



Australian Government



## **SMARTER SCHOOLS NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS**

**IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY  
LOW SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS SCHOOL COMMUNITIES  
LITERACY AND NUMERACY**

**Australian Capital Territory  
Annual Report for 2010**

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## Section 1 – Smarter Schools Executive Summary

### Overview

The establishment of the Teacher Quality Institute, targeted professional development for school leaders, the improvement to teachers' literacy and numeracy teaching practices, and the use of a rich mix of data to provide schools with evidence for informed decision making, are the central reform planks that support progress of key Smarter Schools National Partnership reforms in the ACT.

Consistent with these key reforms, strategic education directions in the ACT place a high priority on developing leadership, the development of an integrated and comprehensive approach to improve student learning outcomes and the networking of knowledge and skills.

Implementation of these principles requires involvement of teacher quality, development of leadership capacity and the increased use of data to monitor and report on school performance. There is a commitment to developing these principles into a more targeted approach to school improvement through:

- Enhanced accountability of principals and school network leaders;
- Increased availability and use of data to inform school improvement practices and monitor progress;
- Provision of leadership support to principals; and
- Building the capacity of teachers, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

The ACT will continue to integrate its local objectives with national reform activity, positioning itself within the national reform agenda while striving to maximise opportunities for local improvement.

### 2010 Key Highlights

A key initiative under the Teacher Quality National Partnership (TQNP) Agreement was the establishment of the Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) as the teacher registration body for the ACT. The Institute will enable the ACT to implement reforms relating to national consistency in teacher registration, certification of teachers and accreditation of teacher education courses.

The four public ACT schools involved in the Low SES National Partnership (NP) have tackled some common areas including improving teachers' literacy and numeracy teaching practices, strengthening links with their school community, and developing links with outside agencies. They have also focussed on specific areas relevant to their school community.

All four schools have had a Literacy and Numeracy Field Officer since October 2009. The Field Officers have become a highly successful means of advancing the NP reforms. They have developed and delivered programs on their school's identified focus areas, coached individual teachers, worked with teams and the whole staff, and in some instances worked across their network or the system.

Each Low SES NP school has examined the needs of their students and identified strategies to increase support. Understanding of the factors involved in students' engagement and success at school has been highlighted through increased tracking of students' attendance, academic performance, both through NAPLAN and school based assessment, in depth analysis of student data including first language and schooling history, and through student questionnaires and interviews.

The strategy that has had the most impact in the Literacy and Numeracy NP public schools has been the provision of Literacy and Numeracy Field Officers. The Field Officers have been in their schools since the start of 2010.

The main component of their role, which makes up about 80% of their time, is coaching teachers to improve learning practices in literacy and numeracy to lift student outcomes. There is a particular focus on delivering balanced literacy and numeracy programs and embedding system endorsed programs *First Steps* and *Count Me In Too*.

All public schools also have Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators, who along with the Field Officers, received a series of professional learning opportunities covering coaching, planning and programming, balanced literacy and numeracy programs and professional learning communities during 2010. The Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators work with classroom teachers in a coaching capacity for 50% of their time and work with small groups or individual students for the other 50%. In National Partnership schools the Field Officer and Coordinators work together to support improvements in literacy and numeracy in the school.

In Catholic Systemic Schools, progress has been sound against the key reform areas of the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership. A significant impact on student achievement and the teacher workforce during 2010 had been effective evidence-based teaching - aligning evidenced based teaching methods with the school's literacy and numeracy goals. Individual Reading and Numeracy Plans (Numeracy Intervention Program) were developed and implemented by year 3 and year 5 teachers for students identified at risk of achieving at or below the National Minimum Standard in Reading and Numeracy. All staff participated in the NSW DET *Team Leadership for School Improvement Program*, providing clarity and consensus about their school's goals and expectations in Reading and Numeracy.

In 2010, Independent schools developed good practice in the provision of *First Steps* programs, focussing on the specific development of pedagogy and quality teaching strategies. Whole of school approaches to monitoring student performance was evidenced in all schools. Significantly, independent schools not only targeted the development of specific strategies to address the key reform elements, but also placed crucial importance on strategic leadership. This enabled individual schools to engage in professional dialogue with regard to focussing on reform outcomes, and for leadership teams to ensure that these outcomes were the appropriate resources and support for staff to fully engage in the program.

The significant similarity across the independent NP schools has been the development of a whole of school approach to the monitoring of student performance in all aspects of literacy. Individual schools have worked within their particular environments to determine the most effective means of determining a performance monitoring model not simply for a target or cohort group, but to be implemented across whole schools. The significance of this within the NP reforms will therefore see a continuation of the mechanisms and programs implemented long after the program life of the NP.

### **Cross-sector collaboration**

The three education sectors in the ACT continue to collaboratively progress and implement the 'Smarter Schools' reforms.

A cross-sector symposium was held in June 2010 to discuss potential models for innovative School Centres of Teacher Education Excellence in the ACT. Attendees included principals, school leaders and teachers from the three education sectors, senior lecturers from the University of Canberra and the Australian Catholic University and representatives from the Australian and Independent education unions. Outcomes from the symposium informed the next stage of planning by the Teacher Education Committee on potential models to be considered for implementation.

During 2010, the COAG Cross Sectoral Education Committee met three times. The group continues its focus on supporting cooperative and collaborative work which supports the key reforms and deliverables outlined in ACT Implementation Plans.

The first edition of the ACT Smart Schools Newsletter was published in Term 2 and distributed to all ACT schools. The newsletter highlights the achievements of participating ACT schools in implementing the SSNP reforms. The newsletter highlighted community engagement, literacy, numeracy and Indigenous programs and their achievements at the school level.

**School Level Plans**

All schools have an NP Plan on their school website.

## Section 2 – Improving Teacher Quality

### **Overview – 1 January to 31 December 2010**

A key initiative under the Teacher Quality National Partnership (TQNP) Agreement is the establishment of the Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) as the teacher registration body for the ACT.

Establishment of the Institute will enable the ACT to implement the reforms relating to national consistency in teacher registration, certification of teachers and accreditation of teacher education courses.

The scoping work for the establishment of the Institute was completed in 2010, an interim Board Chair was appointed and an interim board was formed in July 2010. The legislation to establish the Institute as an independent statutory body was passed in November 2010 and the policies and procedures required for the Institute to carry out its functions continue to be developed.

### **Progress against TQNP Facilitation Reforms – 1 January to 31 December 2010**

#### **National Professional Standards for Teachers**

The ACT participated in the consultation process for the National Professional Standards for Teachers. A number of cross-sector workshops were held for ACT teachers to provide feedback on the draft standards. An expert working group was formed comprising representatives of the three education sectors, education unions, local universities and parents and citizens groups to refine the feedback provided through the cross-sector workshops. A combined response was submitted to MCEECDYA on behalf of the jurisdiction. Following refinement of the Standards, ACT teachers were actively engaged in the validation process for the Standards.

#### **National Certification of Accomplished and Lead Teachers**

The ACT continues to be part of the national working group developing national certification processes for Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers.

#### **Nationally Consistent Registration of Teachers**

The ACT is engaged with the national working group to develop nationally consistent registration of teachers. The establishment of the Teacher Quality Institute will allow the ACT to implement the reforms relating to national consistency in teacher registration once these are developed.

#### **National Accreditation of Pre-service Teacher Education Courses**

During 2010, the ACT, in partnership with AITSL, hosted a forum on national accreditation of pre-service teacher education courses. Representatives from key stakeholder groups were brought together to provide feedback on the proposed accreditation process. The ACT continues to engage in progressing this work at a national level.

### **Professional Development and Support for Principals**

The ACT is actively involved in the national discussion on professional development and support for principals. The jurisdiction provided feedback on the proposed arrangements for distribution of national partnership funding and will continue to be engaged in national work to be carried out on this reform.

### **Improved Performance Management and continuous improvement in schools**

Renewal and alignment of performance management practices will be supported by the National Professional Standards for Teachers. While the review of practices and documentation has been completed, further alignment and refinement of processes will occur now that the National Professional Standards for Teachers have been endorsed by MCEECDYA.

### **New Pathways into Teaching**

The Final Implementation Plan for the ACT committed to the placement of Associates from cohort II of the Teach for Australia program in ACT public schools. During 2010, local arrangements for the program were determined and eligible placement schools were selected. Principals identified school vacancies and selected mentor teachers. Five associates were selected during 2010 and matched to appropriate vacancies and commenced their intensive training in November. Mentor teachers also commenced their training with the Melbourne Graduate School of Education in preparation for the placement of Associates at the start of the 2011 school year.

### **Better Pathways into Teaching**

The Better Pathways into Teaching initiative is being overseen by the Teacher Education Committee. This committee has called for a working group to be established to develop all of the Pathways into Teaching programs. Planning for the Better Pathways program is now aligned with the plans of the working group. The ACT has also entered into discussion with DEEWR regarding the implementation of a national Better Pathways program.

### **Improved Quality and Availability of Teacher Workforce Data**

The workforce data business analysis has been completed. Phase 1 of the School Staffing Integrated Management System was launched and is operational. Additional functions for the integrated management system will progressively come on line and will be implemented. The ACT continues to be actively involved in the national data collection working group and the initiatives being developed at a national level.

The Professional Experience Committee has been working with both of the ACT universities on mapping pre-service teacher data including peak placement periods and subject specialisations.

### **Indigenous Education Workforce Pathways**

The timeline for the implementation of Indigenous Education Workforce Pathways has been amended in line with supporting the implementation of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy 2010 – 2013. An Indigenous Student Scholarship Program has been established for students in year 11 and 12 who intend to pursue a career in teaching.

### **Quality Placements**

Providing quality pre-service teacher placements continues to be a high priority for the ACT. The Professional Experience Committee, established as a sub-committee of the Teacher Education Committee, has been tasked with developing options for and promoting quality placements in, all ACT schools. The committee comprises school leaders from each of the education sectors, union representatives and both local universities.

The committee met seven times during 2010 and has been working with both local universities to map pre-service teacher data. This includes identifying the total number of placements required, mapping subject specialisations and comparing peak placement periods with school timetables and availability of supervising teachers. The committee has also sought data from schools on their involvement with pre-service teacher placements.

Quality placements for pre-service teachers will also be addressed through the development and implementation of further School Centres of Teacher Education Excellence.

### **School Centres of Excellence**

A cross-sector symposium was held in June 2010 to discuss potential models for innovative School Centres of Teacher Education Excellence in the ACT. Attendees included principals, school leaders and teachers from the three education sectors, senior lecturers from the University of Canberra and the Australian Catholic University and representatives from the Australian and Independent education unions. Outcomes from the symposium informed the next stage of planning by the Teacher Education Committee on potential models to be considered for implementation.

A pilot project was run during Semester 2 for a School Centre of Teacher Education Excellence in the Early Childhood sector. A work integrated learning project was run in conjunction with the University of Canberra and evaluated at the end of Term 4. As a result of this pilot project the University of Canberra has made a change to their early childhood course to include two work integrated learning units.

### **Progress towards meeting TQNP Reward Reforms**

#### *Improved Pay Dispersion*

Reforms to improve pay dispersion are being negotiated through enterprise agreements in each sector. The public sector has established a pay structure that includes categories for highly accomplished and lead teachers. The ACT will continue to be part of the national work to develop certification processes for highly accomplished and lead teachers.

#### *Increased School-based Decision Making*

Recommendations arising from the school-based management review of public schools are being implemented. Schools have been selected for Phase 1 of the School Autonomy project. The two new ACT public schools selected staff for 2011 through revised arrangements for the teacher transfer process.

