through this partnership, local school staff are released for a full day each week to undertake study with a jointly funded lecturer who delivers training on site. Further, Shepherdson College is building employment opportunities and pathways through initiatives such as a taskforce which employs local people to work with the school to support students and their families improve school attendance and participation.

Section 2 – Low SES School Communities

Significant Achievements/Highlights—1 January to 30 June 2013

The Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities National Partnership supports schools with disadvantaged students through the implementation of a range of initiatives across sectors at the school, region and system level. The delivery of reform through this multi-layered approach aims to target the diverse needs of each school and community. The Northern Territory has 116 schools identified as eligible for support under this national partnership representing 60 per cent of schools and 38 per cent of students in the Northern Territory*.

As the Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities National Partnership enters its fifth year, review and consolidation of work to date has been undertaken to ensure a smooth transition beyond the funding period.

In this period, work continued to sustain and build on improvement gains achieved since the commencement of the SSNP, with:

- 57 schools eligible under this national partnership achieving over 70 per cent average student attendance in Semester 1, 2013.*
- 28 schools eligible under this national partnership achieving over 80 per cent attendance for Indigenous students in Semester 1, 2013.*

Locally identified and driven solutions which meet the needs of each school and community are a focus of initiatives under this national partnership, including providing direct resourcing to schools to deliver priorities identified in their school improvement plans. School priorities align to, and complement, support provided through systemic and regional reform. Three initiatives: Remote Whole School Reform, Engaging Urban Students and Engaging Remote Indigenous Students have provided the framework for tailoring resourcing for the individual needs of these schools.

The **Remote Whole School Reform (RWSR)** initiative provided intensive resourcing for 22 of the Northern Territory's largest very remote school communities. Through this initiative, 19 government and three non-government schools are supported to enhance community engagement, student enrolment and attendance and student achievement. The range of activities supported through the RWSR in this period included:

- Employment of cultural advisors, home liaison officers and other community engagement positions focused on strengthening relationships between schools and their communities to improve education outcomes. For example, RWSR sites in Alice Springs have employed and provided training for local Indigenous staff as mentors and role models to enhance delivery of learning. Also at these sites, cultural advisors liaise with community and proactively engage the community in school decision-making.
- Working with local people to align curriculum offerings with the educational aspirations of the community. For example, at Alekarenge School in the Barkly region, the funding of a curriculum manager enabled the school to work with community members to ensure that the curriculum taught at the school mirrors the educational aspirations of the community within the framework of the Australian Curriculum.
- Expanding the range of curriculum offerings to better engage students, including the establishment of suitable facilities and resources to accommodate the delivery of VET programs to secondary students. For example Ngukurr School in the Katherine region works in partnership with the local community to provide rural operations training and recreational pony club. This project provides the basis for a Certificate I in AgriFood Operations for students in Years 9–11, a practical 'taster' experiences for students in Years 7–8, and a rural camp (held twice a year) in partnership with Warringudu Station at Hodgson Downs.

The **Engaging Remote Indigenous Students (ERIS)** initiative supported 56 smaller remote and very remote schools (51 government and five non-government schools). Like RWSR, ERIS activity targets communities working in partnership to lead change that results in sustainable and

successful educational and life outcomes for students. Highlights of activities from this period include:

- Employment of student pathways coordinators and tutors to support student learning and pathways beyond school. For example, boarding students from remote and very remote areas of Katherine continued to be provided with access to homework tutors via Katherine High School.
- Facilitating access to professional learning for teaching teams. For example in the Arnhem region, additional release time was provided for school leaders to facilitate engagement of teaching teams in planning and learning together for improved classroom practice.

The **Engaging Urban Students (EUS)** initiative supported 16 schools (14 government and two non-government schools) to implement strategies that focus on student wellbeing and strong links between home and school for disadvantaged students living in provincial and regional (remote) areas. Highlights under the EUS initiative include a continued focus on supporting students, family-school and community partnerships and improving student attendance through:

- Employment of Home Liaison Officers, Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers and support staff to build and maintain links between families, schools and other government /non-government stakeholders.
- Employment of tutors to support students, including assistance for the completion of individual Learning and Engagement Plans to identify learning goals and support strategies to improve outcomes, and outside classroom support through homework centres.
- Transport assistance for student to and from school and transport to enable school based staff to undertake home visits to discuss student progress and attendance at school.
- Nutrition and wellbeing programs, such as the Ready for School program in Alice Springs that enables a 'streamlined' morning process during which students have breakfast, get dressed in uniform, have showers if required, pick up their lunch and pack their bag prior to starting the day at school.
- Targeted programs to engage students, such as the Music Australia Program in Katherine—an online music program that enables students to form bands, practice and receive ongoing support. Students have also been supported through increased access to ICT resources.
- Community events, awards and rewards to celebrate student success. For example, rewarding students through the provision of transport costs to enable participation in academic, cultural and sporting activities, including camps, overseas trips and excursions.

