



Australian Government



## **SMARTER SCHOOLS NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS**

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

# **Australian Capital Territory Annual Report for 2011**

<b>Section 1</b>	<b><i>Smarter Schools Overview/Executive Summary</i></b>
<b>Section 2</b>	<b><i>Improving Teacher Quality</i></b>
<b>Section 3</b>	<b><i>Low Socio-economic Status School Communities</i></b>
<b>Section 4</b>	<b><i>Literacy and Numeracy</i></b>
<b>Section 5</b>	<b><i>Research and Evaluation</i></b>
<b>Section 6</b>	<b><i>Milestone Report</i></b>
<b>Section 7</b>	<b><i>Low SES School Communities - Performance Indicators for Identified Cohorts</i></b>
<b>Section 8</b>	<b><i>Low SES School Communities - State Performance Measures</i></b>

## Section 1 – Overview – Executive Summary

### **2011 National Partnership Overview – 1 January to 31 December 2011**

Under the Smarter Schools National Partnerships (NPs) a variety and abundance of strategies have been implemented throughout 2011 across the ACT education system and within each of the three education sectors. Strategies to improve teacher quality, increase the engagement of the community in schools and raise outcomes in literacy and numeracy are having a positive impact on educational outcomes for children in the ACT.

Activities included providing teachers and school leaders with professional learning, developing and sharing resources and support materials and extending and improving the use of data. All of these actions have a focus on targeted learning programs to ensure students' individual learning needs are addressed.

Smarter Schools NPs activity in the ACT is building on a number of the ACT Education and Training Directorate (ETD)'s strategic and operational priorities for 2011-2012 including:

- raising standards in literacy and numeracy
- closing the learning achievement gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and other students
- increasing student engagement and participation
- building collective capacity through school networks.

Key ACT Government education initiatives aligned with the Smarter Schools NPs reforms include:

- funding to increase teacher salaries
- funding for leading and accomplished teachers to attract and retain quality teachers and improve career paths in schools
- the establishment of the ACT Teacher Quality Institute (TQI).

A number of successful strategies employed under the Smarter Schools NPs within each of the education sectors have gained traction and have been integrated and embedded into core business. This has taken place not only in schools involved in the Smarter Schools NPs schools, but more widely across the system.

### **2011 Significant Highlights/Achievements**

The high level of cross-sectoral collaboration and support for facilitation reform activity has been one of the key benefits stemming from the ACT's involvement in the Improving Teacher Quality NP. Broad stakeholder engagement and commitment to improving educational arrangements in all schools in the ACT has enabled the implementation of consistent, sustainable reform. The establishment of the TQI has been a key achievement with this cross sectoral body leading implementation of a number of teacher quality initiatives. Other highlights include the successful implementation of the Teach for Australia program and the establishment of the Down South initiative at St Mary MacKillop College, a school centre of excellence involving collaboration between St Mary MacKillop College and the Australian Catholic University (ACU).

The four public schools involved in the Low Socio-economic Status (SES) School Communities NP have successfully focused on establishing school operational arrangements which encourage innovation and flexibility, developing innovative and tailored learning opportunities, strengthening school accountability through school wide assessment and tracking processes and improving engagement with the school and broader community. Schools have developed a range of successful programs to meet the specific needs of their community and have offered extended learning opportunities to meet the needs of specific student groups including English as a Second Language (ESL) students, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and disengaged students.

The retention of field officers in the Low SES School Communities NP schools has been integral to the implementation and embedding of reforms in 2011, enabling a continued emphasis on coaching, data analysis and development of external partnerships with parents/carers, local churches, not for profit organisations, and other schools and government agencies. A database for data collection and tracking, developed by one of the field officers, has been adopted in at least ten other schools and has been adapted to meet their specific data collection needs. Together, four field officers also developed a criterion based reference tool for writing that is now being used across the system.

There has been a major system focus on knowledge and capacity building in ACT public schools. Literacy and Numeracy NP funding has been used to deliver a program of professional learning for literacy and numeracy field officers and coordinators, to support them in their school roles, and more broadly for schools across the system. The strong performance of the Literacy and Numeracy NP schools in NAPLAN testing in 2011 reflects the success of this strategy. Other highlights in the reporting period include the opportunities that have been provided for sharing and networking and the subsequent implementation and embedding as standard practice, of endorsed programs and the strategies and techniques learnt from subject experts and their peers.

ACT Catholic schools have made significant progress in 2011 in improving evidence based teaching, whole school engagement in literacy and numeracy and performance monitoring through a range of activities based on whole school intervention and leadership training, including professional development, mentoring and program support.

Under the Literacy and Numeracy NP ACT independent schools have developed a balanced literacy program utilising both phonic and whole language approaches. The Word Work program they have developed in consultation with a literacy consultant has helped students to discover a greater understanding of the links within the English language and has led to improved student attitudes to spelling.

### **Sustainability of Reforms**

A number of factors support the sustainability of teacher quality reforms. There is strong cross sector collaboration and support for facilitation reform activity in the ACT. The TQI, as an independent statutory authority which drives reforms at a jurisdictional level, will continue to operate and generate funding through registration fees. The finalisation of a number of nationally consistent processes for teacher registration and the accreditation of pre-service teacher education programs, the National Professional Standards for Teachers and the National Professional Standard for Principals will embed a number of reforms. The development of the Empowering Local Schools NP is expected to generate additional momentum.

ACT public schools involved in the Low SES School Communities NP and Literacy and Numeracy NP, with the input of their field officers, are considering the sustainability of their programs as part of their broader planning processes. A number of successful programs and practices have gained traction

across the system and are being integrated and embedded into core business. Partnerships with parents and external providers are becoming entrenched in school operational planning and new partnerships continue to be developed.

The Catholic sector is confident that reforms introduced under the Literacy and Numeracy NP, which have involved a school wide approach since 2009, are sustainable. The agreed practices in timetabling literacy blocks, adopting First Steps Reading and staff mentoring are considered to be self-sustaining and the relationships of increasing trust and expertise that have been built across the teaching staff will further support the sustainability of these reforms.

### **Student Engagement and Attendance**

Each of the Low SES School Communities NP schools has developed programs to meet the needs of their school community, including the need to improve student engagement and attendance. Examples include an area called *The Beach* set up at Charnwood Dunlop Primary for disengaged students, and a program at Florey Primary where disengaged students meet weekly to do woodwork and construction activities with an emphasis on developing social skills and managing conflict. These schools have also offered extending learning opportunities to engage groups of students identified as having specific needs. One example provides a behaviour therapist to support a group of Sudanese refugee students suffering from severe trauma, and homework, special interest, sports and computer clubs.

Increasing the engagement and attendance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, in particular, has been a priority for Richardson Primary in 2011. The school has achieved positive results through the provision of professional development for staff in cooperative learning and the introduction of an initiative to recognise and reward 100% attendance.

### **Support for Disadvantaged Student Cohorts (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students with a disability, LBOTE/ESL students etc)**

The NPs are contributing to improving educational outcomes for disadvantaged student cohorts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and ESL students, in a number of ways. These students are supported through tracking and analysis of performance data using strategies such as Florey Primary's Traffic Lights and the Putting Faces on the Data Strategy, often through a case management approach and translation into differentiated classroom teaching practices and targeted support if needed. Specific learning opportunities are also provided such as homework clubs run by Koori parents and visits for ESL students to the Canberra Show and local shopping centres to buy food for cooking classes and to provide stimulus for language based activities.

All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have a personalised learning plan that is formulated in consultation with teachers, parents and students. These plans are used to track individual student progress against agreed targets.

At Florey Primary, two teachers participated in the Accepting the Challenge: Improving Learning Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students (Practitioner Based Inquiry) Project, resulting in progress in reading comprehension of the participating students.

During the reporting period, details of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Scholarship Program, an initiative related to the ACT Education and Training Directorate (ETD) *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students Matters: Strategic Plan 2010-2013*, were communicated to schools, students and families as well as principals and contact teachers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

This program enables public school students to have access to mentoring and provides opportunities to develop leadership skills in order to make an informed career decision around teaching.

**School Level Plans**

All schools have a National Partnership Plan on their website.

## Section 2 – Improving Teacher Quality

### Overview

One of the most significant benefits to the ACT from its involvement in the Improving Teacher Quality NP is the level of cross-sectoral collaboration. This collaboration is demonstrated through the:

- development of cross-sectoral Principal Forums
- work of the Teacher Education Committee in engaging the universities and unions with the Improving Teacher Quality NP reforms
- work of the Professional Experience Committee in improving the quality and availability of professional experience placements
- planning and development of an ACT Teacher Mentor program.

A key initiative under the Improving Teacher Quality NP is the establishment of the TQI as the teacher registration body for the ACT. Establishment of the TQI enables the ACT to implement the reforms relating to national consistency in teacher registration, certification of teachers and accreditation of teacher education courses. The TQI will also partner with the three ACT education sectors in the implementation of the National Professional Standards for Teachers.

Other significant outcomes from the Improving Teacher Quality NP include:

- alignment of the public and Catholic sectors' leadership capability frameworks and leadership development programs with the National Professional Standard for Principals
- inclusion of additional classroom classifications in enterprise agreements, aimed at keeping the best classroom teachers working in classrooms
- momentum for reform achieved in the public sector through the local decision making reform with forty schools applying to join the initiative in 2012.

### **2011 Significant Achievements/ Activities/ Highlights – 1 January to 31 December 2011**

A significant achievement for the ACT under the Improving Teacher Quality NP has been the establishment of the TQI. Legislation for the TQI came into effect on 1 January 2011, establishing the TQI as a key cross-sectoral body with responsibility for leading the implementation of a number of teacher quality initiatives, including professional registration of ACT teachers, certification against national standards, accreditation of teacher education courses and promotion of professional learning.

A highlight of the cross-sectoral collaboration with ACT schools has been the successful completion in May 2011 of the online registration application process by teachers currently working in ACT schools.

A key facilitator of reform activity in the ACT is the continued work of the ACT Teacher Education Committee and the Professional Experience Committee. These cross-sectoral committees comprise a broad stakeholder representation and provide the opportunity for representative groups to engage with the national agenda and be part of developing reform activity in the ACT. Both committees have generated a strong commitment from all groups to future work designed to improve teacher quality in the ACT.

The strength of the jurisdiction in implementing consistent, sustainable reform under the Improving Teacher Quality NP is the cross-sector collaboration and support for facilitation reform activity. The

ACT is in the unique position of being able to develop and implement reform in collaboration with all three education sectors. There is broad stakeholder engagement and commitment to improving educational arrangements in all schools in the ACT.

Significant activities completed in the reporting period include the instigation of a program of cross-sector principal forums to increase professional discussion and information sharing across the three education sectors regarding educational initiatives at both a national and jurisdictional level. These meetings occur on a semester basis and involve all principals from all education sectors in the ACT. The focus of the forums in 2011 was the National Professional Standards for Teachers and the National Principal Standard.

A highlight for the ACT during the reporting period has been the successful implementation of the Teach for Australia program. Five associates commenced their placement in ACT public schools at the start of 2011, with participating school principals reporting associates to be highly motivated, quality individuals who are performing extremely well in the classroom. On the basis of the success of the program to date the ACT has committed to placing an additional six associates from cohort three of the program in 2012.