#### *Continual Improvement Program For All Teachers*

The New Educator Training program for mentor teachers has been developed and will be implemented in 2011. A coaching program for principals and deputy principals has been implemented during 2010 with approximately 50% of public school SLAs and SLBs taking part in the program.

#### *Indigenous Teachers and Leaders Engagement With Community Members*

Consultancy through the Dare to Lead program has enabled the development of School/Community Partnership Agreements. A school-specific priority addressing Indigenous Education has also been included in the Principals' Performance and Development Agreement.



**Challenges to Implementation/Progress – 1 January to 31 December 2010**

The progress of national initiatives has, at times, impacted on aspects of facilitation reform activities within the jurisdiction.

Engaging with the wider teacher workforce is proving to be complex. Feedback from representative groups indicates that not enough time is available for people to engage with the large number of initiatives requiring consultation at both a jurisdictional and national level.

**Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples – 1 January to 31 December 2010**

A cross-sector coordination committee is ensuring that reform activities are designed to provide support to Indigenous students and teachers in the three education sectors in the ACT. Specific reform initiatives applicable to each sector continue to be refined.

The Teacher Education Committee has been established and is responsible for providing oversight of the implementation of teacher education initiatives within the National Partnership. This includes the future development of flexible teacher education pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. A working group has been formed by this committee to progress the development of pathways into teacher education.

**Support for Other Cohorts (if applicable) – 1 January to 31 December 2010**

Not applicable

**Showcase – 1 January to 31 December 2010**

Nil

**Sustainability**

The establishment of the ACT Teacher Quality Institute and the implementation of teacher registration is driving reform at a jurisdictional level. This reform will continue beyond the life of the partnership as the Institute is established under legislation and as an independent statutory authority will continue to operate and generate funding through registration fees.

## Section 3 – Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities

### Overview – 1 January to 31 December 2010

The four public ACT schools involved in the Low SES National Partnership (NP) have tackled some common areas including improving teachers' literacy and numeracy teaching practices, strengthening links with their school community, and developing partnerships with outside agencies. They have also focussed on specific areas relevant to their school community.

All four schools have had a Literacy and Numeracy Field Officer since October 2009. The Field Officers have become a highly successful means of advancing the NP reforms. They have developed and delivered programs on their school's identified focus areas, coached individual teachers, worked with teams and the whole staff, and in some instances worked across their network or the system. All Field Officers been trained in at least one system-endorsed program in literacy and/or numeracy and deliver professional learning across the whole system.

Each Low SES NP school has examined the needs of their students and identified strategies to increase support. Understanding of the factors involved in students' engagement and success at school has been highlighted through increased tracking of students' attendance, academic performance both through NAPLAN and school-based assessment, in-depth analysis of student data including first language and schooling history, and through student questionnaires and interviews.

Examples of responses to areas of identified need are the establishment of homework clubs, breakfast programs, before and after school care, parent education programs, and increased parent engagement and responsibility within the school. Schools are recording information on their progress towards reform on a common database that is collected and analysed at regular intervals.

Twice a term meetings are held with school principals, School Network Leaders, Executive Director School Improvement, Director Learning and Teaching and the Project Coordinator to provide a forum for sharing expertise. At these meetings any issues arising from involvement in the NP are discussed, ideas and resources are shared, and senior executive are informed of what is happening at the school level.

### Significant Achievements of National Partnership reforms – 1 January to 31 December 2010

The specialist skills and support provided by a Literacy and Numeracy Field Officer in each of the four Low SES NP schools during 2010 was the most significant factor in the level of engagement with the NP reforms.

Providing a Field Officer whose focus was on the National Partnership allowed schools to engage at a much higher level. All schools receive some funding to support them in providing designated Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators. The coordinators have a dual role, spending 50% of their time coaching teachers and 50% supporting identified students. These positions have raised the profile and expectations for literacy and numeracy across the system. The Field Officers and Coordinators work together in their schools.

Professional Learning for Field Officers, and Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators, was provided across the year with the intention of building the capacity of these officers and developing a pool of highly qualified literacy and numeracy practitioners in ACT public schools. Provision of training in the system-endorsed programs was a major focus in 2010, delivered largely by the Field Officers who were trained as facilitators at the start of 2010 as part of their induction program. All four Low SES Field officers were trained as First Steps Reading Facilitators.

In addition to the professional learning provided, the four Field Officers and the project coordinator met at least once a term to engage in a professional discussion about the extra dimensions to their

positions in regard to challenges specific to Low SES NP, high ESL and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and school communities and improving their engagement with schooling. This professional discussion supports the development of strategies and a shared approach to addressing the common issues in the four schools. The Field Officers share resources, approaches and strategies that have worked in their school, building the internal capacity of the four Field Officers and their capacity as a team.

Academic partners from the University of Canberra have been valuable in facilitating work on building capacity in teachers through providing reading, facilitating action research and providing an academic lens for reflection. A significant focus in schools is teacher efficacy and teacher expectations in regard to student outcomes in Low SES schools. This focus arose in response to classroom observations, answers in staff questionnaires and from the literature on Low SES NP schools that indicated that teachers did not hold high expectations for student achievement in this setting.

During 2010, twice a term meetings were held with the Principals from the four NP schools and resulted in some rich discussions on community involvement and the important role outside agencies play in broadening the educational outlook for students and the community. One example is the developing relationship with the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) that has held a community breakfast at each school, and has provided resources and staff support for a number of programs and school-based events. This program is expected to grow significantly in 2011. Other outside agencies such as the Department of Housing and Community Services (DHCS), The Smith Family, St. Vincent de Paul Society and local community and church groups have also worked with the schools to provide a broad range of activities and programs to support students and their families.

All principals and Field Officers participated in the *Coach in a Box* program to develop a common understanding and focus in NP work and support them in their roles in schools. This was done through providing practical help to ensure the Field Officers hit the ground running, and an injection of coaching skills to give them maximum chance of early success in their roles. The program consisted of three workshops: *Our Coaching Culture* – focusing on how coaching can come to life in their partnership school; *Noticing and Reflecting – Working with the Unspoken* – focusing on the tools of empathy and of listening for feelings as well as content, how to help defensive clients open up; *Confronting and Recognition – Using feedback to transform performance* – focusing on two linked capabilities – making the difficult challenge and building confidence. All participants also had five one on one coaching to work on an area of their skills needing development. Having both Field Officers and principals go through the same program ensured alignment in their approach and provided a common language for them to work together on the NP reform areas.

### **Challenges to Implementation/Progress – 1 January to 31 December 2010**

Staffing the four NP schools with high quality teachers has been a key issue, with these schools experiencing high numbers of beginning teachers and high teacher mobility. Special consideration was given to the schools in the 2010 teacher transfer round allowing them preference in choosing new staff, to provide a better balance of experience and to select teachers with particular expertise. The Field Officers, while working with all teachers, are particularly focussing on beginning and early career teachers.

A number of school leaders in these schools are young and relatively inexperienced with some having only a few years teaching experience before taking on a leadership role. Inexperience as a leader is also a factor with a number newly appointed at their current level. Regular meeting of school leaders from these schools means information on the National Partnership agenda is shared with professional discussion to identify focus areas and strategies within the school.

Time away from their schools at the start of the 2010 school year for Field Officers to receive training for their role was also an issue. While there was a clear need for training before the start of the school year, it is also important for them to be in their schools to be part of the staff from day one, This will be

avoided in 2011 with the priority for Field Officers to be in schools as much as possible.

### **Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples – 1 January to 31 December 2010**

In 2010, the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters Strategic Plan 2010-2013* was developed with the aim of 'closing the gap' and improving the educational outcomes for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in public schools have a Personalised Learning Strategy (PLS) developed by the teacher, parents/carers, student, school leader, and counsellor when appropriate. The PLS looks at baseline student achievement, student needs, performance, attendance, and any intervention programs and develops a learning plan and targets to map a personalised learning pathways for each student.

Additional resources have been deployed to support NP schools in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Resources are allocated based on population, identified student needs, and requests from principals and School Network Leader recommendations. In 2010 this took the form of four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Literacy and Numeracy Officers who worked with teachers with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students on improving the classroom environment and differentiating the curriculum to better support these students.

One of the schools has established a homework club run by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents supported by the school. This initiative aims to increase parental engagement by providing support to parents in assisting their children with homework. This school is also enriching their community engagement through their reconciliation activities, their *Values Garden* and Indigenous Partnership and the use of elders and community members in significant events at the school.

The total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the ACT is quite low and in the four identified schools there were 76 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students out of a total K-6 population of 1742. Kingsford Smith School also has a Koori Preschool that caters for an extra 10 students.

## **Support for Other Cohorts (if applicable) – 1 January to 31 December 2010**

Significant work has been completed on strengthening identification and tracking of ESL students. The ESL Executive Officer from the Department's Literacy and Numeracy Section, ESL teachers and Field Officers have worked together to disaggregate the information contained in system databases. By drilling down into this information a more refined differentiated program is being developed to support these children in their learning and engagement with schooling. All four schools have a substantial number of ESL students ranging from 13.9% at Kingsford Smith School to 31.2% at Florey Primary School (from February 2010 ACT School Census data).

System professional learning has been offered in *InSinc* which is designed to enhance teaching pedagogy and student access across the curriculum. It provides practical and inclusive strategies that are effective in improving all students' literacy outcomes. The emphasis on scaffolding is particularly beneficial for low literacy students and students for whom English is a second or additional language. The *InSinc* program is delivered through targeted school-based workshops and demonstrated classroom strategies.

Other student cohorts with particular needs have been identified, for example refugees, with schools identifying ways to support these students. One school has responded by setting up a homework club, supported by a community group, aimed at assisting and supporting these students and their parents.

Breakfast Clubs supported by outside agencies such as Red Cross and local community groups and churches are running in schools to make sure students do not start the school day on an empty stomach. Several schools also run a Homework Club with help from groups such as Schools as Communities to support students manage their own learning outside of the classroom environment.

## **Showcase – 1 January to 31 December 2010**

### **1. School operational arrangements which encourage innovation and flexibility**

NP schools identified areas that they wanted to focus on in the context of their school communities, and staff and leadership team composition and experience.

The areas identified under this reform include:

- specific school wide professional development;
- student attendance;
- raising expectations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
- teacher capacity building;
- student engagement and significance of learning;
- external partnerships;
- parent learning and engagement; and
- innovative and flexible staffing arrangements.

At NP schools, one of the major focuses in 2010 was improving student outcomes with particular emphasis on student engagement, and teacher effectiveness and expectation. Identification of student needs and ways of providing support was also a priority of these schools and was approached in a range of ways.

At Richardson Primary School significant work was undertaken in examining teacher attitude and expectations towards low SES students. A large cohort of early career teachers, entrenched low

expectations and low student engagement were identified as barriers to student learning and improving student outcomes.

The Field Officer at this school led the staff through a number of activities to examine staff attitude and efficacy and with the collaboration of an academic partner from the University of Canberra introduced professional learning through a research base and action learning. The school staff chose focus areas and worked in small teams on an action research project and reported back to the whole staff, their School Network Leader and the Project Coordinator. This learning has been implemented and will become embedded in practice in 2011.

To encourage and celebrate student engagement with their schooling, Richardson Primary School also started an acknowledgement of attendance section in their school newsletter and at the school assembly at the end of every term. Students who had 100% attendance or 1% explained absence received certificates and book prizes.

Kingsford Smith School engaged their academic partner to look at teaching practices across the school. Their initial focus was on getting groups of teachers to engage in peer observations leading to improved instructional practices. This worked well for some groups but proved problematic in others so the academic partner was asked to do a whole school audit and present recommendations for the school to work on. The recommendations included raising expectations of student work and behaviour, improved teacher instruction to focus on learning, continued support for successful teams and increased leadership involvement with poorly performing teams. The recommendation for the leadership team was to develop their skills in instructional leadership and how they could become educational leaders in their school setting.