Regional initiatives

Complementing school level reforms under this national partnership, targeted initiatives aimed at supporting student attendance and engagement and enhancing family and community engagement have continued. Regions and sectors have determined action that is responsive to local challenges. Examples of **Local Attendance and Engagement Strategies** during this period include:

- In the Central Australia Directorate (Alice Springs and Barkly regions), work is underway to improve the capacity of teachers to deliver effective, evidence-based teaching and learning to students at all phases of learning. A directorate-wide program provides a framework and significant teacher resources and professional learning to understand the concept of assessment capable learners and then provides strategies to deliver high level teaching, provide feedback at all levels to enhance the learning process, measure student learning progress and assess growth of learning effectively.
- In the Katherine region the IT into the Curriculum program was run over ten weeks at many remote schools. This program involves both students and parents/community and

aims to increase engagement with information technology and extend use onto the home. School based incentives for improved attendance were also supported, including an excursion to Sydney for students at Amanbidji School who achieved over 90 per cent attendance.

- In the Arnhem and Palmerston and Rural regions, schools planned for work, alongside their communities, to research student, family and staff perceptions of successful learning and schooling that contribute to future school improvement decisions and activities.
- In the independent sector, schools continued their two way discussions and consultations to emphasise the importance of attendance and engagement and offered a range of programs targeting different ages and stages of learning, such as: community playgroup which promotes literacy, good hygiene and school-readiness activities, nutrition and kitchen garden programs and engagement through sport including Clontarf at Kormilda College and Yirara College and AFL and Girls programs at Tiwi College.

Examples of **Local Family and Community Engagement Strategies** during this period include:

- Working with community members, schools and other government departments to complete the development of language sound charts for nine Indigenous languages in the Katherine Region. The charts will be accompanied by sound recordings and published online to support school to maintain their Indigenous language and culture/Indigenous studies programs.
- Also in the Katherine region, schools continued to employ community engagement officers to support disengaged families and students to reconnect with schooling. Schools also worked to extend cultural programs and increase opportunities for community involvement in schooling.
- In the independent sector, schools strengthened links with their communities through the engagement of community liaison officers with strong links to their communities and the school. In some sites offering boarding facilities family members have the opportunity to travel to their children's school in order to participate in formal and informal activities with students, carers and teachers. House parents/teachers also have the opportunity to travel with students to their home communities and make connections in this way.

Support for teachers of multi-lingual learners

Delivery of the **Intercultural Teaching and Learning accredited Master of Education** unit to the seventh teacher cohort via a five-day intensive program was completed in Semester 1, 2013. There were 34 teachers involved from 20 schools. Professional networks built through provision of this unit and the Graduate Certificate in Education (Teachers of English to Speakers of other Languages (TESOL) for Indigenous Learners) are ongoing, broadening in scope and influence across regions and jurisdictions as an outcome of the course. Access to quality accredited training and professional support means that teachers are better equipped to support English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EALD) learners.

Based in regions, **staff supporting EALD learners**, provided professional development and school based support services for the implementation of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. Specialist staff work closely with other regional support staff on agreed priorities to provide high level, coordinated and holistic support to schools. Regional priorities during the period included designing and delivering professional learning workshops to build staff understanding of:

- the new Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority EALD phases of English language learning
- effective oral language teaching and assessment
- the use of appropriate pedagogical practices, and
- preparing for moderation.

Support to schools, also included coaching staff to differentiate the curriculum to cater for EALD learners, conducting classroom walkthroughs to observe teacher practice and provide feedback and facilitating regional network meetings.

