



Australian Government



SMARTER SCHOOLS NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY

LOW SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

LITERACY AND NUMERACY

**New South Wales
Annual Report 2010
(April 2011)**

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Section 1 – Smarter Schools Executive Summary

Overview and 2010 key highlights

New South Wales continues to focus on improving achievements for all students as the key strategy towards attaining educational excellence, social equity and economic prosperity in this State. During 2010, each of the three NSW Smarter Schools National Partnerships (SSNPs) – Improving Teacher Quality, Literacy and Numeracy and Low Socio-economic Status School Communities – contributed a suite of coordinated strategies and reforms, directing activities to those areas known to be most effective in raising student achievement.

National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality

The National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality underpins the delivery of both the Literacy and Numeracy and Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnerships (NPs) by raising the quality of the teaching workforce to ensure that these significant reforms in schooling are successfully implemented.

All 18 facilitation and reward reforms of the Improving Teacher Quality NP were successfully implemented, with headline activities including:

- employment of an additional 95 Highly Accomplished Teachers (including equivalents in the non-government sectors) across the three SSNPs
- employment of an additional 89 paraprofessionals across the three SSNPs
- more than doubling the number of teacher mentors, bringing the total of full-time and part-time positions to 183
- over 1200 government school teachers participating in training courses to support the learning outcomes of Aboriginal students and more than 270 teachers and leaders from Catholic and independent schools undertaking school-based or locally developed Aboriginal cultural immersion or awareness programs
- 21,359 registrations of government, independent and Catholic school teachers in courses registered with the NSW Institute of Teachers and 1,175 course subsidies provided to over 1,000 teachers in the independent sector to attend professional learning courses
- 865 teachers applying to the NSW Institute of Teachers for accreditation at the level of Professional Accomplishment or Professional Leadership.

National Partnership on Low Socio-economic Status School Communities

While improvements in teacher quality will continue to enhance student outcomes in the longer term, immediate impacts have stemmed from shifts in the ways that schools have made decisions around whole school planning and implementation of customised interventions.

This has been the main feature of the National Partnership on Low Socio-economic Status School Communities (Low SES NP) in which comprehensive environmental scans of local contexts as well as informed analysis and use of student performance data have been the basis for undertaking initiatives which directly address student needs.

Local communities, particularly those with high numbers of Aboriginal parents, have been consulted and engaged in a range of activities and partnerships to ensure the most relevant strategies have been adopted.

In 2010, 331 schools in NSW participated in the Low SES NP. Current Low SES NP schools cater for almost 25% of Aboriginal students in NSW schools and more than 61% of students attending remote schools in NSW.

Extensive planning was undertaken in 2010 by a further 191 schools preparing to join the Low SES NP in 2011, with additional schools also identified to participate in the Partnership through the NSW-funded two year Reform Extension Initiative.

Headline activities supported by the Low SES NP during 2010 include:

- employment of 14 Highly Accomplished Teachers and sector equivalents to Low SES NP schools
- provision of over 400 literacy and numeracy focused interventions, including intensive programs targeting the needs of Aboriginal students
- significant flexible school organisational changes in 139 Low SES NP schools including teacher learning teams, extended library hours, allied health services and enhanced leadership structures
- establishment of at least 38 university partnerships
- employment of 58 paraprofessionals
- parent education sessions offered in 224 schools to support student learning
- Aboriginal community engagement strategies implemented in 274 schools, including 98.5% of government schools participating in this National Partnership.

Through the Low SES NP, significant changes in school culture have occurred, particularly in the strengthening of processes to monitor progress and effectiveness, underpinned by systemic and sectoral support and high quality professional development in the analysis and use of data.

School plans for the 295 government schools in the Low SES NP indicated significant progress toward or achievement of 63% of reported targets, with schools exceeding 17% of targets, for areas such as student performance, community engagement and other local priorities.

Improved engagement, attendance, retention and completion rates have resulted from implementation of strategies at critical transition points to assist students as they move from pre-school to Kindergarten, Year 6 to high school and transition to further education or work. High levels of uptake of explicit literacy and numeracy programs are further testament to the commitment of schools to improve student outcomes through the Low SES NP.

National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy

The use of a strong base of student performance data, and the growing confidence of teachers to inform their practice in response to this evidence, has allowed students' needs in literacy and numeracy to be immediately identified and addressed with the most effective programs and teaching strategies through the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership.

Selecting the best strategies from a strong evidence base has focused activities in the 147 primary and central schools participating in this two year Partnership. In July 2010, an additional 22 schools began their participation in a one year Literacy and Numeracy Addendum Program.

At the school level, leadership teams have:

- used data to identify immediate needs and to plan for future literacy and numeracy interventions, programs, resourcing, and staffing
- identified key personnel and matched them to leadership and in-class support roles
- engaged in professional learning to develop leadership capacity using programs such as the *NSW DET Team Leadership for School Improvement* program.

At the classroom level, teachers and support staff have:

- analysed and shared student progress data, resources and workloads, collaborating with colleagues to plan for more effective teaching
- used tools such as SMART2, the *Data Analysis Skills Assessment (DASA)* and literacy and numeracy continuums to develop whole class and individual student learning plans
- been mentored in planning, explicit teaching and implementation of intervention programs.

Highlights of achievements in the Literacy and Numeracy NP have included an increase in the percentage of students at and above national minimum standard in three mandated NAPLAN measures for Years 3 and 5, with the results exceeding the targets for 2011 reward payments.

The local measures targets were also exceeded for the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy Assessment in Years 3, 4 and 5:

- the numeracy improvement was 8.6 scale score points on average, which exceeded the target by 2.1 points
- the literacy improvement was 5.9 scale score points, which exceeded the target by 0.4 points.

Targets were also significantly exceeded in the DASA, with the percentage of teachers assessed as remaining in the lowest phase (Phase 1) across the 7 domains of DASA reduced to only 30%, down from 65.5% in 2009 and significantly exceeding the target of 60%. In Local Measure 3 (literacy and numeracy leadership programs) the 2010 target was achieved in 97 of the 125 schools (77%).

Aboriginal education and cultural immersion programs were expanded in this National Partnership, with 244 teachers across all sectors participating in these programs within the Literacy and Numeracy NP in 2010.

Cross sector collaboration

All three sectors have collaborated extensively to implement the three Smarter Schools National Partnerships. The implementation of each Partnership is being guided by a dedicated cross-sectoral implementation working group. All three working groups operate under the umbrella of the cross-sectoral NSW Smarter Schools National Partnerships State Steering Committee.

Across all the reform areas, there has been extensive cross-sectoral engagement in sharing the results and challenges of programs, innovations and best practice. This has been formalised in the work of two cross sectoral committees – the Reporting and Evaluation Working Group and NSW National Partnerships Evaluation Committee (NPEC), the members of which are appointed by the Minister.

The full impact of SSNP initiatives, particularly focusing on the enhancement of student educational outcomes, will be measured across the full terms of the National Partnerships through a suite of evaluations commissioned by NPEC. Evaluations of individual literacy and numeracy programs have also commenced, with external experts being engaged to examine the effectiveness of these initiatives in the government and Catholic sectors.

School level plans

Each participating National Partnership school has developed a school plan which is made publicly available. These school plans identify National Partnership investment at the school level and the National Partnership activities being implemented within the school.

Section 2 – Improving Teacher Quality

Overview – 1 January to 31 December 2010

During 2010, New South Wales made significant progress in implementing all 18 facilitation and reward reforms of the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality. All sectors consolidated reform efforts and built on existing structures and processes to make reforms sustainable and effective. The following table provides a summary of progress against agreed reward triggers across all sectors during 2010:

Triggers	2009	Additional in 2010	Cumulative total
Increased decision-making schools (Government sector only)	47	0	47
Highly Accomplished Teachers and equivalents	23 ¹	95 *, ***	118 *
Teacher mentors	91 **	92 **	183 **
Paraprofessionals	5 ²	89 *, ***	94 *
Schools participating in Aboriginal community engagement programs in NSW schools	102 ³	318	420

* Includes full- and part-time

** Includes full-, part- and full-time equivalent positions

*** Employed across the National Partnerships on Improving Teacher Quality, Low SES School Communities and the Low SES School Communities Reform Extension Initiative.

In the government sector alone, 118 schools participated in the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership, including 13 as Centres for Excellence, 58 “spoke” schools from those 13 “hub” schools, and 47 schools participating in the *Increased School Based Decision Making Pilot* during 2010. A further 22 government schools were announced in September 2010 to commence as Centres for Excellence in 2011.

¹ Includes full-time and part-time Highly Accomplished Teacher equivalents as at February 2010. This figure comprises two HAT equivalents (Quality Teacher positions) linked to Catholic school Centres for Excellence, nine employed in other Catholic schools and the achievement of conditional accreditation at Classroom Professional Excellence level by 12 independent school teachers.

² Paraprofessionals employed in independent and Catholic schools participating in the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality only. NSW’s 2009 Smarter Schools National Partnerships Annual Report (April 2010) indicated planning was also underway in 2009 to employ an additional 12 paraprofessionals in government schools. This eventuated in 2010 and the resulting paraprofessionals are included in the 2010 total above.

³ This figure comprises 89 government schools and 13 Catholic schools across NSW.

The 60 government school Centres for Excellence and schools participating in the *Increased School Based Decision Making Pilot* in 2010 represent:

- 2.7% cent of all NSW government schools
- 4.7% of NSW government school students⁴
- 4.8% of Aboriginal students attending NSW government schools
- 4.4% of NSW students attending remote government schools.

Key achievements

Implementation of teacher quality initiatives progressed considerably in 2010. Key achievements include:

- 95 Highly Accomplished Teachers and sector equivalents employed⁵
- 92 teacher mentors employed
- 89 paraprofessionals employed⁶
- 865 teachers applying to the NSW Institute of Teachers for accreditation at the level of Professional Accomplishment or Professional Leadership
- over 300 variations to regular staffing approaches implemented within the NSW Department of Education and Training (NSW DET) *Increased School Based Decision Making Pilot*
- 8 additional Centres for Excellence established in the Catholic sector
- 17 incentive payments allocated for principals leading school Centres for Excellence
- 244 teachers across all sectors undertook Aboriginal education and cultural immersion programs through the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership
- more than 270 teachers and leaders from Catholic and independent schools undertook school-based or locally developed Aboriginal cultural immersion or awareness programs
- over 1200 government school teachers participated in training courses to support the learning outcomes of Aboriginal students
- enhancement of partnerships between universities and schools, particularly in the area of maths and science and the development of reciprocal arrangements between schools and universities

⁴ All student numbers referred to in this report are calculated on full-time equivalents, except for references to refugees and ESL students which reflect enrolments.

⁵ Employed across the National Partnerships on Improving Teacher Quality and Low SES School Communities and the Low SES School Communities Reform Extension Initiative, including full- and part-time positions.

⁶ Employed across the National Partnerships on Improving Teacher Quality and Low SES School Communities and the Low SES School Communities Reform Extension Initiative, including full- and part-time positions.

- acceptance of the NSW proposal for all universities to offer specific pre-service teacher education courses in understanding Aboriginal students and culture by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs meeting in April 2010
- over 1,000 teachers in the independent sector received up to 1,175 course subsidies to attend professional learning courses
- 21,359 registrations of government, independent and Catholic school teachers participating in courses registered with the NSW Institute of Teachers
- 84,200 registrations by government school teachers, principals and executive staff in 5,909 professional learning sessions
- development of a professional learning management system (MyPL@DET), which is now used by all government schools, regions and directorates
- development of a comprehensive suite of professional learning programs to support aspiring, newly appointed and current government school leaders
- development of the *Classroom Teacher* program to support new teachers in maintaining accreditation at the key stage of Professional Competence with the NSW Institute of Teachers
- the delivery of team leadership programs across all sectors, for example the *NSW DET Team Leadership for School Improvement* program.

NSW engagement in the national reform agenda to improve teacher quality

During 2010, NSW continued to actively participate in the development and implementation of the national reform agenda for teacher quality. Further progress expected in 2011 when the second tranche of Centres for Excellence that were announced in 2010 become operational.

Throughout 2010, NSW engaged in the development of national professional teaching standards, including higher accreditation levels of Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership equivalent to the national levels of Accomplished and Lead Teachers. National professional teaching standards represent a significant area of reform which will support the mobility of the teaching workforce by underpinning both the national accreditation and registration of teachers and accreditation of pre-service teacher education courses.

Under the direction of the National Standards Sub-group, the New South Wales Institute of Teachers redrafted the national standards to reflect the consultation responses gathered from all jurisdictions. This resulted in significant progress in the development of the national standards, taking them to the validation stage.

The national professional standards were approved by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) in December 2010. Planning for implementation will commence following MCEECDYA approval during 2011 of the proposed process for assessing initial teacher education programs using national graduate standards and program requirements.

Implementation of teacher certification against the national standard Proficient level is dependent on the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) progress with implementation materials that will support teachers and schools. NSW has already commenced accreditation against Accomplished and Lead Teacher levels and is ready to transfer to the national standards within legislative frameworks when AITSL principles for a common approach to certification have been agreed.

In 2010, NSW also contributed significantly to the development of pre-service teacher education at the national level. At the 15 April meeting of MCEECDYA, the NSW Minister for Education and Training successfully proposed the inclusion of additional modules for pre-service teacher education courses nationally, including requirements addressing Aboriginal issues. This work is being progressed by the AITSL.

NSW made a substantial contribution to the development of nationally consistent school principal standards. In 2010, a range of educational stakeholders in NSW were invited by the AITSL to participate in the targeted initial stakeholder feedback on the *National Professional Standards for Principals*.

Progress against facilitation and reward reforms – 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2010

The reforms contained within the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality align to the five stages of the teacher lifecycle:

- **attracting** the best entrants into teaching, including through flexible pathways
- **training** pre-service teachers, principals, teachers and school leaders for their roles and the school environment
- **recruiting** school teachers and leaders to minimise skills shortages
- **developing** and enhancing the skills and knowledge of teachers and school leaders through their careers
- **retaining** and rewarding quality principals, teachers and school leaders.

Facilitation and reward reforms have been aligned against these five stages.

1. Attracting the best entrants into teaching, including through flexible pathways

New Pathways into Teaching, Better Pathways into Teaching, Aboriginal Education Pathways

Teacher education scholarships

Teacher education scholarships provide an annual training allowance to support students in full-time teacher education study. Scholarships are provided to students completing their HSC, tertiary students currently enrolled in teacher education courses and those who intend to enrol in teacher training after having already gained a degree or industry qualification in another field. The total number of teacher education scholarships offered in NSW during 2009 and 2010 was 665.

275 teacher education scholarships were offered in New South Wales in 2009:

- 230 in government schools, including:
 - 60 offered to Aboriginal teacher education students
 - 19 offered to support teachers working in schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments
 - 12 targeted scholarships in the areas of maths and science
- 45 in Catholic schools, including 5 offered to Aboriginal education students.

In addition, at least 390 additional teacher education scholarships were offered in NSW in 2010:

- 300 in government schools, including:
 - 80 scholarships targeted towards Aboriginal teacher education students
 - 20 scholarships offered to support teachers working in schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments
- 79 in Catholic schools, including four offered to Aboriginal education students
- at least 11 offered by independent schools.

For further information regarding initiatives to engage Aboriginal people in the teaching workforce, please see the 'Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' section below.

Internships

An internship is an unpaid professional placement for an extended period of time (for example, one school term) for a teacher education student who has completed the course work of their degree. The internship is normally the final requirement to complete the degree and is usually graded. Interns do not carry a full teaching load.

At least 59 teacher education internships were offered in NSW in 2010 through the National Partnership:

- 24 teacher education internships to teach in government school Centres for Excellence
- 27 teacher education internships in Catholic schools
- 8 internships in independent schools.

NSW DET also offered programs to support teacher education students to access a diverse range of professional experiences in government sector schools during their pre-service training. These were not internships, but were targeted to teacher education students currently undertaking degree courses. Examples include:

- *Beyond the Line* program in Western NSW and rural schools
- *Beyond the Bridge* program in Western Sydney and South Western Sydney schools.

2. Training pre-service teachers, as well as principals, teachers and school leaders for their roles in the school environment

Quality placements for teacher education courses

Professional experience placements are short periods of time when a student teacher gains unpaid teaching experience under supervision as part of an undergraduate degree.

Within the Centres for Excellence initiative, the NSW Department of Education and Training established 16 university partnerships to facilitate the provision of professional experience placements in schools. In addition, NSW DET currently supports approximately 16,500 professional experience placements annually.

The Catholic sector provided in excess of 446 teacher professional experience placements in 2010, while the Association of Independent Schools of NSW (AIS) established 32 new quality teacher education placements with the University of New South Wales (UNSW).

According to the *National Partnerships Teacher Quality Survey* by the Association of Independent Schools of NSW, 55 independent schools provide four or more quality placements every year. The survey also indicated that 50 schools had capacity to increase the number of placements. 26 participating schools indicated the need for extra support in this area.

Joint engagement with higher education providers to improve teacher quality

All sectors engage in a range of activities with university partners ranging from professional experience placements to working with schools to improve the quality of teaching and school leadership. Some universities have reciprocal arrangements with schools whereby teachers are involved in supporting pre-service teachers by delivering lectures at the university.

Universities are major partners in the Centres for Excellence initiative, detailed in a separate section below.

In 2010, NSW DET and higher education providers expanded the provision of professional learning to support teachers of maths and science. This includes:

- *Physics Science Foundation Summer Schools* (University of Sydney): This program supports secondary science teachers to maintain currency of knowledge and skills in the teaching of science and increase teacher capacity to engage students
- *Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Project* (Macquarie University): This initiative supports the Peninsula Community of Schools in Sydney's Northern Beaches to develop and implement innovative teaching and learning practices within STEM curriculum areas
- *Building Outreach Opportunities for Students and Teachers* project (University of Newcastle): This project aims to build teacher capacity in the teaching of stage 6 mathematics through provision of a targeted professional development program.

Strategies implemented by specific dioceses within the Catholic education sector to enhance engagement with universities include:

- engaging with Southern Cross University in a number of areas, including early childhood education, student wellbeing and behaviour management (Diocese of Lismore)
- partnering with Charles Sturt University to examine exemplary educational leadership and professional development practice in rural and regional communities in New South Wales and Queensland (Catholic Schools Office, Wagga Wagga).

Individual independent schools also established partnerships with universities, often related to teacher education practicum placements or for specific school improvement projects. A number of independent schools continued to be involved in school-based research in which teachers worked closely with university staff on projects ranging from science and mathematics education to provisions for gifted students.

The AIS links independent schools and universities seeking partnerships and in 2010 worked with UNSW to establish new quality teacher education placements. Independent sector staff members are involved in supporting universities by lecturing in undergraduate and Masters' degree programs in education.

Professional development and support for principals

Improving school performance and student results relies heavily on increasing school leadership capacity to drive change.

The NSW Department of Education and Training is supporting its aspiring, newly appointed and current school leaders by developing and delivering a comprehensive suite of professional learning programs and resources as outlined in the *NSW DET Professional Learning Continuum*. This professional development and support for school leaders assists in supporting the achievement of school and student learning targets.

In 2010, 161 professional learning programs registered by the NSW Institute of Teachers were developed and delivered state-wide, supporting the key accountabilities of school leaders.

These programs and resources are aligned to the key accountabilities and competencies of school leadership as outlined in *Leading and Managing the School* and the *NSW DET School Leadership Capability Framework*.

Specific professional development provided to principals within the Catholic sector includes:

- Participation of 12 staff from the Bathurst Diocese in the *NSW DET Team Leadership for School Improvement* program. Follow up planning is currently taking place which is expected to extend the impact of this training program to all Bathurst Diocese schools
- sponsorship of all principals in the Diocese of Armidale to attend the *Australian Catholic University International Leadership Conference* in Sydney, which dealt with pedagogy, management and leadership development
- attendance by all school principals and their leadership teams in the Wagga Wagga Diocese at a two day conference in October 2010 on *Creating, Sustaining and Leading a Performance Culture*.

The Independent Schools Leadership Centre (ISLC) provided foundation leadership training to 21 newly appointed principals and 14 executives preparing for a role as a principal, as well as a program on leadership coaching for 20 experienced principals. On-going professional learning was offered through the *Leading Insight* series of presentations by key educators and the *Masterclass* series, providing professional learning for principals on financial skills, leadership and learning, schools and the law, and strategic planning.

3. Recruiting teachers and school leaders to minimise skills shortages

Increased school based decision making for recruitment, staffing mix and budget

Forty seven government schools are participating in the *Increased School Based Decision Making Pilot*, which provides principals with increased flexibility in school recruitment, staffing mix and budget. The pilot commenced in January 2010.

Principals of pilot schools are engaging with the new management processes and demonstrating innovative leadership.

Improving teaching and learning is the major focus for pilot schools in determining how to apply the new flexibilities. Strategies largely consist of varying the staffing mix. Across the 47 participating schools, over 300 variations to 'regular' staffing mix approaches have now been instigated.

Although principals of independent schools already exercise full control of recruitment, staffing mix and budget, programs offered through the ISLC provide opportunities to improve school management processes. Potential leaders are nurtured through programs for middle managers and aspiring principals are supported by mentoring and shadowing opportunities. In areas of identified skills shortages, some schools have enhanced and extended internships for promising school students and teacher education students.

Catholic schools generally conduct their own recruitment of staff within system guidelines. For example, the Catholic Education Office Sydney has a devolved decision-making process where principals select their staff through school based selection panels.

Each school also receives a substantial budget over which principals have discretion regarding the appropriate allocation of funds within system requirements. Schools are given budgets for professional learning but the decision as to how the funds are allocated is made by each school community. There is however a requirement for schools to be transparent about the use of the funds and the outcomes of the expenditure, ensuring alignment to individual school improvement plans.

Improved quality and availability of teacher workforce data

NSW DET has developed a professional learning record management system (MyPL@DET) based on online enrolment which has been implemented across all government school regions of NSW.

MyPL@DET:

- maps and reports on the provision of professional learning programs, enrolment and participation. The professional learning record system enables teachers to retain records of their professional learning when they move from one government school to another
- maps all professional learning captured within the system against the NSW Institute of Teachers standards
- provides a *My Professional Learning Diary* function which allows all staff members to manually enter details of any informal professional learning that they undertake
- has the capacity to monitor achievement of the NSW Institute of Teachers Professional Teaching Standards across NSW DET and can identify any gaps in the provision to inform future planning. MyPL@DET also has the functionality to electronically feed information into the NSW Institute of Teachers' professional learning register.

In 2010, there were 20,719 registrations of government school teachers and leaders in registered professional development courses.