The arrival of a number of Sudanese refugee students at Charnwood-Dunlop School led the school to examine how they could best support these high need students. In collaboration with *Schools as Communities* program, run through the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DHCS), they set up a Homework Club that provided a structured after school environment for the students and their parents to engage with Australian schooling and with the concept of homework and student responsibility for their own learning.

Richardson Primary School has engaged its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community through their reconciliation activities, launch of their *Values Garden* and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnership, and use of elders and community members in significant events at the school. Community members are used to promote connections with school and learning for the students.

Developing a respect for and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is high on the agenda for Richardson Primary School led by the Principal, who is a trained *Dare to Lead* Facilitator. Richardson Primary School also set up an After School Homework Centre, initially for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and with a strong focus on developing the self confidence, skills and efficacy of their families and parents who are running the Centre with support from staff.

## **2. Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities**

Florey Primary School has a large and diverse ESL population, with 31% of their total population self identified as ESL at time of enrolment. In order to provide the best learning environment for these students an ESL Executive Officer worked with the Field Officer and ESL teacher to analyse their student data to disaggregate the information. They worked on identifying students by language and cultural groups, amount of schooling, time in Australia, parent language, first and second or subsequent language, and a range of other data.

This work provided evidence for the school to use in engaging with their academic partner and a focus on developing teachers and building the capacity of the whole school to improve outcomes for the diverse range of ESL students. The school has since worked on applying this information to maximise

support for these students and improve teaching practices to address the particular needs of English as a second, or subsequent, language learners.

This model of data disaggregation has subsequently been adapted by the ESL Executive Officer and used at other schools, including Kingsford Smith, another Low SES NP school. This work will help inform the Department's ESL Policy Paper that is under development.

### **3. Strengthened school accountability**

All NP schools are gathering and tracking detailed student data. The Field Officer at Florey Primary had a high level of skill in developing and using databases to track individual students, classes and school trends. He developed a tool to capture student data and track individual, class and year level performance against school-based literacy and numeracy programs. Class teachers enter the information for their students through their home page and this feeds into a whole school database. The Excel database is used by other teachers to inform their classroom planning and teaching and by the school leadership team to make whole school evidence-based decisions.

This tool has been so successful and user friendly that the Field Officer has delivered professional learning to other schools and at a system level and has worked with at least 10 other schools to develop similar databases based on system endorsed literacy and numeracy programs. This has not only raised the level of data management in these schools but has fed into the broader accountability discussion at a system level.

All schools have a tool for capturing and tracking student data, and have engaged the staff in the analysis of this data and its implications for classroom practices in teaching, student management and parent/carer interactions.

### **4. External partnerships with parents, other schools, businesses and communities and the provision of access to extended services.**

All NP schools have put considerable work into their external partnerships. Some schools have strengthened existing ones or extended the scope of them, and a number of new relationships have been developed. These external partnerships are aimed at creating opportunities for students and/or supporting student engagement, parent/community involvement and providing support to students and their parents/carers.

The outside agencies and community groups working with, and supporting, Low SES NP schools include:

- Australian and Business Community Network
- ACT Youth Tennis
- Companion House
- Eddie Longford Winnunga Nimmityjah working with challenging students
- Sheps Program
- Gugan Gulwan
- M Power Girls Group
- UTurn Belconnen Youth Centre
- Aussie Sports Leaders
- Schools as Communities (DCHS)
- Paint and Play (DCHS)
- Smith Family

- BluEarth
- CSIRO Scientists in Schools Program
- Musica Viva
- Life Education
- Support House
- Communities@Work
- YWCA
- Local church groups
- Oz Harvest
- University of Canberra
- Canberra Institute of Technology
- Schools First
- World Vision
- HopeOz
- Australian Catholic University
- View Clubs
- Smartstart
- SPARK reading program
- Woolworths
- Youth InterACT

These agencies have supported the schools in setting up homework clubs, breakfast programs, mentoring programs, running school/community events, a “Values Garden” to support work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and community members, and promoting education and the schools in the broader community. Through these agencies schools are able to supplement support to students to enable them to participate in a range of activities to enhance their educational experience.

The University of Canberra has been an academic partner for the NP schools and enhanced their ability to undertake action research. They have also provided a valuable external perspective and academic richness in analysing school data and developing recommendations for future directions.

In working to identify factors impacting on student engagement and performance, the lower than average educational achievements of family members of students became obvious. Non-completion of Year 12 and a lack of post-secondary qualifications among significant numbers of parents of students were common across all NP schools. Alternatives were explored to broaden educational horizons for students and community members.

The Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) was keen to become involved with the National Partnership and offered a gateway into post-secondary education for students and community members. In 2010, a memorandum of Understanding between CIT and DET was signed and launched at Kingsford Smith School. Planning for 2011 is underway and CIT involvement will increase as the partnership progresses.

All schools have also invested heavily in parent/school community involvement.

- Richardson Primary School has made strong connections with their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- Florey Primary School, with their focus on ESL students, has embarked on a journey of taking



literacy home to families in their community. The goal was for all students to have access to quality literature. Research suggested that there are considerable differences in the vocabulary that children bring to school and this has an impact on their learning. They formed a committee to investigate further and worked together to develop 17 literacy packs that have been made available to students from preschool to year 6. Carefully selected authors and themes allow students and families access to quality literature and language examples. Online surveys of parents, grandparents and other family members helped gain information that was used to assist the formation of the literacy packs. The launching of the packs was linked with a 'Grandparents and Special Friends Day' attended by over 200 grandparents and special friends.

- Charnwood Dunlop School has reached out to its Somali community through their Homework Club which has also provided a link for these families, with Schools as Communities and their parent agency the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services.
- Both Kingsford Smith and Richardson Primary Schools are developing a relationship between their school and the local Community Health Centre, directing parents there for professional help and support.
- Kingsford Smith School has run parent information sessions on areas such as 'Literacy and Numeracy' and 'Maintaining Positive Relationships', with information provided by staff and guest speakers. The sessions include a barbecue dinner and free resources to take home.

### **Sustainability**

By focussing on building the capacity of teachers and involving outside agencies and the community the work being done in schools to address the reform areas should be sustainable in the long term. Due to the mobile nature of the ACT teaching workforce, gains made with the staff in the NP schools will have a flow-on effect through the system as staff transfer to new schools.

Strategies being developed are being implemented across the system. For example, the data collection and tracking tool developed at Florey Primary school, homework clubs, partnerships with universities and CIT, and specialist Literacy and Numeracy positions in schools.

As 2010 was the first full year of this NP, the focus was on developing strategies to address the identified needs in the NP schools and monitoring their impact. As this NP progresses, the successful strategies will influence change at the system level and be adopted by non-NP schools.

## Section 4 – Literacy and Numeracy

### Overview – 1 January to 31 December 2010

#### Public Schools

The strategy that has had the most impact in the 12 NP public schools has been the provision of Literacy and Numeracy Field Officers. The Field Officers have been in their schools since the start of 2010.

The main component of their role, which makes up about 80% of their time, is coaching teachers to improve learning practices in literacy and numeracy to lift student outcomes. There is a particular focus on delivering balanced literacy and numeracy programs and embedding system endorsed programs *First Steps* and *Count Me In Too*.

All public schools also have Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators, who along with the Field Officers, during 2010 received a series of professional learning opportunities covering coaching, planning and programming, balanced literacy and numeracy programs and professional learning communities. The Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators work with classroom teachers in a coaching capacity for 50% of their time and work with small groups or individual students for the other 50%. In National Partnership schools the Field Officer and Coordinators work together to support improvements in literacy and numeracy in the school.

Literacy was a focus for most of the schools with *First Steps* professional learning undertaken by all NP schools and a large number of other schools across the system. Field Officers followed up with embedding strategies in their schools and supported all schools who undertook professional learning.

Field Officers worked as part of their school executive on whole school planning and identification of strategies to improve student literacy and numeracy outcomes including developing a consistent language across the school, a whole school focus, and increased parental involvement.

During 2010, *First Steps* and *Count Me In Too* tools were used in all schools to assess and track all students. The Quality Teaching model is being used as a lens for professional discussions about pedagogy and for lesson study.

A data analyst, funded through the NP, provided schools with NAPLAN based information tracking particular student cohorts across time and also comparing year level performance over a number of years. The schools have also been gathering data from school-based assessment including the SENA tests from *Count Me In Too*, reading levels, phases of development using the *First Steps* maps of development and other locally based tools. Together this rich mix of data is used to provide schools with evidence for informed decision making.

Regular meetings took place with the principals, School Network Leaders, the Executive Director School Improvement, Director Learning and Teaching and the Project Coordinator. Field officers met regularly for professional learning and to network with other senior staff including the project coordinator, and the manager and assistant manager of the Department's Literacy and Numeracy Section.

Schools ran a variety of parent information and education nights for literacy and numeracy and have worked to raise the profile of literacy and numeracy in the school communities.

#### Catholic Systemic Schools

The progress has been very sound against the key reform areas of National Partnerships and the following highlights how the activities have made a significant impact on student achievement and the teacher workforce during 2010 and outlines the effective strategies that were chosen to meet the

specific requirements.

### **Effective, evidenced-based teaching**

- Teaching programs aligned with the school's literacy and numeracy goals.
- Individual Reading and Numeracy Plans (Numeracy Intervention Program) were developed and implemented by year 3 and year 5 teachers for students identified at risk of achieving at or below the National Minimum Standard in Reading and Numeracy.
- Teachers' utilisation of NAPLAN data and a range of assessment tools to inform the planning of future teaching and learning (PAT Reading, Running Records, NSW National Partnership Numeracy tests 2009, April and August 2010 Yrs 3 – 5, SENA 1 and SENA 2, PAT Maths (February and October 2010) and Nelson Numeracy Assessment Tool.
- Teachers accessed ongoing Professional Learning, which increased teacher capacity to deliver a consistent, high quality comprehensive approach to the teaching of Reading and Numeracy.

### **Strong school leadership and whole school engagement with reading and numeracy.**

- All staff participated in the NSW DET *Team Leadership for School Improvement Program*. This program supported the school's literacy and numeracy goals by providing an opportunity for professional dialogue. This provided clarity and consensus about the school's goals and expectations in Reading and Numeracy.
- School leaders developed effective partnerships with parents and carers to promote Literacy and Numeracy through a whole school approach to Home Reading and Numeracy skill development.
- Appointment of a National Partnership school based-Literacy and Numeracy Facilitator to support school leaders to implement and support the School Literacy and Numeracy Plan.

### **Effective monitoring of student and school reading and numeracy performance**

- All staff participated in SMART data training.
- Staff members used a tracking and monitoring system to collect reading and numeracy performance data at different times throughout the year. Individual Reading and Numeracy Plans were adjusted accordingly.
- Teaching programs explicitly catered for the range of literacy and numeracy learners.

### **Independent Schools**

The six independent schools engaged in the National Partnership operate as separate entities. They have each developed specific plans which reflect the needs of their communities and have made sound progress against the key reform areas of the National Partnership. The focus on providing balanced literacy programs and key intervention strategies with the aim of improving the literacy outcomes of their students is common across all schools.

Significantly, independent schools have not only targeted the development of specific strategies to address the key reform elements, but have also placed crucial importance on strategic leadership. This has enabled individual schools to engage in professional dialogue with regard to focussing the outcomes of the plan, and for the leadership teams to ensure that these outcomes are the appropriate resources and support for staff to fully engage in the program.

Schools have taken on such programs as *First Steps* and *Jolly Phonics/Jolly Grammar* as mechanisms to achieve their goals for students. Some schools have also developed specific series of modules to train teacher assistants in the use of specific reading recovery classroom strategies.