Another key initiative has been the establishment of the Down South initiative at St Mary MacKillop College as a school centre for teacher education excellence, involving collaboration between St Mary MacKillop College and the ACU. It is based on an immersion model and involves pre-service teachers from the Graduate Diploma of Education (Secondary). Thirty teachers were enrolled in the program in January 2011. This program is complemented by the development of the University of Canberra (UC) Clinical Practice Program, to commence in 2012, which selects high performing classroom teachers from ACT public schools to work with pre-service teachers during their pre-service programs to better prepare the students for entrance in to the teaching profession.

#### **Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students – 1 January to 31 December 2011**

The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters: Strategic Plan 2010-2013* provides clear direction for closing the learning achievement gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and other students. The priorities, performance measures and key actions outlined in the Plan provide a framework for committed action and innovative responses in ACT public schools to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, their families and communities. These include the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Scholarship Program and the Student Aspirations Program.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Scholarship Program enables public school students to have access to mentoring and provides opportunities to develop leadership skills in order to make an informed career decision around teaching. Five scholarships of \$5000 per year will be available for students wishing to pursue a career in teaching and who intend to enrol in a tertiary package.

During the reporting period, information about the scholarship program was communicated to schools, students and families as well as principals and contact teachers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Application forms were distributed to all interested students and posted on the ETD intranet in preparation for the selection of scholarship holders for 2012.



**Support for Other Disadvantaged Student Cohorts (if applicable) – 1 January to 31 December 2011**

Reform initiatives under the Improving Teacher Quality NP are about improving teacher quality as a whole and are not targeted at specific student cohorts. There are no milestone activities under this partnership that reference or require targeted actions for specific disadvantaged student cohorts. The focus is on teacher quality and activities that will develop and improve all teachers, not just those teaching a particular student group.

**Progress against Teacher Quality National Partnership Facilitation Reforms – 1 January to 31 December 2011**

***National Professional Standards for Teachers***

In preparation for the implementation of the National Professional Standards for Teachers in 2013, the ACT has continued to participate in the development of the Standards support documentation.

During the reporting period a cross-sectoral submission to the AITSL Standards Pilot Project was accepted. The successful ACT project proposal involved collaboration between the TQI, ACU, UC and teachers from the Catholic and public systems. The pilot focused on the use of standards in pre-service teacher placements to improve planning, feedback and self-reflection for pre-service and mentor teachers. The new assessment and support tools will commence being used during professional experience placements in 2012. The professional discussion tool developed during the pilot will also be used in performance review and development discussions with experienced teachers.

Mapping of the National Professional Standard for Principals and National Professional Standards for Teachers (the National Standards) against teacher support and assessment programs as well as local leadership frameworks was completed during 2011. The next step is to develop and implement a framework for professional learning focussed on professional practice and leadership development, underpinned by the National Standards.

Planning also commenced to expand the TQI business system to incorporate standards referencing for registration renewal and recording of professional learning. This development work will be completed during 2012.

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

During 2011, the ACT has been an active participant in the AITSL process for the development of national certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers.

Planning has occurred at the local level for implementation of the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher standards through enterprise agreements, particularly in the public education enterprise agreement and for local level negotiation and implementation of the Highly Accomplished standard in the next Catholic education enterprise agreement.

The TQI has also been involved in local planning for certification processes based on the standards to be piloted in 2012.

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

The Director-General, ETD chaired the Nationally Consistent Teacher Registration Policy Group during 2011. The Policy Group provided advice to AITSL, AEEYSOC and MCEEDYA on the framework for nationally consistent registration processes to be implemented from 2013.

The legislation for the ACT TQI came into effect on 1 January 2011 and aligns with the requirements of the national framework for consistent registration of teachers. The on-line registration of ACT teachers commenced on 9 May 2011.

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

The ACT continues to engage at a national level in preparation for national consistency in accreditation of pre-service teacher education courses.

The accreditation of courses in the ACT will be overseen by the TQI with information also provided to the jurisdiction through the ACT Teacher Education Committee.

Twelve ACT based teachers and education administrators completed the national training for pre-service teacher education course accreditation. The ACT will commence accreditation of pre-service teacher education programs in the second half of 2012 should UC seek early accreditation of programs.

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

Mapping of current principal professional development against leadership frameworks was undertaken during the reporting period. The Catholic Education Office (CEO) has delivered a series of capability workshops for their principals based on their leadership framework. A targeted induction program for new principals and senior school leaders was conducted in January 2011.

ETD has instigated an induction and orientation program for new and acting principals. During the reporting period a module on financial management was delivered.

ACT principals have also been involved in AITSL flagship professional development for principals through the Leading Australia's Schools program.

A program of cross-sectoral principal forums has been established to facilitate professional discussion on educational initiatives at both a national and jurisdictional level. It is planned that the forums will occur each semester and involve all principals from all schools in the ACT.

ETD has reviewed its Principal Induction Program and the revised program commenced operation during 2011. The program is available to new principals and acting principals.

The CEO and ETD have also commenced coaching programs for current principals in each sector that align with sector leadership capability frameworks. Professional learning has also been provided for the principals involved in the School Autonomy project in ETD. Focus topics have included staffing and recruitment, and financial management.

Senior Catholic sector principals were trained as coaches for less experienced principals. These senior principals were themselves coached by a senior coach to ensure that their professional learning was enriched through the coaching work they were doing with other principals.

### ***Improved Performance Management and Continuous Improvement in Schools***

Improved performance management and continuous improvement in schools in the ACT has links to enterprise agreements for public and Catholic school teachers and varies from school to school in the independent sector.

Work completed during the reporting period involved planning for alignment of performance management processes to the National Professional Standards for Teachers and implementation of initiatives aimed to drive continuous improvement in schools. For ETD this involved implementation of the Annual Professional Discussion from January 2011, and for the Catholic sector it involved participation in the Developmental Staff Appraisal process.

### ***New Pathways into Teaching***

Five associates from cohort two of the Teach for Australia program were placed in ACT public schools at the start of 2011. Associates completed their initial intensive training in January and commenced their placement on 31 January 2011. Associates returned to Melbourne at the end of Semester one to complete their mid-year intensive.

During the reporting period, the training for mentor teachers was also completed at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education.

The Teach for Australia program is being supported in the ACT through regular meetings with participating principals and program coordinators including representatives from Teach for Australia.

A further six associates from cohort three have been matched with vacancies in ACT public schools for 2012. The selected associates completed an initial induction with their schools and will commence work in 2012 following their intensive training in January 2012. Mentors have also been selected and have commenced the training program.

All five of the cohort two associates enjoyed a highly successful 2011 school year and have indicated they will continue in the program at the same schools in 2012. The principals of the participating schools are very satisfied with the associates' performance and the contribution that each associate has made to the school.

### ***Better Pathways into Teaching***

The ACT has been engaged in the national development of the Teach Next Program under Better Pathways into Teaching. In 2012 the jurisdiction was involved in pre-tender arrangements as well as consultation regarding program delivery. The ACT will participate in the first phase of the program with ACT public schools agreeing to provide up to six placements for participants from the first cohort of the Teach Next Program in 2012.

Discussions continued through the Teacher Education Committee about jurisdictional development of local arrangements to target career change teachers in areas of need and potential pathways with the foreshadowed introduction of the 2-year graduate program requirement.

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

All education sectors in the ACT participated in the Australian Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs Senior Officials Committee sub-committee formed to progress reforms related to improved quality and availability of teacher workforce data.

The development of the business system for the TQI has incorporated data elements in line with key elements of the national teacher workforce data set to facilitate improved national reporting and workforce planning at the school level.

ETD is continuing with the redevelopment and roll out of the Staff Integrated Management System (SiMS) to assist in school-based management and workforce planning. Planning for stage two of SiMS commenced during the reporting period.

### ***Indigenous Education Workforce Pathways***

As part of the ETD *ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy 2010-2013* an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Scholarship Program has been established. The scholarship enables students to have access to mentoring and provides opportunities to develop leadership skills in order to make an informed career decision regarding teaching. Scholarships of \$5,000 per year will be available for students to apply for during year ten. They are targeted at those who wish to pursue a career in teaching and who are enrolled in a tertiary package. During the reporting period information about the scholarship program was communicated to schools, students and families as well as principals and contact teachers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Six scholarships were awarded to students to commence in 2012.

In addition, scholarships of \$10,000 per semester are awarded to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in pre-service teacher education programs at local universities. One scholarship recipient graduated in 2011 and another will continue her studies in 2012. Two additional scholarships were awarded in 2011 for students to commence university studies in 2012.

In partnership with UC, ETD also continues to support the Charles Perkins Scholarships which provide support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students studying at the university. Two scholarships are awarded each year.

### ***Quality Placements***

The provision of quality placements for pre-service teachers continues to be a priority for the jurisdiction and was a key motivator for the cross-sectoral standards pilot proposal. The Professional Experience Committee, established as a sub-committee of the ACT Teacher Education Committee, has continued its work on developing options for and promoting quality pre-service teacher placements in the ACT. With changes to the term structure at UC, the previous professional experience arrangements were revised and extensive consultation conducted with principals. Changes to placement processes will continue into 2012 to ensure that pre-service teachers receive high level mentoring and performance feedback during placements.

### ***School Centres of Excellence***

In January 2011, the Down South partnership was formed between the ACU and St Mary MacKillop College. This involved the development of a new model of secondary teacher education for pre-service teachers enrolled in the Graduate Diploma of Education (Secondary) course and an immersion model with ACU staff delivering the teaching program on campus at the College.

The Down South partnership aims to create a dynamic learning environment comprising multi-dimensional layers of interactions between all participants, including ACU academics, College staff, pre-service teachers and secondary school students, for collaborative professional learning and research opportunities. The new model commenced in January 2011 and involves placement of pre-service students for the duration of the year, with evaluation taking place throughout the program.

Following a pilot project in Early Childhood during 2010, UC has continued to evaluate changes that were made to improve the Early Childhood course. During 2011, UC and ETD have established a

clinical practice model that places highly performing teachers from public schools at the university to work with pre-service teachers to ensure better preparation during their teacher education program. Five teachers were selected to commence the program in 2012.

Construction of the building for the UC and ETD joint venture InSPIRE Centre was completed in late November 2011. The Centre is a purpose built facility to provide high level professional training and extension facilities in the areas of advanced ICT leadership, pedagogy and practice. It will support creative ICT research and practice amongst leaders, educators and students, showcase innovation, build consumable resources, and encourage and enable the sharing of good practices both physically and digitally. The Centre provides opportunities for stakeholders to engage with state of the art ICT spaces and facilities.

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

The ACT elected to focus on four reward reforms.

#### *Improved Pay Dispersion*

Reforms to improve pay dispersion were included in the negotiations for new teacher enterprise agreements in each sector. While some of these agreements were finalised during the reporting period, others continue to be negotiated. The public sector agreement has received in-principle agreement and established a new classification, Professional Practice. The purpose of the new classification is to keep the best classroom teachers working in classrooms, mentoring and modelling best practice to other teachers. The other sectors have been encouraged to adopt similar classifications aligned to the higher level national standards. In addition, progress through the classroom teacher salary scale is now based on the teacher's performance, including an annual professional discussion. Based on performance, salary progression may also be delayed or accelerated.