The Association of Independent Schools of NSW (AIS) has developed a professional learning record management system to enable teachers and their school executive to track their participation in AIS professional learning activities and map it to the professional teaching standards.

Improved mobility of the Australian teaching workforce

National professional teaching standards will enable nationally consistent accreditation across all sectors. NSW has an accreditation process for the levels equivalent to Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher. To date, 865 teachers have submitted preliminary assessment applications to obtain accreditation at higher levels (above Professional Competence) with the NSW Institute of Teachers.

This includes applications from:

- 694 government school teachers
- 67 Catholic school teachers
- 104 independent school teachers.

4. Developing and enhancing the skills and knowledge of teachers and school leaders through their careers

National professional standards for teachers

Throughout 2010, government, Catholic and independent school sectors participated extensively in the development of national professional standards. This is a significant area of national reform activity, which will underpin both the national accreditation and registration of teachers and national accreditation of pre-service teacher education courses. As well as increasing the mobility of the teaching workforce, the national standards will support enhanced consistency of teacher quality by enabling teachers to work across jurisdictions and systems.

New South Wales is represented on the Board of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership by the Chief Executive Officer of the NSW Institute of Teachers.

In 2010, school sectors, principals, parents and subject associations conducted stakeholder consultation and provided written responses to the NSW Institute of Teachers. The Institute then provided a coordinated response from NSW to the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership regarding the proposed national standards.

Under the direction of the National Standards Sub-Group, the NSW Institute of Teachers redrafted the national standards to reflect responses gathered from all jurisdictions, taking the national standards to the validation stage, with approval given by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs in December 2010.

Centres for Excellence

Centres for Excellence are sites for demonstrating, developing and sharing high quality teaching within schools and school communities to improve student engagement and outcomes. During 2009 and 2010, extensive work was undertaken in planning and making the Centres for Excellence operational across all three sectors.

In 2009, 18 Centres for Excellence were established (including those planned and/or operational) across NSW's three school sectors including:

- 13 government schools announced and in planning stages
- four Catholic schools, including two operational by the end of 2009 and
- the Independent Schools Centre for Excellence.

More than 200 schools across the three sectors participated in this initiative in 2009 in New South Wales (either in planning stage or fully participating). This included:

- plans to engage 58 government schools with the 13 Centres for Excellence using a 'hub and spoke' model
- 123 Catholic schools planning to participate with the four Centres for Excellence
- 30 independent schools.

By the end of 2010 there were 26 Centres for Excellence in operation in NSW:

- 13 Centres for Excellence in government schools announced in 2009 became operational
- four Catholic school Centres for Excellence announced in 2009 became operational, with a further eight in operation by the end of 2010
- the Independent Schools Centre for Excellence continued its provision of services.

The total number of 'spokes' schools participating in Centres for Excellence initiatives during 2010 included:

- 58 schools supported by 13 government school Centres for Excellence through the "hub and spoke" model
- 172 Catholic schools
- 111 independent schools.

A further 22 government Centres for Excellence were announced in September 2010 and will become operational in 2011. These schools are listed in **Appendix A**. Planning occurred in 2010 for up to 90 additional government 'spokes' schools to participate in the initiative in 2011.

Details of Centres for Excellence

	Centre for Excellence	Partnering University	Location	No. of schools participating
Association of Independent Schools of NSW	The Independent Schools Centre for Excellence	AIS with the University of NSW. Independent schools work with 16 different NSW universities.	The secretariat is based at the AIS in Sydney. Activities occur across NSW	111 cumulative <i>(81 of which joined the initiative in 2010)</i>
Catholic Education Commission of NSW	St Paul's Catholic Secondary College	University of Newcastle	Manly	1
	Diocese of Lismore Online Education Centre	To be finalised	'Virtual' centre based in Lismore with the ability to reach into every diocese in NSW	29
	Building Leadership Capacity	CSU, Australian Catholic University	Diocese of Wagga Wagga	32
	St Augustine's	Newcastle	Narromine	1
	Holy Family P.S.	Newcastle	Merewether Beach	1
	St Joseph's HS	Newcastle	Aberdeen	2
	St Paul's HS	Newcastle	Booragul	2
	St Catherine's Catholic College K-12	Newcastle	Singleton	2
	Learning Exchange	Australian Catholic University University of Notre Dame	Mt Druitt	76
	Southern Cross Catholic Vocational College	Charles Sturt University	Newly established at Burwood, Sydney. 17Comer St Burwood. 2134	12
	Partners4Learning	To be finalised	Virtual	All
	Outside the Bell Curve	To be finalised	Our Lady of Mercy College Parramatta	14

	Centre for Excellence	Partnering University	Location	No. of schools participating
NSW Department of Education and Training	North Ryde PS	Macquarie University	Northern Sydney	6
	Epping Boys HS	Macquarie University Sydney University		2
	Macarthur Girls HS	University of Western Sydney	Western Sydney	3
	Carlingford West PS	University of Technology Sydney		4
	Lansvale PS	University of Western Sydney, University of Sydney	South Western Sydney	4
	Macquarie Fields HS			4
	Morrisset PS	University of Newcastle	Hunter/Central Coast	5
	Merewether PS			5
	Oxley HS	University of New England	New England	4
	Temora HS	Charles Sturt University	Riverina	5
	Eden Marine HS	University of Wollongong	Illawarra/South East	3
	Nowra HS			3
	Mudgee HS	Charles Sturt University	Western NSW	10

Strategies implemented by Centres for Excellence across all sectors:

- working with other schools in their cluster to support quality teaching, including the use of technology in the classroom (e.g. Moodle, video conferencing, multimedia studios, accessing the Learning Exchange Centre for Excellence)
- strengthening actual and virtual professional experience placement programs for teacher education students with university partners
- providing mentoring, support and supervision of early career teachers to refine their skills, knowledge and experiences

- building leadership capacity through shared practice and targeted professional learning
- developing professional learning plans for teachers aligned to teaching standards
- supporting accreditation at Professional Accomplishment/Professional Leadership levels with the NSW Institute of Teachers
- providing opportunities for professional learning and collaboration through cross-school interaction, including networking with experienced teachers and school leaders to share best practice to improve student learning outcomes
- establishing regular communication links between geographically isolated schools
- establishing processes for continuous review and refinement of programs.

Detail of university partnerships

Traditionally, relationships between universities and schools have largely focused on facilitating provision of professional experience placements of pre-service teachers. However, through the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality, a number of new strategies and activities have been implemented to develop the partnerships between schools and universities.

Examples include:

- identifying and addressing specific professional development needs within schools
- enhancing teacher involvement in continual professional development e.g. through undertaking post-graduate courses at universities
- supporting school-based action research on student learning, improvement programs and teacher professional experience placements
- deepening understanding of the *NSW DET Quality Teaching Framework* in schools
- reviewing action plans being implemented in schools
- developing shared professional networks
- university partners acting as critical friends and engaging in research initiatives with the Catholic school Centre for Excellence, the Learning Exchange.

Improved performance management and continuous improvement in schools

Improving school performance and student results relies heavily on increasing the capacity of all staff to provide quality teaching and school leadership. This requires enhanced workforce management strategies that support continual improvement.

NSW DET's performance management and development strategy provides a framework to value staff, foster a working environment that acknowledges their contribution and builds capacity to ensure organisational effectiveness. Performance management and development in NSW DET supports the continuous process of reflecting on, negotiating, developing, reviewing and making decisions about an individual's performance in achieving organisational goals. This process identifies areas for the future development of each teacher and school leader and the appropriate professional learning activities to meet these development needs.

All teachers and school leaders in NSW government schools undertake an annual assessment of their performance using the annual review schedule process:

- *Teacher Assessment and Review Schedule (TARS)*
- *Executive Assessment and Review Schedule (EARS)* and
- *Principal Assessment and Review Schedule (PARS).*

TARS and EARS provide a framework for principals to assess staff performance. PARS provides a similar framework for school education directors to manage the performance of principals.

Assessment and review processes are strongly aligned with teaching standards and support the recognition, provision of support and development of quality teachers.

Teachers, executives and principals who are identified as experiencing performance difficulties are placed on an improvement program which provides support and assistance for improvement

Many Catholic dioceses have introduced teacher professional development management systems. Some operate at the diocesan level but most operate at the school level. These initiatives along with those of the NSW Institute of Teachers professional teaching standards have promoted greater ownership and a more professional approach to the task of maintaining teachers' skills and ensuring that time spent on development is focussed in areas of greatest need.

In the independent sector, performance management and continuous improvement are addressed within each individual school. However, to support the needs of independent schools, in 2010 the AIS developed a performance appraisal process for schools linked to teaching standards. The development of extensive leadership programs, incorporating study of performance management, further contributed to progress against this reform.

Continual improvement program for all teachers

Professional learning

There is a strong expectation that teachers will maintain currency in both subject knowledge content and good pedagogical practice.

NSW DET has developed a range of online professional learning programs that can be accessed by teachers and school leaders that focus on continuous improvement and leading change in schools.

NSW DET currently provides the following range of professional development courses:

- 2,761 registered, non-registered and developed courses on MyPL@DET
- 1,930 professional learning sessions aligned to the professional teaching standards
- 1,218 professional learning sessions incorporating the *NSW DET Quality Teaching Model*.

Since its inception in 2010, there have been over 84,200 registrations in 5,909 professional learning sessions by government school teachers, principals and executive staff.

The *Classroom Teacher* program was developed in 2010 by NSW DET and is a registered professional development course with the NSW Institute of Teachers. This is an innovative and flexible online professional learning program that supports teachers to maintain accreditation at Professional Competence level. The program provides valuable resources for use in teacher induction and supports supervisors, principals and NSW DET school regions in guiding teacher professional learning programs.

The *NSW DET Team Leadership for School Improvement* program has been delivered across all educational sectors in NSW and focuses specifically on the achievement of school improvement targets. This program supports distributed leadership by focusing on the development, implementation and evaluation of whole school planning. This program provides support for school teams to achieve targets associated with their school's priority areas.

In the independent sector, subsidised professional learning for teachers has addressed the need for deeper subject content knowledge, delivered by endorsed providers and linked to the NSW Institute of Teachers professional standards. Over 1,000 teachers in independent schools have taken up 1,775 course subsidies to support their continued improvement. Additional travel grants for teachers in regional and remote schools have enabled them to participate more extensively in professional learning during 2010.

In 2010, independent schools were involved in consultations to enable the flexible delivery of professional learning to regional schools across the state. This laid the groundwork for improved access to professional learning and mentoring opportunities for teachers and leaders in remote communities.

In the Catholic sector, a range of activities were implemented to support the continued improvement of all teachers. These include:

- work by the Diocese of Wilcannia/Forbes with the University of Newcastle to develop and promote teacher quality. The *Leaders Transforming Learners and Learning Framework* is also closely linked to the national teaching standards and is delivered in partnership with Australian Catholic University and Literacy/Numeracy Plan of St Augustine's School, Narromine.

Both the University of Newcastle program and the *Leaders Transforming Learners and Learning Framework* engage teachers and leaders in professional learning in these specialist areas and support recent graduates in their new positions in schools and to attain accreditation at professional competence with the NSW Institute of Teachers.

- provision of the *Covey Leadership Course* in 2010 for 21 participants in the Diocese of Lismore. This course provided leadership training online and through workshops across Australia. The course promoted planning, productivity and goal setting for individuals and schools.

Teacher accreditation

From 1 October 2004, all newly commencing teachers across all sectors in NSW have been required to achieve full accreditation by demonstrating achievement of the Professional Competence teaching standards as a condition of employment. Completion of 50 hours of NSW Institute of Teachers registered professional development is also a significant component of the process for maintaining accreditation. In addition, teachers are required to complete a further 50 hours of professional development which meet the teaching standards.

Between January and December 2010, there were 21,359 registrations of government, independent and Catholic school teachers participating in courses registered with the NSW Institute of Teachers.

Teacher accreditation grants and courses to support teachers and their in-school mentors through the NSW Institute of Teachers accreditation process have been advertised to all independent schools. In 2010, five Teacher Accreditation grants were made to schools, 37 teachers completed courses to assist them in preparing for higher levels of accreditation with the NSW Institute of Teachers, and 103 experienced teachers completed training to support teachers through all levels of accreditation.

The Catholic sector has also been active in the assessment and registration of professional development programs to achieve NSW Institute of Teachers recognition and support. For example, in 2010 the Archdiocese of Sydney successfully achieved accreditation for 497 courses and programs registered in the *Professional Development In-service Guide*.

In addition to the higher levels of accreditation through the NSW Institute of Teachers, teachers in the independent sector can achieve accreditation through the Independent School Teachers Accreditation Authority.

5. Retaining and rewarding quality principals, teachers and school leaders

Improved pay dispersion to reward quality teaching

In 2009, 23⁷ Highly Accomplished Teacher (HAT) equivalent staff were employed in NSW schools, including:

- two HAT sector equivalents (Quality Teacher positions) linked to Catholic school Centres for Excellence
- nine Quality Teachers in other Catholic schools
- 12 teachers in independent schools gaining conditional accreditation at Classroom Professional Excellence.

In addition to those employed in 2009, 95 new HATs were employed⁸ in 2010:

- 13 HATs in government school Centres for Excellence
- two full-time HATs in government schools participating in the National Partnership on Low Socio-economic Status School Communities
- 10 full-time HATs in government schools participating in the Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities Reform Extension Initiative
- nine Quality Teachers linked to Catholic school Centres for Excellence

⁷ NSW's 2009 Smarter Schools National Partnerships Annual Report (April 2010) indicated planning was also underway in 2009 to employ 13 Highly Accomplished Teachers in government school Centres for Excellence. This eventuated in 2010.

⁸ Highly Accomplished Teachers and equivalents are employed on a temporary basis, reflecting the fixed term of the Smarter Schools National Partnership funding. Appointments of HATs should not be interpreted as the number currently active in schools, which may vary due to staff mobility and the temporary nature of employment conditions.

- two part-time Quality Teachers in Catholic schools participating in the National Partnership on Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities
- 59 full and part-time Quality Teachers in other Catholic schools.

In order to be recognised as HAT equivalents, teachers in independent schools are required to achieve higher levels of accreditation through the NSW Institute of Teachers and through the Independent Schools Teacher Accreditation Authority (ISTAA).

As part of a broader commitment to increase the number of teachers accredited at higher levels and to embed a culture of career development and professional learning, the independent sector encourages teachers to seek ISTAA accreditation at an intermediate level (between the NSW Institute of Teachers levels of Professional Competence and Professional Accomplishment) and at a higher level of Professional Excellence.

In 2010:

- 170 teachers applied to the Association of Independent Schools of NSW at the level of Experienced Teacher, 35 of whom have since deferred
- 37 teachers completed courses to prepare for accreditation at Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership
- to date, six teachers have had their evidence reviewed by AIS as part of ISTAA's accreditation process
- 38 teachers who previously qualified at the ISTAA level of Classroom Professional Excellence were encouraged to submit their evidence to the NSW Institute of Teachers for accreditation at the level of Professional Accomplishment.

These teachers have since completed their documentation and are awaiting the outcome from the NSW Institute of Teachers assessment. If successful, 38 teachers in the independent sector will achieve Highly Accomplished Teacher equivalent status.

[Improved reward structures for teachers and leaders who work in disadvantaged Aboriginal, rural/remote and hard-to-staff schools](#)

NSW DET offers a range of incentives to attract staff to schools with significant geographic or socio-economic challenges. These incentives encompass both financial and non financial rewards and are provided on a temporary basis (i.e. for the life of the school's NP funding). Incentives include:

- additional staffing resources to provide extra support for staff and more time to focus on teaching and learning activities and/or professional development
- flexible school organisation incentives such as:
 - the provision of additional release time for teachers and/or executive staff for the purposes of their or other teachers' professional development or team teaching
 - the creation of 'teacher teams' comprising current or additional teachers, executive staff and/or paraprofessionals to provide targeted focused support for particular programs
 - being able to employ a teacher for four weeks on a casual basis prior to their formal appointment, to allow for more in depth induction and acclimatisation in the school and the local community

- provision of an allowance to high achieving teacher education students to undertake internships at targeted National Partnership schools. This incentive is particularly important in attracting these students to seek future employment within the school.

Catholic schools participating in the Partnership provided improved support to teachers and leaders in rural, remote and hard to staff schools through such initiatives as rental assistance for teachers, furnishing of residences and provision of allowances.

In the independent sector, each school employs its own staff. Where teachers work in schools with employment arrangements linked to accreditation through ISTAA, additional payments are made on being awarded the higher levels of accreditation. Additional financial support is provided to enable teachers in regional and remote schools to attend targeted professional learning and conferences through course subsidies and subsidies for travel under the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality.

Most independent schools involved in the Partnership have rewarded teachers with additional professional learning and opportunities to work with expert mentors. In all NP schools, teachers have been provided with release time for planning and for the analysis of data to inform teaching and learning. Funded release time has also been an important strategy in National Partnership schools and those schools receiving grants targeting rural/remote and hard to staff schools.

Principal incentive payments

The NSW Department of Education and Training has made provision for annual additional payments for principals leading government Centres for Excellence schools, based on the principal's leadership, management and success in achieving the goals of the Centre for Excellence. The payment is contingent on performance as demonstrated during the *Principal Assessment and Review Schedule* and the school plan.

The Association of Independent Schools of NSW has established a single independent Schools Centre for Excellence (ISCE) to provide support to all independent schools in NSW. As a result, schools in that sector receive payments to participate in ISCE activities, including assisting teachers and executives to attend professional learning activities.

Provision was made for 17 payments to NSW principals leading school Centres for Excellence in 2010:

- four payments to principals in the Catholic sector
- 13 incentive allowances available for principals of Centres for Excellence in the government sector, to be paid during 2011 after assessments for the 2010 school year are completed.

Improved in-school support for teachers and leaders, particularly in disadvantaged, Aboriginal, rural/remote and hard to staff schools

Paraprofessionals

Paraprofessionals are non-teaching positions that provide support to classroom teachers to enable them to focus on student learning. Paraprofessional positions include:

- 'educational paraprofessionals' who work under the guidance of teachers to assist in areas such as literacy and numeracy and Aboriginal student mentoring

- 'operational paraprofessionals' who work in a broader role across the school to assist in areas such as technology, professional experience placements, and co-coordinating home/school partnerships with Aboriginal communities.

In 2009, five⁹ paraprofessionals were employed in NSW independent and Catholic schools participating in the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality:

- one paraprofessional in a Catholic Centre for Excellence
- four paraprofessionals in the independent sector.

In addition to those employed in 2009, the following paraprofessionals were employed in 2010:

- 31 paraprofessionals in the Improving Teacher Quality NP schools, including:
 - 19 paraprofessionals in government school Centres for Excellence
 - four paraprofessionals in government schools participating in the *Increased School Based Decision Making Pilot*
 - eight full and part-time paraprofessionals in Catholic schools
- 47 paraprofessionals in Low SES School Communities NP schools, including:
 - 22 full- and part-time paraprofessionals in government schools
 - 13 paraprofessionals in independent schools , including 2 Aboriginal paraprofessionals
 - 12 full- and part-time paraprofessionals in Catholic schools
- 11 paraprofessionals in government schools participating in the Low Socio-economic Status School Communities Reform Extension Initiative in 2010.

Teacher mentors

In 2009, 50 full-time equivalent teacher mentors were allocated to support 90 NSW government schools.¹⁰ 41 part-time teacher mentors were employed in NSW Catholic schools across the state.

In addition to those employed in 2009, the following teacher mentors were employed in New South Wales in 2010:

- 45 teacher mentors in independent schools (42 teacher mentors, plus three teacher mentors based at AIS to work with schools across the state)
- 47 part-time teacher mentors in Catholic schools.

At least 183¹¹ teacher mentors were employed in New South Wales during 2009 and 2010.

⁹ NSW's 2009 Smarter Schools National Partnerships Annual Report (April 2010) indicated planning was also underway in 2009 to employ an additional 12 paraprofessionals in government schools. This eventuated in 2010.

¹⁰ Teacher mentors are employed on a temporary basis. For example, teacher mentors are employed in government schools for a fixed term of two years. Appointments of teacher mentors should not be interpreted as the number currently active in schools, which may vary due to staff mobility and the temporary nature of employment conditions.

¹¹ Includes full-, part- and full-time equivalent positions

Aboriginal teachers' and school leaders' engagement with community members

Aboriginal community engagement programs

The number of NSW schools participating in Aboriginal community engagement programs increased by 318 schools in 2010.

In 2009, 89 government schools began working in partnership with their local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups (AECGs) and Aboriginal communities to develop school plans and educational practices to improve outcomes for Aboriginal students. This involved forming school advisory committees and signing partnership agreements.

By the end of 2010, the number of government schools undertaking Aboriginal community engagement programs had increased by 181, including a significant proportion of government schools participating in the Low SES National Partnership.

13 Catholic schools implemented Aboriginal community engagement programs in 2009. An additional 83 Catholic schools commenced Aboriginal community engagement programs in 2010, including five schools participating in the Low SES National Partnership.

54 independent schools implemented Aboriginal community engagement programs in 2010, including two schools participating in the Low SES National Partnership.

Strategies to engage the Aboriginal community

In the government sector, NSW DET provides a wide range of courses to enhance schools' understanding of the specific needs of Aboriginal students and to engage effectively with Aboriginal communities, such as:

- *Being Culturally Aware, Becoming Culturally Inclusive: A Pathway to Cultural Competence* (three-day in-the-field Aboriginal education and cultural immersion program held by local AECGs)
- *Articulating Aboriginal Cultural Immersion into Teaching and Learning: Sharing and Planning* (two day follow up school-based professional learning program by Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups and the Aboriginal Education and Training Directorate)
- *Building Cultural Competencies in Aboriginal Cultures*
- *Gaining a Better Understanding of our Local Aboriginal Culture.*

During 2010, over 1200 government school teachers participated in training courses to support the learning outcomes of Aboriginal students.

The Catholic sector implemented a range of strategies to promote school engagement with Aboriginal communities in 2010, including:

- visiting parents, the local Aboriginal preschool and health centre
- over 270 teachers and school leaders from Catholic schools participating in cultural immersion programs
- participating in an early childhood program which targets engagement of both parents and pre-school children in literacy activities
- establishing an Aboriginal contact teacher role in schools

- organising an annual retreat for Aboriginal teachers and Aboriginal education workers
- engaging an Aboriginal film maker to work with Aboriginal students.