During 2010, schools have maintained their National Partnership Plan on their websites, and have provided parents with information about the NP and what the individual school is working to achieve through this partnership.

All schools have monitored individual student and school literacy results as a means of providing feedback on their programs, and as a mechanism for continuing to refine the quality of classroom teaching.

### **Significant Achievements of National Partnership reforms – 1 January to 31 December 2010**

A Cross Sectoral Newsletter was compiled during term 2 showcasing National partnership schools and distributed to all ACT schools.

#### **Public schools**

All twelve NP schools have had a Field Officer since the start of 2010. The Field Officers have become a highly successful means of advancing the NP reforms. They have developed and delivered programs on their school's identified focus areas, coached individual teachers, worked with teams and the whole staff, and in some instances worked across their network or the system. They have all been trained in at least one of the system endorsed program of *First Steps* Reading or Writing or *Count Me In Too*, and delivered professional learning across the whole system. They also completed a series of sessions on coaching, planning and programming at the school level, balanced literacy and numeracy programs and professional learning communities.

All schools have a National Partnership Plan on their website. To support this plan and their work in improving student outcomes in literacy and numeracy, schools have worked with their School Network Leader and the School Improvement Team to reflect priorities for student improvement in their School Plans, Annual Operating Plans and Principal Appraisal documents. These documents all reflect the ACT curriculum - *Every chance to learn*, the *Literacy and Numeracy Strategy 2009-2013*, and the *School Improvement Framework*. As part of the Department's Literacy and Numeracy Strategy to improve teaching practice all schools must identify Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators whose role is 50% coaching teachers and 50% working to support identified students.

Professional Learning for Field Officers, and Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators, was provided during the year with the intention of building the capacity of these officers and developing a pool of highly qualified literacy and numeracy practitioners in ACT public schools. Provision of training in the system endorsed programs was a major focus in 2010, delivered largely by the Field Officers who were trained as facilitators at the start of 2010 as part of their induction program. Seven Literacy and Numeracy Field Officers and four Low SES Field officers are trained as *First Steps* Reading Facilitators, six Literacy and Numeracy Field Officers are Writing facilitators and 2 Literacy and Numeracy Field Officers are trained *Count Me In Too* facilitators.

All NP principals and Field Officers participated in the *Coach in a Box* program to develop a common understanding and focus in NP work and support them in their roles in schools. This was done through providing practical help to ensure the Field Officers hit the ground running, and an injection of coaching skills to give them maximum chance of early success in their roles. The program consisted of three workshops: *Our Coaching Culture* – focusing on how coaching can come to life in their partnership school; *Noticing and Reflecting – Working with the Unspoken* – focusing on the tools of empathy and of listening for feelings as well as content, how to help defensive clients open up; *Confronting and Recognition – Using feedback to transform performance* – focusing on two linked capabilities – making the difficult challenge and building confidence. All participants also had five one on one coaching to work on an area of their skills needing development. By having both Field Officers and principals go through the same program ensured alignment in their approach and provided a common language for them to work together on the NP reform areas.

In 2010, 26 schools participated in *First Steps* Reading, 12 of these were NP schools. Fourteen schools attended *First Steps* Writing, two being NP schools. All National Partnership schools have completed *First Steps* training in either reading or writing in 2009/10. *Count Me In Too* was presented

to 14 schools in 2010, five of which were NP schools. All class teachers in the above schools participated in training and received associated resources. System training was also provided in all of the above programs for staff who transferred in a school that had already done the training or who wanted to do the training in addition to other school selected professional learning for 2010.

Professional learning was also available through a range of other literacy and numeracy programs such as Bee Spelling, Guided Reading, Balanced Literacy and Numeracy programs, Middle Years Mental Computation, Big Books, Early Literacy Intervention Strategies (ELIS), Incorporating Strategies for an Inclusive Curriculum (InSinc), ESL in the Mainstream Classroom, Persuasive Writing, and Grammar.

All schools are gathering data based on *First Steps* and *CMIT* and the majority also participated in trials of online diagnostic and testing tools as part of the SSNP. Schools are developing data collection and tracking tools and Field Officers with particular expertise are working across schools to share high quality electronic data capture models.

The high level of collaboration between Field Officers and across schools has been a significant achievement of this NP. The sharing of expertise in data collection and tracking, literacy and numeracy knowledge, pedagogy, planning and programming, coaching and mentoring, resource development, development of professional learning teams and communities, school leadership practices and moderation practices, to name a few, has been exemplary and provided exponentially more than could have been achieved by sole practice. The support of the School Network Leaders has also facilitated this practice across schools and encouraged principals to participate.

## **Catholic Systemic Schools**

### **Improved Educational Outcomes**

The key drivers of student achievement were the introduction of PAT-Reading and PAT-Maths programs.

The data suggests that there has generally been considerable improvement in NAPLAN scores for students at the NP schools. This suggests that the implementation of whole school practices introduced in 2010 in each of the participating schools has contributed to the over all numeracy success over the life of the National Partnership program.

- Of the ninety-one year 3 students using Pat-Reading, thirty-seven students increased performance by at least one stanine, twenty-five decreased and twenty-nine remained the same. Of the seventy-six year 5 students, thirty-two students increased by at least one stanine, twenty-five students decreased and nineteen remained the same.
- Of the two hundred and forty year 5 students using Pat-Maths, 5 students increased by 5-6 stanines, fifty two students increased by 3-4 stanines, one hundred and thirty two students increased performance by one to two stanines, thirty seven students remained on the same stanine and fourteen students decreased in stanine scores.

The data does indicate however, those students in the later band of development in some schools need more targeted attention. The school leadership teams are aware that the Numeracy focus, begun in 2010 at a whole school level, needs to be a continuing priority for 2011. The whole-school agreed practices that were introduced, need to be monitored closely. A continuing focus on teacher professional development is planned. Focused support for students who are underachieving is also a priority for 2011.

It is to be noted that the year five *Numeracy Intervention Program* participating students across all participating schools, made significant gains in PAT-Maths stanine scores and are out performing

some of the non NIP students as indicated in the Post PAT-Maths test results. This data indicates the quality of the Numeracy Intervention Program and its great success for targeted at risk students.

## **Impact on Teaching and Learning**

### **Professional Learning**

The implementation of the NSW DET *Team Leadership for School Improvement* program has enabled schools to organise and implement whole school agreed practices. The professionalism and dialogue that has been generated through the program has resulted in whole school changes in pedagogy.

The impact of the *Team Leadership for School Improvement Program* was significant. It provided a forum to discuss Literacy and Numeracy specifically and provided a common understanding and focus on the use of the data. School leaders actively engaged in professional learning activities as both a leader and a learner. School leaders promoted staff discussion and dialogue including discussions about successes in reading and numeracy and areas for development.

The *Team Leadership for School Improvement* was well planned and delivered at staff meetings and staff development days. The program was well paced to allow staff to reflect on new learning.

Impact included:

- Enabled a common understanding of instructional approaches and agreed practices across a whole school;
- All staff members have accessed planned Professional Learning activities in reading and numeracy; and
- All staff members have accessed SMART 2 to access learning activities in all aspects of Reading and Numeracy.

### **Planning and Programming**

- Ongoing administration and analysis of running records and other diagnostic assessment e.g. PAT R;
- Ongoing administration and analysis of SENA 1 and 2 and Counting On assessments. Other diagnostic assessment e.g. PAT Maths;
- School English policy reflected the beliefs underpinning the First Steps Reading resource;
- School Mathematics policies reflects the beliefs underpinning Brain-Based Mathematics research;
- The school literacy and numeracy plan clearly linked literacy and numeracy goals with implementation strategies;
- Teachers have refined their Literacy and Numeracy programs and lessons using the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model (Pearson and Gallagher) and implemented more effective strategies and processes to support student learning;
- Explicit focus on planning and programming literacy and numeracy to meet all student needs; and
- Implementation of individual reading plans to meet the needs of identified students.

### **Classroom Practice**

- A more consistent approach to classroom practice in the teaching of reading, mathematics and numeracy;
- Reading and numeracy teaching and learning strategies are explicit and balanced;
- Teachers have implemented literacy and numeracy blocks;
- Time allocation has increased for literacy blocks and are timetabled for a minimum of 90 minutes four times per week;

- Time allocation has increased for numeracy to at least 45 minutes to 60 minutes per day; and
- Strategic resourcing has enabled a comprehensive approach to literacy and numeracy teaching and learning to be implemented.

### **Mentoring**

- Lesson study/ peer mentoring has enabled a shared vision and common language across the school for the teaching of reading; and
- Peer mentoring has promoted critical reflection on classroom practice.

### **Independent schools**

The significant similarity across the independent NP schools has been the development of a whole of school approach to the monitoring of student performance in all aspects of literacy. Individual schools have worked within their particular environments to determine the most effective means of determining a performance monitoring model not simply for a target or cohort group, but for this to be implemented across whole schools.

The significance of this within the NP reforms will therefore see a continuation of the mechanisms and programs implemented long after the program life of the NP.

Many schools have created specific staffing positions as a means to advance the NP reforms. Program coordinators and specific learning support teachers have been trained and provided additional school resourcing and support to advance the teaching of, and improve the outcomes of, literacy within the school.

Some schools have implemented new reporting systems which will electronically provide ongoing access to students' progress and performance in literacy throughout their school life.

These specialist staff also plan, promote, facilitate and continue to encourage the professional learning of other staff. During 2010, coordinators reviewed the professional learning needs of staff with specific emphasis on quality teaching strategies and pedagogy. Where appropriate, they have brought in expert program facilitators to develop targeted strategies.

Staff in some schools have been trained in programs such as *First Steps* reading and writing, *First Steps* numeracy and *Jolly Phonics/Jolly Grammar*. These have been implemented in schools by staff, supported by school leadership teams. Staff received relevant resources and opportunities to engage in continuous professional conversations with regard to the implementation of these programs.

The significance of these approaches in schools is that there has been a shared understanding and commitment with staff and leadership teams on the best possible classroom pedagogical approaches to achieve desired outcomes. Staff have shared a collegial mentoring process in support of this understanding, and have developed planned, ongoing professional learning activities to continue these priorities.

## **Challenges to Implementation/Progress – 1 January to 31 December 2010**

### **Public Schools**

Succession planning has become an issue with challenges in recruiting suitable candidates to fill Field Officer vacancies caused by staff movement. Work is being undertaken to plan a comprehensive professional learning program for Literacy and Numeracy coordinators in schools as identified potential candidates to fill future vacancies. Alignment between the professional learning offered to Field Officers and Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators is aimed at decreasing the skill gap between the two groups and providing a pool of qualified people capable of stepping into the field officer role at short

notice, and in the long term of building the capacity of a large number of ACT public school teachers in literacy and numeracy.

Staffing of these schools with high quality teachers has been an issue with a high proportion of beginning teachers in some of the schools and high staff mobility. The Field Officers, while working with all teachers, are particularly focussing on beginning and early career teachers and in most schools others in school leadership positions are also taking on coaching of staff.

A number of school leaders in the NP schools are young and relatively inexperienced with some having only a few years teaching experience before taking on a leadership role. Inexperience as a school leader is also a factor with a number newly appointed at their current level. Regular meetings of school leaders from these schools means information on the National Partnership agenda is shared with professional discussion to identify focus areas and strategies within the school.

### **Catholic Systemic Schools**

The ongoing maintenance of classroom resources is an issue, particularly with the focus of additional resources being made available under the NP. However, teaching resources have been, and will continue to be, purchased and managed across schools so they support a comprehensive approach to the teaching of reading and numeracy. New purchases of literacy and numeracy resources will align with the school plan. Improved and expanded professional learning has allowed for a maintenance plan to be established for purchasing of new resources in accordance with the pedagogical approach.