#### *Increased School-Based Decision Making*

Recommendations arising from the school-based management review of public schools are being implemented. Eight public schools were selected for phase one of the School Autonomy implementation. These schools were allocated a dollar based single-line budget for 2011 and worked with a central support team to develop and trial new processes and procedures for recruiting and selecting classroom teachers. Approximately 70 classroom teacher positions were advertised and filled through these new staffing processes. The involvement of ACT public schools in the Empowering Local Schools NP was finalised. A total of 15 public schools were selected as phase two schools to join the other eight in the 2012 implementation. Eight of these schools will be part of the Empowering Local Schools NP.

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

The public and catholic sectors each reviewed teacher induction and support programs with a focus on strengthening teacher mentoring. A New Educator Training program for mentor teachers was offered to experienced teachers in the public and Catholic sectors in 2011. The Teacher Education Committee approved the development of a formal teacher Mentor Program. This program, as a unit of a Masters or Graduate Certificate, will be offered during 2012. Principals and deputy principals in the public and Catholic sectors were offered a coaching program during 2011. The public schools leadership coaching program that commenced in 2010 was completed in early 2011 by approximately 140 school leaders and executive staff. Thirteen senior Catholic school principals completed a similar program during 2011.

### *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 and school network plans also include specific priorities for supporting Indigenous students and engaging the community. Both the public and Catholic sectors commenced delivery of a cultural competence program in 2011. Forty four public school leaders commenced the program in November 2011. The Catholic sector program is available for all school leaders and teachers in schools which have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments.

Milestones and targets for each of the reforms were refined to meet the requirements of reporting to the COAG Reform Council. The revised milestones and targets were agreed during this reporting period and the draft report developed. The final report will be submitted for assessment and payment of reward monies in 2012.

### **Challenges to Implementation/Progress – 1 January to 31 December 2011**

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

Engaging the wider teacher workforce with the national reforms continues to be frustrating. Feedback from representative groups indicates that not enough time is available for teachers and school leaders to engage with the large number of initiatives requiring consultation at both a jurisdictional and national level.

The ongoing conflict between the demand for professional experience placements and the reluctance of classroom teachers to be involved is limiting the capacity to improve the quality of placements. This issue needs national consideration and response.

### **Showcase / Exemplary Activities – 1 January to 31 December 2011**

Noteworthy activities highlighted in this report are:

- the Down South university-school-community partnership between ACU and St Mary MacKillop College
- the joint venture InSPIRE Centre providing high level professional training and extension facilities in the areas of advanced ICT leadership, pedagogy and practice
- success of the public sector's involvement in the Teach for Australia program.

**Sustainability**

The establishment of the TQI and the implementation of teacher registration is driving a number of reforms 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.

Finalisation of a number of nationally consistent processes for teacher registration and the accreditation of pre-service teacher education program and the National Standards will embed a number of reforms. Further national agreement on other reforms over the coming years will further ensure that reforms continue beyond the life of the Improving Teacher Quality NP.

The development of associated NPs such as the Empowering Local Schools NP will provide added momentum for the implementation and longer term impact of the local decision making reward reform.

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

### Overview – 1 January to 31 December 2011

#### School operational arrangements which encourage innovation and flexibility

In 2011 the four schools participating in the Low SES School Communities NP retained their field officers who have continued in their coaching role, working with teachers to improve classroom practices. As part of the school leadership team they lead data analysis for evidence based decision. Each school is striving to improve learning outcomes for students and has identified needs specific to their individual communities in order to develop programs that address these needs. Examples include:

- an area and program called The Beach set up for disengaged students
- a program set up for disengaged students where they met weekly to do woodwork and construction activities with an emphasis on social skills and managing conflict
- a speech therapist who provided support for individual children and trained learning support assistants in support strategies to use in the classroom
- adjustments to school organisational structures to support coaching.

#### Innovative and tailored learning opportunities

All schools offer extended learning opportunities such as:

- a behaviour therapist employed to support a group of Sudanese refugee students
- specific learning opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- excursions and a weekly cooking group to engage English as an Additional Language Dialect (EALD) students in vocabulary building
- extended learning opportunities such as special interest, sports and computer clubs
- support for identified groups of students through homework clubs.

#### Strengthened school accountability

All schools have developed and are using school wide assessment and tracking processes. They have regular data discussions looking at student performance in NAPLAN and school based assessment tasks, and are using these to plan for learning. A number of the schools have done assessment reviews, looking at the assessment pieces they use, and have developed school assessment practices and timelines. Schools are using information to track and plan for all students and to identify those at risk. Data is being used to support the improvement of student achievement and engagement, particularly for vulnerable students, and to monitor attendance. For students identified as being at risk, an Individualised Learning Plan has been developed that sets targets and interventions and tracks their progress.

#### Partnerships

All schools are working to improve engagement with their school and broader community. Parent information nights and workshops, particularly about literacy and numeracy, have been run by all schools with great success. Programs for under school age children are offered at some schools with support from community groups, such as the Paint and Play program developed in partnership with the Community Services Directorate and Kippax Uniting Church. The four Low SES School Communities



NP schools have a memorandum of understanding with the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) to provide opportunities for students and their families to broaden their educational horizons through programs offered at the schools and at CIT. Academic partners from UC continued to work with some schools, and all engage with a range of community groups depending on their school context and community needs.

## **2011 Significant Achievements/Activities/Highlights – 1 January to 31 December 2011**

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

Richardson Primary has taken a lead in this area with their focus on a whole of school change process. Their journey started in 2010 and has continued and strengthened in 2011. They have redefined educational leadership in the school through peer learning in a professional learning community. They developed a whole school coaching philosophy and program, strategic roles for the professional learning teams, staff ownership of decisions around student learning and staff professional learning, and a vibrant action learning cycle that is led by the field officer but owned by the teachers. To support this they have adjusted organisational structures to accommodate allocated times for coaching within the school day.

Other schools have introduced flexibility into their operational arrangements by reassigning staff, especially learning support assistants, to different roles in their schools to better cater to students needs.

Florey Primary was a pilot school for the Therapy ACT Assistant Pilot Project that started in term 1, 2011. The therapy assistant model enables children with disabilities to access therapy support during the school day. The model offers a holistic approach to intervention including intense individual intervention, work within groups and collaboration with teaching staff. These children participated in small group sessions once a week and whole class sessions were also run weekly. Those students who required further support continued small group work once a week in term 4. All students who received therapy made significant gains in relation to their disability.

The teachers at Florey Primary were allocated time and resources to prepare and develop materials and will implement features from this program, with all the kindergarten students in 2012, from the beginning of the school year. The teachers now have skills and strategies to help students with articulation of speech sounds and to develop phonics awareness skills. Teachers are now able to implement the program independently.

### **Innovative and tailored learning opportunities**

All schools worked to develop programs in 2011 that responded to the needs of their student community.

- Charnwood Dunlop Primary employed a behaviour therapist to support a group of Sudanese refugee students who came to their school with severe trauma. This program has been extended to also provide support for other students with anger management and behavioural issues.
- In 2011, two teachers from Florey Primary participated in the Accepting the Challenge – Improving Learning Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students (Practitioner Based Inquiry) Project.
- Florey Primary's EALD team provided excursions for students and a weekly cooking group to engage EALD students in vocabulary building.

- All schools offered extended learning opportunities such as homework clubs and special interest, sports and computer clubs.
- Support was provided for identified groups of students such as homework clubs run by Koori parents or for particular groups such as Sudanese parents (mainly mothers) and their children.

### **Strengthened school accountability**

Work is continuing in all schools to improve student data collection and tracking. All schools have a process in place and Florey Primary has been a leader in this area. The field officer at Florey Primary developed a database that was adopted by at least ten other schools in 2011, helping to adapt it to different schools' data collection needs and providing professional learning to schools in use of the tool and also in data collection more broadly. This field officer also worked with another nine schools to support their data collection and analysis needs and presented professional learning about data collection and analysis to literacy and numeracy coordinators and field officers across the system. The field officer has also had an article about assessment, called *Working towards unity*, published in the Australian Literacy Educators' Association (ALEA) publication *Practically Primary*.

### **Partnerships**

All of the schools have engaged in partnerships inside and outside of their immediate school community. These partnerships include not only parents and carers but local churches, not for profit groups, other schools and other government agencies. A number of activities have been conducted that provide support to students, parents/carers and the whole school community. These include:

- Kingsford Smith Primary worked with respected elders in the Sudanese community in 2011 to support their Sudanese students. Together they addressed engagement issues with their students by providing parent forums to establish links between the school and parents, and to explore learning in an Australian school context.
- Breakfast and homework clubs, run and organised by parents and community members, continue to operate at several schools and will continue as long as volunteers are available. Richardson Primary's Koori Homework Club which is run by a Koori parent, for example, is continuing from 2010.
- Parent information nights, grandparents days, sporting carnivals and learning journeys have been conducted and were well attended across all four schools in 2011.

All schools have engaged with the following major agencies:

- Community Services Directorate (CSD), to provide health and family support programs such as the Therapy ACT program at Florey Primary, the Paint and Play program for preschoolers, parent and staff information sessions to explain available services, implementation of the Australian Early Development Index process and a follow up forum and action plan, and the launch at Richardson Primary of the book *On my first day* based on messages about starting school from kindergarten and year 1 students.
- CIT, to provide opportunities for students and their families to broaden their educational horizons through programs offered at the schools and at CIT campuses. The four schools have a memorandum of understanding with CIT and in 2011 CIT offered Try a Trade days for schools, assisted with sporting carnivals, provided barbecues, stalls and displays at school community events, held parent information sessions, ran a parent drop-in centre at Richardson, provided a return to work Learning Options Program at Florey Primary, and provided landscaping at Florey Primary and school beautification through public artwork at Charnwood Dunlop Primary.

- Churches and not for profit groups such as The Smith Family, YMCA, YWCA, Red Cross and Salvation Army, to provide breakfast clubs and after school and homework clubs.

While a focus on developing external relationships is becoming the norm across the system, the Low SES School Communities NP schools are leading the way in cooperatively developing and delivering extra support to their students and communities through such partnerships. These partnerships will continue and will be strengthened. The CIT partnership, in particular, will be extended in 2012.

### **Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students – 1 January to 31 December 2011**

All schools are continuing to support their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through tracking and analysis of performance data.

In 2011 Richardson Primary had the highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students of the four low SES schools, with 33 out of 227 students enrolled at the school. All staff have undertaken cooperative learning with a view to increasing student engagement at the classroom level. This has been a whole school focus over the last two years and has increased student engagement and reduced behaviour issues in classes.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander student attendance and engagement continue to be priorities in the drive to improve student outcomes. The school developed a strategy to decrease absenteeism that involved the recognition of students who achieve 100% attendance, through presentation of a certificate at the school assembly and an honorary mention in the school newsletter. The number of certificates being awarded has risen as this form of recognition becomes valued by students and families as a reflection of what is valued by the school. Table 3.1 shows increases in rates of attendance across all year levels in 2011 when compared with 2010 results.

**Table 3.1: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student attendance rate, Richardson Primary, by year level, 2010 and 2011 (%)**

Year level	Attendance rate	
	2010	2011
Kindergarten	90.6	94.7
Year 1	94.3	100.0
Year 2	88.9	97.7
Year 3	90.3	97.3
Year 4	91.4	96.9
Year 5	86.1	99.0
Year 6	91.2	97.9

Richardson Primary's work on increasing engagement and attendance is also reflected in improvements in student performance in NAPLAN testing. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student results for year 3, 2009 and year 5, 2011 were matched. The matched results show a 20% reduction in the proportion of students falling below the minimum national standard on NAPLAN tests for both spelling (from 60% to 40%) and numeracy (from 40% to 20%).