Within the independent sector, the extent and nature of engagement with Aboriginal communities varies from school to school, however, many schools work with their local AECG. Some schools established programs of consultation and cultural activities and implemented a wide range of joint projects with the local community. Specific programs and initiatives include:

- establishing parent education classes for Aboriginal parents
- supporting family literacy and numeracy in Aboriginal communities
- supporting Aboriginal teacher education students on extended internships in schools
- teaching an Aboriginal language.

Independent schools' *National Partnerships Teacher Quality Survey* identified the next phase of development of the Independent Schools Centre for Excellence (ISCE). Thirty two schools were identified in the survey as seeking support in building relationships with Aboriginal communities and 20 schools indicated that they had expertise and were willing to offer assistance in this area.

The ISCE undertook planning to facilitate the exchange of ideas and information between schools with expertise and those seeking support in building relationships with Aboriginal communities.

For further information, please see the 'Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' section below.

Challenges to implementation/progress – 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2010

Maintaining the momentum of NP reforms following conclusion of funding

Maintaining the momentum of reforms implemented under the National Partnership will be challenging without the continued support of funding provided under the Smarter Schools National Partnerships.

NSW is working to change school culture and practice and to develop systems to sustain a supply of high quality teachers, make continual improvement sustainable within schools and maintain support for teachers and school leaders beyond the life of the National Partnership.

For a more detailed assessment of the sustainability of reforms implemented under the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality, please see the 'Sustainability' section.

Integrated management tools to support the *Increased School Based Decision Making Pilot*

NSW Department of Education and Training's *Increased School Based Decision Making Pilot* encountered significant challenges in providing schools with access to the necessary integrated financial, HR and payroll information and effective automated report systems. Issues such as data accuracy and processes within NSW DET's human resources, finance and payroll functions are being addressed through a structured change program, cooperation across directorates and high level business analysis. Over time, the new management systems being trialled at both the system and school level will integrate with NSW DET's major *Learning Management and Business Reform* initiatives.

Diversity in the non-government sectors

The autonomous nature of independent schools and the diversity of the 10 dioceses in the Catholic sector present challenges in capturing consistent school data.

The *National Partnerships Teacher Quality Survey* of independent school principals was developed in 2010 to identify their most pressing needs and their areas of strength. The survey results have informed the development of the next strategies for the sector to address the implementation of reforms and to plan for the long-term sustainability of the initiatives.

The Catholic sector has established a data collection system to enable accurate reporting within the Smarter Schools National Partnership. As the sector involves more than 60 employers, this has required a significant focus on developing common definitions and applications of definitions to ensure the validity of data.

Promoting teacher uptake of higher levels of accreditation

The anticipated introduction of national professional teaching standards may have an impact on the numbers of teachers applying to achieve higher levels of teacher accreditation such as Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership. No trends have been detected at this stage.

NSW accreditation processes are rigorous and require significant commitment from teachers who are required to demonstrate all standards using evidence from an external observation of their practice, from referees and in documents from their teaching practice. These are not familiar processes to even the most experienced of teachers.

In some sectors, financial incentives have been created, such as salary agreements, to encourage teachers to seek higher level accreditation. In the government sector, teachers with higher level accreditation (or who have embarked on the process) may apply for Highly Accomplished Teacher positions.

The independent sector has developed extensive accreditation support for teachers and schools including providing courses on accreditation requirements and processes. These are promoting confidence in teachers to pursue higher levels of accreditation. The independent sector also provides subsidies and travel grants for teachers to participate in professional learning to support teacher uptake of accreditation.

Attracting employment candidates in schools with high Aboriginal populations

In the independent sector one school with significant Aboriginal student enrolments awarded two internships for Aboriginal teacher education students. Despite working with the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group and their partner university, they were unsuccessful in securing candidates for the positions in 2010 and will pursue this in 2011.

Four traineeships for Aboriginal people were established in regional areas in 2010. Three of the traineeships were in Education Support Services, while the fourth was in Business Services. Two of these traineeships have been established but have yet to secure candidates. The school is working with local elders to address this issue.

Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders – 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2010

The reforms contained within the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality underpin the delivery of all three Smarter Schools National Partnerships and are reflected in the reforms and performance targets of the NSW National Partnerships on Literacy and Numeracy and Low Socio-economic Status School Communities.

Government schools participating in the *Increased School Based Decision Making Pilot* or as Centres for Excellence hub schools in 2010 catered to 4.8% of 2010 government Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school student enrolments¹² in NSW.

Strategies to attract Aboriginal people into the teaching profession

In the government sector, 60 scholarships were made available in 2009 specifically for Aboriginal students, with 55 awarded. These numbers were increased in 2010 to 80 scholarships being made available, with 74 being awarded.

In 2010 a further 20 scholarships were offered through the *Enhanced Teacher Training* program to education students intending to teach in government schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments. Eighteen of the 20 scholarships were awarded.

The NSW Department of Education and Training also has a number of designated school and administrative support staff positions for Aboriginal people in schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments. In 2010, 20 of these positions were identified, with all positions filled and 18 people commencing duty before the end of 2010.

In 2010, at least eight teacher education scholarships were offered to Aboriginal students in the Catholic dioceses of Maitland/Newcastle, Bathurst and Canberra/Goulburn. Twelve graduates and teachers were also provided with incentives to teach in Catholic schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments. In addition, the Parramatta Diocese's program *Step Up Into Teaching* provides strong encouragement to Aboriginal students to become a teacher, with 25 students working across schools in the area.

In the Association of Independent Schools of NSW's *National Partnerships Teacher Quality Survey*, 16 principals indicated that they had strategies in place to encourage young Aboriginal people into teaching.

The Independent Schools Centre for Excellence (ISCE) advertised a number of internships in Term 2, 2010 to all independent schools, including internships for Aboriginal final year teacher education students and for teacher education students interested in working in schools with high Aboriginal enrolments. These internships provided financial assistance ranging from a living allowance to financial assistance for books, travel and HECS.

Of the two internships offered through the ISCE for final year Aboriginal teacher education students and students teaching in schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments, both are currently being negotiated, to be implemented in 2011.

Some independent schools offered their own internships for Aboriginal teacher education students in 2010, one of which led to employment of an intern at the end of the year.

¹² *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school student enrolment data is collected annually and will next become available in December 2011.*

Inclusion of Aboriginal module in pre-service teacher education

In 2010, NSW made significant contributions to the development of pre-service teacher education at the national level, when the NSW Minister for Education and Training successfully proposed a set of specific requirements for pre-service courses at the 15 April meeting of the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs, that included requirements to address Aboriginal issues.

This work is currently being undertaken by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, with NSW represented by the Chief Executive Officer of the NSW Institute of Teachers.

Aboriginal education and cultural immersion

Local Aboriginal cultural immersion programs were offered to assist teachers develop their capacity to tailor reading and numeracy teaching strategies to make appropriate links to local Aboriginal cultural backgrounds and context.

The *Connecting to Country* cultural immersion program was developed in collaboration with the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) and the Aboriginal Education and Training Directorate (AETD). This program was piloted in schools participating in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy.

The program comprises a three day in-the-field Aboriginal community cultural awareness experience delivered by local AECG community members followed by the equivalent of two days of follow-up delivered as school-based professional learning to integrate Aboriginal cultural knowledge in teaching and learning.

The government sector also plans to extend Aboriginal cultural immersion programs beyond the schools participating in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy.

Teachers and executive staff also undertook school-based or locally developed Aboriginal cultural immersion or awareness programs in 2010, including:

- two participants from independent schools
- at least 270 participants from Catholic schools.

Within the independent sector, each school determines its participation in Aboriginal cultural immersion programs. As a result, independent schools have developed their own strategies with parents and local communities to develop and deepen school leaders' and teachers' understanding of local Aboriginal cultural knowledge.

Participation by independent schools in cultural immersion programs through the AECG was not possible in 2010 as the programs were not held in accessible locations for the relevant schools' Aboriginal communities. However, in preparation for the further development of AECG courses and to facilitate independent sector involvement, three National Partnerships Coordinators in the independent sector participated in the two day cross-sectoral workshop, *Articulating Aboriginal Cultural Immersion into Teaching and Learning*.

Teacher professional development to respond to Aboriginal students' needs

NSW DET provides extensive professional learning for teachers to support the learning outcomes of Aboriginal students, as part of a state wide online professional learning record management system (MyPL@DET).

MyPL@DET indicates that approximately 1,614 participants including teaching and non-teaching staff have undertaken 53 NSW DET training courses that support the learning outcomes of Aboriginal students. Specific examples of professional learning targeted to Aboriginal students' needs include:

- *Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Within Schools*
- *Building Cultural Competencies in Aboriginal Cultures*
- *Linking Aboriginal Studies and Perspectives to Quality Teaching*
- *Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning in Aboriginal Education*
- *Implementing Personalised Learning Plans for Aboriginal Students*
- *Building Cultural Competencies in Aboriginal Cultures*
- *Embedding Aboriginal Perspectives - Years 5-9*
- *Gaining a Better Understanding of our Local Aboriginal Culture*
- *Integrating ICT Through Aboriginal Culture K-12*
- *Interactive Whiteboards in the Aboriginal Languages Classroom*
- *Being Culturally Aware, Becoming Culturally Inclusive: A Pathway to Cultural Competence* (three-day, locally delivered Aboriginal education and cultural immersion program)
- *Articulating Aboriginal Cultural Immersion into Teaching and Learning: Sharing and Planning* (two day follow up school-based professional learning program).

Professional development strategies to support teachers in responding to students' needs in Catholic schools have included:

- field trips to significant Aboriginal sites in the local area
- the establishment of network meetings of identified Aboriginal contact teachers to facilitate the sharing of teaching practices and resources and improve knowledge and understanding of local Aboriginal traditions
- workshops in implementing Aboriginal pedagogies and designing personalised learning plans for Aboriginal students.

Professional development strategies to support teachers in responding to students' needs in independent schools have included:

- field trips to significant Aboriginal sites, events and welfare services in local areas
- organisation of gatherings of Aboriginal students and their teachers with local elders and community members
- regular network meetings of liaison people in girls' schools with Aboriginal students
- staff involvement in significant Aboriginal projects such as *Yarn Up* and in AECG meetings
- school-based support in the development of Personalised Learning Plans for Aboriginal students.

Centre for Excellence support for Aboriginal students

The Learning Exchange Centre for Excellence in the Parramatta Diocese is closely connected to the “Jarara” Aboriginal support unit. Jarara employs a number of Aboriginal education workers who provide a wide range of support for both Aboriginal students and staff across a number of schools, particularly three local schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments.

In 2010, the Centre for Excellence coordinated a number of activities in conjunction with Jarara. The Centre for Excellence is also developing a comprehensive online cultural immersion program in conjunction with the Indigenous Education Unit in Parramatta Diocese, which is expected to be available later in 2011.

The local Aboriginal community is involved in regular Yarn Up afternoons where they can discuss issues with the Catholic Education Commission’s Executive Director of Schools, Head of System Learning and Head of Finance.

Support for other cohorts (if applicable) – 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2010

Aboriginal students are the only specific cohort targeted by the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality.

Utilising technology to build capacity in pre-service teacher programs

Macarthur Girls High School is a Centre for Excellence located in the Western Sydney region. Approximately 85% of students have a language background other than English. Macarthur Girls High School is the “hub” school of the Western Sydney Centre for Excellence cluster (WSC4E), partnering with three other nearby high schools and the University of Western Sydney in a number of initiatives linked to the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality.

Macarthur Girls High School has a Highly Accomplished Teacher (HAT) who works intensively across the cluster. With support from a technology learning facilitator (paraprofessional), the HAT implements a range of strategies to achieve the cluster’s key goal of improving student outcomes through the interrelated areas of understanding student needs, enhancing teacher practice and building partnerships.

The WSC4E is using the learning management tool Moodle to facilitate a number of initiatives. Through Moodle, the WSC4E is working on the implementation of online individual student literacy profiles, an online literacy homework program and extension writing courses to support the achievement of improved student outcomes in stage 4 literacy.

The HAT has provided professional learning to support teachers in using the student data analysis tool School Measurement, Assessment and Reporting Toolkit to identify individual student needs and match them to explicit teaching strategies.

Moodle is providing an effective way for the WSC4E to access professional learning and teaching resources and to maximise student engagement in literacy learning.

Moodle is also being used as a tool to coordinate support to pre-service teachers across the WSC4E, particularly in relation to literacy learning. The HAT has implemented a targeted one week professional learning course for pre-service teachers from the University of Western Sydney to prepare them for their 20 day placements in the school.

The program includes the use of online modules on the Moodle, as well as orientation activities, observation lessons, mentoring and subject specific support. The HAT has delivered a number of voluntary professional learning sessions, which were attended by all of the pre-service teachers. This professional learning program has received excellent evaluation results from participating pre-service teachers.

First time teacher toolkit

The First Time Teacher Toolkit developed by the NSW Department of Education and Training's Professional Learning and Leadership Development Directorate, is an online resource which has been developed to support the professional learning of newly appointed teachers as a part of their orientation within NSW DET.

The First Time Teacher Toolkit is specifically designed to support new teachers within the first 10 weeks in their appointment to a NSW government school. This resource is intended to complement formal school based teacher induction programs.

The Toolkit includes a question generator which provides the functionality to tailor professional learning to the specific needs of each newly appointed teacher. This web-based resource enables teachers to access information to prepare them for their first few weeks at any time and from any location.

The first few weeks in the life of a classroom teacher are critical in establishing credibility. Teaching positions in the NSW public education system are diverse. Whether a teacher is in a classroom in a remote country school or a teacher in the inner city, this resource helps to develop the confidence and effectiveness of new teachers in their first appointment.

Centre for Excellence supporting small and isolated schools in a rural setting

Mudgee High School is a Centre for Excellence located in a progressive rural area of Western NSW. The school embraces a strong technology focus in delivering a comprehensive curriculum, and this focus has been expanded through the Centre for Excellence initiative to include a significant number of "spoke" schools.

Mudgee High School has taken advantage of its size within its rural location to support a number of smaller and more isolated schools. This has been achieved through professional development days which bring together approximately 300 staff from all schools in the Cudgegong learning community, providing workshops and seminars with teachers and executive in various primary and secondary schools as well as university and regional staff. The first joint learning day was held in Term 2 of 2010 and given its success, a second day will be held in April 2011.

Another example of the school's outreach approach is a key initiative establishing a 'Virtual' Head Teacher Science. Using Connected Classrooms Technology, a 'virtual science faculty', with a base at Mudgee High School operates to support the delivery of the science curriculum to six small and isolated high schools.

Through the use of videoconferencing, the Virtual Head Teacher can provide support across the spoke schools, coordinating knowledge and resource sharing, professional learning, faculty meetings and mentoring. Face to face support is provided through team teaching and through staff from other schools visiting Mudgee High School to share the learning and teaching processes of a larger science faculty at work.

This has helped to sustain and support teachers and students where a dedicated Head Teacher Science is not appointed due to either smaller numbers of students or less experienced staff in the school. The Virtual Head Teacher Science has operated with the support of Mudgee High School's Highly Accomplished Teacher and science staff.

Learning, leading, capacity and change

Professional learning opportunities being provided as part of the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership to members of diocesan leadership teams include programs that explore how to manage change within the school setting to improve student outcomes.

Ready to Teach:

The Ready to Teach program supports engagement between system authorities and university partners to provide high quality candidates for teaching positions.

The mentor based Ready to Teach program was offered to fourth year primary and secondary teaching students and was designed to provide intensive preparation immediately prior to uptake of their first teaching position. The selected students engaged with a class and class teacher and participated in an intense three week period of team teaching specifically designed to prepare them for employment in the workforce. This was similar to an internship arrangement, however the student taught with the class teacher for the duration of the program.

The class teacher was provided with a financial incentive of \$400. Participating class teachers did not have significant student assessment and reporting responsibilities. The Catholic Education Office used the Ready to Teach program to assess individual potential for employment in the Catholic system through contact with the class teacher and principal.

The Ready to Teach program was highly successful and many of the candidates are presently working in Catholic schools as a result of participation.

Doctoral and Masters research scholarships:

The Catholic Education Office, Sydney has provided 15 doctoral scholarships and 11 Masters research scholarships to highly talented principals and teachers to complete formal study and research at selected universities. These scholarship holders will investigate areas of educational growth and improvement in selected areas of teaching and learning. This program is a significant investment in knowledge growth and capacity building and is intended to increase the proportion of highly qualified and trained staff in the Catholic education system.

Building capacity in a secondary school setting

The Building Capacity in the Secondary School Setting project was designed to promote and demonstrate quality teaching practices in three different schools. This project enabled the provision of intensive in-school support in an identified subject area through the appointment of three teacher educators, equivalent to Highly Accomplished Teachers.

St Joseph's Aberdeen is a 7-12 systemic school in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle was selected to participate in this project. As a rural school, St Joseph's caters to small cohorts of students who live in a relatively remote context. The project specifically addresses challenges related to teacher inexperience, varying levels of teacher capacity and expectations for students, access to stage 6 best practice strategies and resources in the teaching and learning of science.

St Joseph's partnered with a secondary school with a record of achieving excellent HSC results - All Saints College, St Mary's campus. A member of staff from the science faculty at St Mary's was identified as a teacher educator to work with the science faculty at St Joseph's. Several strategies enhanced the capacity of the science faculty at St Joseph's:

- *mentoring arrangements linking science staff with a teacher educator from St Mary's*
- *weekly communication between the science coordinators in both schools*
- *a communication network using email and Skype*
- *trailing of a videoconference link between the two schools in 2011 for both teacher meetings and student classes*
- *support from teacher educators to analyse assessment tasks, scope and sequence*
- *a whole faculty visit by the staff of St Joseph's to St Mary's campus.*
- *shared science excursion opportunities for the students of both schools.*

Although the Building Capacity in the Secondary School Setting project has only been in existence for one semester, it has already had a strong positive impact at St Joseph's, Aberdeen. Benefits realised to date include:

- *increased shared teacher understanding of stage 6 levels of expectation*
- *redevelopment of assessment tasks*
- *significant improvements in teacher confidence*
- *sharing of good practice through linking less experienced teachers with highly experienced teachers*
- *analysis of marking HSC assessment tasks*
- *joint school excursions which have developed peer relations between students from a remote rural school and students from a highly successful academic 'sister school' and*
- *staff in need of advice and support being effectively linked to highly experienced colleagues.*

Science faculties from other schools have also sought support and development from the teacher educator at St Mary's campus as an extension of the initiative.

A strategic approach to flexible professional learning for regional and remote schools

The independent sector is very diverse, with many schools serving disadvantaged communities in regional areas. The delivery of professional learning that is affordable and accessible for teachers and leaders in regional and remote schools poses a significant challenge for this sector.

Schools in regional and remote areas struggle to fund travel and time release for teachers and leaders to attend professional learning activities which are predominantly based in the city. The cost and time burdens of travel have been identified as the greatest impediment to supporting the improvement of teacher quality through professional learning, particularly in country areas.

To provide more accessible professional learning, increase mentoring opportunities and support leaders of independent schools, the sector has completed the planning phase of implementing regional videoconferencing facilities to link to quality professional learning activities in metropolitan areas. The new facilities will significantly reduce travel time and the need for teacher release, as teachers and leaders will use ICT facilities to access opportunities through a regional hub.

Flexible delivery will also support leadership mentoring for some of the most isolated school leaders. In addition, it will allow teachers in regional and remote areas to participate in subject committees and support groups. This will provide collegial support and advice, which will be particularly valuable to inexperienced graduates teachers and teachers operating in schools where they are the only member of staff covering a subject area.

The provision of flexible professional learning and mentoring through this initiative addresses issues of teacher quality by reducing the sense of isolation experienced by teachers and school leaders, supporting teachers to attain higher levels of accreditation, and encouraging the uptake and retention of teaching positions in regional and remote areas.

Enhanced internships in regional independent schools

Providing an enhanced internship experience in regional areas for final year teacher education students is likely to increase the uptake of positions in regional communities, thereby addressing critical shortages in those schools.

In 2010, two 'hard to staff' schools in regional NSW (one with 65 students and the other with an enrolment of 1,010) received funding to engage four interns.

Kinross Wolaroi was able to attract two interns from a city university who had trained in a subject in which the school had previously struggled to attract staff. The school was able to provide the interns with accommodation, travel costs and an introduction to life in regional NSW as a direct result of the financial support provided under the National Partnership.

Rainbow Ridge Steiner School engaged interns who were trained in the Steiner approach. During the period of the internship, all interns received extensive mentoring.

Sustainability

Implementation of the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership in NSW focuses on reform activity that will significantly impact across all schools and where possible, will be sustainable after the life of the National Partnership.

As a result, implementation in this State focuses on changing culture and practice and developing systems to ensure continual improvement and support for teachers and school leaders.

NSW is implementing sustainable systemic change across all education sectors at each stage of the teacher lifecycle (i.e. attracting, training, recruiting, developing and retaining). This approach aims to address issues specific to both the national agenda and the State context.

Significant strategies being implemented across all sectors in NSW to sustain a quality supply of teachers include:

- the establishment of Centres for Excellence
- the development of a new level of expert teaching, which allows high quality teachers to stay in the classroom
- engagement with higher education providers to improve the quality of pre-service teacher education courses and graduate teachers to sustain a quality supply of teachers
- investment in leadership and mentoring programs focusing on capacity building at all levels
- development of networks of supportive relationships between schools, which provide both for the sharing of expertise across a wide range of school issues and for the transfer of good practice.

This State will use Smarter Schools National Partnership reward payments to build on the significant achievements flowing from the reform activity of the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership. Sectors will learn from evaluations conducted at the program and state levels and implement flexible strategies that sustain the achievement of National Partnership reform priorities.

Section 3 – Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities

Overview – 1 January to 31 December 2010

In 2010, 331 NSW schools participated in the National Partnership on Low Socio-economic Status School Communities (Low SES NP), including 295 government schools, 23 Catholic schools and 13 independent schools.

Schools participating in the Low SES NP¹³ in NSW in 2010 represent:

- 10.4% of all NSW schools
- 7.4% of NSW school students¹⁴
- 24.3% of Aboriginal students attending NSW schools
- 61.4% of NSW students attending remote schools.

Participating schools catered to 7.4% of the 2010 NSW school student population. This amounts to:

- more than 35,758 school students in metropolitan areas
- around 43,739 school students in regional and rural areas
- around 3,282 school students in remote areas.

More than 71.4% (237) of these schools are located in rural, regional or remote areas.

Throughout 2010, Low SES NP schools continued their implementation of activities within the key reform areas. Schools consolidated their strategies and activities aimed at improving the education outcomes of students from low SES backgrounds through a focus on high quality, evidence-based teaching informed by rigorous data and planning.