The early identification of students needing additional support is highlighted as a concern as it is obvious that greater improvements can come if this is done in years K-2. The implementation of tracking systems to allow for early identification of at risk students needs to be a focus as does a math facilitator role. The 2011 Catholic Education Office budget has allowed for a staffing allocation for the NIP and Reading Recovery program to continue.

Decisions about school/class timetables and calendars were made to maximise instructional time for literacy and numeracy blocks and to facilitate staff collaboration as it became apparent that not enough time was allocated to the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Professional Learning targeted at the structure and organisation of a numeracy block using the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model components to ensure effective differentiation.

Using the Quality Teaching model the Mathematics committee has begun the process of identifying and highlighting the three dimensions in programming in response to an identified need to skill teachers and build their capacity and confidence in teaching Numeracy and Reading. Lesson studies have been conducted in year 1 and year 6 classrooms to support better engagement of students. Preparations for lesson studies, mentoring with colleagues to prepare, evaluate and modify quality Maths lessons will be implemented in 2011. This is linked to 2011 Numeracy plan.

### **Independent schools**

General challenges across programs and independent NP schools includes the ongoing maintenance of resources, succession planning of staffing resources, maintenance of timely and appropriate professional learning, and competing demands within finite time constraints of school timetables.

Schools respond to these challenges in their own ways. Independent schools have the capacity to act, in some instances, with greater immediacy to issues such as staffing and resourcing. Strategic direction and leadership from school leadership teams will allow decisions to be made in future planning which should facilitate the continuation of program improvements and long term improvements in student outcomes. Early intervention will also be assisted through whole school approaches and common pedagogical approaches to literacy, particularly in the early years.



Planned future professional exchanges, promoting best practice, will also assist in transformational quality teaching. The recently formed Teaching and Learning committee of the Association of Independent Schools in the ACT (AISACT) will be a possible facilitator of this.

## **Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples – 1 January to 31 December 2010**

### **Public Schools**

Public schools have the highest percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students of all three ACT education sectors, with 833 students in years kindergarten to year 6, a percentage of total K-6 public enrolment of 3.6%. National Partnership schools have fewer than 200 students, with three quarters enrolled in Literacy and Numeracy NP schools. Through better analysis of their data schools are more clearly identifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and their families, and are able to provide targeted support. Data being analysed includes NAPLAN, school based assessment data, any intervention programs students may be involved in such as ESL, targeted literacy and/or numeracy support, school counsellor, behaviour management/intervention and outside agencies.

In 2010, the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters Strategic Plan 2010-2013* was developed with the aim of 'closing the gap' and improving the educational outcomes for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in public schools have a Personalised Learning Strategy (PLS) developed by the teacher, parents/carers, student, school leader, and counsellor when appropriate. The PLS looks at baseline student achievement, student needs, performance, attendance, and any intervention programs and develops a learning plan and sets targets to map a personalised learning plan for each student.

Schools are working to improve parent understanding and engagement with schooling through parent workshops, information nights and parent teacher interviews.

Additional resources have been used to support schools with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Resources are allocated based on population, identified student needs, request from principals and School Network Leader recommendations. Professional learning has been presented to school leaders on "*Leadership in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education in ACT Public Schools*".

### **Catholic Systemic Schools**

There are very small numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Catholic Systemic Schools.

An Aboriginal Officer is continuing to work with teachers on best practice to assist in meeting the learning needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. There were several Professional Development days about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives. The local Ngunnawal people, with assistance of teachers, developed the program collaboratively.

A Cultural Immersion Program involving the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community is being developed to assist teachers. The program will also be available to other members of the school community especially encouraging the executive of the school to participate thus ensuring continued momentum and sustainability.

## **Support for Other Cohorts (if applicable) – 1 January to 31 December 2010**

### **Public Schools**

Significant work has been undertaken on strengthening achievement identification and tracking for all students and this work has highlighted groups of students with specific needs. The enhanced identification of student need through better interrogation of data has been particularly noticeable for previously under-identified ESL students. The ESL Executive Officer from the Department's Literacy and Numeracy Section, ESL teachers and Field Officers have worked together to disaggregate the information contained in system databases. By drilling down into this information a more refined differentiated program is being developed to support these children in their learning and engagement with schooling.

Cohorts of students with particular needs have been identified, for example Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and ESL students, with whole school tracking using *First Steps* and *Count Me In Too* criteria more closely monitoring student progress and providing current information on all students to identify need for intervention and record outcomes and progress. A number of NP schools are also using databases to track intervention from ESL teachers, school counsellors, behaviour management, literacy and numeracy support to confirm outcomes and efficacy of interventions.

System professional learning has been offered in *InSinc* which is designed to enhance teaching pedagogy and student access across the curriculum. It provides practical and inclusive strategies that are effective in improving all students' literacy outcomes. The emphasis on scaffolding is particularly beneficial for students with low levels of literacy and students for whom English is a second or additional language. The *InSinc* program is delivered through targeted school-based workshops and demonstrated classroom strategies.

## **Showcase – 1 January to 31 December 2010**

### **Public schools**

#### **Effective and evidence based teaching**

All schools are using *First Steps* Reading and Writing and *Count Me In Too* as the basis of their planning, programming and assessment. They have data collection and tracking tools based on these programs and Field Officers who are trained facilitators. This means a shared understanding and language in literacy and numeracy which facilitates professional discussions and the coaching process.

Caroline Chisholm School has been working on developing a targeted focus for student improvement. They have streamlined their executive structure so the two School Leader (Level C) (SLCs) and the Field Officer work together on literacy and numeracy. One SLC focuses on literacy and one on numeracy. They have developed an audit process where they examine the practice and needs of staff and can initiate coaching with an identified teacher, or coaching may be staff initiated by asking for an SLC or the Field Officer to work on a self identified area. The principal has noticed a lift in the standard and purposefulness of planning across the school.

#### **Strong school leadership and whole school engagement**

A *Principal's Performance and Development Agreement* came into place during 2010 and is the performance management and development framework for ACT Principals. The performance and development agreement is based on an analysis of leadership strengths and developmental needs and recognises the responsibility of each principal to lead continuous school improvement. It will include clearly articulated criteria to monitor a principal's performance as agreed between the principal and school network leader.

Schools have adopted a range of coaching models based on the needs and expertise of their staff. At Bonython Primary School the whole school leadership team work as coaches. All SLCs and the Deputy share an office and conference regularly about student and teacher performance. The principal tells the story of a day he went in and taught a class while the teacher and SLC sat in the back and observed and took notes. After the lesson they had a shared discussion about the lesson using the Quality Teaching lens and he got feedback on his teaching. There were pointers for areas in which he could improve and as he said “we all have something to learn and can always improve our teaching practice”. This involvement at all levels reinforces the importance of the coaching role and that it is a shared experience.

The School Operational Plan has become a vehicle for improvement in literacy and numeracy as a focus for what is important in schools. Giralang Primary School and Evatt Primary School both said their Operational Plan was the filter through which decisions were made. At Evatt Primary School it has allowed them to ask tough questions about what to let go and “defluff”. They are working on opening doors, sharing good practice and examining bad practice. Their Field Officer and Literacy and Numeracy Coordinator act as a lens for this. *First Steps* and the Quality Teaching model provide a whole school language and approach to ask “what, how and why?”

Four Field Officers worked together to develop a support document on writing. It is a criteria reference tool that is aligned with *First Steps* and writing for a social purpose. It contains information on formative assessment, informs coaching conversations and targeted intervention, and has moderation information and exemplars. Other Field Officers have developed resources including a Reading Records Lifesaver Pack which has information on taking reading records and resources for guided reading; Reading and Writing Walls where exemplars of reading and writing are displayed with descriptors and annotations; planning and programming templates; and led whole school movement towards balanced literacy and numeracy programs and dedicated literacy and numeracy blocks.

### **Monitoring school and student performance**

All schools have a tool for capturing and tracking student data, and have engaged staff in the analysis of this data and its implications for classroom practices in teaching, student management and parent/carer interactions.

Some of the NP schools have worked with the Low SES Field Officer from Florey Primary School who have developed a tool to capture student data and track individual, class and year level performance against school-based literacy and numeracy programs. Class teachers enter the information for their students through their home page and this feeds into a whole school database. The Excel database is used by teachers to inform their classroom planning and teaching and by the school leadership team to make whole school evidence-based decisions.

This tool has been so successful and user friendly that the Field Officer has delivered professional learning to other schools and at a system level and has worked with at least 10 other schools to develop similar databases for them based on system endorsed literacy and numeracy programs. This has not only raised the level of data management in these schools but has fed into the broader accountability discussion at a system level.

Charles Conder Primary School has been involved in action research. They have completed *First Steps* Reading and are doing Writing at the start of 2011. They are using this shared knowledge to facilitate discussion of research and data to analyse classroom practice. This shared learning fosters a common focus and knowledgeable and open discussion. The principal, deputy principal and SLCs are working with teachers using a Quality Teaching rounds model. Through this work the staff have developed a better knowledge of their students and a more detailed knowledge of identified cohorts.

Gordon Primary School has *First Steps* as the focus of their literacy program. To support this they have developed a database to track students using the *First Steps* Map of Development and an aligned planning proforma. The database tracks students across the school, informs teaching and supports moderation across classes. This database was developed as the school wanted more detailed

information and data that was useful in informing teaching. It will be trialled and refined in 2011.

### Catholic Systemic Schools

St Matthew's Page, St Michael's Kaleen and St Thomas Aquinas are jointly participating in a Reading and READ ON strategy to engage students in modelling, sharing, guiding and applying teaching and learning opportunities.

GRADUAL RELEASE OF RESPONSIBILITY MODEL				
ROLE OF THE TEACHER	MODELLING	SHARING	GUIDING	APPLYING
DEGREE OF CONTROL	The teacher demonstrates by using "think alouds"	The teacher provides the direction and invites the students to contribute	The teacher provides scaffolds, support and corrective feedback	The teacher offers support and encouragement
ROLE OF THE STUDENT	Students participate by actively attending and listening to the demonstration	Students contribute ideas and information	Students practise skills and strategies previously taught, with support from the teacher and peers	Students work independently
	Teacher Does Students Watch	Teacher Does Students Help	Students Do Teacher Helps	Students Do Teacher Watches

The model used was the Gradual Release of Responsibility (Pearson and Gallagher 1983), which provided an effective scaffold for the student to reach independence as a learner.

All students were targeted in the project. Staff used a range of external measures to develop a basis for tracking student improvement. These included benchmarks, diagnostic tests, student profiling and the analysis of results from national testing. From these results, individual students were identified as being those whose reading abilities were significantly below set benchmarks. Individual programs were developed to support these students. The identification process also highlighted skills and strategies required across all grades, as whole class or small group needs.

Parents and caregivers were involved through the focus on the home reading program. An online home reading program was introduced at one school. This was supported and monitored at home and at school, with regular communication between parents and teachers. Reading strategies and hints were regularly featured in the school newsletter. Student achievements were also recognised through awards at school assemblies, class trophies and the publication of success stories in the newsletter.

Teachers are now confident in the use of explicit teaching strategies. There is a shared common language being used across the school. Teachers feel supported through the mentoring program. The documentation of the process assisted in the programming of student learning.

The schools' strategic plans for Literacy kept the focus on the teaching of reading and also gave clear guidelines to staff. There is now a consistent approach to the programming of English across the school. Shared goals and common purpose are clearly evident. Professional development in the use of diagnostic data has resulted in teachers being able to use the data more effectively to inform teaching practice. The level of enthusiasm for reading across the school was beyond the expectations of the schools.