In 2011 two teachers from Florey Primary participated in the Accepting the Challenge: Improving Learning Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students (Practitioner Based Inquiry)

Project. With a focus on student engagement in guided reading, the practising teacher closely observed identified students for changes in their reading behaviours and attitudes towards reading. The mentor teacher advised and supported the practising teacher during this process. All students made progress in their reading comprehension from term 1 to term 2.

A pilot program is also being developed by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Student Engagement Branch to look at ways of increasing school attendance and will be progressed in 2012.

Due to the low number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across the ACT and in the four Low SES School Communities NP schools the majority of work on improving student achievement is done on an individual basis. Students are identified and tracked through strategies such as Florey Primary's Traffic Lights, or the Putting Faces On The Data Strategy that is used in a large number of ACT schools. The Putting Faces On The Data Strategy involves using data to identify at risk students and creating data walls with photographs of students or name tags to visually identify students in need of extra support.

#### **Support for Other Disadvantaged Student Cohorts – 1 January to 31 December 2011**

Identifying outcomes for any particular student cohort in the Low SES School Communities NP report will not be possible for the ACT because of insufficient student numbers, especially since the ACT has only four participating schools.

Strategies similar to those used to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are also employed with ESL students. At Florey Primary, which has the largest percentage of ESL students, several small special interest and target groups were established during 2011 with programs delivered to engage the students and aid in vocabulary expansion. Excursions included visits to the Canberra Show and local shopping centres to buy food for cooking classes and to provide stimulus for language based activities.

Support programs at Charnwood Dunlop Primary and Kingsford Smith Primary were also developed to support traumatised Sudanese refugee students who were having difficulty adjusting to school and whose behaviour was hampering their engagement and learning.

#### **Challenges to Implementation/Progress – 1 January to 31 December 2011**

Challenges that have impacted on the capacity to implement reform activities have been minimal and have been mitigated by the continuation of a field officer in each of the Low SES School Communities NP schools, regular meetings between the principals and central office support staff, regular professional learning opportunities for the field officers and the continuation of a Project Coordinator position for the Low SES School Communities NP.

#### **Showcase – 1 January to 31 December 2011**

##### **School operational arrangements which encourage innovation and flexibility at Richardson Primary School**

In 2011 Richardson Primary had a total enrolment of 227, including 33 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 52 students with a Language Background Other Than English (LBOTE) and 22 students in special classes.

The prime focus for Richardson Primary since 2010 has been to improve student educational

outcomes. They have done this through:

- raising expectations in a low SES school community
- building teacher efficacy and capacity
- improving student attendance
- whole school adoption of cooperative learning as a means of increasing student engagement.

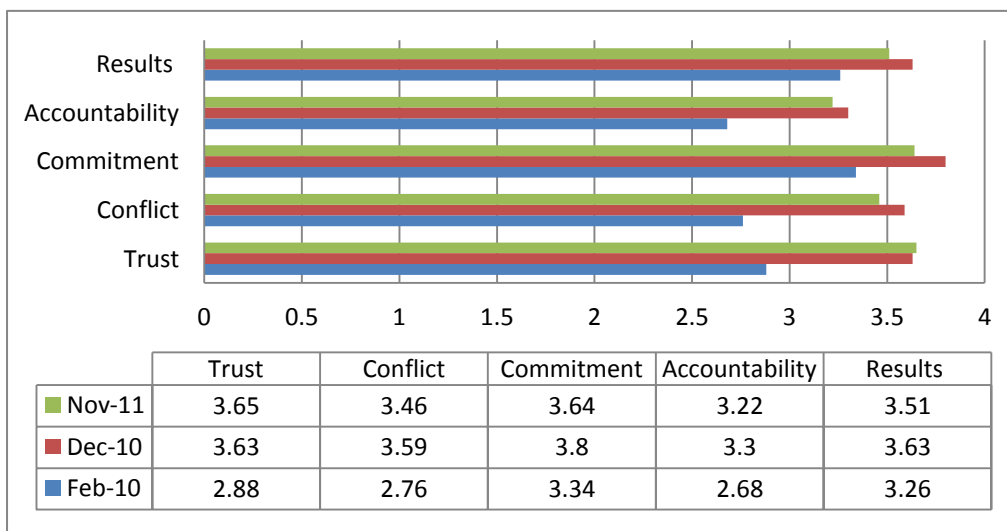
In 2010, the focus for staff was on efficacy and capacity building, and developing a strong learning community leading the development of a shared set of expectations for all students. In 2011, the focus on literacy coaching became more structured through the use of:

- an *Instructional coaching @ RPS opportunities* list, used to guide discussions around coaching
- an English teaching self assessment completed by teachers and used for coaching
- an instructional coaching menu of services offered by the field officer and literacy coordinator
- a coaching conversations summary template used to record the coaching conference.

These tools were adapted from *Practical Literacy Coaching: A collection of tools to support your work* (Miller Burkins, 2009).

At the beginning and end of 2010 and again in November 2011, staff undertook a team self-assessment based on *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* by Patrick Lencioni. The results of the December 2010 self-assessment show significant growth in every area of team effectiveness when compared with February 2010 results (see figure 3.1). Results decreased slightly in November 2011, when compared with December 2010, but this difference was not significant.

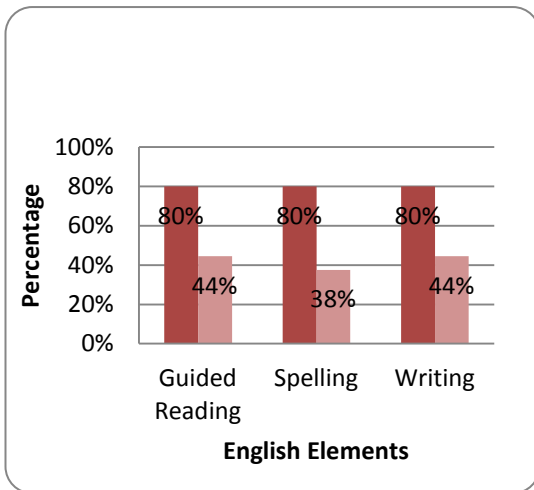
**Figure 3.1: Staff self-assessment of team effectiveness, Richardson Primary, February 2010, December 2010 and November 2011**



Source: Team Effectiveness Report, 2011

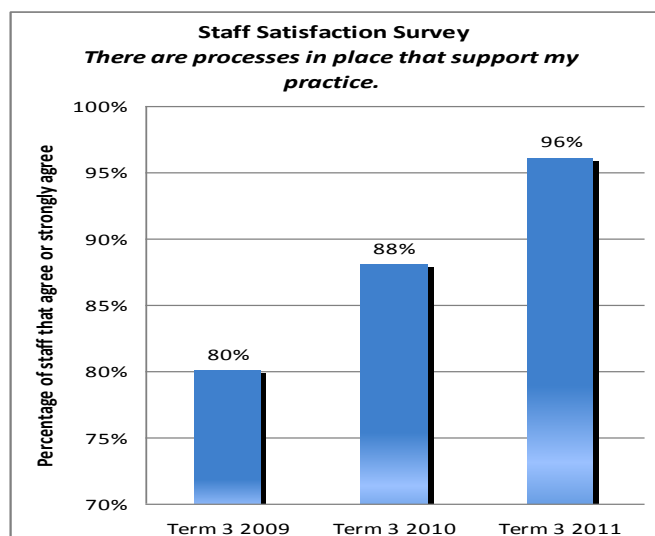
Early in 2011 teachers participated in an English teaching self-assessment. Data from this process, shown in Figure 3.2, was used to inform individual coaching practices. End of year English teaching self-assessments showed the percentage of teachers self-nominating as requiring support in the teaching of guided reading, spelling and writing had decreased by 36%, 42% and 36%, respectively, when compared to the start of the year.

**Figure 3.2: Percentage of teachers self-assessing as needing support in teaching English, Richardson Primary, beginning and end of year, 2011 (%)**



Satisfaction survey results from staff, shown in Figure 3.3, indicate that the practices and processes that are in place support teaching practices at Richardson Primary. One teacher commented, “The approach we took allowed me to engage in professional reading and discussion with my work mates as part of my daily work instead of an extra during my own time.”

**Figure 3.3: Percentage of staff agreeing to the statement “There are processes in place to support my practice”, Richardson Primary, term 3, 2009, 2010 and 2011 (%)**



Source: ETD Staff Satisfaction Survey

In 2011 the External Validation Panel noted, “Adjustments to school organisational structures (e.g.

timetabling changes which allow time for coach and coached to have productive meetings; change in staff supervision personnel) have supported the work of the staff, as has the use of a coaching approach which allows for differing needs of staff.”

While Richardson Primary’s NAPLAN results are still generally below the system average scaled growth scores in reading, they are above the system average in spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy. Writing could not be mapped as the genre types changed between 2009 and 2011 and were not comparable.

Table 3.2 shows that for all matched students (students who sat NAPLAN at Richardson Primary School in year 3 and again in year 5), the average scaled score growth was higher than the ACT system results in all tests for which growth could be shown in 2011.

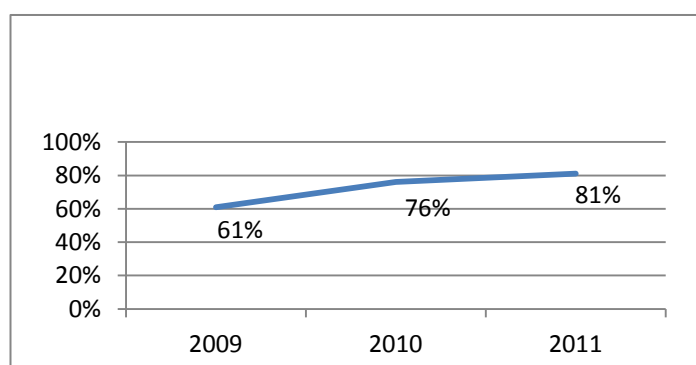
**Table 3.2: Average scaled score growth, within school matched students, Year 3 2009 to Year 5 2011, by school and ACT system (%)**

	ACT System	Richardson Primary
<b>Reading</b>	81.0	83.8
<b>Spelling</b>	75.4	85.3
<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	85.9	100.8
<b>Numeracy</b>	93.5	94.0

The improvements in student achievement also reflect the quantum of work done by the school on student attendance and engagement. Students must be at school and engaged with their learning before any other strategies the school has put in place can have any real effect. Richardson Primary has worked as a whole staff to implement a cooperative approach to learning. Over the last two years all staff have undertaken professional learning in the Kagan approach to cooperative learning. Strategies have been implemented in all classes to increase student engagement with classroom learning.

Formal teaching observations revealed that those classrooms in which cooperative learning was operating well had minimal to no down time for students. Students and teachers have reflected that cooperative learning is more engaging and appears to have a positive effect on achievement for the majority of students. This is supported by results of the student satisfaction survey shown in Figure 3.4.

**Figure 3.4: Percentage of students who agreed with the statement “I am doing work that interests me”, Richardson Primary, 2009, 2010 and 2011 (%)**



Source: ETD Student Satisfaction Survey

Richardson Primary's 2011 Annual School Board Report states "we have observed significantly fewer children leaving class during learning time, an increase in the number of students choosing to read and write for pleasure, and a marked increase in the quality and quantity of student work on display and being shared with the school executive. This suggests students are showing more pride in their learning efforts and achievement, which suggests increased engagement in learning."