The 331 participating schools continued their focus upon improving education outcomes for Aboriginal students with an expanding range of support programs targeting literacy and numeracy.

NSW achieved the following under this National Partnership during 2010:

- during Semester 2, schools undertook a rigorous revised situational analysis/environmental scan to monitor and evaluate the progress and achievement of targets and strategies and to inform and revise school plans for 2011
- more than 400 literacy and numeracy reform interventions were implemented, including intensive programs targeting the needs of Aboriginal students

¹³ These figures do not include schools participating in the two year Low Socio-Economic School Communities NP Reform Extension Initiative.

¹⁴ Student figures provided are drawn from the 2010 school student enrolments. This data is collected annually and will next become available in December 2011.

- the majority of schools with Aboriginal students implemented explicit community engagement strategies
- high quality teaching was supported through:
 - additional expert staff including regional consultants, principals, Highly Accomplished/Quality Teachers, school executive and experienced teachers leading professional learning at regional/diocesan and school level
 - implementing mentoring strategies for teachers and leaders, including the provision of release time for teaching principals or executive members to lead onsite professional learning and to mentor teachers
 - all schools implementing professional learning around the use of data to inform teaching and learning
 - all schools implementing additional professional learning programs supporting improved pedagogy
 - explicit leadership development programs
 - specialist teacher assistance in English as a Second Language pedagogy, literacy, numeracy and learning support
 - paraprofessional support for classroom teachers.

Ten additional schools were identified to participate in the Low Socio-Economic School Communities National Partnership through the two year Reform Extension Initiative. This is a two year program, with a focus on actions that directly increase the availability of high quality teaching.

Extensive planning was also undertaken in 2010 by the 191 schools preparing to join the Partnership in 2011, which included significant support and development activities across the State. A total of 637 schools will participate in the Low SES NP in NSW from 2009 to 2015.

Significant achievements of National Partnership reforms – 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2010

The strengthening of processes for monitoring and evaluation of schools' activities in the National Partnership was a significant achievement for 2010. This was achieved through systemic and sectoral support to schools and a requirement for all schools to participate in professional learning around the analysis and use of data.

Analysis and use of data to inform planning – a major cultural shift

There are indications that the analysis and use of data to inform teaching is leading to increasingly targeted, effective individual, class and whole-school strategies.

Key elements of the monitoring and evaluation process and use of student data include:

- all Partnership schools undertake a rigorous situational analysis/environmental scan as part of initial planning using internal and external data sources, which include student performance and achievement, attendance, retention, staff profile, parent, staff and student focus group and survey data.
- these data sources inform the strategies implemented by schools and the targets and indicators set to monitor and evaluate progress and achievement

- schools undertake a revised situational analysis/scan each subsequent year of the program to reflect on progress and achievement and to further refine their strategies, targets and indicators in school plans.

Information collected through the analysis of school plans, situational analysis reports, staff surveys and observation of staff practice effectively informs practice. For example, in 2010 the 295 government schools made “significant progress” toward or “achieved” 63% of their reported targets and “exceeded” 17% of targets.

These figures provide strong evidence of schools’ capacity to evaluate and monitor their progress and to revise and refine their implementation strategies to further improve student outcomes. Independent and Catholic schools report an increase in teacher use of external test data and school based data when designing learning experiences to cater to student needs.

Improved educational outcomes/learning engagement for schools and students

Programs and strategies undertaken through the Partnership are focusing on achieving increased learning engagement and improved education outcomes for students.

The combined impact of explicit curriculum strategies, the increased focus on pedagogy through professional learning, use of new technologies and targeted interventions ensured that a high percentage of school targets were achieved.

The commitment to improving students’ literacy and numeracy through the Partnership is demonstrated through the high level uptake of literacy and numeracy programs; in 2010, 356 explicit literacy and numeracy programs were undertaken in 242 government schools, 15 interventions in independent schools and 39 in Catholic schools.

Other key achievements include:

- the implementation of strategies at critical transition points to assist students as they move from pre-school to Kindergarten, Year 6 to high school and transition to further education or work, having the effect of improving engagement, attendance, retention and completion
- the initiation or further development of links with businesses and universities
- the development of explicit programs to support Aboriginal students, refugees and English as a Second Language students.

Further details of significant achievements are found below.

Allocation of funds and selection of strategies against the six Low SES NP reforms

Funding was allocated in 2010 to the 331 Low SES National Partnership schools active in 2009 and 2010 as follows:

- \$85,075,987 to 295 government schools
- \$4,682,850 to 23 Catholic schools
- \$2,751,000 to 13 independent schools.

Distribution of funding allocated to each reform, by sector for Low SES NP schools in 2010 is indicated in the table below:

Reform	\$ funding			% of each sector's 2010 allocation		
	Govt	Catholic	Indep	Govt	Catholic	Indep
1. Incentives to attract high-performing principals and teachers	22,600,967	1,650,151	1,385,694	27.0	35.0	50.4
2. Adoption of best practice performance management and staffing arrangements that articulate a clear role for principals	8,796,113	295,930	29,567	10.0	6.0	01.1
3. School operational arrangements which encourage innovation and flexibility	16,937,412	308,715	290,659	20.0	7.0	10.6
4. Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities	21,335,673	1,583,876	982,545	25.0	34.0	35.7
5. Strengthened school accountability	6,087,211	361,237	8,100	7.0	8.0	0.3
6. External partnerships with parents, other schools, businesses and communities and the provision of access to extended services (including through brokering arrangements)	9,318,609	482,941	54,435	11.0	10.0	2.0
TOTALS	85,075,987	4,682,850	2,751,000	100%*	100%*	100%*

* Percentages may add up to more than 100% due to rounding.

The 10 government schools joining the Reform Extension Initiative in 2010 addressed Reforms one and four of the Low SES NP with an equal distribution of \$2.2 million in funding to each reform.

Reform 1: Incentives to attract high-performing principals and teachers

In 2010, the following allocations of funding were made against Reform 1:

- 27% of funding (\$22,600,967) in government schools
- 35% of funding (\$1,650,151) in Catholic schools
- 50.4% of funding (\$1,385,694) in independent schools.

The following strategies have been undertaken to implement this reform:

Coaching / mentoring

There was a strong uptake of coaching/mentoring strategies to attract and support high-performing principals and teachers. These included:

- the employment of external coaches/mentors, with 278 government schools including this in their 2010 school plans
- the release of senior staff in the Catholic sector to undertake coaching activities - for instance a Catholic assistant principal released from face to face teaching to coach and train staff in the *Numeracy Now* and *Extending Mathematical Understanding* project
- experienced or specialist teachers in nine independent schools mentoring/coaching school staff, including new scheme teachers and fully accredited teachers
- coaching specifically for school leaders, for example members of the executive of two independent schools provided with an external mentor/coach and the government's Western NSW region employing mentors to support school leaders in cluster arrangements across the region.

Professional learning

Schools participating in the Low SES National Partnership implemented a variety of professional learning strategies. Teachers and school leaders were supported through increased professional learning opportunities in targeted areas, as identified through schools' situational analysis/environmental scan processes. Areas of development included:

- leadership
- quality teaching
- literacy/numeracy programs
- other curriculum programs
- cultural awareness
- school self evaluation
- use of data to inform teaching and learning
- English as a Second Language programs - *Teaching English Language Learners* and *ESL Matters*
- measurement of ICT skills development using CLAS and DASA matrices.

Employment of additional teaching and non-teaching staff

Additional teaching and non-teaching staff were employed in most 2010 Low SES NP schools, to provide additional executive positions, additional time for executive teachers and school leaders to lead professional learning, or to enable the release of teachers from face to face teaching so they could participate in professional learning, program development and leadership programs.

Leadership capacity development

There was strong participation in leadership capacity development activities and programs by Partnership schools in 2010 in recognition of the central role that leadership plays in improving school functioning.

129 government schools indicated participation in a leadership program in their school plans. The majority of government schools undertook the *NSW DET Analytical Framework for Effective Leadership and School Improvement in Literacy and Numeracy*[®] and the *NSW DET Team Leadership for School Improvement K-12 program*.

Catholic school leaders participated in the Catholic Education Office, Parramatta system leadership program over four days in 2010. School executive teams from the Sydney Archdiocesan Low SES Partnership schools worked with Catholic Education Office staff over several days to further develop school leadership skills for supporting low socio-economic school communities.

The leadership teams from 13 independent schools participated in at least two leadership courses. Two newly appointed independent school principals enrolled in the 10 day *Foundation Leadership* program offered by the Independent Schools Leadership Centre.

Highly Accomplished Teacher positions and equivalents

Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) are employed as expert teachers to model high quality teaching across their schools and lead other teachers in the development and refinement of their teaching practice to improve student learning outcomes.

By the end of 2010, 14 Highly Accomplished Teachers and sector equivalents had been employed in schools participating in the Low SES National Partnership:¹⁵

- two full-time HATs in government schools participating in the National Partnership on Low Socio-economic Status School Communities
- 10 full-time HATs in government schools participating in the Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities Reform Extension Initiative
- two part-time HAT equivalents (Quality Teachers) in Catholic schools participating in the National Partnership on Low Socio-economic Status School Communities.

In 2010 the government sector made plans to employ 82 HATs in 2011. Of these, 57 will be supporting the 63 Reform Extension Initiative schools and 25 will be working to improve learning outcomes in other Low SES NP schools.

¹⁵ *Highly Accomplished Teachers and equivalents are employed on a temporary basis, reflecting the fixed term of the Smarter Schools National Partnership funding. Appointments of HATs should not be interpreted as the number currently active in schools, which may vary due to staff mobility and the temporary nature of employment conditions.*

In order to be recognised as HAT equivalents, teachers in independent schools are required to achieve higher levels of accreditation through the NSW Institute of Teachers. The first tranche of independent teachers will be accredited by the NSW Institute of Teachers in early 2011.

Independent schools have also worked to attract highly competent and experienced specialist staff, particularly in English as a Second Language and ICT and learning. Eight ESL teachers and an ICT and learning support teacher were employed in 2010.

Some examples of Highly Accomplished Teacher and equivalents' activity include:

- providing whole school and faculty/stage professional learning on quality teaching practices – programming, evaluating and teaching, data analysis
- team teaching and demonstration lessons
- lesson coding and feedback discussions
- working with teachers to achieve accreditation at the various levels
- coordinating professional experience (practicum) placements and liaising with universities.

[Reform 2: Adoption of best practice performance management and staffing arrangements that articulate a clear role for principals](#)

In 2010, the following allocations of funding were made against Reform 2:

- 10% of funding (\$8,796,113) in government schools
- 6% of funding (\$295,930) in Catholic schools
- 1.1% of funding (\$29,567) in independent schools.

In 2010, performance management processes and staffing arrangements were undertaken in Low SES NP schools under new and existing strategies.

All government schools follow agreed processes for performance management through the *Teacher Assessment and Review Schedule (TARS)*, the *Executive Assessment and Review Schedule (EARS)* and the *Principal Assessment and Review Schedule (PARS)*. The TARS and EARS processes are school based performance management processes and the PARS process includes school education directors visiting schools at least once each term. In 2010, 288 government schools indicated explicit strategies to support and enhance performance management in their school plans.

Catholic sector schools implemented a range of diocese-specific performance management and staffing arrangements according to their specific contexts and needs, including:

- a personnel performance planning and review process linked to annual improvement plan professional learning plans for staff around identified teaching goals
- targeted school goals for improved student outcomes and a new leadership team model focused on teaching and learning which strengthened the educational leadership of the school.

Independent schools, by their nature, manage school-based performance management and staffing arrangements. While the schools are committed to a process of ongoing improvement, the activities/strategies listed in the reform menu are mostly appropriate for systems, and therefore a smaller allocation of funding was expended on this reform in the independent sector. One independent school allocated a new deputy principal position and a second school has started to implement a new teacher appraisal process involving external expertise.

Reform 3: School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility

In 2010, the following allocations of funding were made against Reform 3:

- 20% of funding (\$16,937,412) in government schools
- 7% of funding (\$308,715) in Catholic schools
- 10.6% of funding (\$290,659) in independent schools

As a consequence of Partnership funding Low SES NP schools were provided with a valuable opportunity to identify changes to school operational arrangements that would increase their capacity to respond to the needs of their local communities.

Flexible school organisational practices

116 Low SES NP government schools, seven independent schools and 16 Catholic schools reported changes to school organisational arrangements, including:

- team teaching
- teacher learning teams comprised of teachers, librarian and support staff
- extracurricular and co-curricular learning experiences
- establishment of homework centres
- extended library hours
- out of school hours care
- allied health services
- enhanced leadership structures to better support adjusted organisational practices.

Use of new technologies to access and share resources

There was a substantial uptake of new technologies in 2010, enabling improved access to and sharing of resources, and the creation of more flexible and engaging pedagogies. This included greater use of video conferencing and electronic whiteboards.

The uptake reflects the systemic support provided to schools to support the adoption of new technology. For instance in the government system 244 schools introduced new technology in 2010, as a consequence of significant work from central office in the area of connected learning. In the Catholic sector, support from the Parramatta Diocese saw the building of a suite of technology to support innovative and flexible learning practices. Five independent schools included new activities to support this strategy, including employing an ICT learning specialist and resourcing classrooms to allow the accessing and sharing of resources by staff and students.

University partnerships to pilot new or innovative pedagogy

Schools are increasing links with universities to support student learning, including the piloting of innovative pedagogy. This activity includes:

- establishment of 33 university partnerships in government schools
- engagement of tertiary expertise from the University of Sydney or Southern Cross College graduate school, respectively, to work with staff of two independent schools in the development of new pedagogical practices
- engagement of the Australian Catholic University by the Diocese of Parramatta to facilitate *Numeracy Now* and the *Extending Mathematical Understanding* (EMU) project, and strong relationships between the Archdiocese of Sydney and the university in the areas of leadership, literacy education and student wellbeing.

Schools working together

Collaboration between Low SES NP schools continued to strengthen through 2010, with schools regularly coming together at cluster, regional, diocesan and community levels for activities including planning and professional development around Partnership activities.

All 295 government schools took part in joint planning in 2010 as part of the situational analysis and planning process. Many schools are working in communities of schools which often include Partnership and non Partnership schools. Activities include sharing expert staff, professional learning, cost sharing on program implementation and whole-of-community strategies for attendance, transition and retention.

All 10 schools located in the Archdiocese of Sydney worked collaboratively to develop and support a professional community to produce enhanced outcomes for all. Other examples of schools working together are:

- one Catholic school engaged in a learning community with a neighbouring primary school to focus on the development of *Numeracy Now* and the EMU project
- a regional government primary school engaged with its neighbouring high school to employ a community liaison officer to develop a whole of community attendance strategy.

Paraprofessionals

The following paraprofessionals were employed in 2010 under the Low SES National Partnership:

- 47 paraprofessionals in schools participating in the Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnership, including:
 - 22 full- and part-time paraprofessionals in government schools
 - 13 paraprofessionals in independent schools, including 2 Aboriginal paraprofessionals
 - 12 full- and part-time paraprofessionals in Catholic schools
- 11 paraprofessionals in government schools participating in the Low Socio-economic Status School Communities Reform Extension Initiative in 2010.

Educational and operational paraprofessional staff provided increased teacher and student support that directly benefits student learning. Paraprofessionals particularly supported literacy and numeracy development, and provided support for Aboriginal students and students with special needs. Paraprofessionals also supported student learning by enabling relationship-building with the wider community, particularly with Aboriginal community members.

Government school educational paraprofessionals provided in-class teaching and learning support for staff, including tutoring, supporting students with special needs, facilitating transition activities and supporting digital learning. Technology learning facilitators (operational paraprofessionals) performed non-classroom based technology roles, allowing teachers more time to focus on teaching and learning activities. This included sourcing and developing materials for classroom use, supporting staff professional learning in technology and providing classroom support to staff in their use of technology.

Six government schools have employed community engagement officers (paraprofessionals) including Aboriginal and Language Background Other Than English officers to work with their communities. The officers are building relationships with parents and carers, encouraging active participation and involvement in, and decision making around their children's education.

In the Catholic sector, paraprofessionals are providing resource management support, in-class reading support, tutoring and support for Aboriginal students through a part-time Aboriginal community engagement officer.

In the independent sector, the activities of the paraprofessionals are mostly focused on supporting an increase in student literacy/learning skills through individual delivery of interventions such as *Making Up for Lost Time in Literacy* program (MULTILIT), supporting kindergarten and other classroom teachers or providing supervision of afterschool homework centres.

Reform 4: Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities

In 2010, the following allocations of funding were made against Reform 4:

- 25% of funding (\$21,335,673) in government schools
- 34% of funding (\$1,583,876) in Catholic schools
- 35.7% of funding (\$982,545) in independent schools.

Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities was a major area of activity for Low SES NP schools in 2010.

Targeted literacy and numeracy interventions

The following literacy and numeracy reform interventions were implemented under the Low SES National Partnership¹⁶ in NSW in 2010:

Literacy and Numeracy Interventions	No. of independent schools	No. of Catholic schools	No. of government schools
<i>Reading to Learn</i>	6	1	99
<i>Accelerated Literacy</i>	1	0	96
<i>QuickSmart</i>	1	0	61
<i>Taking Off With Numeracy</i>	0	0	27
<i>MULTILIT</i>	4	7	56
<i>Focus on Reading 3-6</i>	0	3	17
<i>Learning in Early Numeracy, Learning in Numeracy</i>	3	0	0
<i>Catholic sector-specific programs</i>			
<i>First Steps Reading (2nd Edition)</i>	n/a	4	n/a
<i>First Steps Writing (2nd Edition)</i>	n/a	7	n/a
<i>ESL Matters</i>	n/a	10	n/a
<i>Numeracy Matters</i>	n/a	1	n/a
<i>Numeracy Now</i>	n/a	1	n/a
<i>Extending Mathematical Understanding</i>	n/a	1	n/a
<i>Successful Language Learners (National Partnership Literacy and Numeracy Pilot)</i>	n/a	1	n/a
<i>Numeracy Intervention</i>	n/a	3	n/a
Total	15	39	356

¹⁶ These figures include a small number of schools that are participating in both Low SES and Literacy and Numeracy NPs.

Other targeted approaches to lift results for identified students

Targeted approaches to lift results for identified students were undertaken by all sectors in 2010. Additional support was provided for Aboriginal students, including the development and maintenance of Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) for all Aboriginal students in government schools, and independent schools and Catholic schools as appropriate. *For further information, please see the 'Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' section below.*

Government schools implemented programs and plans that provided targeted support at key transition points, such as links with pre schools, peer support programs and programs for families in cultural transition. *(Further details are provided under Reform 6.)* Many government schools implemented direct student interventions for students requiring English as a Second Language support, including individual learning and transition plans. *(For further details, please see the 'Support for Other Cohorts' section later in this report.)*

Targeted programs were undertaken by dioceses in the Catholic sector, for example the Archdiocese of Sydney provided Individual Learning Plans for Aboriginal students, new arrivals and those identified through NAPLAN results and school based assessments. The Maitland/Newcastle Diocese developed literacy plans for individual students. Other targeted approaches aimed at supporting specific students in the Catholic sector included individual counselling sessions, a breakfast program, and a social and resilience skills program, *You Can Do It*, which focuses upon positive attitudes to life and learning.

Teacher professional development e.g. ESL pedagogy, refugee pedagogy

Teacher professional development in English as a Second Language (ESL) pedagogy was a focus for the Archdiocese of Sydney (*ESL Matters*), four independent schools and 14 government schools. Whole school programs in government schools included *Teaching English Language Learners*, *Teaching Refugees In My Classroom* and training in using the *ESL Scales* for assessment. Professional development in independent schools included external expert led courses for teachers in meeting the needs of the ESL learner in the mainstream classroom in three schools and the use of *ESL Scales* in three schools. Schools have also provided support for professional learning of executive and other staff.

Professional development to use and analyse student data to cater to student needs

All Low SES NP schools undertook training in the use of data to inform programming and planning for teaching and learning as part of the preparation for their first situational analysis/environmental scan.

Reform 5: Strengthen school accountability

In 2010, the following allocations of funding were made against Reform 5:

- 7% of funding (\$6,087,211) in government schools
- 8% of funding (\$361,237) in Catholic schools
- 0.3% of funding (\$8,100) in independent schools.

Undertaking a rigorous situational analysis/environmental scan as part of initial planning is cornerstone of this reform. All schools developed school plans based on a situational analysis. Schools used a variety of relevant internal and external data sources to inform school planning and hence the strategies implemented by schools and the resources they allocated.

In government schools, plans are endorsed by school education directors and approved by regional directors. Schools then undertake a revised situational analysis each subsequent year of the program to reflect on progress and achievement and to further refine their school plans. Revisions to school plans are also endorsed by school education directors and are approved by regional directors. Schools are accountable for their progress towards and achievement of the targets in their plans.

The situational analysis process in government schools is supported strategically by central office and regions in a variety of ways through workshops, support documents and professional learning. For example, Hunter Central Coast Region has developed a model to build capacity across the region to support evaluation and monitoring. The *Hunter Central Coast Internal Review Training* supports schools involved in strategic interventions, assisting school leaders to plan and implement rigorous evaluations of school operations.

Individual government school staff accountability is managed through the *Teacher Assessment and Review Schedule*, the *Executive Assessment and Review Schedule* and the *Principal Assessment and Review Schedule*. In 2010, 288 government schools indicated explicit strategies to support and enhance performance management.

While there is some variability between dioceses, Catholic sector schools have similar systemic processes for ensuring strengthened school accountability, including planning for, developing and approving schools plans. This includes the use of data to inform planning and the selection of appropriate strategies and resource allocation across the school and to support individual interventions.

For example, the Parramatta Diocese analysed and used assessment data to inform teaching and to track and monitor student learning. During Term 1, teachers were released, with two teachers working in teaching teams, to meet with each student's parents to discuss and inform the student's learning goals for the year. Each term, parent meetings were held to share school goals, initiatives and various data sets for example NAPLAN and the *Successful Language Learners* assessment bank.

All 13 independent schools participating in the Low SES NP also developed school plans based on a situational analysis. The analysis used a range of data sources including NAPLAN, the local measure assessments and school data. This process has strengthened the leadership and made a significant impact on the identification of targets underpinning school plans. Schools regarded this process as a critical component of the initial leadership development work and assigned funds in this area under Reform 1.

All Low SES NP school plans are published on school web sites.

[Reform 6: External partnerships with parents, other schools, businesses and communities and the provision of access to extended services \(including through brokering arrangements\)](#)

In 2010, the following allocations of funding were made against Reform 6:

- 11% of funding (\$9,318,609) in government schools
- 10% of funding (\$482,941) in Catholic schools
- 2% of funding (\$54,435) in independent schools.