Student wellbeing

Support for students at risk continued to focus on inclusive learning environments that cater to all students, including those with hearing and other difficulties. For example, in this period over 130 hours of direct hearing support was delivered to over 50 schools (including principals, special education teachers, classroom teachers and individual students and classes). Support included resources and professional development covering:

- identifying and managing a hearing loss
- improving classroom acoustics
- using individual and group amplification
- strategies to improve ear health
- appropriate teaching and classroom strategies to minimise the impact of hearing loss, and
- managing behaviour caused by hearing loss.

Regionally based **Students at Risk Advisors** provided critical incident and case management support, targeted professional learning opportunities and expert advice to create and maintain positive and inclusive learning environments. Regionally determined professional learning priorities during this period included:

- school based training opportunities for the continued implementation of the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support framework
- Essential Skills for Classroom Management training for teaching and support staff
- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (delivered under the auspices of the Crisis Prevention Institute), and
- Coaching for nominated staff in classroom management, productive pedagogy and positive behaviour management strategies.

In the independent sector, schools have continued a focus on the **pastoral care and wellbeing of students**, including nutrition programs and cooking, cleaning and self-care practices. Yipirinya School, Nyangatjatjara College and Tiwi College having food growing and healthy eating programs in place which are making a positive impact in their communities, not just at school. Tiwi College is also utilising the support of the Hayden Way and Kitchen Garden Schemes and students at Nyangatjatjara College maintain a number of 'Wiki' gardens that support the college kitchens.

The **Residential Care Workers Project**, led by the Northern Territory Christian Schools Association, is enhancing the capacity and quality of care workers across six residential boarding colleges (Kormilda College, Marrara Christian College, Woolaning Homeland Christian College, Tiwi College, St. John's Catholic College and Yirara College). In this period, 10 new residential care workers were employed in Northern Territory boarding programs. The project provides support to workers through delivery of the Certificate IV Residential Care Work and access to ongoing peer support and coaching. Residential care workers play a key role in education and development of young people and increased staff retention and access to ongoing training opportunities enhance the care of students enrolled in residential programs.

Strengthening leadership

In the government sector, school leaders continued to be supported by regional **Business Support Consultants**. Flexible support, including training for school administration staff, assistance with financial reporting obligations and school budget development, enabled principals to focus on their role as instructional leaders, while still meeting their financial, human resource and other corporate responsibilities. In this period support provided included the further development of tools to improve financial management in schools, monitoring of school financial data and regular workshops to build financial skills for school based staff. The role of these officers will continue to expand as the Northern Territory moves toward greater autonomy in the allocation and management of school resources.

The Centre for School Leadership, Learning and Development continued to provide professional

development and support for principals. As outlined in Section 1 of this report, programs delivered by the centre have a strong focus on teaching instruction and instructional leadership.

In the independent sector, the **Principals and Communities in Partnership Leading Whole School Reform** initiative continued to support eligible schools to engage in whole school review and improvement and focus on active involvement with their school communities. As part of this work Tiwi College in conjunction with the Tiwi Education Board is exploring governance arrangements and opportunities to engage with other schools on the Tiwi islands. This is also occurring in Central Australia at Nyangatjatjara College with a focus on its three campuses. Yirara College and Kormilda College are continuing their programs of board and community engagement to inform directions for their schools, with a review of the school structure being undertaken at Yirara College.

Using data to inform teaching and learning

Work has been undertaken to improve diagnostic and data systems to enhance the availability and use of data in schools, with a particular focus on providing easy access to quality information to inform teaching programs for Indigenous students in the early, primary and middle years. Schools have been supported in the use of three **online diagnostic tools**: On Demand Testing, e-asTTle and Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (PIPS).

The **Student Achievement Information System (SAIS)** is available to all schools and all sectors enabling teachers to access and input data for monitoring purposes. Professional learning and resource materials have been developed to support teachers to use the system. Improved reporting capabilities have been developed that now allow schools to have class and individual student views of assessment data in SAIS.

The **Assessment of Student Competencies (ASC)** is an on-entry screening assessment that enables the identification of at risks student that may require early intervention. Menzies School of Health Research completed their psychometric analysis of the ASC, the findings from which have led to refinements to ensure the ASC continues to provide a valid measure of all domains. Professional learning and comprehensive resources tailored to remote and very remote contexts to make the ASC more accessible are currently under development.