Since 2010 the school has been using public acknowledgement and celebration as a strategy to increase attendance. Students who achieve 100% attendance or 1% explained absence receive a congratulatory certificate presented at the school assembly, a mention in the school newsletter and a book prize. Table 3.7 shows increases in rates of attendance across all year levels in 2011 when compared with 2010 results.

**Table 3.3: Student attendance rates, by year level, Richardson Primary, 2010 and 2011 (%)**

Year level	2010	2011
Kindergarten	92.6	97.4
Year 1	93.1	98.2
Year 2	92.0	97.8
Year 3	93.6	98.5
Year 4	94.3	98.2
Year 5	91.8	99.2
Year 6	92.1	98.7

While Richardson Primary has taken the lead with their innovative and wide-ranging program of change, many of the strategies have been adopted across the four Low Socio-economic School Communities NP schools, 12 Literacy and Numeracy NP schools and more broadly across the system. The coaching menu, self assessment, action learning and professional learning models used at Richardson Primary have been shared with field officers and literacy and numeracy coordinators across the system and have been broadly adopted. The field officer from Richardson Primary has spoken in a variety of forums and, with the literacy coordinator, has delivered the Richardson Primary model of professional learning at the Australian Council for Educational Leaders National Conference in Adelaide in October 2011 where it was well received by educational leaders from across Australia.

#### **Innovative and tailored learning opportunities at Charnwood Dunlop Primary School**

In 2011 Charnwood Dunlop Primary had 325 students, including 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 72 LBOTE students and 13 students in special classes.

In 2010 the number of students of Sudanese background at the school increased markedly. Many of these students were found to require additional support around behaviour management. Initially a homework club was set up in collaboration with Belconnen Community Services and the West Belconnen Child and Family Services to provide support for these students and an environment where the parents could engage with the school and be provided with additional support services.

In 2011 the school decided to provide more targeted support for the identified students. The school used some of their Low SES School Communities NP funding to develop a mental health program called Children's Opportunity for Resilience Education (CORE) to assist students, particularly those



suffering from ongoing trauma. The program was developed by a behaviour therapist who was employed to work with traumatised children three days a week for two to three hours. The therapist worked with a small group of students and was supported by a learning support assistant who received on the job training.

Throughout the year this program was refined and expanded to include more children with engagement issues. The program ran as follows:

- Term 1: CORE program targeted at Sudanese students.
- Term 2: Three groups (years 5 and 6) supported to build resilience, confidence and anger management.
- Term 3: development of The Beach, a time out space where children needing a break from the classroom work with a teacher on a literacy-based program.

The Beach name was chosen to reflect the school’s Fish philosophy which is based on four pillars: Be There; Have Fun; Choose Your Attitude; and Make Their Day. A play based program has been also developed for Kindergarten children. The Beach accommodates individual or small groups of two to three students at a time.

These programs are having an effect on the culture of the whole school as it lowers disruptions to learning for all students and allows for the focus to move from student management to student learning. The impact of this program on student engagement with schooling is reflected in the student satisfaction surveys which show a substantial increase from 2010 to 2011, as shown in Table 3.4.

**Table 3.4: Percentage of students who agreed with the statement “Overall I am getting a good education at this school”, by Richardson Primary and ACT System, 2010 and 2011 (%)**

<b>2010</b>	School	74
	System	80
<b>2011</b>	School	98
	System	80

Source: ETD Student Satisfaction Survey

### **Strengthened school accountability at Florey Primary**

In 2011 Florey Primary had a total enrolment of 429 students, including eight Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 159 LBOTE students and 13 students in special classes.

In 2010 the field officer at Florey Primary designed a central student performance database to collect the multiple pieces of data a school collects on students. The database has been developed over the last two years to store a range of student information including ESL and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self identification, any intervention received, results of assessment, and performance against developmental tracking tools such as the *First Steps Reading Map of Development* or *Count Me In Too SENA Test*.

In 2011, 100% of staff utilised this tool to track student literacy and numeracy achievement. Data such as Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (PIPS) and SMART data in reading, writing, punctuation and grammar, spelling and numeracy are being collected and analysed and used to inform teaching practice. The school has also been involved with data collection as a part of the Middle Years Mental Computation Project.

The data is used for the identification and analysis of students who are at risk. Records on individual

students, groups such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, ESL, boys, girls, class and year groups can be called up for specific data analysis to ensure the special needs of a group or individuals are addressed.

As a school with nearly 40% of their students identifying as ESL, there has been whole school professional learning in Teaching English as a Second Language in mainstream classrooms. Staff have also worked with UC on ESL focus areas. Executive staff identified the need to develop a more effective use of resources in order to meet the needs of learners. This, and the recommendations of the academic partner, had a direct impact on the delivery of ESL teaching and student engagement in classroom learning.

Teacher capacity has been built across the school through action research, coaching and professional learning. The school is developing balanced numeracy and literacy programs, with the whole school participating in the dedicated literacy block each morning. In 2011 they have developed a literacy moderation plan with rubrics to ensure consistency. A criterion referenced marking rubric for writing has been developed by the field officer at Florey Primary in collaboration with three other field officers.

### **Sustainability**

In 2011 all schools had a field officer whose role was to work on reform areas in line with identified school needs, the Smarter Schools NP school plans, and school Operational Plans. As part of this planning the field officer and school are considering the sustainability of any programs. Where possible programs are being integrated and embedded into business as usual for schools. Old practices are being replaced by new practices, innovations are becoming normal practice and staff expectations are accommodating the new conditions.

Partnerships with parents and external providers are becoming entrenched in school operational planning and new partnerships are being developed. As part of their 2012 planning, schools are being asked to look at the sustainability of their practices and how the Low Socio-economic School Communities NP initiatives can become part of their core business.

## Section 4 – Literacy and Numeracy

### Overview – 1 January to 31 December 2011

#### Public Schools

##### Knowledge and capacity building

In 2011 knowledge and capacity building have been a major system focus in ACT public schools. A program of professional learning was developed for literacy and numeracy coordinators across the system, building on the professional learning offered to field officers in 2010. Once a term, forums were held for coordinators and field officers with professional learning provided by guest speakers, staff of the ETD Literacy and Numeracy Section or field officers. At every forum, time was allocated for sharing and workshop style learning, peer learning and networking. Field officers acted as mentors and subject experts at the forums, sharing the learning gained through their specialised role as literacy and numeracy coaches in the Literacy and Numeracy NP schools.

All professional learning is done in alignment with the ETD *Literacy and Numeracy Strategy 2009-2013*, the Quality Teaching model and the three Smarter Schools NPs reform areas. Between April and July, 93 literacy and numeracy coordinators also attended professional learning in coaching. These teachers have a 50% coaching role and therefore use this learning in their role.

A survey of schools with coordinator positions was undertaken in June 2011 to ascertain the impact of the literacy and numeracy coordinator program in schools. Principals, coordinators and classroom teachers were asked to rate the impact of the coordinators in building teacher capacity. On a rating scale of one to five, with one being little impact and five being high impact, the majority of principals and coordinators rated the program as a four or five, and the majority of teachers surveyed rated the program's impact as three to five.

##### Leadership and system engagement

During 2011 substantial learning occurred through the Literacy and Numeracy NP, with staff sharing knowledge and experience at the network, system, territory and national level. Examples of the work that occurred include:

- Four field officers developed a criterion based reference tool for writing that is now being used across the system.
- A number of field officers were involved in presenting a series of data workshops to coordinators and teachers.
- Field officers, who are all trained as facilitators in at least one system endorsed program, presented professional learning in literacy and numeracy to individual schools, clusters, networks and centrally.
- Staff from schools and central office presented at the Australian Literacy Educators National Conference in Melbourne in July.
- Representatives from two schools presented at the Literacy and Numeracy NP Forum in Brisbane in November 2011.

##### Catholic Systemic Schools

A significant range of activity has been implemented in schools progressively throughout 2011 based on whole school intervention and leadership training, with the aim of improving evidenced based teaching,

whole school engagement with literacy and numeracy, and performance monitoring. These activities, including providing leaders with professional learning, mentoring and program support, and the extended and improved use of data, are having a positive impact on improving educational outcomes for students. They are geared towards teachers implementing effective programs to ensure each student's individual learning needs are addressed through targeted learning programs based on sound pedagogy. Literacy and Numeracy NP funding has also supported literacy and numeracy initiatives in schools outside the NP where a specific need has been identified.

## **Independent Schools**

### **Providing a balanced literacy program: utilising both phonic and whole language approaches**

Along with the assistance of literacy consultant, Barbara Brann, staff have developed an approach to word study called Word Work, a conceptual, differentiated and inquiry approach to studying words, grammatical concepts and the meaning of print in context. The program involves a progressive scope and sequence of phonemic awareness from pre-kindergarten to year 6. The evidence underpinning the Word Work approach has been informed by best practice, including the work of educational author and consultant, Shane Templeton, and Barbara Brann.

During the reporting period, the Junior School Leadership Team have supported staff throughout the implementation of our Word Work program through intensive professional development including:

- establishing a school network leader position to support staff in the implementation of the program and to track the progress of students through the program through one on one mentoring, demonstration lessons and assistance with monitoring and recording progress
- Conversations Mornings run by the school executive and frequent newsletter articles aimed at educating the parent community about the approach and empowering parents in the ways they can support their children at home
- 3-day in school and out of hours professional development at the start of 2011 for Junior School staff on *Spelling: It Can Make Sense*, by Barbara Brann, involving theoretical knowledge and practical application of the new approach through demonstration and mentoring of teachers within the classroom setting
- an evening session for parents, presented by Barbara Brann, involving theoretical knowledge and practical ways to help their children at home to align with the school's focus
- conducting professional development sessions for teachers across the Primary Years Programme Network and hosting an Australian Literacy Educator's Association Classroom Chat at Radford College to share our inquiry approach to word study with colleagues across the ACT
- dedicated staff meeting and in-school release time to train staff and work through implementation challenges and needs.

Students have developed a greater understanding of the links within the English language and positive changes to student attitudes to spelling are evident. At the start of 2010, students in year 5 were asked what the word 'spelling' made them think of. Responses such as 'words', 'boring', 'corrections', 'learning', 'tests', 'syllables', 'attempts', 'alphabet', 'sounds', 'writing' and 'sore hands' were common replies. When asked the same question in 2011, the students responded with words and phrases such as 'vowels', 'graphs', 'digraphs and other elements of the English language', 'rules we follow', 'all about words', 'helps you improve and it's great playing games with friends'.