Activities selected by schools include the following:

Parent education classes related to student learning

In 2010, 224 schools indicated they were implementing sessions and/or classes for parents on issues related to student learning.

219 government schools indicated they were undertaking sessions for parents in their plans. Some of these were explicit classes for parent learning, others were information sessions that included components of how to help the child at home. Many schools conducted learning opportunities for parents so that they could then assist in the classrooms at the school. Of the five independent schools providing learning opportunities for parents, one created a DVD and resource pack for numeracy to support isolated parents who could not readily attend functions at the school. The Parramatta Diocese offered a range of parent classes and sessions including English language classes, and sessions on numeracy and internet safety.

Aboriginal elders and community members providing classroom support

In 2010, 93 schools (87 government, two independent and four Catholic) implemented strategies that included Aboriginal elders and/or community members working with teachers. In government schools these strategies were not always conducted in the classroom but supported the development of knowledge and appreciation of Aboriginal culture and its significance in Australian society. One independent school has involved Aboriginal elders of the Dunghutti language group in sharing stories and art work with students and another has extended *QuickSmart* training to a group of parents who deliver the program to Years 4, 5, and 6 students.

Professional learning on student wellbeing initiatives

A wide range professional learning initiatives around student wellbeing occurred in 2010. 168 government schools recording student wellbeing initiatives in their school plans selected the following activities:

- *Positive Behaviour for Learning* program
- programs for building emotional intelligence
- learning centres for disengaged students
- healthy eating programs and breakfast clubs
- transition programs
- resilience building programs.

Catholic sector programs included *Restorative Practices*, *Seasons for Growth*, *Transition to School* program, and *Leaders Transforming Learners and Learning Framework* (with the Australian Catholic University). Two independent schools identified professional development for school leaders and staff in student well-being initiatives.

Other partnerships with parents, other schools, businesses and communities

Partnerships were established with parents, other schools, businesses and communities that provided for greater student and family support and engagement with learning. The establishment of transition-to-school programs was a major focus for government schools. One hundred and forty three government schools indicated that they had undertaken these programs, which involved working closely with local preschools and other schools to coordinate support strategies across their communities.

A variety of activities was undertaken within Catholic dioceses to develop local partnerships. For example, the Parramatta Diocese built extensive networks with parents, the community and local organisations. This included story telling sessions, community music sessions, the establishment of a parent resource library, playgroups, and the SPARK program, established in partnership with St Vincent de Paul through *Successful Language Learners* pilot funding. A parallel parent group also ran, which focused on sharing the school newsletter, games to play at home with children and English lessons.

Two independent special assistance schools have established strategies focused on partnerships with local business and local community youth organizations. One independent Aboriginal primary school is working towards a transition to school program with an Aboriginal preschool operating on the same site, and has also initiated strategies to develop closer collaborative relationships with the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) and the *Parental and Community Engagement* program (PaCE).

Support services such as allied health

In 2010, support services were established to address specific student needs, with 74 government schools indicating support services in their school plans, the most common of these being speech pathology. Various activities were undertaken at diocesan level, such as partnerships between the Catholic Schools Office and the Aboriginal Medical Service and Dharriwaa Elders Group in the Armidale Diocese.

One independent school developed links with the Durri Aboriginal Medical Service, and another has developed a process to screen and provide interventions for students with hearing loss associated with Otitis Media. Initiatives in the Catholic sector included the employment of an educational psychologist for onsite visits, assessments and facilitation of professional learning.

Homework centres

Homework centres are a long term existing strategy to support student learning. As a result, not all schools included them in their school plans for reporting on Partnership activity. In 2010, four independent and 33 government schools indicated the establishment or functioning of a homework centre in their school. Planning was undertaken in 2010 to enable an additional 85 homework centres in 2011.

Before and after school care

Similarly, the provision of before and after school care facilities may not have been mentioned by all Partnership schools in their school plans because they are an existing resource. However, in 2010, nine government schools indicated before and after school care in their school plans.

Community engagement

Community engagement activities

Two hundred and sixty seven government, five Catholic schools and two independent schools participating in the Low SES NP planned for or implemented Aboriginal community engagement strategies in 2010.

Two independent schools with a high percentage of Aboriginal students are actively engaging with the Aboriginal community. Examples include participating in National Aboriginal and Islander Day of Celebration week, implementing the PaCE program, forming an Aboriginal education advisory group and providing space for Aboriginal Elders of the Dunghutti language group for their work in recording the language.

As well as these school-level activities, the Broken Bay Diocese worked in partnership with the local AECG to build positive and effective relationships between school, parents of Aboriginal students and the wider community. Initiatives included workshops for parents in mathematics, how to approach the principal, post school options and specific opportunities for parents to meet their children's teachers in the company of the diocese's Aboriginal education workers.

Aboriginal education and cultural immersion

All sectors are undertaking school-based or locally developed Aboriginal cultural immersion or awareness programs.

Many government schools participating in the Low SES National Partnership have completed a professional development module focused on working with the school community and in particular the Aboriginal community, as part of the *NSW DET Team Leadership for School Improvement K-12* program.

In the Catholic sector, around 115 school staff participated in cultural immersion programs, run by NSW DET, local AECGs or system-run cultural immersion days.

An independent school conducted a cultural awareness program in January 2010 and another independent school participated in an Aboriginal education and cultural immersion program.

For more information, please see the 'Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' section below.

University partnerships

At least 38 university partnerships have been established under the Low SES National Partnership:

- 33 university partnerships with government schools to pilot new or innovative pedagogy
- two university partnerships with independent schools to develop new pedagogical practices
- at least three university partnerships with Catholic schools, focusing on numeracy and leadership capability development, literacy education and student wellbeing.

A wide variety of activities and strategies were undertaken through the Low SES NP to build university-school partnerships aimed at strengthening student engagement and improving student attainment levels. Many schools allocated resources to develop new programs and enhance existing relationships with universities, with programs including professional learning for teachers around curriculum and pedagogy, and student intervention and engagement programs.

In addition to activities at the school and regional/diocesan level, NSW developed a State-wide, cross-sectoral strategy to foster school-university collaboration that will lead to increased student engagement, improved student attainment and higher aspiration levels for a university education. This involved consultation with schools and universities to identify and share, through an information booklet, existing support programs and effective strategies schools are using to build student attainment, such as targeted tutoring and mentoring programs, and parental engagement programs.

Examples of school-university partnerships in 2010 include:

- the leadership group and staff of an independent school working with a University of Sydney academic one day a week on English as a Second Language pedagogy during Semester 2, and professional development in collaborative teaching and improving literacy levels across all Key Learning Areas provided by an academic from Southern Cross College Graduate School
- the partnership between the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn and the University of Canberra to develop and implement the *Numeracy Intervention* program
- provision of professional development to school leadership teams in the Archdiocese of Sydney and the Diocese of Parramatta in leadership, literacy education and student wellbeing by personnel from the Australian Catholic University (ACU), as well as facilitating the *Numeracy Now* and *Extending Mathematical Understanding* project
- a partnership between Burke Ward Public School and the University of Sydney which places final year speech pathology trainees in the school under the clinical supervision of Greater Western Area Health staff
- partnerships undertaken by the Diocese of Wilcannia/Forbes with ACU in the *Leaders Transforming Learners and Learning Framework* program, Newcastle University on the *Quality Teaching Framework* and an internship program with Notre Dame University
- collaboration with the *Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience* and the University of Wollongong by Corrimal High School to continue provision of quality mentoring for Aboriginal students
- student support program *Aspire*, commenced by Condobolin High School with the University of NSW.

Reading and numeracy performance in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 (NAPLAN)

It should be noted that NAPLAN data must be interpreted with caution. It is not feasible to draw conclusions from the data to infer that differences in data between years are statistically significant, indicative of trends, or attributable (or not) to National Partnership initiatives. *Detailed information is provided in 'Section 8 – Low SES NP State Performance Measures'*

School level plans

All independent, government and Catholic Low SES NP schools that commenced the National Partnership in 2009 or 2010 published their school plan on a school website.

All school plans identify National Partnership investment at the school level, NP activities being implemented and how they align with the six reforms of the National Partnership.

Challenges to implementation/progress – 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2010

Staff recruitment

Recruitment of additional/new specialised staff was identified by the government and independent sectors as a challenge in 2010. Both sectors noted the difficulty in recruiting staff to remote schools, and the independent sector also noted a lack of available, suitably qualified English as a Second Language and learning support teachers.

The independent sector also identified problems with staff retention in four schools, with increased challenges for the two regional schools which provided for at risk students who had not succeeded in mainstream educational settings. This sector found recruitment of specialist staff to be a barrier that has caused some delay to the implementation of aspects of the school plans. Schools have used flexible approaches to manage the initial implementation until appropriate staff were employed.

In the government sector, central office and the regions continued to work together to identify, recruit and support staff in remote and difficult-to-staff schools. Government schools are looking at flexible solutions including virtual consultants who spend some time on site in the schools to lead professional learning and model high quality teaching, and some time working with staff via video conferencing.

Isolation

Schools in all three school sectors experienced challenges caused by isolation and distance, which had impacts on their capacity to recruit teachers to remote schools and provide them with appropriate professional development opportunities.

To address this, government schools have undertaken joint planning and often work in communities of schools to share expert staff, professional learning and the costs of program implementation. The independent sector provides travel subsidies and staff relief to smaller schools to allow independent school teachers to attend professional development training.

Uptake of Highly Accomplished Teachers in government schools

The slow uptake of Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) during 2010 was due in part to this being a new position in government schools with a different role and conditions of employment. While the HAT position is linked to accreditation at higher levels with the NSW Institute of Teachers, many highly experienced teachers had not previously sought this accreditation.

Regions and schools are supporting teachers through the accreditation process. NSW DET has employed 10 HATs through the Low SES Reform Extension Initiative and an additional two HATs were employed through the four year Low SES National Partnership in 2010.

Management of multiple programs in schools

Many schools participating in the Low SES National Partnership are also involved in a range of other targeted school programs such as the *Successful Language Learners* literacy and numeracy pilot. Different reporting and accountability requirements added to the burden placed on these schools, with the potential to detract from the primary focus of lifting student achievement.

Consistency of Commonwealth and state definitions and streamlined reporting requirements are required to reduce the impact of this challenge.

Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders – 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2010

24.3% of the 2010 NSW Aboriginal and Torres Strait school student population¹⁷ was enrolled in schools participating in the 2009 and 2010 cohorts of the National Partnership on Low SES School Communities.¹⁸

This represents:

- around 2,102 Aboriginal Islander school students in metropolitan areas
- around 8,107 Aboriginal Islander school students in regional and rural areas
- around 1,794 Aboriginal Islander school students in remote areas.

The Low SES NP offers an invaluable opportunity to provide additional support to the State's Aboriginal students. Participating schools across the sectors are responding with comprehensive, targeted support at school and systems levels. The level of support and activity reflects the State's prioritisation of significantly improving the education attainment levels, aspirations and life opportunities of Aboriginal students.

Across all sectors, schools are collaborating with their local Aboriginal communities to improve student outcomes, developing greater levels of appreciation and understanding of Aboriginal culture through immersion and education programs, and providing focused and targeted interventions and support for Aboriginal students' learning.

Government schools consulted with Aboriginal communities during the planning for the implementation process and 98.5% of these schools indicated they were applying Aboriginal community engagement strategies in their school plans.

In Catholic schools, Aboriginal communities have been involved in the planning and implementation processes where appropriate.

Three independent Low SES NP schools which involved the Aboriginal community in the development of school plans accounted for 83% of Aboriginal student enrolments in the independent sector.

Support provided to Aboriginal students

Personalised Learning Plans

Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) are a major tool for providing direction, guidance and support for Aboriginal students. They are developed and maintained for all Aboriginal students in government schools, and in Catholic and independent Low SES NP schools as needed. Developing PLPs for Aboriginal students allows teachers to set goals and to tailor teaching and learning to the needs and abilities of individual students.

¹⁷ *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school student enrolment data is collected annually and will next become available in December 2011.*

¹⁸ *Please note that these figures do not include schools participating in the two year Low Socio-Economic School Communities NP Reform Extension Initiative.*

Some examples of the development and impact of PLPs:

- In Wilcannia/Forbes Diocese schools, all Aboriginal students are provided with a Personalised Learning Plan which involves all stakeholders (teachers, student, parent, AEW and community members). In other dioceses, PLPs are used for Aboriginal students, as appropriate, by recommendation and negotiation.
- During 2010, the PLP process was evaluated and updated across the Cessnock Community of Great Public Schools. All Aboriginal students and students at risk of falling below national standards were identified and specific strategies including support teacher learning assistance and Aboriginal education workers (AEWs) in class tuition were utilised. Recommendations from the evaluation included focused professional learning for staff around embedding strategies into teaching programs to engage Aboriginal students in learning and clearly communicated PLPs across all Key Learning Areas.

Individualised intervention support

Across the government sector, 120 schools provided individualised intervention support in classrooms using the MULTILIT literacy program in 2010 and 98 schools planned to use *QuickSmart* in 2011.

Independent and Catholic schools are also using tailored individual interventions as needed.

Other support programs and resources

Schools are providing a range of general support and wellbeing programs and strategies for Aboriginal students. For example, Catholic schools participating in the Low SES National Partnership are implementing the following programs and strategies:

- *Restorative Practices* program
- *Seasons for Growth* program
- breakfast and nutrition programs
- transition to school, strengthened home/school partnership through home-school visits
- production of a parent DVD to promote the school/family partnership
- IT workshops for parents and AEWs
- employment of an educational psychologist for assessments and behaviour support.

Aboriginal education and cultural immersion programs

Many government schools participating in the Low SES National Partnership have completed the *NSW DET Team Leadership for School Improvement K-12* program, which contains a module focused on working with the school community and in particular, the Aboriginal community.

An innovative cultural immersion program is being developed in collaboration with the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) and the Aboriginal Education and Training Directorate. The *Connecting to Country* program was piloted in schools participating in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy.

The program comprises a three day in-the-field Aboriginal community cultural awareness experience delivered by local AECG community members followed by the equivalent of two days of follow-up delivered as school-based professional learning to integrate Aboriginal cultural knowledge in teaching and learning.

All Low SES School Communities National Partnership Schools will be provided with access to the two phases of the program through a staged roll out.

Around 115 Catholic school staff including teachers, executive and AEWs participated in cultural immersion programs, run by NSW DET, local AECGs or system-run cultural immersion days.

An independent school conducted a cultural awareness program for its staff in January 2010 and one independent school participated in Aboriginal education and cultural immersion programs.

Building school and teacher capacity to meet the needs of Aboriginal students

Teacher professional learning

In government schools, school and teacher capacity is being strengthened to meet the needs of all students by training teachers to implement whole-school approaches to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes. All government schools continued to provide professional learning to improve student outcomes in 2010.

Further details of literacy and numeracy reform interventions can be found in the 'Significant Achievements' section of this report.

Employment of Aboriginal paraprofessionals and education support workers

During 2010, Aboriginal education support workers were employed in many government schools as either school learning support officers or community engagement officers to work in schools alongside existing staff in a range of different ways. This strategy created a deeper awareness and understanding of Aboriginal culture among staff and built relationships with the Aboriginal community.

For example, during the situational analysis process at Cowra Public School, the local AECG indicated that the addition of Aboriginal workers into the school through National Partnerships funding in 2010 was a positive strategy. The AECG reported that the establishment of the Windradyne Room, a designated area for use by the Aboriginal community and class groups in the school, was a positive initiative that would make Aboriginal parents and community more comfortable in coming to the school and speaking to staff.

In the independent sector, Macleay Vocational College employed an Aboriginal person to fill a new paraprofessional position and Minimbah Aboriginal Primary School provided additional hours of employment for an Aboriginal paraprofessional.

Schools and Aboriginal communities collaborating to improve student outcomes

Some schools developed strategies within their cluster or community of schools to collaborate with their Aboriginal community and improve outcomes for students or worked more closely with their local AECG. Some examples include:

- strengthened collaboration with the AECG by creating a Junior AECG committee
- the continuation of an advisory committee which provides a strong voice for Aboriginal parents and community as partners in the development of school policies, targets and programs at Mount View High School
- an extension of the current kindergarten orientation program at Cowra Public School following a request by the AECG President.

School community engagement to meet the needs of Aboriginal students

The Cessnock Community of Great Public Schools (CCGPS) encompasses 16 schools with approximately 8% Aboriginal student enrolments.

The CCGPS has developed a productive relationship with Korreil Wonnai AECG, resulting in significant progress in Aboriginal community involvement, sharing effective practices for engaging Aboriginal students and the coordination of a professional learning program by the CCGPS' Aboriginal education committee.

Planning for Aboriginal education occurs at the CCGPS level and schools report at the AECG meetings on school initiatives.

In September 2010, the CCGPS initiated an internal review to evaluate current practice and determine future directions. Principals, the School Education Director, School Development Officer and AECG representative participated in discussions. The review identified priority areas for the next three years as: student engagement and learning, Aboriginal education and community engagement.

The 2010 CCGPS review also identified the following key achievements:

- *professional learning for staff on local Aboriginal culture at Wollombi camp*
- *two middle years camps held with high schools and partner primary schools*
- *establishment of a CCGPS Aboriginal workers' network*
- *establishment of a common proforma developed for PLPs.*

For another example of schools and communities collaborating to improve student outcomes, please see the Walhallow Public School case study in the 'Showcase' section.

Support for other cohorts (if applicable) – 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2010

English as a Second Language students

Significant numbers of English as Second Language (ESL) school students, including refugees, are enrolled in Low SES NP schools.

- 11.6% of the 2010 first phase ESL student population in NSW government schools were enrolled in government schools participating in the 2009 and 2010 cohorts of the Low SES NP¹⁹
- 9.4% of the 2010 refugee student population in NSW government schools were enrolled in government schools participating in the 2009 and 2010 cohorts of the Low SES NP²⁰
- In the Sydney Archdiocese, many individual schools participating in the Low SES NP have ESL enrolments greater than 80%.

Language background other than English (LBOTE) students

- 8% of the 2010 Language Background Other Than English²¹ (LBOTE) student population in NSW government were enrolled in government schools participating in the 2009 and 2010 cohorts of the Low SES NP
- the independent sector reported that 3,071 students with a LBOTE were enrolled in 2010 in seven of the 13 independent schools currently participating in the Low SES National Partnership. This figure represents over 93% of the total population of those seven schools.

Four of these independent schools have LBOTE enrolments of over 95% and three are Islamic schools. A large majority of the students in this cohort have a high level of educational disadvantage and require ongoing ESL support to develop sufficient English language skills for successful post compulsory secondary schooling.

¹⁹ English as a second language school student enrolment and phase data are collected annually and reported concurrently with enrolment data. At present, ESL proficiency (ESL phase data) are only reported to the National Partnership team by NSW government schools

²⁰ Refugee school student enrolment data is collected annually and reported concurrently with enrolment data. This data will next become available in December 2011. At present, refugee enrolments are only reported to the National Partnership team by NSW government schools

²¹ Note: Language background other than English (LBOTE) and first phase ESL enrolment data cannot be compared, due to a difference in definitions. Phase 1 ESL identifies students with a high level of educational disadvantage, who have generally been learning English for less than one year and are often characterised as new arrivals to Australia. LBOTE students either speak a language other than English or live in a home where a language other than English is spoken. LBOTE students may or may not require ESL support.

Strategies to support ESL students

Low SES NP schools implemented a range of strategies in 2010 to support the learning of ESL students, with a strong focus on whole school and teacher professional development and direct student interventions.

Strategies include:

- professional learning in ESL and refugee pedagogy
- use of *ESL Scales* assessments to inform planning
- integrating ICT into language learning
- whole school programs such as *Teaching English Language Learners* and *Teaching Refugees In My Classroom*
- developing Individual Learning Plans
- assessing and reporting on ESL learners.

Interventions and support structures were informed by comprehensive assessment of ESL students to identify learning needs, track progress and plan learning programs accordingly. The *ESL Scales* were widely employed to inform planning and training.

In addition to training in the use of the *ESL Scales*, comprehensive professional development in ESL pedagogy was undertaken across Low SES NP schools to build on these skills and embed ESL pedagogy into classroom practice.

Government schools used team teaching, modelling and mentoring to improve practice in ESL pedagogy. For example, one school reported that its leadership team is providing modelling, mentoring, feed forward and feedback through a coaching model and coordinated professional learning opportunities in literacy through ESL pedagogy and interactive technologies.

Catholic schools provided professional learning in understanding and meeting the needs of ESL students, including those of refugees. These included the provision of in-class support through peer teaching, mentoring of newly appointed teachers, and assisting whole class and individual learning plan development.

Four independent schools targeted teacher professional development in ESL pedagogy. This has included external expert-led courses for teachers in meeting the needs of the ESL learner in the mainstream classroom in three schools and the use of *ESL Scales* in three schools. The three largest schools also included team teaching and support for professional learning of all staff in the roles of the newly appointed experienced ESL teachers.

Apart from specific ESL programs, targeted literacy and numeracy intervention programs drawn from the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy are expected to improve outcomes for all students, including ESL students.

For more information, please see the case study on Lidcombe Public School in the 'Showcase' section.

Employment of additional staff

Some government schools employed additional staff with ESL expertise to assist with mentoring and modelling and also to provide intensive support to phase one ESL students.

Four schools planned to employ an assistant principal in 2011 who was specifically responsible for ESL learning. Two of these schools are continuing strategies implemented under the

Successful Language Learners (SLL) pilot. Following the success of the SLL project, an additional two schools have decided to employ an assistant principal ESL.

As well as teaching staff, schools employed community engagement officers to enhance ESL community involvement. For example, one government school employed three community engagement officers from the major community language groups to improve communication between parents and school personnel through translating and interpreting essential information and to assist in the selection, organisation and promotion of parent workshops and meetings. These strategies focus on enhancing relationships with parents.

Another school employed a community engagement officer to initiate parent and carer gatherings (with translation services available) to link the parents and the school with community support services and to provide parents with an understanding of how they can assist their children with their learning at home.

Refugee students

In 2010, government schools provided focused transition support for refugee students, including both newly arrived students and students transferring from an Intensive English Centre to high school.

Five Low SES NP schools participated in facilitator training for the *Teaching Refugees In My Classroom* program late in the year.

One example of a school providing intensive support to refugees is Chester Hill High School. This school allocated significant Partnership funding to expand their *Refugee Transition Program* in 2010, increasing the number of student participants from 18 to 34. Outcomes of this program in 2010 include 100% of students on the program improving in oral interaction and reading and 90% improving in writing as assessed using the *ESL Scales*.