Innovative delivery

To support teachers working in composite, multi-age and multiple year level contexts, **Multiple Year Level (MYL) teaching materials** have been developed, including scope and sequence, whole school plan, year level plans and unit plans. The materials have been made available to all schools via the Learning Links website and cover Transition to Year 3, Years 3 to 6 and Years 6 to 9. An online survey was developed and administered to gather feedback on the use of materials within schools to monitor the effectiveness of the materials. Feedback from schools is being used to review and further refine the materials.

Innovative and tailored program delivery is a key element of reforms to enhance outcomes for students in remote and very remote locations where face-to-face support is limited. Through the **eLearning Senior Secondary Pathways** project an online module targeted at supporting remote senior secondary students to complete the Personal Learning Plan—a compulsory Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET) course has been implemented. Development of online modules focused on literacy for work and community life is also underway. The modules build on previous successful online course delivery developed as part of the Virtual Schooling (Ready to Run) project.

In the independent sector, Tiwi College is continuing its program of **flexible timetabling** to cater for students who travel from communities across the Tiwi Islands to board during the school week. A more flexible timetable provides a balance for students between school and home and minimises periods of isolation. As part of the program students are bussed home for the weekend. Similar systems have also been used by Yipirinya School and Nyangatjatjara College to streamline the pick-up and drop-off of students that board. These sites have also adjusted holiday breaks to better suit the communities that they serve.

*NOTE: In 2013, a new process was implemented for capturing enrolment and attendance data for government schools. Due to this change in processing, 2013 data for government schools is no longer comparable to previous years or to non-government schools. In this report, 2013 data for government schools has been combined with non-government schools data, therefore information contained in this report represent data from two different sources and calculation methods.

Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students — 1 January to 30 June 2013

In Semester 1, 2013, 162 students, representing 77.5 per cent of student enrolments in schools eligible under the Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities National Partnership were Indigenous students.* To this end, all initiatives provide targeted support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Support for community engagement has assisted with progress towards the completion of School-Community Partnership Agreements in 55 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan focus schools. Identified as key to the improvement of Indigenous student outcomes, the agreements focus on school readiness, student attendance and partnerships between schools, communities and families.

Regionally based **Managers of Indigenous Education** continued working to ensure that across all levels: system, region and school, the needs of Indigenous staff and students are central to strategic decisions and operational delivery of government education. The focus of work in this period included:

- Supporting the negotiation, finalisation and implementation of School-Community Partnership Agreements.
- Collaborating with project leaders and schools regarding the NARIS Community and Cultural Orientation Project, including supporting the development of an online resource to assist newly appointed teachers to NARIS schools with their cultural readiness, through the provision of localised information pertaining to country, culture and relationships.
- Facilitating network meetings for Aboriginal and Islander education workers and home liaison officers. The meetings offer professional learning and career development support as well as collaboration opportunities for school celebration of prominent events in Indigenous society.

*NOTE: In 2013, a new process was implemented for capturing enrolment and attendance data for government schools. Due to this change in processing, 2013 data for government schools is no longer comparable to previous years or to non-government schools. In this report, 2013 data for government schools has been combined with non-government schools data, therefore information contained in this report represent data from two different sources and calculation methods.

Exemplary Schools — 1 January to 30 June 2013

Gillen Primary School

Gillen Primary School is located in the western urban area of Alice Springs, providing education services to around 300 students from diverse cultural, linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds ranging from preschool to Year 6. The school has an ICSEA value of 733 and approximately 70 per cent of students are Indigenous. A high proportion of students are from low socio-economic backgrounds and many have English as an additional language or dialect. School attendance is an ongoing focus for Gillen Primary School, with continuous movement of significant numbers of students in and out of Alice Springs. Consequently, increasing school attendance and engagement through supporting family-school and community partnerships remains a priority.



Gillen Primary School is part of the EUS reform initiative. The focus of this initiative is to increase attendance and engagement of disadvantaged students living in provincial and regional areas. The school has implemented a multifaceted approach to addressing need across a broad range of student ability levels. For example, to improve numeracy outcomes there has been a strong focus on engaging students through the use of online programs and materials including Mathletics. This has been supported by the employment of a mathematics tutor who has supported student engagement and learning. The QuickSmart Mathematics Program is used as a targeted intervention to improve numeracy outcomes for identified students. A whole school approach to reading has been employed at Gillen Primary School using the Reading Eggs program. In 2012–13, the average reading growth of students across the school was 1.25 levels, which is above the expected annual growth of 1. This was significantly higher than the reading growth of 0.73 achieved in 2011–012, indicating that the approach is positively impacting reading outcomes.