## 2011 Significant Achievements/Activities/Highlights – 1 January to 31 December 2011

### Public Schools

#### Effective and evidence based teaching of literacy and numeracy

A significant amount of professional learning was delivered to schools across the system through Literacy and Numeracy NP funding in 2011, as shown in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1: Professional learning programs supporting literacy and numeracy, 2011**

Programs	Participation
First Steps Writing	12 schools (6 NP schools)
First steps Writing Facilitator Training	21 participants
First Steps Reading	3 schools
First Steps Speaking and Listening Facilitator Training	5 participants
Teaching Persuasive Writing	7 schools (1 NP school)
BEE Spelling	10 schools (3 NP schools)
Teaching Grammar	1 school
10 Things a Primary Teacher needs to know about Grammar	54 participants
10 Things a Secondary Teacher needs to know about Grammar	30 participants
Working with Struggling Readers	63 participants
Running Records	1 school
Middle Years Mental Computation	6 schools (1 NP school)
Count Me In Too Facilitator Training	18 participants
Count Me In Too Number	5 schools (2 NP schools)
Count Me In Too Measurement	1 school (1 NP school)
Teaching ESL to Students in Mainstream Classes	1 school
ESL in the Mainstream for Early Learners	12 participants
InSinc facilitator training	16 participants
Foundations of Coaching	93 participants
Robyn Ewing – Action Learning	100+ participants (including representatives from all NP schools)

Professional learning was delivered by field officers and facilitators trained through Literacy and Numeracy NP funding. Participants received resource and support materials and follow up support was available to schools from facilitators, after delivery of the initial course, to support implementation and embedding of new knowledge.

Professional Learning was also developed and delivered to support field officers and literacy and numeracy coordinators in their roles in schools. Literacy and numeracy learning was delivered by field officers, members of the Literacy and Numeracy Section of ETD, and also by external expert presenters including:

- Dianne Siemon, Professor of Education, RMIT
- Robyn Ewing - Professor of Teacher Education and the Arts at the University of Sydney
- Associate Professor Brian Cambourne, Principal Fellow at the University of Wollongong (UOW)
- Jacqui Rammage - Professor, School of Mathematics and Applied Statistics, UOW
- author Anthony Eaton
- Dr Lyn Sharratt, Superintendent of Curriculum and Instructional Services, York Region District School Board, Canada
- Misty Adoniou, Senior Lecturer, Language Literacy TESL, UC
- Associate Professor Kaye Lowe, Language and Literacy, Faculty of Education Director, National Capital Centre for Literacy Research, UC.

Training for the coaching portion of their roles was provided to two new field officers, and 91 literacy and numeracy coordinators and school leaders.

Knowledge and capacity building was a major focus in 2011 and the performance of the Literacy and Numeracy NP schools against the 12 targets reflects the success of this strategy.

Table 4.2 shows that ACT public Literacy and Numeracy NP schools fully achieved 11 of their 12 targets.

**Table 4.2: NAPLAN targets and results in ACT public Literacy and Numeracy NP schools, 2011**

<b>Mandated NAPLAN Measures</b>	<b>Target Group</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Results</b>
Students at or above national minimum standard (ALL) (Reading and Numeracy)	Year 3 Reading	95.7	97.2
	Year 5 Reading	94.6	95.8
	Year 3 Numeracy	98.1	97.6
	Year 5 Numeracy	96.5	97.8
Mean Scale Score (ALL) (Reading and Numeracy)	Year 3 Reading	411.5	440.5
	Year 5 Reading	502.4	515.7
	Year 3 Numeracy	405.6	417.9
	Year 5 Numeracy	486.4	507.8
Students at or above national minimum standard (ALL INDIGENOUS) (Reading and Numeracy)*	Year 3 Reading	86.8	89.8
	Year 5 Reading	86.6	90.9
	Year 3 Numeracy	91.3	92.0
	Year 5 Numeracy	87.8	90.9

Schools have developed programs to support their students and strategies to address groups or individuals at risk of poor performance in literacy and numeracy. Teachers are becoming more skilful at developing differentiated instruction to cater for student needs, and at monitoring performance.

The professional learning available to schools, the opportunities for sharing and networking provided through regular meetings of field officers, literacy and numeracy officers and ESL teachers, and the subsequent implementation and embedding of endorsed programs and of strategies and techniques learnt from subject experts and their peers have been highlights for schools in 2011. This was evidenced through:

- results of a questionnaire sent to a sample of system principals in June
- results of a questionnaire sent to Literacy and Numeracy NP school principals in August
- a coaching report from field officers in September
- school visits throughout the year
- regular meetings with Literacy and Numeracy NP school principals
- field officer professional learning forums, and
- feedback from principals and field officers.

A number of schools are engaging in action learning in identified areas. Others have trialled new approaches to the teaching of literacy and numeracy or re-examined their practices such as guided reading, Writer's Notebook, running records, use of First Steps continuums to inform teaching, spelling journals, and cooperative reading.

For all schools 2011 was a year of consolidation, and a number of schools were migrating across from a focus on literacy to a focus on numeracy. Field officers and principals consistently commented on the embedding of new knowledge into practice, the growth of a shared understanding and common language for professional discussions and the development and establishment of a consistent way of doing things.

### **Strong school leadership and whole school engagement with literacy and numeracy**

During 2011 leadership has been shown at the school, network, system and national level by school leaders, field officers and teachers. School leaders, field officers and teachers have delivered professional learning to schools, groups of their peers and at network and system workshops.

Field officers have been involved in delivering a series of data workshops, and four field officers developed a criterion based reference tool for writing that is being used by a number of schools across the system. They have also provided professional learning in using the tool to improve teaching practices and student outcomes.

The learning occurring through the Literacy and Numeracy NP has also been presented at the national level with staff from schools and central office presenting at several national forums, including:

- July 2011 - Australian Literacy Educators Association National Conference in Melbourne.  
Presentations included:
  - whole school approach to literacy
  - school-based action research in literacy

- *Literacy Coaching: a whole system takes on the challenge* which described the coaching focus of field officers and coordinators and their part in implementing the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy.
- November 2011 – Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership Forum in Brisbane.

Presentations included:

- individualised student focus - individualised student learning intentions is a whole school approach for differentiation through assessment for learning. This approach aligns teacher work from the planning stage through to reporting. Regular and ongoing communication with parents provides specific strategies for support at home.
- Building capacity through coaching - increasing engagement in learning across the school community.

Principals are engaging with the concept of Instructional Leadership and are rearranging their days so they can spend time in classrooms interacting with students and teachers in a more direct manner. Their knowledge of literacy and numeracy best practice and their role as coaches in the school are becoming more explicit. Through these practices whole school engagement with literacy and numeracy is being achieved and a shared philosophy, knowledge base and suite of practices are developed and considered part of the school's core business.

#### **Monitoring student and school literacy and numeracy performance to identify where support is needed**

All schools have data collection tools based on the system endorsed programs, and locally decided and developed tools based on school programs. Schools are using the Improve Diagnostic Tool (IDT) developed by Education Services Australia that is based on NAPLAN style test questions that can be formatted to suit class, groups or individual assessment. IDT provides a bank of questions that can be used to track student performance and identify areas of strength or areas needing intervention. One field officer has done a significant amount of work to embed IDT in the practices of his school and has demonstrated the approach to the other Literacy and Numeracy NP school principals and school network leaders. Schools are looking at ways to include IDT in their assessment schedule.

Expertise developed in the Literacy and Numeracy NP schools continues to inform and support individual schools and the system. In network workshops for literacy and numeracy coordinators, field officers and school improvement officers have run professional learning in data use and analysis.

A database developed by a field officer to collect and track student data was being used in ten schools by term three with a number of others looking to adopt it or develop a similar data tracking system. In each of the 10 schools support was given to introduce the database, localise it to suit school requirements, and provide professional learning and follow up support.

In April 2011 Dr Lyn Sharratt, Superintendent of Curriculum and Instructional Services, York Region District School Board, Canada, ran a workshop with the field officers where they looked at data tracking and how to use data to make a difference for students. One of the techniques that she introduced was Putting Faces On The Data. This concept has been widely adopted by schools, and many have created data walls where information linked to individual students is displayed visually to allow easy identification of outlying students, either gifted or struggling, and identify trends in groups of students. A variety of tracking tools are used to create the data walls including PM Reading Benchmarks, SENA numeracy testing, and First Steps Reading and Writing maps of development phases.

Dr Sharratt also introduced the concept of case management of student performance to provide a



responsive, personalised approach to differentiated teaching and learning. In a case management approach, school leaders, the class teacher and specialist teachers meet to look at individual student's strengths and needs and plan an appropriate program of strategies and interventions to support future growth and development.

Significant work being undertaken in schools to develop tools to support evidence based assessment of students. Four field officers spent several months in 2011 working on a criterion based reference tool for writing. They used the First Steps Writing maps of development and created a rubric that teachers could use to assess student writing and plan for future teaching. Schools are developing criterion based assessment tools and rubrics to provide consistency in assessment practices.

### **Catholic Systemic Schools**

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

All five Literacy and Numeracy NP schools within the Canberra Goulburn Diocese have utilised NP funding to implement a strong research based approach to the teaching of Mathematics. This approach entails a synthesis of David Sousa's Brain Based Learning Program and Pearson and Gallagher's Gradual Release of Responsibility Model, aimed at achieving an effective and consistent approach to the teaching of Mathematics. It required all teachers to have common understandings and language around pedagogical approaches and to provide students with a contextual, relevant and effective learning environment.

A range of strategies were employed to achieve this outcome:

- Professional learning in Brain Based Learning and the pedagogical approach of the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model, to support teachers in programming learning experiences for their students.
- Embedding of literacy blocks into school practice.
- Mentoring using classroom observation and feedback and during programming sessions with classroom teachers.
- Implementation of the Whole, Part, Whole approach to teaching and learning.
- Implementation of Cognitive Closure, which involved a metacognitive approach for students towards their learning.

As well as targeting the Literacy and Numeracy NP schools, this approach has been adopted system wide across the Diocese, and has led to improved pedagogical practice, a whole school/system approach to the teaching of mathematics and the use of consistent and uniform language amongst staff and students regarding the teaching and learning of mathematics.

Saint Michael's Primary School Kaleen, Saint Thomas Aquinas Primary School West Belconnen, and Saint Matthew's Primary School Page have all implemented the research based pedagogical approach of First Steps in the teaching of reading. In 2011, teaching staff continued to receive professional learning in First Steps and engaged in mentoring using an in-school mentoring program combined with mentoring partnerships with the Catholic Education Office. They continued to provide each other with professional support in teaching and programming through class visits and feedback using the Two Stars and A Wish approach and team programming workshops in partnership with literacy officers in the CEO. There was an increased focus on assessment in 2011, in which analysis of assessment to inform whole class, small group and independent teaching focus was explored, as was the use of balanced assessment of observation, conversation and product.

Home reading was also a focus. All Literacy and Numeracy NP schools continued to promote home reading and provide parent information sessions in home reading throughout 2011. Saint Michael's Primary School in Kaleen continued to audit and purchase reading resources, to maintain the Reading Bags for ongoing focus on reading strategies between home and school, and update the school website.

These efforts led to improved pedagogical practice, stronger parent partnerships through the home reading program and a whole school approach to the teaching of reading.

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

School Leadership teams within the Literacy and Numeracy NP schools have developed a number of whole school agreed practices:

- Literacy and Numeracy Blocks in class timetables.
- School wide uniform programming proformas, designed and used by teachers to reflect teaching practices and learning activities consistent with Brain Based Learning and the Gradual Release of Responsibility model.
- School wide systems of tracking achievement and diagnostic data.
- Mentoring between teachers, including lesson study activities, as part of everyday school practice.
- Ongoing audit and replenishment/update of current literacy and numeracy resources, provided for in school budgets, to support teachers in improved pedagogical approaches.

The aim of these measures was to create within schools and teachers the sense that there was invested support for the new way of teaching literacy and numeracy which was both financial and pedagogical.