The model used for the implementation of the reading project is being extended to the teaching of Writing, including Spelling, with the same levels of professional development and strategic planning. The literacy plan is also integrated into the Aboriginal Action Plan and the Personal Learning Plans for Aboriginal students. Individual Education Programs [ IEP's] also reflect the levels of planning and teaching programs. There are plans to develop training modules for parents, to assist in their understanding of the teaching of Reading, Writing and Spelling.

### **Independent schools**

The six independent schools have each made significant headway in pursuing their goals of increasing student outcomes in literacy and numeracy. Each school has embarked on an approach which best suits the needs of their school community and school philosophy, and support this through the educational leadership of the school. Most schools specifically adhere to the *First Steps* ideas and principals of leadership.

Schools have developed good practice in the provision of *First Steps* programs, focussing on the specific development of pedagogy and quality teaching strategies. Whole school approaches to monitoring student performance is evidenced in all schools. For example:

- Marist College implemented a new electronic record keeping system providing ongoing access to students' progress throughout the school.
- Radford College, in their pursuit of providing a balanced literacy program using both phonic and whole language approaches, introduced the *Jolly Phonics/Joly Grammar* programs.
- Canberra Grammar School, in introducing *First Steps* to the development of pedagogy to enhance student performance in all aspects of literacy, also developed intervention programs which cater for both in-class support or withdrawal programs for students with specific literacy needs. These are facilitated by reading recovery and literacy support teachers.

## **Sustainability**

### **Public schools**

By focussing on building the capacity of teachers, the work being done in schools to address the reform areas should be sustainable in the long term. Due to the mobile nature of the ACT teaching force gains made with the staff in the NPs schools will have a flow-on effect through the system as staff transfer to new schools.

Strategies being developed are spreading across the system – examples being the data collection and tracking tools. Resources such as the writing booklet, developed by Field Officers and NP schools, are also being shared across the system and Field Officers are increasingly being called upon by teachers and schools as system experts in literacy and numeracy.

As 2010 was the first full year of this NP, the focus was on developing strategies to address the identified needs in the NP schools and monitoring their impact. As this NP progresses the strategies proven to be successful in these settings may influence change at the system level and be adopted by non-NP schools.

### **Catholic Systemic Schools**

It has been recognised at a system level that the process of data analysis, leadership, whole school and focussed intervention, is effective in improving student outcomes in schools. This model has been adapted in other contexts with good success, for example, four secondary schools have undertaken a modified process of survey, class and program observation and reporting.

The greatest outcome of the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership is that system and schools are working together on a model that has produced change. A publication called READ ON has been a result of this work and provides system support for the instructional strategies involved in reading.

Peer mentoring have also provided a focus for a shared vision and common language for the teaching of Reading and Numeracy. This approach was chosen so that key teachers could then be available to sustain this approach for 2011 and beyond. Whole school peer mentoring or the lesson study approach will be implemented in 2011/2012 across all NP schools.

## Section 5 – Research and Evaluation

Academic partners from the University of Canberra have been working in the four Low SES schools on a variety of action research projects identified by the schools. In three of these schools progress reports were presented to the schools in August/September 2010 and a final report was presented to the schools and the Department in December 2010. One research project was not completed and will be reported on in 2011. Their work focussed on a reform area identified by the school. Of the three completed two chose teacher effectiveness and expectations with slightly different focuses, and the other one, due to their high ESL population, chose to focus on better identifying their ESL students and developing a differentiated curriculum.

The University of Newcastle is conducting a survey to gauge the success of the implementation of the Quality Teaching model in ACT public schools. This survey was not completed at the end of 2010 and will continue into 2011. The outcome will be reported on when available.

The University of Canberra is evaluating the Field Officer program as implemented in National Partnership schools through interviews with a sample of Field Officers and principals, questionnaires completed by all Field Officers, and supported by information gathered by the Project Coordinator in several Field Officer meetings in terms 3 and 4, 2010. The findings will be made available in 2011.

**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.

**Milestones for 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2010**

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Detail of achievement against milestone <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i></b>	<b>If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why <i>Qualitative</i></b>	<b>Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe) <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i></b>
<i>Scoping of the Teacher Quality Institute.</i>	Completed – Scoping work for the Institute was completed and legislation establishing the ACT Teacher Quality Institute has been passed.		
<i>Workforce data business analysis complete, with data collection and analysis tools implemented.</i>	Workforce data business analysis has been completed. Phase 1 of the School Staffing Integrated Management System was launched and is operational. Additional functions will progressively come online.		
<i>Gap analysis of current ACT performance management practices complete.</i>	Gap analysis of current ACT performance management practices complete. Review of performance documentation has been carried out.	Further refinement of current performance management processes will occur following finalisation of nationally consistent registration and certification processes.	Performance management practices will be examined and aligned to the National Professional Standards for Teachers through negotiation with unions and stakeholder groups.
<i>Better Pathways training program developed.</i>		Better Pathways planning now aligned to working group for all pathways into teaching.	Research being conducted into potential focus for a Better Pathways program. Consultation with DEEWR on implementation of a national Better Pathways into Teaching program. Planning for Better Pathways program to occur in 2011.



<p><i>Arrangements for placement of participants in New Pathways program into ACT schools developed.</i></p>	<p>Completed. Arrangements for placement of participants in New Pathways program completed. Associates selected and have completed training ready for placement in 2011.</p>		
<p><i>Initial School Centre of Teacher Education Excellence established and operational.</i></p>	<p>Pilot project for Early Childhood School Centre established and implemented. Review of pilot conducted at the end of 2010 and changes to Early Childhood course made by University of Canberra.</p>		<p>Research continuing into potential additional models to be established in the ACT. Monitoring and evaluation of the changed course units at the University of Canberra to inform future school centre planning.</p>
<p><i>Increased number of pre-service teacher placements in ACT schools and course data collected through ACT system.</i></p>	<p>Professional Experience Committee established to develop and implement strategies to increase the number of pre-service teacher placements in ACT schools. Initial data collected on number and length of placements required and peak placement times.</p>		<p>Communication strategy developed to increase the awareness of the demand for quality pre-service teacher placements. Committee to meet on a monthly basis to continue to develop cross-sector strategies to improve the quality and increase the number of pre-service teacher placements in ACT schools.</p>
<p><i>Model and program developed for additional School Centres of Teacher Education Excellence.</i></p>	<p>A cross-sector symposium was held to discuss the development of School Centres in the ACT. Proposals have been put to the Teacher Education Committee on the potential focus of additional models for School Centres of Teacher Education Excellence. The Committee has agreed to the proposed areas of mentoring and special education. Increased cross-sector involvement in the establishment of a School Centre of Teacher Education Excellence is being investigated.</p>	<p>Additional models need to build on the cross-sector participation in reforms and provide quality placements for pre-service teachers.</p>	<p>Research continuing into potential additional models to be established in the ACT and best practice examples of School Centres of Teacher Education Excellence. Development of the first additional model to occur during 2011 for implementation in 2012.</p>

<i>Renewal strategy for performance management developed and implemented (D).</i>	Documentation has been reviewed and updated.	The timeline for renewal of performance management was influenced by the completion of the National Professional Standards for Teachers. Some aspects of performance management processes require finalisation of national consistency in teacher registration.	Continue to refine and align performance management practices with the National Professional Standards for Teachers through enterprise bargaining negotiations. Following agreement on national teacher registration, probation and performance management processes will be examined to align with these requirements.
<i>New Pathways graduate selection process completed.</i>	Completed – New Pathways program Associates selected for participating schools and have completed their training ready for placement in 2011.		
<i>Initial Better Pathways training program implemented.</i>		Better Pathways planning now aligned to working group for all pathways into teaching.	Work for 2011 will focus on the development and implementation of a Better Pathways into Teaching program.
<i>Workforce data collection tool contributing data to national data sets.</i>		Parameters for national data set and collection methods not yet established.	The ACT continues to participate in the national working group and will provide data once the national data set requirements have been established.
<i>Graduates allocated to the ACT from the second cohort of New Pathways program placed in ACT schools.</i>	Completed – New Pathways program Associates selected for participating schools and have completed their training ready for placement in 2011.		
<i>Mentor teachers taking part in University of Melbourne training and network developed.</i>	Mentor teachers completed initial training with University of Melbourne, to be completed in 2011. Network established.		

**Summary**

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**Milestones for 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2010**

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Detail of achievement against milestone <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i></b>	<b>If not achieved, or partially achieved, reasons why <i>Qualitative</i></b>	<b>Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe) <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i></b>
<i>School plans are being implemented and monitored in consultation with the school community.</i>	All schools have NP Plans that are available to the school community on their school websites.		School plans are developed at the start of the year in consultation with the School Network Leader, School Improvement Team, Project Coordinator and Director Learning and Teaching.
<i>A data bank is established to record activities such as parent education programs, and parent learning and engagement activities.</i>	All schools are recording activities in a databank.		A template was provided to all schools and is regularly monitored by the Project Coordinator and used for reporting in the Annual and Progress Reports.

Schools have reached their school-based literacy and numeracy targets for 2010.

While not all targets were met, schools generally made improvement against measures.

	Year 3		Year 5	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
<b>Charnwood Dunlop</b>				
Reading	403	384	476	456
Writing	NA	396	474	455
Numeracy	400	378	450	471

	Year 3		Year 5	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
<b>Kingsford Smith</b>				
Reading	397	395	490	491
Writing	NA	418	477	488
Numeracy	395	370	474	469

	Year 3		Year 5	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
<b>Florey</b>				
Reading	395	400	491	498
Writing	NA	403	496	486
Numeracy	393	395	469	499

	Year 3		Year 5	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
<b>Richardson</b>				
Reading	354	364	450	443
Writing	NA	349	459	441
Numeracy	358	334	458	445

While not all targets were met schools on the whole made good growth from years 3 to 5 compared to the system average.

	System growth	School growth
Reading	88	CDunlop 98 Richardson 102 Florey 104
Writing	71	KSSmith 83 Richardson 92 CDunlop 94
Numeracy	85	CDunlop 110 Richardson 112 Florey 120

As Field Officers were not in their schools for very long before NAPLAN testing took place the efficacy of this strategy could not be measured against 2010 NAPLAN results with any reasonable validity.

In some of these schools issues of student engagement, disadvantage and initial deficit have to be addressed before quantifiable improvement in test results could be expected.

Field Officers and Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators in all schools are working to improve student engagement with schooling and literacy and numeracy outcomes.

Principals and school leaders are using data to more effectively identify and develop strategies to better support at risk students.

New targets will be set for 2011 and schools will continue to work towards these.

<p><i>Schools have developed a process for tracking student achievement against school-based literacy and numeracy programs.</i></p>	<p>All schools have a process for tracking student achievement against school-based literacy and numeracy programs.</p>		<p>All schools have a tracking process and a large number either have, or are developing, databases to increase efficiency and accessibility of data.</p>
<p><i>Strategies for parent engagement and community partnerships have been developed.</i></p>	<p>All schools are engaged in a variety of parent and community partnerships.</p>		<p>Regular meetings of school principals and discussion of programs has led to programs spreading across schools, and shared opportunities e.g. the partnership with CIT.</p>

**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.

**Milestones for 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2010**

Milestone	Detail of achievement against milestone <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i>	If not achieved, or partially achieved, reasons why <i>Qualitative</i>	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe) <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i>
<i>Literacy and Numeracy NP school plans for 2010 reflect priorities for student improvement in literacy and numeracy.</i>	All schools have an NP Plan on their school website.		Support from Project Coordinator, School Network Leaders and School Improvement Team in development of school plans.
<i>Schools are provided with literacy and numeracy resources and teachers access professional learning.</i>	<i>First Steps</i> Reading and Writing and <i>Count Me In Too</i> are the system endorsed programs and are available to all schools. All teachers participating in training receive program resources. All NP schools have participated in at least one system endorsed program in 2010.		Field Officers were all trained as facilitators in at least one of the system endorsed program of <i>First Steps</i> Reading, Writing or <i>Count Me In Too</i> . Funding was provided for all schools to participate in system endorsed programs.
<i>School-based data collection methods used to track student literacy and numeracy progress.</i>	All schools have a process for tracking student achievement against school-based literacy and numeracy programs.		All schools have a tracking process and a large number either have, or are developing, databases to increase efficiency and accessibility of data.