In 2013, the school continues to implement the Families and Schools Together program to increase the level of engagement by parents in school life. With the support of a home liaison officer and Aboriginal and Islander education worker, there is a focus on strengthening relationships with families of students with poor attendance and liaising with them to address issues and barriers. A range of parental engagement functions and professional development workshops have also been hosted by the school, for example, workshops on cyber-bullying and behaviour management using the Restorative Practices Framework. Further, the school runs a nutrition program providing healthy meals for students to enable them to better engage in learning.



Students identified as being at risk of disengaging from schooling have been assisted to attend regularly through a transport program, with up to 45 students being transported to and from school daily during Semester 1, 2013. Further, rewards and incentives are offered to students to build on attendance gains. The school reports an increase in the level of engagement of low socio-economic status and Indigenous families in school life as a result of the broad range of EUS programs and activities being run. From 2009 to 2012, the proportion of students attending over 80 per cent at Gillen Primary School increased by five percentage points, up from 81.9 per cent in 2009 to 85.7 per cent in 2012. The school's average attendance rate during Semester 1, 2013 was 86.8 per cent.

Xavier Catholic College, Wurrumiyanga

Xavier Catholic College is situated on Bathurst Island, 80 km north of Darwin and has an ICSEA value of 634. The college has approximately 100 enrolments, with 95 per cent of students identified as Indigenous. The college is part of the RWSR initiative.



The college caters for both male and female students from Years 7 to 12, with a focus on improving attendance through student engagement, to further education goals. Teaching staff are drawn from all over Australia and are supported by local Tiwi teaching assistants who provide invaluable support through their interpreting skills and knowledge of student culture and background. The college operates a range of parallel projects focussed on improving outcomes, including:

- Japalinga Mob—targeting improved student outcomes through developing student academic, sporting, cultural and leadership capacity.
- Counselling for Health—targeting student outcomes through improved student wellbeing and resilience.
- P-12 (in collaboration with Murrupurtiyanuwu Catholic Primary School, Wurrumiyanga) — developing a seamless education precinct for the community of Wurrumiyanga.
- Virtual Delivery of Professional Learning targeting teaching workforce professional development.

Since 2010, the college has seen a 30 per cent increase in enrolments, a consolidating rate of student attendance, and a 20 per cent increase in the number of students attending on average each day. Attendance gains have strengthened and extended the college's capacity to offer a quality secondary program to the community. This year a core group of six students have the potential to complete their NTCET.

To complement the college's focus on student wellbeing and outcomes, a whole of teaching workforce professional development approach has been implemented. As part of this approach, in Semester 1, 2013 all teaching staff completed the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and the principal and a small group of teachers are currently undertaking further studies through the University of Toronto in Teaching English as a Foreign Language, on-line certification.

Work is being undertaken throughout 2013 to ensure the essential elements of these projects are sustainable beyond the term of the Low Socio-Economic Status Communities National Partnership Agreement.



Gapuwiyak School

Gapuwiyak School is located in the community of Gapuwiyak, 220km west of Nhulunbuy and has an ICSEA value of 595. The school caters for students from the early years through to the senior years as well as providing education services to two homeland learning centres. There are approximately 284 students enrolled in the school with 98 per cent identified as Indigenous.

The school recognised the challenge of improving student attendance rates with inconsistent student attendance impacting on engagement in learning and class cohesion. Working with families and students to address barriers to participation and improving community understanding of the importance of consistent school attendance and its impact on student behavior and educational achievement was identified as priorities.

Gapuwiyak School is participating in the RWSR initiative. The school developed various strategies to improve student attendance including:

- Conducting a review with families, staff and community members who specifically identified attendance as a whole community issue and all agreed to commit to working together towards improving student engagement and participation.
- Establishing the Gapuwiyak Attendance and Engagement Leadership Team with the goal of improving student outcomes through a continuing, staged, attendance plan that included the whole community, to provide accurate attendance data.
- Employing community members including a cultural advisor, home liaison manager and home liaison officers to work with students and families and support and foster relationships between the school and the community to address student wellbeing, attendance, participation and engagement.