The independent and Catholic sector programs and support strategies outlined for ESL students extend to refugee students.

As part of the Smarter Schools National Partnerships, Catholic sector programs to assist refugee students were also extended to schools in neighbouring clusters in the Sydney Archdiocese. The two Low SES NP schools in this Archdiocese have 40 refugee enrolments from seven different language groups.

A whole school approach to making a difference in literacy for Aboriginal students

Walhallow Public School is located in Caroonna, a small rural town in the New England region of NSW. The school is located in an Aboriginal settlement known as Walhallow, meaning 'between the hills', which includes a health centre, community hall and historic church. In addition to National Partnership funding, the school receives funding through the Schools in Partnership and Priority Schools Funding programs.

Walhallow Public School's enrolment increased from 25 to 28 during 2010. All students are Aboriginal. The school has a teaching principal, one classroom teacher, a full-time Aboriginal education officer and a school learning support officer for three days a week.

The school's situational analysis highlighted that interventions to support the literacy learning of students were a priority. A number of strategies have since been implemented.

The National Partnership on Low SES School Communities has supported the school to provide more explicit and individualised support to students in literacy. An additional teacher provides mentoring and professional learning for staff in the use of the Accelerated Literacy program in the classroom, with this pedagogy underpinning the school's approach to literacy sessions. The school's Aboriginal education officer works closely with parents to support student learning in the classroom.

Focusing on implementation of the NSW DET Quality Teaching Model in the classroom, especially student engagement, have been critical to the effectiveness of the school's approach to literacy. In Semester 2, teachers, parents and community members participated in lesson study - lesson demonstrations with the small schools learning community with the aim of developing understandings of quality teaching in practice.

Data shows that 100% of students improved their reading by a minimum of three Reading Recovery levels during 2010. Early evidence from teacher and parent interviews indicates that students are also more engaged in reading and writing activities. Teacher assessments, including running records, show that students are improving in reading, talking and listening skills, resulting in an increase of the use of oral language in the classroom. School based assessments indicate that the number of students achieving stage appropriate outcomes in English and mathematics has increased from 70% to 80%, meeting 2010 school plan targets. The school attributes this success to explicit teaching and individualised programs.

Significant professional learning in data analysis and literacy and numeracy teaching has resulted in increased teacher proficiency in the use of ICT to engage students in the classroom and in the use of data to inform planning for teaching and learning, evidenced by teacher observation and DASA results.

A stronger partnership is developing between the school, the Parents and Citizens' Association, community members and the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, as a direct result of the school's participation in the National Partnership. These close relationships have also resulted in the school achieving its target of increasing student attendance from 85% to over 90% in 2010 and decreasing suspensions from school.

Building the capacity of the leadership team, staff, students and parents to address the needs of English language learners

Lidcombe Public School is located in Sydney's South West, 17 km from the Sydney CBD. It has an enrolment of 557 students. Over 90% of students are from a language background other than English with 44 languages represented in the school. The majority of kindergarten students begin school at Level 0 in all critical aspects of literacy.

The revised situational analysis undertaken in 2010 provided detailed information of the impact of reform strategies and informed decisions about the school's strategies for 2011.

Reading was identified as a focus for 2010 through analysis of NAPLAN, Best Start and teacher data. The data gathered from parent interviews and surveys indicated that the school also needed to strengthen communication with, and engagement of, parents in the school. The school identified the need to develop a whole school approach to the use of ESL Scales to assess and track student language development and to inform curriculum planning. Each teacher has been engaged in ongoing teacher professional learning, conducted by a school based Teaching English Language Learners facilitator, focusing on explicit teaching strategies for language development.

An external ESL consultant was employed to work with Lidcombe Public School and partner schools to provide an objective overview and recommendations for each school's ESL program. The need for all staff to refine and develop shared knowledge and understanding of second language acquisition to facilitate discussions around the language needs and development of their students was identified as a challenge.

The school employed the following strategies in 2010:

- *timetabled small group reading instruction focused on explicit and systematic teaching*
- *use of a Reading Recovery teacher, an assistant principal, experienced classroom teachers and a regional literacy consultant to mentor teachers and support guided reading in the classroom at the level of Years 1 and 2 through team teaching, collaborative planning and demonstration lessons*
- *literacy workshops for parents, facilitated by the community engagement officer and led by executive, to explain how literacy is taught in the classroom and how parents can help.*

Year 2 data was gathered from the beginning of Term 3 until Week 3 of Term 4, 2010 on student achievement using the 2009 Year 3 Reading and Responding NAPLAN Test. This data suggests an average of 35% overall growth of students' correct responses.

NAPLAN performance for Year 5 literacy showed an upward trend in reading, contrary to both region and State, with 67.3% of students achieving greater than or equal to expected growth. Results in spelling performance are above State average and the school exceeded State and local school group in Band 8.

The school conducted literacy workshops for parents about how literacy is taught and how parents can help, facilitated by the community engagement officer.

Classroom teachers have a clear sense of responsibility for improvements in reading for every student and ownership of their teaching and learning programs. The school has developed a strong professional learning community. This achievement was recognised in 2010 when Lidcombe Public School received a Director-General's Award for Dynamic, Innovative, Sustainable Practice.

Collaboration and flexibility deliver whole school change

The 83 K-6 students at South Granville Christian Community School (Primary campus of the Regents Park Christian School) come from 16 different cultures and the majority of the students come from a non English speaking background. The predominant language group is Tongan but significant numbers speak Burmese, Chinese, Dinka, Indonesian, Kiswahili, Korean, Russian, Spanish and Tagalog. The school has a teaching staff of four full-time classroom teachers and four part-time support teachers (literacy, library, release).

The project aimed to address the significant language and literacy needs of an extremely diverse cohort of students, while providing professional learning to support the continued growth in teaching expertise of early career teachers. This involved on-site and external professional learning opportunities focused on classroom practice, supported by time release for teachers to plan, program and evaluate collaboratively. Time and resources were allocated to school executive and the learning support teacher to lead the professional learning, mentor and team teach with teachers.

The school adopted a three level approach:

- *addressing language and literacy needs at a classroom level through the teachers meeting twice a term to review assessment, literacy and NAPLAN data. Close analysis of NAPLAN results was the starting point for teachers when planning a new unit work. Teachers then developed class programs which include pre-tests, teaching strategies and post tests*
- *providing at risk students with individual and small group support in reading (MULTILIT)*
- *establishing a homework help centre with paraprofessionals to provide individual and small group reading tuition in a structured environment.*

The impacts were almost immediate and evident to both staff and students. During the delivery of the first unit developed, which explicitly targeted some basic writing skills, a Year 6 boy surprised his teacher with the confident admission that he could now write and was enjoying it!

Teacher collaboration resulted in a decision for all teachers to use reciprocal teaching to help improve students' reading skills and to build students' oral language.

All students who received specific individual reading interventions recorded significant growth when retested in Term 4. Half of those targeted completed the MULTILIT levels, the rest scoring between 3 and 12 levels of growth. Students' confidence and enjoyment of reading grew. Of the Year 2/3 students surveyed, 85% agreed that they are good at reading and 90% liked reading. Students are now requesting harder books and more time to read. Library borrowing rates also increased.

The homework help centre also delivered positive results. It began with a large jump in attendance from the eight expected to 23 students. The centre also provided school leaders with an unanticipated but helpful insight into how homework was operating in the school, which became a spring board for further collaborative work at a whole school level. The review of this strategy revealed that most of the targeted students completed homework and that this had a positive effect on their participation in the classroom. Students even asked their parents for a later pick up and/or more days at the Centre, and 85% of parents surveyed were extremely satisfied and wanted their children to continue to participate in 2011.

The progress and effectiveness of these three initiatives were monitored throughout the year and formally evaluated both qualitatively and quantitatively in Term 4. As a result of the review, these strategies will be maintained in 2011 with continued monitoring. The flexible approach adopted by the teachers and the school leaders to making adjustments as a part of the implementation will continue to ensure the ongoing success of the initiatives.

Planning for the future through the situational analysis

Developing a comprehensive situational analysis was a critical starting point for St. Peter's Catholic College at Tuggerah Lakes. The college leaders were determined to take the necessary time to analyse the school's strengths and areas of challenge, based on a broad range of rigorous evidence, before determining priority goals, strategies, targets and measurement tools.

Understanding the agreement and 'rules' of participating in the Low SES National Partnership was the first step. The program guidelines were examined thoroughly by a team consisting of the principal, assistant principal and advisers from the Catholic Schools Office. Over a period of three months, the program guidelines were mapped to the context of St. Peter's Catholic College, and a range of possibilities for goals and strategies was considered.

With a clear understanding of the intent of the National Partnership agenda, a small group was then chosen to develop the situational analysis. The team consisted of the principal, assistant principal, four members of staff and an education officer from the Catholic Schools Office. The team used the template provided and examined all areas of schooling suggested.

Other areas were added if they were considered significant for the college community. For example, the issue of students taking on potentially excessive paid part-time employment was a concern for some teaching staff and was therefore included in the situational analysis.

Over a two month period, the team committed to gathering and using a broad range of evidence to draw conclusions and ultimately make recommendations. The education officer from the Catholic Schools Office acted as an external moderator during these meetings to ensure that findings and conclusions accurately reflected the evidence.

Between the regular meetings, draft findings were discussed with targeted focus groups. Focus groups of the college executive, key learning area and year level coordinators and finally, all staff, were established to ensure agreement and ownership of the situational analysis. When focus groups suggested changes, these were considered by the situational analysis team at the following team meeting.

The situational analysis also needed to be validated by the National Partnerships management group at the Catholic Schools Office. This group brought expertise in Aboriginal education, parent liaison, data analysis, project management and school improvement to their examination of the draft.

By the end of the 2010 school year, the draft was nearing completion. Some modifications were still required to take account of Higher School Certificate and School Certificate results (which were released on 17 December) and these modifications were finalised in early 2011.

This thorough process has added considerable confidence to the development of the school plan. For a school to answer the questions – ‘Where do we want to be in 2014? What do we want to be doing better?’ – they first need to be clear about ‘where are we now?’

Sustainability

The strengthening of monitoring and evaluation of schools' activities through the situational analysis/environmental scan processes and the requirement for all schools to participate in professional learning around the analysis and use of data both contribute to the sustainability of activities conducted under the Low SES NP.

Increased capacity to identify and plan the most appropriate strategies in local school contexts and to allocate available resources to optimise impact on student outcomes are high level outcomes that are essential for ongoing school improvement.

The early phase of implementation in many schools has required additional expert and executive teachers leading capacity building strategies through professional learning, coaching/mentoring and the implementation of literacy, numeracy and leadership programs, extended services activities and individual or small group support for students at risk.

Over time, teachers are developing sustained, increased capacity that will extend beyond the life of the National Partnership, both in their current schools and as they move to other schools throughout their careers.

However, these significant opportunities for capacity building and school-level change will not be realised without longer term commitment to the funding that enables these activities. While current staff can carry over their new skills, new staff, including new and prospective principals, will continue to need professional learning, students will continue to need the increased literacy and numeracy support and access to extended services, and community engagement will remain an essential commitment for every school. Low SES schools in particular tend to have a high turnover of staff, students and families, so the loss of National Partnership funding will be sorely missed as schools complete their four year term and return to normal levels of financial support.

Section 4 – Literacy and Numeracy

Overview – 1 January to 31 December 2010

In 2010, 147 NSW schools participated in the two year National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy reform, comprising 114 government schools, 26 Catholic schools and seven independent schools.

Schools participating in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy represent:

- 6.0% of all NSW Primary and Central Schools
- 6.2% of all NSW Primary Schools
- 4.1% of all NSW Central Schools.

These schools catered to 7% of the total 2010 NSW primary level school student population.²² This amounts to:

- more than 25,255 school students in metropolitan areas
- around 18,202 school students in regional and rural areas
- around 368 school students in remote areas.

Almost 46% (67) of participating schools are located in rural, regional or remote areas.

Teachers and school leaders in the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership schools focused on improvement gained through whole school approaches to professional learning which focused on reading, numeracy and the development of leadership capacity.

In three mandated NAPLAN measures for Years 3 and 5, there was an increase in the percentage of students at and above the national minimum standard, with the results exceeding the targets for 2011 reward payments. The local measures targets were also exceeded for the National Partnership Literacy and Numeracy Assessment in Years 3, 4 and 5, the *Data Analysis Skills Assessment (DASA)* and the *NSW DET Analytical Framework for Effective Leadership and School Improvement in Literacy and Numeracy*[®].

In addition, growth in results for Aboriginal students was at or above growth for all students in nearly all categories of the Literacy and Numeracy Assessment. These results are impressive, given the short time frame and considerable effort required to implement the National Partnership reforms.

²² Student figures provided are drawn from the 2010 school student enrolments. This data is collected annually and will next become available in December 2011.

In July 2010, an additional 15 government primary schools, four government secondary schools, one Catholic primary and two independent schools began their participation in a one year Literacy and Numeracy Addendum Program in 2010/2011. Progress for these 22 schools included:

- school leadership teams completing a modified situational analysis in consultation with sector support officers to review literacy and numeracy achievement and identify areas for improvement for inclusion in revised schools plans for 2011
- teachers and teaching principals updating the *Data Analysis Skills Assessment (DASA)*
- teachers and school leaders revisiting *School Measurement, Assessment and Reporting Toolkit (SMART)* data analysis of NAPLAN 2009 and 2010
- teachers accessing the online e-learning SMART data module
- schools publishing school plans on their school website.

St Columban's Primary School Mayfield and St Andrew's Cathedral School – Gawura Campus also participated in the reform activities listed above. (*For further information on the status of these schools, please refer to Appendix C, p. 109 of the New South Wales Smarter Schools National Partnerships Implementation Plan*).

Significant achievements of National Partnership reforms – 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2010

The impact of schools' participation in this National Partnership reflected significant cultural change to embrace new ways of teaching literacy and numeracy:

- schools have adopted more systematic approaches to the analysis of performance data at an individual student, class and whole school level, with the ongoing support of sector/school/classroom program facilitators, teachers and school leaders in National Partnership
- whole school planning and leadership processes to improve student outcomes have been central to the overall improvement in student achievement.

School leadership teams:

- engaged in professional learning to analyse student performance data in literacy and numeracy. This in turn has informed resource and whole school planning decisions based on clear goals and a focus on increasing student achievement, such as extending the proportion of students achieving the proficient bands in NAPLAN
- implemented leadership strategies informed by tools such as the *NSW DET Analytical Framework for Effective Leadership and School Improvement in Literacy and Numeracy*[®]
- triangulated data to plan for future support, resources and professional learning needs
- worked collaboratively to monitor student progress and to refine and adjust school plans, actions, timelines and resource allocation
- reflected on progress and adjusted direction as required
- identified key personnel and matched them to leadership and in-class support roles.

Classroom teachers and in-class support teachers:

- participated in collaborative professional learning, planning and teaching to select culturally appropriate and authentic texts, used quality teaching models for explicit instruction in numeracy, established quality criteria, developed authentic assessment tasks, analysed and shared student performance data
- shared resources and workloads to maximise the effectiveness of the whole class reading or numeracy programs
- analysed student progress and engaged in collegial dialogue to plan for more effective teaching
- reflected on their teaching practice using tools such as SMART2, the *Data Analysis Skills Assessment* and literacy and numeracy continuums to develop whole class and individual student learning plans
- received mentoring to support individual teachers with planning, explicit teaching and to ensure implementation of chosen intervention programs is embedded into classroom practice.

Significant student outcomes include the following:

- 2010 NAPLAN results in the four Sydney Region schools indicated that the average number of students below or at national minimum standard was reduced by more than 15 percentage points in Year 3 and by more than 10 percentage points in Year 5:
 - the mean scale scores across the four schools between 2008 and 2010 in Year 3 increased by an average of 45 points
 - average increase in mean scale scores for Year 5 was 33 points
- in South Western Sydney Region, all students in Years 3, 4 and 5 exceeded the NSW cohort mean in reading and numeracy in the Literacy and Numeracy Assessment.
- results of the Literacy and Numeracy Assessment indicated that the growth was equal to or better than the NSW cohort in schools in the New England Region. This growth has been attributed to teachers' improved capacity to use explicit teaching practices in reading and numeracy whole class interventions
- in Mayfield East Primary School in the Hunter/Central Coast Region:
 - students in Year 5 achieving Band 8 at the school went from zero in 2009 to 23% in Band 8 for reading in 2010
 - Year 3 students in the proficient bands increased from 25% in 2008 to 39% in 2010
 - the percentage of Aboriginal students below the minimum standard decreased by 14.5 percentage points between 2008 and 2010
- 46% of Year 3 students in Cooma Public School achieved in the proficient bands in the school's chosen domain of numeracy in 2010 - an increase of 13 percentage points from 2009. NAPLAN results reflected students' stronger knowledge of place value in numbers to 1000 and improved problem solving abilities validated through teachers' application of *Newmans' Error Analysis*

- one school in the Wilcannia/Forbes Diocese achieved a 63% increase in Year 3 students achieving Band 5 on the Literacy and Numeracy Assessment and a 54% decrease in the number of students in Band 1 from 2009 to 2010. Teacher professional learning in *First Steps Reading*, MULTILIT, individual student learning plans and teachers' analysis of NAPLAN data was cited as contributing to this achievement
- all students identified for support at Unity Grammar College improved at least 2 bands in NAPLAN reading and writing. This result reflects a significant change in teaching reading, the impact of the *Reading to Learn* intervention and the support from external mentors. Students participating in MULTILIT regularly have their individual learning plans updated.

Increased collaboration has deepened schools' appreciation of the links between the quality of teaching and the improvement in student achievement. Additional outcomes include:

- increased accountability and responsibility across whole schools for student achievement in literacy and numeracy
- increased capacity of staff to be actively involved in school improvement processes
- greater confidence of teachers to recognise and implement effective teaching practices for teaching reading and numeracy.

However, some class teachers are still resistant to opening their classroom to work with colleagues in a supportive, reflective approach to reading and numeracy practices.

Strategies to address this resistance have included network days with school leaders focused on building trust, allocating resources to enable working together rather than in isolation, in-class mentoring and coaching and revisiting aspects of the *Team Leadership for School Improvement Program K-12*.

Western Sydney Region teachers reported that as their understanding of the explicit teaching strategies for literacy and numeracy increased, their workload has decreased. Teachers' sense of increased efficacy was also reinforced in their seeing significant improvement in student learning outcomes which they could directly relate to their planning and teaching.

Whole school or whole class reading programs

Whole school or whole class reading programs were implemented by 1434 teachers in NSW schools participating in the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership in 2010:

Reading Programs – Whole Class/School	No. of Teachers	No. of Schools
<i>Focus on Reading 3-6</i>	429	37
<i>Accelerated Literacy</i>	511	30
<i>Reading to Learn</i>	218	21
<i>Mindful Learning: Mindful Teaching</i>	174	8
<i>First Steps Literacy 2nd Edition – Reading</i>	46	5
<i>English as a Second Language</i>	56	1

Whole school or whole class numeracy programs

Whole school or whole class numeracy programs were implemented by 539 teachers in NSW schools participating in the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership in 2010:

Numeracy Programs – Whole Class/School	No. of Teachers	No. of Schools
<i>Taking Off With Numeracy</i>	472	41
<i>Count Me In Too</i>	16	1
<i>Learning in Numeracy K-8</i>	4	1
<i>First Steps Numeracy</i>	12	1
<i>Numeracy Matters</i>	35	1

Individual learning plans in reading or numeracy

All schools identified students who were at risk of achieving at or below national minimum standards in 2010 and developed an Individual Learning Plan for each of these students.

As a result, 4948 students had individual learning plans in reading or numeracy in 2010 which were implemented, monitored and reviewed.

Where indicated in school plans, students had access to an individual student reading or numeracy intervention program such as MULTILIT, *QuickSmart Numeracy* or *Taking Off With Numeracy*.

Individual reading programs

Individual reading programs were implemented by 102 NSW schools participating in the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership in 2010, targeting 3206 primary students. During the year, 892 students achieved the exit reading goals for individual student intervention programs in reading.

Individual Reading Interventions in 2010	No. of Schools	Students targeted	Students completed
<i>MULTILIT</i>	78	2051	806
<i>Mindful Learning: Mindful teaching</i>	8	323	
<i>Individual learning plans (may include other literacy intervention programs)</i>	7	595	
<i>Working Out What Works</i>	2	26	
<i>First Steps Reading</i>	2	23	
<i>Supporting individual readers</i>	1	30	

Individual Reading Interventions in 2010	No. of Schools	Students targeted	Students completed
<i>LEXIA</i>	1	9	
<i>Reading for Students at Risk</i>	1	60	49
<i>Reading Tutors</i>	1	59	21
<i>QuickSmart Literacy</i>	1	30	16

Individual numeracy programs

Individual numeracy programs were implemented by 45 NSW schools participating in the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership in 2010, targeting 3206 primary students. During the year, 310 students achieved the exit numeracy goals for the individual student intervention programs in numeracy. These programs are designed to provide ongoing targeted support to students who continue to benefit from additional in-class support in *Taking Off With Numeracy* and in other programs through small group intervention.

Individual Numeracy Interventions in 2010	No. of Schools	Students targeted	Students completed
<i>Taking Off With Numeracy</i>	27	1114	92
<i>QuickSmart Numeracy</i>	14	403	206
<i>Individual learning plans (may include other literacy intervention programs)</i>	1	7	4
<i>First Steps Numeracy</i>	1	24	8
<i>Low SES Numeracy Pilot</i>	1	24	
<i>Numeracy Matters</i>	1	56	

Progress in NAPLAN results of participating schools

There are four targets for National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy schools related to NAPLAN results. Three of the four targets were exceeded:

- the percentage of all students below the national minimum standard decreased from 11.5% to 9.5%, exceeding the target by 1.4 percentage points
- the percentage of all students at or below the national minimum standard was decreased from 31.1% to 28.3%, exceeding the target by 1.2 percentage points
- the percentage of Aboriginal students below the national minimum standard decreased from 25.1% to 20.3%, exceeding the target by 3.5 percentage points.

The mean score for all students increased from 414.8 to 423.7, just 1.1 scale score short of the target (424.8).

Teacher professional learning

Intensive, collaborative and systematic professional learning in student data analysis and explicit strategies in teaching literacy and numeracy were reflected in the National Partnership resource allocation to schools. The SMART2 online tool, developed in NSW, supported classroom teachers and school leaders in analysing NAPLAN data to:

- drive continuous improvement by implementing proven literacy and numeracy practices
- use literacy and numeracy performance information to identify the individual learning needs of students so that appropriate teaching strategies could be used
- track students' progress over time, particularly cohorts of students, to provide indicators of the success of the selected reading or numeracy teaching strategies.