# Section 7 – ACT Performance Indicators for Identified Cohorts

# Low SES School Communities NP

Reading and Numeracy results for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 ACT students

Description	Year Level	Domain	2008 (baseline)							2009							2010						
			Participation Rate (%)	Exempt (%)	Bottom Band ± C.I.	Second Bottom Band	Mean Scale Score ± C.I.	Participation Rate (%)	Exempt (%)	Bottom Band ± C.I.	Second Bottom Band	Mean Scale Score ± C.I.	Participation Rate (%)	Exempt (%)	Bottom Band ± C.I.	Second Bottom Band	Mean Scale Score ± C.I.						
Percentage achievement of ALL Students in Low SES Participating Schools	Year 3	Reading	95.9%	4.1%	7.7%±4.8%	17.1%±8.4%	376.1±15.1	91.8%	0.5%	8.9%±4.2%	11.7%±6.3%	393.7±12.9	89.4%	2.5%	6.3%±4.0%	18.8%±7.5%	391.0±13.7						
	Year 5	Reading	99.2%	5.3%	7.7%±4.7%	13.8%±7.5%	487.5±13.2	95.7%	3.2%	12.2%±4.9%	13.9%±7.0%	472.0±11.5	96.5%	6.4%	8.4%±4.3%	16.8%±7.1%	478.2±12.6						
	Year 7	Reading	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	91.0%	3.3%	9.8%±5.6%	17.9%±9.0%	517.5±13.8	89.8%	3.1%	7.9%±5.0%	14.0%±8.1%	527.1±12.2						
	Year 9	Reading	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A						
Participating Schools	Year 3	Numeracy	95.1%	4.9%	5.2%±4.0%	13.8%±7.5%	375.9±13.1	91.8%	0.5%	11.7%±4.7%	17.9%±7.3%	368.7±12.5	90.7%	2.5%	7.5%±4.3%	15.8%±7.3%	373.9±11.9						
	Year 5	Numeracy	98.5%	5.3%	4.7%±3.7%	14.7%±7.1%	471.0±11.6	95.2%	3.2%	4.5%±3.1%	25.7%±7.1%	461.9±8.9	95.4%	6.4%	4.8%±3.4%	17.0%±6.6%	472.8±11.0						
	Year 7	Numeracy	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	90.2%	3.3%	11.7%±6.1%	22.5%±9.8%	507.4±12.9	89.8%	3.1%	2.6%±3.0%	25.4%±8.5%	528.8±13.9						
	Year 9	Numeracy	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A						

Description	Year Level	Domain	2008 (baseline)							2009							2010						
			Participation Rate (%)	Exempt (%)	Bottom Band ± C.I.	Second Bottom Band	Mean Scale Score ± C.I.	Participation Rate (%)	Exempt (%)	Bottom Band ± C.I.	Second Bottom Band	Mean Scale Score ± C.I.	Participation Rate (%)	Exempt (%)	Bottom Band ± C.I.	Second Bottom Band	Mean Scale Score ± C.I.						
Percentage of achievement of Indigenous Students in Low SES Participating Schools	Year 3	Reading	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±						
	Year 5	Reading	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±						
	Year 7	Reading	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±						
	Year 9	Reading	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±						
Participating Schools	Year 3	Numeracy	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±						
	Year 5	Numeracy	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±						
	Year 7	Numeracy	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±						
	Year 9	Numeracy	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP ±						

Description	Year Level	Domain	2008 (baseline)							2009							2010						
			Participation Rate (%)	Exempt (%)	Bottom Band ± C.I.	Second Bottom Band	Mean Scale Score ± C.I.	Participation Rate (%)	Exempt (%)	Bottom Band ± C.I.	Second Bottom Band	Mean Scale Score ± C.I.	Participation Rate (%)	Exempt (%)	Bottom Band ± C.I.	Second Bottom Band	Mean Scale Score ± C.I.						
Percentage of achievement of LBOTE Students in Low SES Participating Schools	Year 3	Reading	97.0%	0.0%	12.5%±11.5%	15.6%±17.0%	386.3±33.8	89.3%	1.8%	10.0%±8.4%	8.0%±11.3%	383.0±23.1	92.5%	2.5%	10.8%±10.1%	24.3%±17.3%	376.8±29.8						
	Year 5	Reading	97.4%	5.1%	10.5%±10.0%	21.1%±16.7%	474.2±25.1	95.7%	4.3%	11.1%±9.4%	17.8%±14.8%	470.1±20.7	100.0%	4.2%	14.6%±10.2%	18.8%±15.2%	470.4±27.2						
	Year 7	Reading	N/A	N/A	N/A ±	N/A ±	N/A	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP							
	Year 9	Reading	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A							
Participating Schools	Year 3	Numeracy	93.9%	0.0%	16.1%±12.9%	12.9%±17.5%	377.5±31.2	89.3%	1.8%	10.0%±8.4%	14.0%±12.8%	368.9±22.6	95.0%	2.5%	10.5%±9.9%	13.2%±14.7%	366.4±24.3						
	Year 5	Numeracy	94.9%	5.1%	8.1%±9.0%	13.5%±14.5%	474.9±26.4	95.7%	4.3%	4.4%±6.2%	28.9%±14.9%	471.2±22.2	100.0%	4.2%	8.3%±8.0%	18.8%±13.8%	479.0±25.3						
	Year 7	Numeracy	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP	NP	NP ±	NP ±	NP							
	Year 9	Numeracy	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A							

NP = Not Published, due to cell size being less than 30.

### Summary

The Annual Report must identify progress against performance measures for Low SES NP activities, as agreed in the Bilateral Agreement and the Low SES School Communities NP Final Implementation Plan.

### Reform 1 – Incentives to attract high-performing principals and teachers

#### Actions and strategies

- (i) Attracting high performing principals
- (ii) Support for principals
- (iii) Attracting high-performing teachers

#### Outcome

- Strong school leadership is evident in the shared school culture of high expectations for all.

Three of the four Low SES NP schools have an experienced principal and the fourth has a principal who was appointed at the end of 2009. Twice per term meetings are held with school principals, School Network Leaders, Director Leading and Teaching, Executive Director School Improvement and the Project Coordinator providing a forum for information sharing. At these meetings any issues arising from involvement in the NP are discussed, ideas and resources are shared and the Department's Senior Executive are informed of what is happening at the school level.

In 2010, public schools moved from three school districts to four School Networks, each with a School Network Leader, with the aim of implementing a systematic and targeted approach to school improvement. Principals and school leaders will be supported to build their capacity as effective leaders and confident users of data to inform school planning and evaluation. School network leaders will build effective partnerships with principals to enhance accountability and support school improvement.

A *Principal's Performance and Development Agreement* came into place during 2010, and is the performance management and development framework for ACT Principals. The performance and development agreement is based on an analysis of leadership strengths and developmental needs and recognises the



responsibility of each principal to lead continuous school improvement. It clearly articulates criteria to monitor principal's performance as agreed between the principal and School Network Leader.

Academic partners from the University of Canberra have been valuable in facilitating work on building capacity in teachers, by providing reading support, facilitating action research and providing an academic lens for reflection. A significant focus in schools is teacher efficacy and teacher expectations in regard to student outcomes in Low SES schools. This focus arose in response to classroom observations, answers in staff questionnaires and from the literature on Low SES schools that indicated that teachers did not hold high expectations for student achievement in this setting.

All principals and Field Officers participated in the *Coach in a Box* program to develop a common understanding and focus in NP work and support them in their roles in schools. This was done through providing practical help to ensure the Field Officers hit the ground running, and an injection of coaching skills to give them maximum chance of early success in their roles. The program consisted of three workshops: *Our Coaching Culture* – focusing on how coaching can come to life in their partnership school; *Noticing and Reflecting – Working with the Unspoken* – focusing on the tools of empathy and of listening for feelings as well as content, how to help defensive clients open up; *Confronting and Recognition – Using feedback to transform performance* – focusing on two linked capabilities – making the difficult challenge and building confidence. All participants also had five one on one coach calls to work on an area of their skills needing development. By having both Field Officers and principals go through the same program ensured alignment in their approach and provided a common language for them to work together on the NP reform areas.

Staffing of these schools with high quality teachers has been an issue with a high proportion of beginning teachers in some of the schools and high mobility. Special consideration was given to the schools in the 2010 transfer round allowing them preference in choosing their new staff to provide a better balance of experience and to select teachers with particular expertise. The Field Officers, while working with all teachers, are particularly focussing on beginning and early career teachers.

In the ACT all teachers have a four year teaching degree. In the four Low SES schools, a significant number of teachers also have post graduate qualifications:

- Richardson – 45%
- Charnwood Dunlop – 40%
- Kingsford Smith – 41%
- Florey – 18%

## **Reform 2 – Adoption of best practice performance management and staffing arrangements that articulate a clear role for principals**

### **Actions and strategies**

- (i) Flexible staffing arrangements

### **Outcome**

- School community satisfaction with leadership structures.
- Improvement in levels of literacy and numeracy achievement.

Kingsford Smith School, as a new school opening for students in 2010 had increased flexibility around its recruitment and staffing for school leadership positions. All school leader positions were advertised as open applications to expand the field for a broader range of applicants at all levels across the department.

As part of the ACT School Improvement process parent, student and staff satisfaction data is collected. This information is reported publicly in Annual School Board Report. All schools use parent, student and staff surveys as a means of collecting data.

Table 1: Parent satisfaction as % Agree or Strongly Agree

I have confidence that my child's school is managed effectively	2009	2010
Richardson School	86%	97%
Kingsford Smith	57%	65%
Charnwood Dunlop	77%	81%
Florey	76%	83%

All schools have a Field Officer and this has allowed schools a level of flexibility through the provision of an extra specialist position in the school. Schools have used the provision in a variety of ways to suit their particular needs and have developed teams of teachers focussing on literacy and numeracy improvement.

Table 2: Overall school achievement growth from years 3 to 5 compared to the system average.

	System growth	Charnwood Dunlop	Richardson	Florey	Kingsford Smith
Reading	88	98	102	104	85
Writing	71	94	92	67	83
Numeracy	85	110	112	120	74

As Field Officers were not in their schools for very long before NAPLAN testing took place the efficacy of this strategy could not be measured against 2010 NAPLAN results with any reasonable validity.

In some of these schools issues of student engagement, disadvantage and initial deficit had to be addressed before quantifiable improvement in test results could be expected.

### **Reform 3 – School operational arrangements which encourage innovation and flexibility**

#### **Actions and strategies**

- (i) Learning and Teaching
- (ii) Student Environment
- (iii) School Communities
- (iv) Staffing

#### **Outcomes**

- Improved teacher satisfaction.
- All students are engaged in, and benefiting from, schooling.
- Improved student learning.
- Increased parental engagement and involvement in assisting children with learning.
- Increased student attendance and engagement in school activities.