Strategies employed to achieve this include:

- whole school changes to timetabling related to sustained and uninterrupted Literacy and Numeracy Blocks
- audit of literacy and mathematical resources and increased purchasing as required
- ongoing school wide professional learning, including in First Steps, through course participation, staff meetings and workshops
- whole school collaboration to finalise Agreed Practices
- promotion of Reading Recovery by leadership teams
- Numeracy Teams established in most schools
- school wide systems of tracking diagnostic and achievement data.

Staff were expected to use the agreed practice programming proformas, to program in teams, and conduct the required diagnostic assessment to inform their teaching. Leadership teams provided professional learning opportunities, agreed practice policies and promoted tracking assessment data in literacy and numeracy. School budgets were also examined to purchase appropriate literacy and mathematics resources to support the new style of teaching and learning.

Tracking and analysing assessment data in literacy was an increased focus within the school and across the National Partnership schools. This included analysis of pre and post test information from 2009 to 2011 in NAPLAN and PAT R Reading, Kindergarten Assessment and Year 1 Observation survey data 2010 and 2011, and Reading Recovery levels for students entering the program and discontinued students from 2010 to 2011.

Positive impacts of these initiatives include:

- improved pedagogical practice
- common language is being used across the schools
- there is a whole school approach to the teaching of reading and mathematics
- resources and their place in the teaching of mathematics are being more critically examined.

### **Monitoring student and school performance to identify where support is needed**

All schools continued to monitor student performance in relation to literacy and numeracy through a variety of assessment instruments and recorded data, enabling teachers to target teaching programs more specifically to students' needs and to identify students at risk that may require intervention.

In numeracy, Kindergarten Assessment requires the use of SENA 1 from the Count Me In Too (CMIT) Framework. This assessment instrument is continued throughout kindergarten, year 1 and year 2 if required. SENA 2 is also used by most schools for years 3 and 4, if not as a whole class focus then as a way of monitoring those students at risk. PAT Maths (3rd edition) is used for years 3 to 6. Tracking these students' achievements is an ongoing focus of the schools. Analysis of the PAT Maths is conducted to look for trends or patterns throughout all strands of mathematics.

Data is also used to identify students where intervention may be needed. A Numeracy Intervention Program, based on the Reading Recovery Program, is used in some form in all schools. At risk students are identified by teachers and through assessment data. Further analysis of at risk students is conducted through the Nelson Assessment Kit. After this analysis, at risk students are placed in a one-on-one intervention program, four mornings a week for half an hour with a specially trained teacher for a period of up to fourteen weeks.

In literacy, tracking of student assessment data using First Steps student profiles, PAT Reading, Running Records, Kindergarten Assessment and Year 1 Observation Surveys, ensured that tracking of all student achievement for years K to 6 was a continued focus. Decisions were made based on tracking assessment data and on early literacy requirements for the junior years. Students making slow progress were referred for further literacy support in all schools, while at Saint Michael's Primary Kaleen, intensive teacher support was provided in literacy blocks in the junior years, where up to five teachers were present in literacy blocks in year 1 classes through timetabling and staffing arrangements.

Saint Michael's Primary School Kaleen, Saint Thomas Aquinas Primary School West Belconnen and Saint Matthew's Primary School Page continued the Reading Recovery program and increased teacher expertise was shared amongst the teaching staff, particularly in programming and through professional mentoring. At all schools, discontinued Reading Recovery students continued to be monitored throughout years 1 and 2.

NAPLAN Data Analysis is used to target teaching to student needs, inform teaching programs and to identify trends related to literacy and numeracy. In all three Literacy and Numeracy NP Catholic schools in the ACT, NAPLAN data show an improvement in reading, while data in Reading Recovery for students within the Reading Recovery program in 2011 and for discontinued students in years 1 and 2 demonstrate continued and sustained progress for the majority of students.

At Saint Thomas Aquinas West Belconnen and Saint Matthew's Primary Page, changes in staffing necessitated retraining in First Steps and further mentoring through programming workshops and lesson observations and feedback, but teachers reported increased levels of professional trust, confidence and

expertise in the teaching of reading and in the analysis of assessments.

At Saint Michael's Primary Kaleen, Saint Matthew's Primary Page and Saint Thomas Aquinas West Belconnen, parents reported appreciation of the intensive reading intervention program and noted the levels of progress and increased confidence for their children. Parents noted improvements in school/home partnerships as a result of increased levels of communication via workshops, newsletters, reading diaries and the school website, which impacted upon their knowledge of student progress and reading requirements. The parents reported that home reading was a more enjoyable activity due to guidance provided by the school relating to reading requirements and strategies and practical ways of providing support in reading at home. Parents also noted that increased levels of communication, stemming from parent education and student feedback through the home reading diary, enhanced parent, student and teacher relationships.

Strategies for monitoring student and school performance to identify where support is needed included:

- professional learning by Numeracy Intervention Teachers and Reading Recovery Teachers
- tracking of students after intervention was completed
- further support provided to students making little or no progress
- mentoring using class observation and feedback
- embedding literacy blocks into school practice
- implementation of the Whole, Part, Whole approach to teaching and learning
- mentoring of students/teachers when transitioning back into the classroom after the program
- teacher group analysis of data to inform practices
- student group work based on data analysis.

These strategies led to improved pedagogical practice, improvement in targeted student activities using diagnostic and growth data, stronger partnerships with parents and improvement in achievement in reading using diagnostic and growth data.

### **Independent Schools**

#### **Effective and evidence-based teaching of literacy and numeracy**

ACT Independent schools have put a number of strategies into place over the past 12 months to monitor and evaluate effective teaching and learning strategies. Two staff members have engaged First Steps Reading Facilitators professional development to ensure that up to date and best practice instructions are being delivered. These individuals have relayed the information to other staff through a course of in school workshops.

Data analysis to support evidence based teaching has been a high priority over the last academic year. NAPLAN results analysis is one such area. In 2011 the Top 20 students in relation to improvement levels from 2010 have received recognition and rewards in an attempt to raise the competition aspect of the testing process. We find this highly effective in raising effort and results in the education of boys.

#### **Strong school leadership and whole school engagement with literacy and numeracy**

Part of the school based leadership and whole school engagement process has been a number of competitions and challenges that have raised awareness about the importance of literacy and numeracy.

The ACT Brumbies rugby players have visited the school on a number of occasions to help with reading

and comprehension exercises in a bid to stress the importance of Literacy in a young man's life.

That is a Strange Place to Read has been a school wide photo competition designed to encourage staff and young men to take part in reading for fun. Photos of staff and students reading novels in strange and interesting places have been taken and displayed to show the importance of literacy but more importantly, the enjoyment of reading.

Literacy Hour has been timetabled on a daily basis to occur from 9.00-10.00am each day. This allows optimum time to be spent with young fresh minds as well as the opportunity to implement streaming classes for years 4 to 6 in numeracy and literacy.

Assessment templates have been revised to incorporate a table that highlights the numeracy and literacy skills needed to complete the assessment accurately. This gives the teacher direct opportunity to highlight numeracy and literacy value in all key learning areas.

### **Monitoring student and school literacy and numeracy performance to identify where support is needed**

The Cars and Stars Reading and Comprehension Program has been purchased and implemented in years 5 and 6 to allow for development to be monitored and encouraged in a structured formalised way. Continued Comprehension testing throughout this reading program allows staff, students and parents to observe progress and individual needs. Regular staff meetings and Weekly Curriculum meetings allow the team to discuss areas of concern with regard to academic development in literacy and numeracy.

## **Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples – 1 January to 31 December 2011**

### **Public Schools**

Numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across the ACT are low. In 2011, the highest percentage in the Literacy and Numeracy NP schools is 10.37%, with a total of 165 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across the 12 schools.

### **Data collection and tracking**

All schools support their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through analysis of data to identify needs, often through a case management approach, and translation into differentiated classroom teaching practices and targeted support if needed. All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are required to have a personalised learning plan that is formulated in consultation with teachers, parents and the student. These plans are used to track individual student progress against agreed targets.

Schools are continuing to strengthen identification and tracking tools for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The concept of Putting Faces On The Data is used to identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, particularly as these are small in number and at risk of being under identified. Annotated student identifiers are attached to data walls and to the school database to assist in tracking particular groups or individuals. These selective data sets assist with the analysis of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student performance. Tracking tools have been developed for recording attendance and performance against school based literacy and numeracy programs, NAPLAN and PIPs, and any intervention or extra support the student receives.

In 2011 the ACT exceeded its literacy and numeracy NAPLAN targets for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as shown in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results, 2011 (%)**

<b>Mandated NAPLAN Measures</b>	<b>Target Group</b>	<b>2011 Target</b>	<b>2011 Results</b>
Students at or above national minimum standard (ALL Indigenous) (Reading and Numeracy)	Year 3 Reading	86.8	89.8
	Year 5 Reading	86.6	90.9
	Year 3 Numeracy	91.3	92.0
	Year 5 Numeracy	87.8	90.9

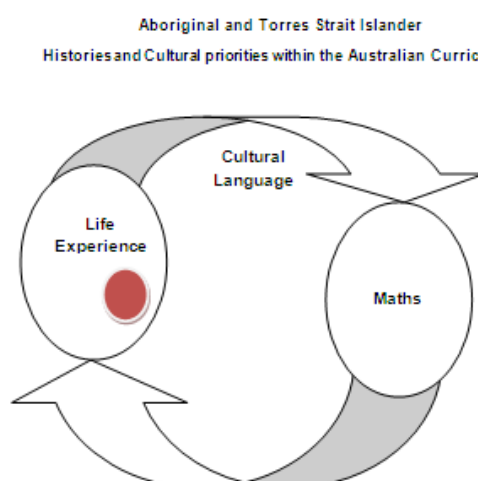
*Note:* Students at or above national minimum standard (ALL Indigenous) (Reading and Numeracy). Targets represents a one percentage point increase in proportion of all years 3 and 5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in ACT schools at or above national minimum standard in reading or numeracy compared with the performance of 2008 years 3 and 5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

### **Catholic Systemic Schools**

Activities across the system supporting improvements in literacy and numeracy outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students include:

- First Steps
- Interactive Numeracy (Numeracy Circles)
- small groups, as well as linking student learning to Grace Sara’s YuMi Deadly Maths program
- Life experience (story), cultural language, maths concepts and critical reflection (Figure 4.1)

**Figure 4.1: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultural priorities within the Australian Curriculum**



Story telling is an important part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student learning. Teachers are encouraged to link the learning to life experience through story telling which assists engagement of these students.

For the second year, personal learning plans have been implemented system wide for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from year 1 to year 6 using SMART Goals to assist in the development of achievable and successful goals for the students. These plans are reviewed in semester 2 of each year.

Relevant professional learning that has been conducted includes First Steps, Interactive Numeracy (Numeracy Circles), Aboriginal Education Workers Cultural activities, Maths Bags and using SMART Goals to develop personalised learning plans for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from year 1 to year 6.

Each school has an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contact teacher who is allocated a number of relief days to meet with parents, classroom and learning support teachers and assist in developing and implementing programs. This initiative is in its third year and the benefits of increased parent/carer engagement and better understanding of the learning targeted goals for the students is being realised.

Other strategies that have been adopted include:

- small group work
- one-on-one instruction
- initial testing of students
- guidance given to classroom teachers.