Teachers' professional learning in the literacy and numeracy programs was aligned to areas of students' learning needs. For example:

- New models of within-class literacy intervention, successfully implemented in the eight schools in the Parramatta Diocese, were supported by teacher professional learning focused on:
 - analysing *School Measurement, Assessment and Reporting Toolkit* (SMART) data
 - using running records, *ESL Scales* and tracking of text levels
 - discussing of student work samples
 - adjusting the timetable for support staff to ensure individual learning plans are addressed through the *Mindful Learning: Mindful Teaching* literacy program.
- Schools in the independent sector developed Individual Learning Plans and Personalised Learning Plans for Aboriginal students which were updated by teachers and paraprofessionals in regular meetings with parents.

Aboriginal education and cultural immersion programs

Local Aboriginal cultural immersion programs were offered to government, Catholic and independent teachers to develop their capacity to tailor literacy and numeracy teaching strategies and make relevant and appropriate links between learning and local cultural backgrounds and contexts.

Two hundred and forty four school teachers and executives participated in local Aboriginal cultural immersion programs in 2010.

For more information, please see the 'Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' section below.

Local Measure 1: National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy Assessment

All 147 schools implemented the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy assessment for students in Years 3, 4 and 5 in 2010. Targets were based on 18 months' progress on this measure and followed students who were originally tested for baseline data in Years 2, 3 and 4. All targets for improvement were exceeded. The reading target for Year 3 was exceeded by 0.7 scale score points for year 4 by 0.4 and for Year 5 by 0.2 scale score points. For numeracy, the Year 3 target was exceeded by 2.3, the Year 4 target by 3.1 and the Year 5 target by 1.0 scale score points.

Local Measure 2: Data Analysis Skill Assessment

In 2010, the second Data Analysis Skills Assessment (DASA) was completed by schools participating in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy, following the baseline data assessment completed in 2009. The National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy target was to reduce the average percentage of teachers in phase 1 (the lowest phase) across the 7 domains of DASA from 65.5% in 2009 to 60% in 2010. The 2010 DASA assessment revealed that the target had been significantly exceeded, showing that the average percentage of teachers in phase 1 has now been reduced to only 30%.

Local Measure 3: Literacy and numeracy leadership programs

The 2010 target for Local Measure 3 was achieved in 97 of the 125 schools²³ (77%). These schools achieved a growth of one (or more) band levels in half of the 25 framework statements in the *NSW DET Analytical Framework for Effective Leadership and School Improvement in Literacy and Numeracy*[®].

There were two significant subsets of the 77% of schools who achieved the Local Measure 3 target:

- 31% of schools achieved growth in 80% of the statements
- 13% of schools achieved growth in 100% of the statements.

²³ Data for Local Measure 3 is collected from the 125 schools participating in the *Team Leadership for School Improvement Program* and using the *NSW DET Analytical Framework for Effective Leadership and School Improvement in Literacy and Numeracy*[®] to benchmark their progress.

Cross sector collaboration

The three school sectors in NSW jointly communicate with and monitor the progress of the 147 schools in the National Partnership. In 2010, the cross-sectoral NSW National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy Implementation Working Group met regularly to ensure that the reform activities were fully supported through the agreed implementation model.

To support the reform initiatives, the three sectors collaborated to:

- support the implementation in National Partnership schools of the SMART2 NAPLAN data analysis package
- maximise the number of teachers completing the DASA assessment
- develop and implement Phases 2 and 3 of the *Focus on Reading 3-6* program
- conduct two professional learning workshops for program facilitators
- network with program facilitators through monthly video conferences to update on implementation progress, share strategies, raise issues and address common concerns.

School level plans

Each participating Partnership school has a school level plan which is publicly available as part of existing school planning cycles. The plans identify National Partnership investment at the school level and the National Partnership activities being implemented.

Challenges to implementation/progress – 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2010

Assessment knowledge

There has been some evidence that teachers have not always fully appreciated the connections between assessment for learning practices, explicit instruction in literacy and numeracy and student performance, in addition to demonstrating an initial reluctance to use DASA and the SMART2 e-learning tool.

The challenge was addressed through:

- improving online access and navigation in SMART2 and making school data more accessible to all teachers
- focusing regional/diocesan/sector support for whole school and class level professional learning in SMART2
- regional/sector workshops with in-school literacy and numeracy leaders providing explicit instruction and examples of practice in analysing student data and making the links to teaching and learning programs
- building teacher confidence in using and seeing the connections between online data analysis tools like SMART2, DASA and SMART2 e-learning online module. More than 1250 teachers have now used the e-learning module
- including professional learning for SMART2 and DASA in teachers' individual learning plans

- using the student self-assessment tool based on the literacy and numeracy continuums, which has increased teacher knowledge and understanding of the stages and progression in student learning and has informed the development of students' individual learning plans.

Cultural change

Challenges were experienced in influencing experienced teachers with established and traditional teaching practices, who questioned the research and need for change within short timelines.

Strategies to address this included:

- maintaining a resilient and persistent message about the school improvement agenda where leadership teams regularly reinforce and encourage staff to implement new ideas and approaches
- building teacher confidence in the success of the literacy and numeracy strategies and using student growth to lead the momentum for continued change
- focusing on active participation of staff as co-learners through involvement in peer teaching and lesson study as a structure for organising teacher professional learning
- cooperative planning between sector program facilitators and classroom leaders/teacher educators to support increased consistency in programming, teaching and learning activities and the use of student data
- tracking student performance data to identify where in-class and professional learning support for classroom teachers is needed.

Student mobility and attendance

Strategies responding to these challenges included:

- early assessment of new students using school-based assessments and the literacy and numeracy continuums to identify learning needs
- students achieving early incremental success through individual intervention programs, resulting in increased self-esteem, motivation and improved attendance.

Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders – 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2010

Schools participating in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy in 2010 catered to 14.6% of the 2010 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander NSW school primary level student enrolments²⁴. This represents:

- more than 1,550 Aboriginal school students in metropolitan areas
- around 2,653 Aboriginal school students in regional and rural areas
- around 219 Aboriginal school students in remote areas.

²⁴ *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school student enrolment data is collected annually and will next become available in December 2011.*

The announcement of the additional 22 schools participating in the Literacy and Numeracy Addendum Program in NSW has lifted the total number of Aboriginal students affected by the initiatives to 4,602.

There was a significant increase in the number of students participating/identifying as Aboriginal in the Literacy and Numeracy Assessment from March 2009 to August 2010. Teachers used SMART2 and school-based data to address learning needs of Aboriginal students based on evidence.

There was an increase in the number of Aboriginal students with Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs). One thousand, five hundred and eighty-four students who were at risk of not meeting the national minimum standards had Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) in reading or numeracy integrated into their PLPs and accessed individual intervention programs like MULTILIT, *QuickSmart Numeracy*, *Taking Off With Numeracy* or *First Steps Reading*. In South Western Sydney region ILPs were updated fortnightly in line with the teaching and learning programs.

Targeted literacy and numeracy programs

Increases in Aboriginal student performance have been attributed to explicit instruction in planned literacy sessions focused on quality reading lessons using comprehension, culturally appropriate and inclusive reading texts and vocabulary strategies. Average improvement was at least one band in the Literacy and Numeracy Assessment. Highlights in the use of targeted programs include:

- all students at Gwandalan Public School being provided with access to teachers with enhanced teaching skills in *Accelerated Literacy* and MULTILIT. Culturally appropriate texts and Aboriginal readers developed links to dreamtime stories, Aboriginal legends and characters. Teachers extended invitations to Aboriginal parents to share students' successes and report progress in academic, cultural and sporting areas, with Aboriginal school support learning officers further developing community relationships
- discussion of students' PLPs by parents, students and teachers at regular meetings at Taree Christian College. The Aboriginal support teacher facilitated parent workshops on reading and promoted the cultural awareness of the local Aboriginal history and culture to all students
- 14 Aboriginal students in Sydney Region schools achieved a growth in 2010 NAPLAN results of 97 scale points from Year 3 to Year 5, placing them above the NSW and regional growth rates, following the *Focus on Reading 3-6* intervention
- at Trangie Public School, the growth in NAPLAN results for Aboriginal students matched that for non-Aboriginal students, following implementation of *Reading to Learn*. The Principal stated that, "Aboriginality is not a defining factor at our school."
- similarly at Condobolin Public School, teachers' improved capacity to meet Aboriginal student needs has resulted in average growth for Aboriginal students of 95.5 points in the NAPLAN assessment, which is 13.8 points above NSW average growth rate, 13.5 points above Western Region and 10.1 points above the school education group of schools.

- in one Catholic school with 13 Aboriginal students, two students needing targeted intervention for numeracy demonstrated improvement through ongoing formative assessment strategies based on the *Learning Framework in Number*. Another student benefited from the flexible grouping structure of TOWN, with support from the numeracy lead teacher, the school's learning support assistant and the TOWN web-site case managers. In addition, Aboriginal students identified as gifted participated in a differentiated program, while another three Aboriginal students participated in the *Diocesan Mathematics Enrichment* program using a virtual classroom.

Individual learning plans

Individual Learning Plans (ILP) in reading and numeracy were developed and implemented for students identified as being at risk of achieving at or below the national minimum standard in reading or numeracy. Personalised Learning Plans are targeted to Aboriginal students.

Highlights include:

- establishment of homework centres in four independent schools with Aboriginal students that allowed the students to focus on the interventions specific to their school focus area and supported the implementation of ILPs and PLPs
- use of ILPs to monitor and track student progress in two schools in the Wilcannia/Forbes diocese, with regular three way conferencing giving parents and students a voice in the students' learning
- use of ILPs to focus on academic aspects for students at risk in schools in Western Sydney Region, carrying over plans from one year to the next
- teachers in the Western Region reviewing and updating students' ILPs with a range of student data to reflect ongoing improvement and areas for further development
- provision of a homework centre at Taree Christian College, which builds on the literacy strategies addressed in the classroom. The school enhanced and maintained accessibility through the Aboriginal support teacher who facilitates the learning and assists students with transport to their homes.

Aboriginal education and cultural immersion programs

Local Aboriginal cultural education and immersion programs have been provided to teachers from all three sectors to enable them to tailor literacy and numeracy teaching strategies and link learning to local Aboriginal cultures and contexts.

Two hundred and forty four school teachers and executives participated in local Aboriginal cultural immersion programs in 2010.

In addition to local cultural immersion programs offered by regions and sectors, a new program was developed specifically for National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy schools.

The *Connecting to Country* cultural immersion program was developed in collaboration with the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) and the Aboriginal Education and Training Directorate (AETD).

The program has two phases:

- A three day in-the-field Aboriginal education and cultural immersion program developed and led by local AECGs and held in local communities, titled *Being Culturally Aware, Becoming Culturally Inclusive: A Pathway to Cultural Competence*
- A two day follow up school-based professional learning program for participants, especially school leaders and teachers, to integrate Aboriginal cultural knowledge into teaching and learning in a school context held by AECGs and the AETD titled *Articulating Aboriginal Cultural Immersion into Teaching and Learning: Sharing and Planning*.

Support for other cohorts (if applicable) – 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2010

Aboriginal students are the only specific cohort targeted by the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy.

Dramatic increase in reading standards arising from teacher professional development

Orange Christian School has benefited greatly from the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy. The funding has provided the opportunity to focus on and improve literacy standards by equipping staff with the skills, understanding, resources and motivation to tackle the task at hand.

Through an intensive professional development program and mentoring by the Association of Independent Schools' consultants, teaching practices have improved and now better meet students' individual needs. For schools in regional NSW where professional development is harder to access, this has been invaluable.

Literacy standards have been lifted considerably by establishing a system in which teachers gauge a student's ability through the use of School Measurement, Assessment and Reporting Toolkit (SMART) data and standardised tests, equipping teachers with appropriate skills through professional development, implementing interventions through the use of new reading resources, and regularly reviewing student progress.

Staff now have a common language, a more unified approach and are armed with exciting new resources to engage and motivate students. These developments have brought a cultural change not only within the student body but also to the broader school community.

Numbers of students engaged in regular reading activities have increased dramatically –

- *70% of students have increased the regularity of their reading*
- *50% of students are reading daily for leisure*
- *70% of students have an improved satisfaction and enjoyment of reading*
- *more than 20 students have graduated through the MULTILIT program with 3 students completing the MULTILIT extension program*
- *MULTILIT has become part of the school culture and has been incorporated as a component of one of the senior subjects.*

The school is excited by the opportunities that lie ahead and is eager to build on the strong foundations that have been established.

Improved classroom practice by working with peers

St Francis of Assisi Primary school, Glendenning, is part of a network of eight schools in the Diocese of Parramatta that are focusing on improving the comprehension skills of all students. With support from this network, and the financial support of the Smarter Schools National Partnership, St Francis has put in place a variety of strategies to build teachers' capacity in the teaching of comprehension, leading to improvement in the students' learning outcomes.

The strongest learning through involvement in the National Partnership has been the improvement in teachers' classroom practice by working with peers at the school and utilising the staff's expertise. Professional learning conversations have helped teachers to reflect on their own practice and that of others. This has been supported by professional reading time during staff meetings.

A large part of the financial support was devoted to employing two extra teachers (0.4 full-time equivalent) every Monday for an 18 month period, in order to release two teachers to observe two other teachers during their comprehension lessons. During the observation, a Comprehension Question Audit Tool was completed which was designed and refined by staff. After the observation period, the two teachers were provided with the opportunity to discuss how questions are asked, at what level, and how to improve the quality of the questions with a focus on inference and evaluative skills.

The success of the process is due to:

- *each teacher experiencing both "teacher" and "observer" roles over a number of lessons during the year*
- *teachers observing lessons across K to 6, not just within their stage*
- *use of a clear and precise audit tool which identified criteria for the observations.*

The next stage of the teacher observation process is to focus on the development of students' conversation around a text.

Whole school engagement and passion for numeracy produces strong results

Tweed Heads Public School is a small school on the NSW North Coast, with a strong leadership team demonstrating a positive approach to the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy and commitment to the school improvement process.

Following the situational analysis, the school invested its energy in the implementation of the Taking Off With Numeracy (TOWN) program and was strongly supported by regional curriculum consultants.

The school has made significant improvements to numeracy teaching and learning. This has included:

- *changing the school timetable to increase and protect the numeracy teaching time*
- *reverting to class groupings away from levelled maths classes*
- *carefully considering the selection of staff to stage groups to encourage mentoring*
- *team building and promoting lesson study*
- *installing interactive white boards in every classroom, supported by professional learning*
- *nominating and supporting a strong classroom leader*
- *replacing the set text book with the TOWN Numeracy Continuum, supported by the North Coast Region Mathematics Scope and Continuum Resource*
- *implementing QuickSmart Numeracy as a targeted intervention program*
- *revising the school numeracy assessment schedule to reflect the numeracy continuum and providing opportunities for students to demonstrate higher order thinking*
- *delivering specific numeracy professional learning at fortnightly meetings and providing opportunities for teachers to share their success and resources*
- *supporting the National Partnership Literacy and Numeracy Assessment and utilising the resulting data to maintain the momentum of the numeracy focus*
- *delivering numeracy information sessions to parents and carers throughout the year and holding a successful maths fun day with parents and community members.*

Students who sat the NAPLAN numeracy test in Years 3 and 5, on average, increased their score by more than the NSW average. The school received a Public Education Week Director's Achievement Award for their initiatives in numeracy.

A community of schools adopting a collaborative approach to learning

In the Sydney Region, Botany Public School, Daceyville Public School, Athelstane Public School and Maroubra Bay Public School have worked collaboratively as a community of schools. Much of their success is attributable to the collegiality and support that has flowed from this collaborative approach.

Maroubra Bay, in particular, demonstrated significant improvements in student outcomes in reading, including:

- *reducing the number of students below minimum standard*
- *increasing the number of students proficient in reading.*

All four schools implemented the NSW DET Team Leadership for School Improvement K-12 program. Principals from the schools discussed each of the professional learning modules, how the executive teams responded to each of them, how the professional learning was impacting on leadership practice and the flow on benefits to supporting and supervising classroom teachers and improving student performance.

In December 2010, a one day meeting was held where all Year 3-6 teachers from each of the schools described and provided evidence of the change to their teaching practice and the impact of this change on student learning outcomes. The teachers discussed how their pedagogy had improved, how they had raised their expectations for their students, how they had implemented specific strategies and how student engagement as well as student results had improved.

In particular, one teacher noted that a student in her class had achieved a 'sound' grading in reading on his report – the first time that this student had ever been judged as sound for any aspect of English in his school career. The sense of achievement for the teacher and the boost to the student and his family were enormous.

The language that the teachers used in their reports reflected deep knowledge and understanding of quality pedagogy and the detail they provided about the change in the organisation, questioning, lesson structures and teacher role in lessons indicated that marked change has been embraced.

An individual student approach proves highly successful

An Aboriginal student in Year 5 in Telarah Public School showed little interest in maths, previously scoring in Band 1 for Numeracy in the Year 3 NAPLAN test. In class, his teacher reported he was difficult to engage because he didn't have the confidence to participate, resulting in disruptive behaviour.

He was identified for inclusion in the intervention program QuickSmart Numeracy and responded extremely well to the program. The regular feedback and goal setting strategies worked well. He engaged enthusiastically in lessons, was supportive and encouraging of his learning partner and completed homework in order to improve. His class teacher reported a significant improvement in his confidence which allowed him to participate in class activities.

The student completed 30 weeks on the QuickSmart Numeracy program and successfully graduated with terrific results. In class, he had the support of his teacher who implemented some of the strategies from QuickSmart Numeracy in her daily lesson sequences which provided additional support. His confidence increased because he could engage in tasks that were routine and familiar e.g. speed sheets, deliberate practice, problem solving. In 2010 NAPLAN, this student scored in Band 6 for Numeracy.

Other good practice: examples of community involvement

A numeracy intervention program specifically targeting Year 3 students at St Felix Primary School Bankstown was established by the Teacher Educator and implemented by the parents of the school. Parents were trained over a series of weeks and implemented the program before school and during assembly time. The benefits of this program can be seen in students' confidence in mathematics and the outstanding results shown in the numeracy clinical interviews where students have achieved increased numeracy growth points.

In the New England region, schools encouraged staff to attend local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group meetings. Involvement of community members in cultural activities at the school, and increased community attendance at informal occasions have been a focus. Schools actively recruited Aboriginal community members for paraprofessional and tutor positions to support individual student intervention programs. Schools using the *NSW DET Analytical Framework for Effective Leadership and School Improvement in Literacy and Numeracy*[®] also implemented recommendations to increase their involvement with local community groups.

Sustainability

Strategies influencing changes at the school level

School plans indicate that schools are striving to maximise the impact of the National Partnership by:

- taking a longer term view of the sustainability of the reforms to consolidate the impact on teacher and student learning

- ensuring that classroom practices among teachers were consistent through sharing ideas, lesson planning and adopting high quality teaching strategies
- continually revisiting team leadership strategies in cyclical planning for improvement to strengthen in-class opportunities for mentoring and coaching, building trust and modelling quality teaching in reading and numeracy lessons
- engaging in SMART2 analysis of their class/student/item NAPLAN data to identify where students need support at all achievement levels
- monitoring student progress using K - 6 literacy and numeracy continuums to explicitly link with the pedagogy in the selected whole school reading or numeracy intervention program
- strengthening the focus on and expectations for achieving proficiency standards, not accepting that it is satisfactory to be at or just above the national minimum standard
- planning teaching programs that are continually reviewed to build incrementally on identified student learning goals
- regular monitoring and review of the implementation of students' individual learning plans
- focusing staff and team meetings on professional dialogue to develop a shared understanding of whole school goals, expectations, timelines and targets for student improvement, including refocusing resources to increase the proportion of students at the proficient levels
- planning for continued implementation in schools beyond this National Partnership of specifically developed resources such as *Focus on Reading 3-6*, *Taking Off With Numeracy*, school self evaluation frameworks, DASA, SMART2 and the e-learning model, sector team leadership programs and the *NSW DET Analytical Framework for Effective Leadership and School Improvement in Literacy and Numeracy*®

Schools also indicated that the additional funding flowing from their participation in this National Partnership was appreciated but identified challenges in maintaining the momentum of change and sustaining individual intervention programs like MULTILIT without the assurance of additional funding resources.

Strategies influencing changes at system/sector level

School sectors are working to support sustainability at the sector level by:

- maintaining consistent support from regions/sectors on leadership, high quality professional learning, data analysis and student achievement to break down resistance to change and to engage teachers in collaborative and reflective practices
- increasing schools' understanding of implementation models that support whole school change to improve student achievement in literacy and numeracy beyond the implementation of a single program or intervention.

Section 5 – Research and Evaluation

State level evaluation

The NSW National Partnerships Evaluation Committee (NPEC) oversees state level strategic evaluations of the Smarter Schools National Partnerships (SSNP) in NSW. This committee is chaired by Dr John Ainley, recently retired from his position as the Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Research, at the Australian Council for Educational Research. The committee includes executives from all three schools sectors, as well as the Chair of the Australian College of Educators, the NSW Chief Scientist, leading academics and representatives of bodies such as the NSW Board of Studies at the NSW Institute of Teachers and other government agencies. The NSW Department of Education and Training provides a secretariat function.

Evaluation of the initial implementation processes for SSNP activities in NSW schools was completed by March 2010. The evaluation was independently conducted by ARTD Consultants with findings indicating that the implementation strategy for the NSW SSNPs was appropriate and effective, and that the associated resources, documentation and support provided to NSW schools generally met their needs. Two main areas of improvement were identified for future phases of SSNP implementation:

- a longer planning timeframe
- refinement of some documentation and resources.

Planning for a suite of five major strategic evaluations of SSNP activity in NSW commenced in 2010, with NPEC presenting invitations to tender to the open market for the following evaluations:

- *The Impact of the Quality Teacher, Paraprofessional and Centre for Excellence Initiatives*
- *The Take-up and Sustainability of New Literacy and Numeracy Practices in NSW Schools*
- *Evaluation of School External Partnerships*
- *Evaluation of School Staffing, Management and Accountability Initiatives*
- *The Impact of Professional Experience Reform Measures*

The first two of these proposed evaluations resulted in contracts being awarded to Price Waterhouse Coopers and Erebus respectively, with evaluation activity anticipated to commence for both projects by April 2011.

Expressions of Interest were invited in early 2011 for the remaining three evaluation projects. These are expected to be contracted for commencement in May 2011.