**Table 1: Staff Satisfaction Survey, 2010**

STAFF SATISFACTION as % Agree and Strongly Agree							
	My professional achievements are celebrated at this school	I have opportunities to practise leadership	I have opportunities to participate in decision making	There is effective communication between teachers and executive staff	There are processes in place that support my practice	I get constructive feedback about my practice	Innovative practice is encouraged
Richardson School	82%	88%	100%	94%	88%	76%	71%
Kingsford Smith	53%	71%	66%	54%	61%	53%	75%
Charnwood Dunlop	41%	50%	68%	50%	77%	64%	82%
Florey	76%	82%	88%	88%	88%	65%	88%

Note: 2010 is the first year these items were asked of teaching staff only, not of whole school staff. This will be able to be compared with data in 2011 for improvement.

**Table 1 continued: Staff Satisfaction Survey, 2010**

STAFF SATISFACTION as % Agree and Strongly Agree				
	Overall I am satisfied with my work at this school.	Overall I am satisfied with this school.	I am satisfied this school has high expectations in all that it does.	I am satisfied the students are getting a good education at this school.
Richardson School	96%	92%	92%	84%
Kingsford Smith	87%	59%	71%	76%
Charnwood Dunlop	85%	85%	93%	96%
Florey	96%	92%	92%	92%

Note: 2010 is the first year these items were asked of teaching staff only, not of whole school staff. This will be able to be compared with data in 2011 for improvement

**Table 2: Student Satisfaction Survey, 2009 and 2010**

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT						
% agree and strongly agree	I have a say in the things I learn		I enjoy learning at this school		I am doing work that interests me	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
Richardson School	59%	78%	82%	76%	61%	76%
Kingsford Smith	44%	44%	52%	58%	46%	55%
Charnwood Dunlop	60%	57%	80%	70%	60%	59%
Florey	55%	62%	79%	78%	71%	71%

According to 2010 NAPLAN data:

- Florey Primary exceeded their school targets in year 3 reading and numeracy, and year 5 reading and numeracy. They fell below their target in year 5 writing.
- Kingsford Smith exceeded their target in year 5 reading and writing and just missed it in numeracy. Year 3 reading was only 2 points below their target and they missed out in year 3 numeracy.
- Charnwood Dunlop only exceeded their target in year 5 numeracy but recorded significant growth above the system in year 5 reading and writing.
- While Richardson only exceeded their targets in year 3 reading and numeracy, they recorded well above system growth in year 5 reading, writing and numeracy.

In 2010, parent groups and committees were active throughout the schools. They contributed on average 10.8 hours each at Kingsford Smith School, and a total of 640 hours at Charnwood Dunlop, 1700 hours at Florey and 7000 hours at Richardson Primary. Activities parents engaged in included school canteen, breakfast club, classroom assistance, fundraising, Parents and Citizens and Preschool Parent groups, special events eg Harmony Day, sporting carnivals, uniform shop homework club and reading with students. At Florey they spent over 100 hours listening to reading, and at Charnwood Dunlop they put in 120 hours at the breakfast club and 80 hours at the homework club.

**Table 3: Student attendance at Low SES Schools, 2009 and 2010**

Student Attendance	Richardson School		Kingsford Smith		Charnwood Dunlop		Florey		SYSTEM	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
K	88.9%	92.6%	89.6%	91.8%	91.2%	93.0%	89.1%	92.8%	93.4%	94.0%
Year 1	89.4%	93.1%	81.3%	92.9%	95.0%	92.6%	93.8%	91.3%	93.6%	94.0%
Year 2	93.0%	92.0%	95.8%	91.9%	94.6%	93.3%	90.8%	93.6%	93.7%	94.0%
Year 3	91.5%	93.6%	80.2%	93.1%	91.3%	95.1%	94.2%	91.9%	93.9%	94.2%
Year 4	92.0%	94.3%	92.2%	91.8%	92.6%	93.4%	94.6%	94.1%	93.7%	94.1%
Year 5	92.3%	91.8%	88.1%	95.1%	92.7%	95.0%	93.4%	95.0%	93.4%	94.0%
Year 6	91.8%	92.1%	64.7%	89.8%	88.9%	89.6%	94.4%	93.4%	93.1%	93.2%
Average K-6	91.3%	92.8%	84.6%	92.4%	92.3%	93.1%	92.9%	93.2%	93.5	93.9%

Note: Student attendance is measured over two school terms, that is, from the first day of school attendance in term one to the last day of school term two.

**Table 4: Student Satisfaction Survey, 2009 and 2010**

STUDENT SATISFACTION as % Agree and Strongly Agree		
	I have opportunities to be involved in school activities	
	2009	2010
Richardson School	85%	85%
Kingsford Smith	69%	81%
Charnwood Dunlop	90%	83%
Florey	69%	87%

## **Reform 4 – Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities**

### **Actions and strategies**

- (i) Literacy and Numeracy Field Officers
- (ii) School Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators
- (iii) Indigenous Literacy and Numeracy Officers
- (iv) Individual Learning Plans
- (v) Personal Learning Plans
- (vi) Early Intervention
- (vii) Preschool education programs

### **Outcomes**

- All children are engaged in, and benefiting from, schooling.
- Student improvement is evident in literacy and numeracy outcomes.
- Improved student attendance.

During 2010, Field Officers and Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators were working in all NP schools to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes. Field Officers and Coordinators are coaching teachers to improve teaching practices and Coordinators are also supporting identified students. In 2010, the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters Strategic Plan 2010-2013* was developed with the aim of ‘closing the gap’ and improving the educational outcomes for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in public schools have a Personalised Learning Strategy (PLS) developed by the teacher, parents, student, school leader, and counsellor when appropriate. The PLS looks at baseline student achievement, student needs, performance, attendance, and any intervention programs and develops a learning plan and sets targets to map a personalised learning pathway for each student.

Additional resources have been provided to support schools in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Resources are allocated based on population, identified student needs, requests from principals and School Network Leader recommendations. In 2010 this took the form of four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Literacy and Numeracy Officers who went into schools to work with teachers with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students on improving the classroom environment and differentiating the curriculum to better support these students.

One of the schools has established a homework club run by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents supported by the school. This initiative aims to increase parental engagement by providing support to parents in assisting their children with homework. This school is also enriching their community engagement through their reconciliation activities, their *Values Garden* and Indigenous Partnership and the use of elders and community members in celebrating significant events at the school.

Children identified as being at risk in their learning have an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) developed by teachers, parents, school counsellor and Field Officer with strategies to support their learning and used to monitor their progress against agreed targets. Some schools have made significant progress in student engagement in their own learning. As a new school Kingsford Smith is working on developing a school culture and structures to allow a student voice. The ability to develop highly engaging student programs often found in an established school may be influenced by the comparative inexperience of teaching staff and their ability to deliver high quality, differentiated programs.

Table 1: Student Satisfaction Survey, 2009 and 2010

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT						
% agree and strongly agree	I have a say in the things I learn		I enjoy learning at this school		I am doing work that interests me	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
Richardson School	59%	78%	82%	76%	61%	76%
Kingsford Smith	44%	44%	52%	58%	46%	55%
Charnwood Dunlop	60%	57%	80%	70%	60%	59%
Florey	55%	62%	79%	78%	71%	71%

According to 2010 NAPLAN data:

- Florey Primary exceeded their school targets in year 3 reading and numeracy, and year 5 reading and numeracy. They fell below their target in year 5 writing.
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- While Richardson only exceeded their targets in year 3 reading and numeracy, they recorded well above system growth in year 5 reading, writing and numeracy.

All four schools have engaged with the 15 hour preschool program being rolled out across the ACT. Kingsford Smith also has a Koori Preschool on campus.



## **Reform 5 – Strengthened school accountability**

### **Actions and strategies**

- (i) School Improvement Framework

### **Outcomes**

- An improvement in outcomes for specified groups of students.
- Schooling promotes the social inclusion and reduces the education disadvantage of children, especially for Indigenous children.

In 2010 the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters Strategic Plan 2010-2013* was developed with the aim of ‘closing the gap’ and improving the educational outcomes for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in public schools have a Personalised Learning Strategy (PLS) developed by the teacher, parents, student, school leader, and counsellor when appropriate. The PLS looks at baseline student achievement, student needs, performance, attendance, and any intervention programs and develops a learning plan and sets targets to map a personalised learning plan for each student.

Cohorts of students with particular needs have been identified, eg Somali refugees in two schools have been identified as needing extra support to engage with their school. One school has responded by setting up a homework club aimed at these students and their parents and supported by a community group.

System professional learning has been offered in *InSinc* which is designed to enhance teaching pedagogy and student access across the curriculum. It provides practical and inclusive strategies that are effective in improving all students’ literacy outcomes. The emphasis on scaffolding is particularly beneficial for low literacy students and students for whom English is a second or additional language. The *InSinc* program is delivered through targeted school-based workshops and demonstrated classroom strategies.

Breakfast clubs supported by outside agencies such as Red Cross and local community groups and churches are running in schools to make sure students do not start the school day on an empty stomach. Several schools also run a Homework Club with help from groups such as Schools as Communities to support students manage their own learning outside of the classroom environment.

## **Reform 6 – External partnerships with parents, other schools, businesses and communities, and the provision of access to extended services**

### **Actions and strategies**

- (i) School community partnerships
- (ii) Outside agencies and community organisations

### **Outcomes**

- Increased parent involvement with the school
- Parents use effective strategies to support their child's literacy and numeracy learning
- Increased student engagement with learning
- Better nutrition, health and social skills of students

All schools have invested heavily in parent/school community involvement.

- Richardson has made strong connections with their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- Florey with their focus on ESL students has embarked on a journey of taking literacy home to families in their community. The goal was for all students to have access to quality literature. Research suggested that there are considerable differences in the vocabulary that children bring to school and this has an impact on their learning. They formed a committee to investigate further and worked together to develop 17 literacy packs that have been made available to students from preschool to year 6. Carefully selected authors and themes allow students and families access to quality literature and language examples. Online surveys of parents, grandparents and other family members helped gain information that was used to assist the formation of the literacy packs. The launching of the packs was linked with a *Grandparents and Special Friends Day* attended by over 200 grandparents and special friends.
- Charnwood Dunlop has reached out to its Somali community in particular through their Homework Club which has also provided a link for these families, and particularly mothers, with Schools as Communities and their parent agency the ACT Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DHCS).
- Both Kingsford Smith and Richardson are developing a relationship between their school and the local Community Health Centre, directing parents to the Centre for professional help and support.
- Kingsford Smith has run parent information sessions on areas such as 'Literacy and Numeracy' and 'Maintaining Positive Relationships', with information provided by staff and guest speakers. A barbecue dinner and free resources to take home was also provided.

All schools have put considerable work into their external partnerships, some have strengthened existing ones or extended the scope of them, and a number of new relationships have been developed. These partnerships are aimed at extending opportunities for students and/or supporting student engagement and parent/community involvement, and providing support to students and their parents/carers. For a full list of external partners refer to point 4 in the Showcase section of the Low SES report.

These agencies have supported the schools in setting up homework clubs, breakfast programs, mentoring programs, running school/community events, a "Values Garden" to support work with ATSI students and community members, and promoting education and the schools in the broader community. Through these agencies schools are able to supplement support to students to enable them to participate in a range of activities to enhance their educational experience.

The University of Canberra has provided academic partners for the schools and enhanced their ability to undertake action research. They also provided an outside perspective and academic richness in analysing school data and developing recommendations for future directions.

In working to identify factors impacting on student engagement and performance the lower than average educational achievements of family members became obvious. Non-completion of year 12 and a lack of post-secondary qualifications among parents were common across all schools. Alternatives were explored to broaden educational horizons for students and community members.

The Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) was keen to become involved with the National Partnership and offered a gateway into post-secondary education for students and community members. In 2010 a memorandum of Understanding between CIT and DET was signed and launched at Kingsford Smith School. Planning for 2011 is underway and CIT involvement will increase as the partnership progresses.