The school reports that these initiatives have made a positive impact, increasing the number of local Indigenous staff employed at the school, improving the accuracy of student attendance data

and increasing collaboration with the overall community. Positive shifts in school attendance patterns have also occurred, for example 26 students were achieving 80 per cent or more attendance in Term 4, 2011, increasing to 106 students attending 80 per cent or more in Term 1, 2012, and the number of students with attendance below 30 per cent halved from 80 to 42 per cent for the same period. The school was nominated for 'Excellence in Improving School Attendance' under the Smarter School awards in 2012.

Definitely the highlight of the improved attendance for me was when every single one of my students attended school for two days (26 students.) In the two and a half years I have been working at Gapuwiyak School I have never seen the attendance as strong The work that the attendance and engagement officers are doing is amazing and its great seeing everyone working together on this issue'. *Classroom teacher*

Section 3 – Milestones

Improving Teacher Quality NP

All milestones for Improving Teacher Quality under the Northern Territory's Implementation Plan for Smarter Schools National Partnerships have been achieved. The following milestones relate to the Implementation Plan for Principal Professional Development in the Northern Territory for the National Partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality.

Principal Professional Development

Description of Activity	Milestone	Progress against milestone to date
Development of a school review mentoring program that aligns with the National Professional Standards for Principals and the Masters Review, to create high functioning teams that are able to provide appropriate mentoring and support to schools.	School review facilitators to deliver training to an additional 30 school leaders, principals and emerging leaders across all regions.	<p>In 2012, the NT government schools sector worked with the Department of Education Queensland to scope and develop a school review program relevant to the context and needs of Northern Territory schools. The program is similar to the Australian Council for Education Research (ACER) program developed for Department of Education Queensland and aligns with the National Professional Standards for Principals and findings of the Northern Territory's Masters' Review.</p> <p>The school review process was the focus of the annual School Leaders' Conference in April 2013. Executive directors and directors school performance delivered the school review training with an emphasis on introducing the framework and ensuring a solid understanding of the matrix. Eighty-seven principals attended the conference and the training workshops.</p> <p>School directors have participated in both school review programs and are providing mentoring and support to principals and school leadership teams to engage in strong school review, planning and implementation processes. Forty-seven school reviews have been conducted in the past 12 months with another 22 scheduled for the remainder of the 2013 year. School reviews are mandated for all government schools and are aligned with the renewal of the school's four-yearly school improvement plan.</p> <p>Training workshops were also offered to a broader audience of 43 assistant principals and senior teachers to ensure a greater understanding of the review framework and expectations in relation to improving the quality of educational services.</p>
Expanding the Australian Council for Educational Leaders (ACEL) Leadership course to all principals, deputy principals and	An additional 20 Catholic school leaders, including principals, deputy principals and Indigenous leaders, participating in a	<p>A leadership program for Catholic Indigenous leadership team members has been developed in consultation with ACEL. ACEL has worked with Catholic Education Northern Territory (CENT) in reviewing CENT service models and structure, including the identification of professional learning needs for Semester 2, 2013.</p> <p>As part of this ongoing work, an Aspiring Leaders in the Middle School program has been developed, underpinned by the ACEL Leadership Framework. This program will commence in Term 3, 2013.</p>

Indigenous leaders in the Catholic schools sector.	leadership development program provided by ACEL.	A total of 19 principals and Indigenous school leaders from the Catholic sector were supported in Semester 1, 2013. It is anticipated that at least ten additional Catholic school leaders will be supported in Semester 2, 2013.
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Low SES School Communities NP

Milestones in Progress Report—(Achieved 1 January to 30 June 2013)

Milestone	Milestone achievement	Reasons for partial achievement and expected future progress
School Annual Reports for all National Partnership schools with published school improvement plans explicitly identifying involvement in SSNP, relevant future activity and reporting on achievements and progress (as appropriate).	Partially achieved	Most schools complete an annual report in Term 1 of the school year. Funding sources to schools are many and varied and work is ongoing to ensure that school annual reports are completed for each school, and that reports include explicit links to SSNP initiatives.
School improvement plans published for all schools involved in this National Partnership.	Achieved	
RWSR, ERIS and EUS schools are accessing direct funding or being provided support to provide access to programs or services that target priority areas such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Improving literacy and numeracy outcomes o Enhanced community and family engagement o Student attendance and engagement 	Achieved	