Cross-sectoral advice to NPEC, through the Reporting and Evaluation Working Group, has guided the preparation of project briefs, the recommendation of successful contractors, and the approval of detailed evaluation plans for each contracted project.

A collection of baseline data for SSNP evaluations was also requested by NPEC in 2010, with a survey of baseline measures currently in development for distribution in early 2011.

Program level evaluation

Evaluation of the literacy and numeracy programs implemented as part of the Literacy and Numeracy NP in government and Catholic schools occurs under the auspices of the NSW DET Student Engagement and Program Evaluation Bureau.

The programs to be evaluated are:

- *Focus on Reading 3-6*
- *Mindful Learning: Mindful Teaching*
- MULTILIT
- *Accelerated Literacy*
- *Reading to Learn*
- *Taking Off With Numeracy*
- *QuickSmart* and
- Individual Learning Plans.

Planning for these evaluations commenced in 2010. Evaluation plans have been developed and sample schools identified.

Evaluation activity is expected to commence in March 2011 for completion by March 2012.

Section 6 – Milestone Reporting

Summary

The Annual Report must include reporting against milestones and measures as agreed in Final Implementation Plans and Bilateral Agreements.

Milestone activity provided in the January-June 2010 Progress Report may form part of the Annual Report for 2010, which covers the full 2010 calendar year.

Where appropriate, information on context or progress towards next milestones or measures may be included – for example if a milestone was reached on time but an unanticipated growth in uptake means that it is likely that the next milestone for that reform will be achieved significantly early.

Improving Teacher Quality

Milestones for 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2010

Improving Teacher Quality Milestones	Detail of achievement against milestone	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe)
	<i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i>	<i>Qualitative</i>	<i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i>
State annual report for 2010	Submitted to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations on 29 April 2011.	NA	NA
Professional Learning:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>DET School Leadership Capacity Framework</i> developed 	Completed	NA	NA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>NSW Institute of Teachers Framework for Teachers</i> expanded to encompass accreditation/registration of teachers 	Completed	NA	NA

Improving Teacher Quality Milestones	Detail of achievement against milestone	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe)
	Quantitative and Qualitative	Qualitative	Quantitative and Qualitative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional learning opportunities provided to support quality teaching 	Completed	NA	NA
Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) and equivalents have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> been employed by sectors/schools where specified been recognised and rewarded for their quality teaching undertaken a formal induction program where appropriate. 	Completed by all relevant schools	NA	NA
Paraprofessionals have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> been employed by sectors/schools where specified undertaken a formal induction program where appropriate. 	Completed by all relevant schools	NA	NA
2010 Centres for Excellence have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provided professional learning opportunities to support quality teaching 	Completed by all relevant schools	NA	NA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> developed collaborative relationships with partner schools where a hub and spoke model is used 	Completed by all relevant schools	NA	NA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> developed partnerships with universities where appropriate 	Completed by all relevant Centres for Excellence	NA	NA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> published a fact sheet on the NSW National Partnership website (NSW DET will have a generic fact sheet) 	Completed	NA	NA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> revised and submitted a school plan for 2011, where the Centre for Excellence is a school 	Completed by all relevant Centres for Excellence established within schools	NA	NA

Improving Teacher Quality Milestones	Detail of achievement against milestone	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe)
	<i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i>	<i>Qualitative</i>	<i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i>
2010 NSW DET Centres for Excellence have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> published the 2011 school plan on the school website 	Completed	NA	NA
2011 NSW DET Centres for Excellence have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> been selected and announced commenced consultation and planning 	Completed	NA	NA
NSW DET Increased School-based Decision Making Pilot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Data Analysis Skills Assessment</i> training undertaken by principals 	Completed by all relevant government school principals	NA	NA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> progress report sent to NSW DET's Audit Review Committee 	Completed	NA	NA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> risk management plan prepared 	Completed	NA	NA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluation strategy developed and externally evaluated and validated 	Completed	NA	NA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2010 Annual School Report which includes National Partnership activity completed for each school. 	Completed	NA	NA

Milestones for 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2010

Low Socio-economic Status School Communities Milestones	Detail of achievement against milestone	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe)
	<i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i>	<i>Qualitative</i>	<i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i>
State annual report for 2010	Submitted to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations on 29 April 2011.	NA	NA
All schools that commenced in 2010 have:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> implemented strategies to improve the availability of high quality teaching 	Completed by all relevant schools	NA	NA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> undertaken professional development on data analysis with a focus on improving student outcomes 	Undertaken by all relevant schools	NA	NA
All new and continuing schools have:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> completed a comprehensive situational analysis/ environmental scan for 2011 including consultation with community partners 	Completed by all relevant schools	NA	NA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> revised and submitted a school plan for 2011 	Completed by all relevant schools	NA	NA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> published their 2011 school plan on the school's website by the end of Term 1 	Completed by all relevant schools	NA	NA

Milestones for 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2010

Literacy and Numeracy Milestones	Detail of achievement against milestone	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe)
	<i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i>	<i>Qualitative</i>	<i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i>
State annual report for 2010	Submitted to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations on 29 April 2011	NA	NA
School leadership teams from 80% of NSW schools in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy complete the pre-program assessment of leadership practise using the <i>NSW DET Analytical Framework for Effective Leadership and School Improvement in Literacy and Numeracy</i> [®]	Completed by all relevant schools	NA	NA
School leadership teams from 80% of NSW schools in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy complete the in-program assessment of leadership practice using the <i>NSW DET Analytical Framework for Effective Leadership and School Improvement in Literacy and Numeracy</i> [®] .	<i>Completed by all relevant schools</i>	NA	NA
Literacy and Numeracy Addendum Program schools:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All schools conduct a modified situational analysis to strengthen literacy and numeracy targets 	Completed by all relevant schools	NA	NA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools engage in specific consultation with school and the local community to revise/develop school improvement plans 	Completed by all relevant schools	NA	NA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools include in the revised school plan specific literacy and numeracy whole-class/school and individual student intervention strategies/programs. 	Completed by all relevant schools	NA	NA

Section 7 – Low SES NP Performance Indicators for Identified Cohorts

Participation rates are calculated as all assessed and exempt students as a percentage of the total number of students in the year level, as reported by schools, which includes those absent and withdrawn

Exempt students are defined as those who were not assessed and are deemed not to have met the national minimum standard

Weighted Likelihood Estimates are used to calculate figures for the Bottom Two Bands and Mean Scale Score

95% confidence intervals are reported for the Bottom Two Bands and Mean Scale Score figures (where possible)*

All data including percentages are expressed to one decimal place.

* It is not possible for NSW to provide confidence intervals (CIs) due to the following factors:

- the range of confidence intervals involved. For example, the comparison of a single 2010 value would require one CI for comparing it to other 2010 values, a different CI when comparing with 2009 values and yet another CI when comparing with 2008 values
- correct calculation of CIs is a complicated process requiring an amalgamation of estimates of sampling, measurement and equating error determined by the Australian Council of Educational Research. The NSW unit responsible for SSNP reporting does not possess these estimates
- comparing year to year results is not appropriate to the duration, scope and long-term focus of the Low SES National Partnership. Analysis of the long term trend over a period of five years or more is required to determine whether overall targets/goals have been met and to avoid misreading certain means or percentages as 'statistically significant' from one year to another.

The following tables should be interpreted with caution as no conclusions can be drawn from the data to infer that differences in data between years are statistically significant, indicative of trends, or attributable (or not) to National Partnership initiatives. While the initial (2009) cohort of schools commenced planning activities in 2009, all reported schools commenced implementation of literacy and numeracy initiatives only in 2010, shortly before the commencement of NAPLAN testing in that same year. At this early stage of implementation of the National Partnership reforms, NAPLAN data is unlikely to reflect the efficacy of many of those reforms, which will require a longer lead time to affect student performance data.

NAPLAN Reading and Numeracy results for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 students attending schools participating in the Low SES National Partnership in 2009 and 2010:

All Students in 331 Low SES Participating Schools

Description	Year Level	Domain	2009 (baseline)					2010				
			Participation Rate (%)	Exempt (%)	Bottom Band	Second Bottom Band	Mean Scale Score	Participation Rate (%)	Exempt (%)	Bottom Band	Second Bottom Band	Mean Scale Score
Percentage achievement of ALL Students in Low SES Participating Schools	Year 3	Reading	96.2%	1.8%	8.8%	16.3%	385.7	96.9%	2.4%	9.6%	17.3%	386.0
	Year 5	Reading	96.8%	1.4%	15.0%	18.3%	466.3	96.9%	2.1%	17.1%	18.9%	462.2
	Year 7	Reading	95.2%	1.0%	13.5%	21.4%	510.5	95.8%	2.0%	13.1%	23.2%	513.4
	Year 9	Reading	91.5%	0.9%	16.7%	21.1%	553.5	91.6%	2.1%	19.9%	26.8%	547.3
	Year 3	Numeracy	95.7%	1.6%	12.4%	17.0%	375.4	96.4%	2.3%	9.4%	20.1%	371.7
	Year 5	Numeracy	96.4%	1.4%	8.3%	23.1%	469.6	96.3%	2.1%	11.7%	18.1%	469.6
	Year 7	Numeracy	93.7%	1.0%	10.3%	24.8%	513.5	95.1%	0.0%	10.8%	24.1%	516.6
	Year 9	Numeracy	90.2%	0.9%	8.3%	24.8%	564.6	90.8%	0.0%	14.3%	24.9%	558.5

Indigenous Students in 331 Low SES Participating Schools

Description	Year Level	Domain	2009 (baseline)					2010				
			Participation Rate (%)	Exempt (%)	Bottom Band	Second Bottom Band	Mean Scale Score	Participation Rate (%)	Exempt (%)	Bottom Band	Second Bottom Band	Mean Scale Score
Percentage of achievement of Indigenous Students in Low SES Participating Schools	Year 3	Reading	92.0%	2.2%	18.8%	25.1%	339.4	94.4%	2.7%	17.7%	28.5%	340.2
	Year 5	Reading	92.4%	2.0%	31.2%	26.3%	418.6	94.2%	2.4%	33.7%	27.7%	415.0
	Year 7	Reading	88.4%	1.1%	29.0%	32.3%	467.2	89.7%	2.1%	26.9%	34.6%	468.7
	Year 9	Reading	78.4%	1.6%	35.4%	25.6%	511.8	81.4%	1.6%	41.4%	32.4%	503.2
	Year 3	Numeracy	91.3%	2.0%	23.4%	26.1%	330.5	92.7%	2.6%	20.0%	33.1%	325.7
	Year 5	Numeracy	91.7%	1.9%	19.0%	36.9%	426.3	92.6%	2.4%	24.7%	29.5%	421.7
	Year 7	Numeracy	84.8%	1.0%	22.0%	42.4%	468.3	87.3%	0.0%	24.3%	39.6%	466.5
	Year 9	Numeracy	75.3%	1.5%	20.9%	40.0%	520.1	78.3%	0.0%	29.3%	38.4%	513.3

LBOTE Students in 331 Low SES Participating Schools

Description	Year Level	Domain	2009 (baseline)					2010				
			Participation Rate (%)	Exempt (%)	Bottom Band	Second Bottom Band	Mean Scale Score	Participation Rate (%)	Exempt (%)	Bottom Band	Second Bottom Band	Mean Scale Score
Percentage of achievement of LBOTE Students in Low SES Participating Schools	Year 3	Reading	97.5%	2.4%	7.3%	13.5%	399.0	97.1%	2.4%	6.9%	13.8%	396.4
	Year 5	Reading	98.0%	1.8%	12.2%	17.7%	472.4	98.2%	2.3%	13.5%	16.3%	472.4
	Year 7	Reading	97.8%	0.8%	11.1%	21.8%	517.1	97.7%	2.8%	13.4%	25.2%	513.5
	Year 9	Reading	96.0%	0.6%	18.4%	25.3%	545.6	96.9%	3.0%	23.9%	25.8%	544.4
	Year 3	Numeracy	97.2%	2.2%	11.0%	13.7%	390.9	97.0%	2.3%	7.5%	17.3%	385.0
	Year 5	Numeracy	98.0%	1.7%	6.6%	19.2%	489.8	97.9%	2.3%	10.2%	15.2%	489.1
	Year 7	Numeracy	97.4%	0.8%	7.5%	23.4%	537.9	97.0%	0.0%	9.8%	23.9%	538.3
	Year 9	Numeracy	95.9%	0.6%	7.9%	24.3%	584.5	95.8%	0.0%	15.1%	21.3%	580.1

ESL Phase 1 Students in Low SES Participating Schools

Description	Year Level	Domain	2009 (baseline)					2010				
			Participation Rate (%)	Exempt (%)	Bottom Band	Second Bottom Band	Mean Scale Score	Participation Rate (%)	Exempt (%)	Bottom Band	Second Bottom Band	Mean Scale Score
Percentage of achievement of ESL Phase 1 Students in Low SES Participating Schools	Year 3	Reading	94.5%	14.4%	28.3%	27.5%	328.4	93.5%	18.5%	29.1%	26.7%	340.1
	Year 5	Reading	96.4%	30.9%	54.7%	24.5%	406.9	94.3%	35.8%	66.0%	18.0%	399.5
	Year 7	Reading	72.7%	9.1%	37.5%	37.5%	483.2	100.0%	22.2%	66.7%	22.2%	429.5
	Year 9	Reading	100.0%	5.3%	63.2%	31.6%	471.2	100.0%	48.0%	76.0%	8.0%	495.9
	Year 3	Numeracy	93.8%	13.7%	37.2%	21.2%	328.2	94.6%	18.5%	31.0%	24.1%	333.0
	Year 5	Numeracy	96.4%	30.9%	49.1%	18.9%	431.7	96.2%	35.8%	60.8%	15.7%	424.9
	Year 7	Numeracy	81.8%	9.1%	44.4%	22.2%	472.5	100.0%	0.0%	55.6%	11.1%	457.4
	Year 9	Numeracy	100.0%	5.3%	31.6%	47.4%	510.4	100.0%	0.0%	56.0%	16.0%	554.5

Section 8 – Low SES NP State Performance Measures

The 2009 and 2010 Low SES NP school cohorts in NSW commenced in 2010 and are therefore treated as a single cohort in the data presented in this section. For future reports, separate baselines may be required for schools with different start years to account for the length of time schools have participated in the Partnership.

To maintain consistency with national reporting requirements and to avoid duplication of effort, the NSW Low SES NP State performance measures align with the performance information that has been agreed for the national *My School* website.

Student attendance

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) National Attendance Collection Working Group is improving methods for collection of student attendance data, as jurisdictions and sectors have varied data collection methodologies. At this point in time, student attendance data cannot be aggregated at the State level.

Volatility in the data is expected in the early stages of reporting and a deeper analysis is required to get the 'real story' out of performance results. It is important to note that the aggregation of data overlooks the diversity of schools classified as Low SES and does not reflect the range of initiatives and programs implemented by these schools.

NSW government schools

Attendance rates in NSW government schools are calculated using absences data for students in Years 1-10 only for Semester 1 (Term 1 and 2). Schools for Specific Purposes, Senior Secondary, Distance Education Schools and ungraded support students are excluded from the attendance data.

NSW Low SES School Communities NP government schools student attendance:

Year	All students in Low SES NP schools (%)		All Aboriginal students in Low SES NP schools (%)		Average attendance in NSW government schools (%)	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
Government	90.0	90.6	83.9	84.6	92.4	92.7

Source: Data Analysis and Collection Unit, Planning and Innovation Directorate, NSW DET. Attendance data extracted from Attendance Datacube Fact Table.

NSW Catholic schools

NSW Low SES School Communities NP Catholic schools student attendance:

Year	All students in Low SES NP schools (%)		All Aboriginal students in Low SES NP schools (%)		Average attendance in NSW Catholic schools (%)	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
Catholic	93.15	94.18	82.74	84.20	93.57	93.67

Source: Annual MCEECDYA Student Attendance Collection.

NSW independent schools

NSW Low SES School Communities NP independent schools student attendance:

Year	All students in Low SES NP schools (%)		All Aboriginal students in Low SES NP schools (%)		Average attendance in NSW independent schools%	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
Independent	94.74	94.3	83.68	70.19	93.9	94.0

Source: Annual MCEECDYA Student Attendance Collection

Note: Data includes two Year 9-12 schools for disengaged youth and data from only 88 Aboriginal students in 2010.

Reading and numeracy performance in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 (NAPLAN)

2009 and 2010 NAPLAN results for 331 Low SES NP schools commencing in 2009 and 2010:

NAPLAN Measures	Year 3		Year 5		Year 7		Year 9	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
1: Percentage at or above Minimum Standard – All Students Reading	91.2	90.4	85.0	82.9	86.5	86.9	83.3	80.1
2: Percentage at or above Minimum Standard – All Students Numeracy	87.6	90.6	91.7	88.3	89.7	89.2	91.7	85.7
3: Percentage of proficient – All Students Reading	30.4	29.5	23.7	18.7	16.7	18.1	13.8	13.2
4: Percentage of proficient – All Students Numeracy	25.9	23.7	19.7	19.9	16.7	17.6	15.1	13.4
5: Mean scale score – All Students Reading	385.7	386.0	466.3	462.2	510.5	513.4	553.5	547.3
6: Mean scale score – All Students Numeracy	375.4	371.7	469.6	469.6	513.5	516.6	564.6	558.5

School-based assessment and reporting mechanisms

All NSW schools participating in the Low SES School Communities NP provided bi-annual student reports to parents and all schools have produced an Annual School Report and have placed it online.

Year 12 or equivalent attainment

Care should be taken in interpreting the data in the following table, noting that each of the three cohorts (all students, all Aboriginal students, and all NSW students) is further limited to those students who have an enrolment in at least one Year 12 course in the calendar year.

NSW Low SES School Communities NP school students receiving a Year 12 or equivalent qualification:

Year	All students* in Low SES NP schools (%)		All Aboriginal students* in Low SES NP schools (%)		All NSW students* (%)	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
Students receiving a HSC or equivalent	83.8	82.2	79.7	75.2	93.5	93.0
Students receiving an AQF Certificate II or above	25.3	18.9	37.0	27.3	20.4	14.4**

Source: NSW Board of Studies

* Note that this is not referring to a whole school cohort, nor does it refer exclusively to Year 12 students. Rather, the cohort comprises only students who have an enrolment in at least one Year 12 course in the calendar year, irrespective of the scholastic year of enrolment of individual students.

** Due to a change in the Hospitality Training Package, Year 12 graduates from 2010 are unable to be awarded a Certificate II for completion of the 240 hour course.

School retention data

Full-time enrolments are used to calculate apparent retention rates. Retention rates are “apparent” as they do not track individual students through their final years of secondary schooling. The measure is the ratio of the total number of full-time school students in a designated year (Year 12 in 2010) divided by the total number of full-time students in a previous year (Year 10 in 2008). Care should be exercised in the interpretation of apparent retention rates as the method of calculation does not take into account a range of factors including:

- students enrolled in Year 12 on a part-time basis or repeating a year
- movements of students between States and between school sectors
- students enrolled in alternate HSC study patterns, such as:
 - *Pathways HSC* – accumulation of HSC for up to five years
 - *Accelerated HSC* – students enrolled in one or more subjects ahead of their own age cohort
 - *Compressed HSC* – students enrolled for 240 hours (Preliminary and HSC courses) for three subjects each year for two consecutive years
- impact of full-fee payment overseas students
- varying enrolment patterns in which students choose to complete their secondary schooling at TAFE.

Apparent student retention for NSW Low SES School Communities NP schools:

Calendar Year	All students in Low SES NP schools (%)		All Aboriginal students in Low SES NP schools (%)		All NSW Average retention (%)	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
Year 10-12	62.4	63.5	34.3	36.0	73.5	74.6

Source: Government and non-government enrolment data used in the calculation of Apparent Retention Rates (ARR) was extracted from National Schools Statistics Collections (NSSC) 2007-2010 school-level data. Note that this may not equate with ABS (August funding) data for NSW.

Student destinations, School satisfaction and Community engagement measures

The ACARA is still progressing work on the Student Destinations, School Satisfaction (parents, students) and Student And School Community Engagement (through surveys of parents and students) measures with no definite timeline for implementation. NSW will report on these measures once nationally agreed approaches are in place.

Appendices

Appendix A: Government school Centres for Excellence announced in 2010 for 2011

- Bankstown Girls High School
- Barellan Central School
- Bega High School
- Beverly Hills Girls High School
- Blayney High School
- Bonnyrigg Heights Public School
- Burwood Public School
- Chatham High School
- Coffs Harbour Senior College
- Colyton Public School
- Coonabarabran High School
- Gulmarrad Public School
- Heaton Public School
- Homebush West Public School
- Keiraville Public School
- Leichhardt Campus - Sydney Secondary College
- Narooma High School
- Narrandera High School
- Quirindi High School
- Tighes Hill Public School
- Warialda High School
- Westmead Public School.

Appendix B: Acronyms used in the NSW Annual Report 2010 (April 2011)

ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
ACU	Australian Catholic University
AECG	Aboriginal Education Consultative Group
AETD	Aboriginal Education Training Directorate
AEW	Aboriginal education worker
AIS	Association of Independent Schools of NSW
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
CCGPS	Cessnock Community of Great Public Schools
DASA	Data Analysis Skills Assessment
DET	NSW Department of Education and Training
EARS	Executive Assessment and Review Schedule
EMU	Extending Mathematical Understanding project
ESL	English as a Second Language
HAT	Highly Accomplished Teacher or sector equivalent
HS	High School
ILPs	Individual Learning Plans
ISCE	Independent Schools Centre for Excellence
ISLC	Independent Schools Leadership Centre
ISTAA	Independent Schools Teacher Accreditation Authority
LBOTE	Language Background Other Than English
Low SES NP	National Partnership on Low Socio-economic Status School Communities
MCEECDYA	Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs
MULTILIT	Making Up for Lost Time in Literacy program
My PL@DET	NSW government online professional learning record management system
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NP	National Partnership
NPEC	NSW National Partnerships Evaluation Committee
NSW	New South Wales
PaCE	Parental and Community Engagement program
PARS	Principal Assessment and Review Schedule
PLPs	Personalised Learning Plans, targeted to Aboriginal students
PS	Public School

SES	Socio-economic Status
SLL	Successful Language Learners pilot
SMART	School Measurement, Assessment and Reporting Toolkit
SSNPs	Smarter Schools National Partnerships
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Project
TARS	Teacher Assessment and Review Schedule
TOWN	Taking off with Numeracy program
UNSW	University of New South Wales
WSC4E	Western Sydney Centre for Excellence cluster