A number of schools who have participated in programs that have targeted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have been provided with guidance to assist in targeting the specific needs of individual students. Overall 63 Aboriginal students participated in such programs with their individual schools and all Literacy and Numeracy NP schools participated in specific programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Improvements in the NAPLAN results of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students between 2009 and 2011 demonstrates the success of these achievements. The student growth data provides good evidence of improvement in performance and significant increase in growth over the two year period from Year 3 to Year 5.

### **Support for Other Disadvantaged Student Cohorts (if applicable) – 1 January to 31 December 2011**

In addition to the normal support offered to ESL students through the provision to each school of a designated ESL position based on numbers of identified ESL students and their English language proficiency rating, support for ESL students was a focus area under this partnership in 2011.

In November 2011 an ESL Conference was held with guest speakers Dr Joe Lo Bianco, Professor, Language and Literacy Education, Melbourne University and Misty Adoniou, Senior Lecturer, Language Literacy TESL, UC. The Conference was attended by 79 ESL teachers who rated the presentations very highly and as being useful to their work. ESL teachers also attended professional learning sessions with the field officers and literacy and numeracy coordinators on several occasions to ensure they received current information and that they were working as part of a team in schools delivering high quality literacy and numeracy instruction.

In 2011 ETD identified the increasing number of refugee students as a group needing special support in literacy. A working party was convened to look at the needs of this group of students, consisting of subject experts from schools and central office. A draft document was developed and further drafting and consultation will take place in 2012.

### **Challenges to Implementation/Progress – 1 January to 31 December 2011**

#### **Public Schools**

2011 was a year of consolidation which, apart from some staff changes of principals and field officers, ran very smoothly. At the end of 2011 three field officers won deputy principal positions and had to be replaced for the start of 2012. Three new principals were appointed to schools during 2011 and another was appointed for the start of the 2012 school year.

#### **Catholic Systemic Schools**

One of the major challenges for the Literacy and Numeracy NP implementation in 2011 was staff turnover. Although the CEO facilitator for numeracy began in January 2011, the task and complexity of the position, and the need to establish relationships across all Literacy and Numeracy NP schools, made the progress during the first half of 2011 slower than desired. There were also many trained and up-skilled staff within schools who either moved schools or left the diocese altogether. This required significant time being spent in professional learning sessions to support new staff. Specialised Numeracy Intervention Teachers also needed to be intensively trained before they could begin intervention projects within their schools and two schools had new principals. This meant significant time spent establishing relationships and discussing priorities and goals within their schools with respect to numeracy.

Staff turnover at Saint Thomas Aquinas West Belconnen and Saint Matthew's Primary Page, including a number of Early Career Teacher appointments, created heightened levels of teacher anxiety from new staff who felt unable to comply with whole school Agreed Practice in teaching and programming using the First Steps approach in reading. Professional development needed to be repeated in these schools, and increased programming workshops and mentor structures were required to support new staff.

The Australian Curriculum implementation timeline in English coincided with increased programming expectations in First Steps for all three Literacy and Numeracy NP schools, which caused increased levels of anxiety amongst teaching staff and an increased reluctance to implement key programming approaches due to lack of knowledge and expertise.



A change of principal at both Saint Matthew's Primary Page and Saint Michael's Primary Kaleen and the appointment of a new Literacy Officer at the Catholic Education Office meant a loss of momentum between 2010 and 2011 in National Partnership literacy plan implementation as new relationships needed to be established, needs reassessed and communicated, and new plans implemented.

A number of strategies were employed to address these challenges:

- The literacy officer increased school visits to provide programming workshops and participate in teacher mentor programs, building relationships through partnerships.
- Increased communication between school executive, Reading Recovery teachers and Literacy Contact teachers provided increasing levels of in-school support for new staff.
- Regular Literacy Contact Days conducted system wide reinforced First Steps across all regions, increased levels of communication within the Literacy and Numeracy NP cluster and across the system. In particular, a midyear showcase at the Literacy Contact Day celebrated achievements and provided a forum for investigation of effective pedagogical approaches, useful resources and successful strategies.
- Visits by the senior curriculum officer facilitated newly appointed principals in understanding the Literacy and Numeracy NP requirements and system directions.
- The assistant principals continued to report on key reform elements and implement the National Partnership Literacy Plan, communicating requirements to the new principals, taking on administrative requirements such as scheduling professional development, timetabling teacher mentoring and programming workshops.
- The Reading Recovery cluster was an effective network and due to increased levels of expertise in teaching reading, was an important source of professional support in school and across schools for class teachers; particularly Early Career Teachers and for the newly appointed principals.

## **Showcase – 1 January to 31 December 2011**

### **Public Schools**

#### **Effective and focussed literacy teaching at Macgregor Primary**

Macgregor Primary School is a preschool to year 6 school with a total enrolment of 407 students in 2011. There are 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander and 77 LBOTE students at the school.

Macgregor has maintained a strong focus on the development of a whole school approach to the teaching of literacy. Professional development at the start of 2011 unpacked the balanced literacy program and allowed teachers to see how the elements fit into a 2-hour literacy block. Teachers applied this knowledge to developing timetables that included all the elements of a balanced literacy program.

Teachers also completed a capacity matrix to self assess their confidence in implementing a balanced literacy program. This allowed professional learning and coaching to be tailored to the needs of individual members of staff. The results of the completed capacity matrices also informed Professional Pathway goals and the focus for team and staff meetings.

To ensure consistency of practices and understanding, teachers refer to a planning, programming and daybook guide. This document identifies the elements that must be evident in programmes. Team

meetings provide a vehicle for focused and planned reflection, the sharing of successes and challenges and feedback from the team leader and peers. The team leaders share the information gained through team meetings at the school leadership team meeting and further directions are set based on need and the school priorities.

The development of strong evidenced based practice has enhanced the monitoring and tracking of student performance. A Criterion Referenced Tool (CRT) linked to First Steps Writing was introduced to provide consistency in the assessment of writing. This tool was developed by a field officer working party involving four schools in the Belconnen Network. The CRT is a powerful formative assessment tool and has further embedded the use of First Steps Writing, as the CRT guides teachers to the appropriate major teaching emphases in the First Steps Writing Map of Development. The CRT was used by all Belconnen schools on the system moderation day to establish cohesion and expectations across the network for writing.

The school leadership team and the curriculum committee identified a need to build teacher capacity in their ability to use quality literature as a model for writing experiences. The term four integrated unit based on the literature strand of the English Australian Curriculum, allowed teachers to use text sets of picture books based on themes such as refugees, extreme weather and challenging perspectives. Teachers integrated quality literature into their program utilising the books as exemplars for many writing experiences. Using the CRT, teachers have been able to measure growth across both the secretarial and authorial aspects of writing. Increased vocabulary and heightened motivation to write have been positive outcomes.

Recognising the part spelling plays within writing, the school investigated system endorsed resources that would support this area of development. Subsequently at the start of the year staff undertook professional learning in Brains, Ears, Eyes (BEE) Spelling and participated in follow up sessions throughout the year. An action learning project has been undertaken with two early career teachers working with the field officer to implement BEE Spelling throughout the school. These teachers have been filmed teaching BEE Spelling and this has been shared at staff meetings and in coaching conversations. Teachers have utilised BEE Spelling Inventories to identify areas of strength and areas for development for individual students and have been able to closely monitor the progress of their students. A BEE Spelling implementation map provided data to inform future directions and facilitate peer coaching.

The introduction of a data wall has maintained a strong focus on reading. Teaching teams engage in professional discussions about how they can support readers who have splintered away from their peers or who trail behind the cohort. Collegial conversations focus on pedagogy and sound research with actionable strategies. The experience of teachers is honoured and valued in these sessions. The learning from each other occurs beyond the team and staff meeting times, as collaboration deepens. Reading levels are recorded in a database, along with writing achievements (at, above and below). The database is being extended to cover BEE Spelling and the CRT achievements.

During term four literacy case management meetings were introduced to discuss students who had plateaued or whose performance was of concern, but were not receiving targeted intervention. The principal, literacy and numeracy field officer, literacy and numeracy coordinator, team leader and classroom teacher initially met to discuss student areas of strength and development. Teachers were required to complete a case management file prior to the meeting that identified current performance in formative assessment tasks. The team then designed a boost plan to further target support within the classroom facilitated by the classroom teacher. Follow up meetings were conducted to reflect on successes or future needs.

Table 4.4 shows that these actions resulted in the school's year 3 means being within the target range expected in writing, and significantly higher in reading and that the school means were within the target range expected in reading and writing for year 5 students.

**Table 4.4: Year 3 and year 5 NAPLAN results in reading and writing, Macgregor Primary, 2011**

	Target	School mean
<b>Yr 3 Reading</b>	392 ± 28	434.3
<b>Yr 3 Writing</b>	402 ± 20	417.5
<b>Yr 5 Reading</b>	466 ± 24	484.1
<b>Yr 5 Writing</b>	453 ± 20	472.1

### **Whole school individualised learning at Bonython Primary**

Bonython Primary is a P-6 school with a total enrolment of 393 students in 2011. There are nine Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and 77 LBOTE students at the school.

Individualised student learning intentions is a whole school approach for differentiation through assessment for learning. This approach aligns teacher work from the planning stage through to reporting. Regular and ongoing communication with parents provides specific strategies for support at home.

A learning intention is a concise statement of the next specific step that is negotiated and understood by both teacher and student. Every student has an individualised learning intention in reading, writing, numeracy and learning how to learn. This supports teachers to differentiate, celebrate and report on each step in learning. Student learning intentions focus teachers' and students' work to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes. These learning intentions are also communicated to parents along with simple, practical strategies to support students' learning at home.

A school priority is using assessment and tracking to inform teaching and learning as a critical part of the teaching process. Teachers at Bonython Primary track student performance using:

- First Steps Reading and Writing Maps of Development
- PM Benchmarks
- MYMC spreadsheets and spider graphs
- CMIT SENA 1 and 2.

A vital part of this process is assessment for learning, using individual learning intentions to focus on student learning in reading, writing and maths. This is a cyclical process from learning intention to learning intention. Through student conferencing, individual learning intentions and success criteria are established. These are shared with parents, along with home support strategies, on a regular basis.

Each teacher has been provided with a portable technology device to track student achievement against learning intentions, to take anecdotal records and to record audio and visual records of achievement. The school also has a data wall that documents the achievements of all students in reading and writing. Teachers use this data wall, in unit groups, to:

- investigate in First Steps phases for moderation and reliability
- determine groups for literacy and numeracy activities

- target students for extra support
- monitor progress of ATSI students
- implement case management with a minimum of two students.

The Ontario Case Management Protocols were introduced in term two through cluster action research projects. This has given teachers more strategies to focus on individualised teaching and learning. Sharing observations on one particular child and brainstorming strategies that could support this student, with other teachers in the cluster, is a powerful strategy.

A case management session was modelled using a Fish Bowl strategy. Teachers discussed the use of this strategy in supporting students. It is now being used, with teachers from different year levels providing input in each case. Action research undertaken showed that these students generally demonstrated improved outcomes.

The following parental feedback email that was received after learning journeys demonstrates the quality of information teachers have about students and how they use it to inform their practice, “the teacher has been able to explain the concepts in a way that [my daughter] understands clearly and given her tools to use at home so that she remembers and it just amazes me that [my daughter] can come home and explain to me in detail what she has learnt and why and then create her own examples and apply to them to various circumstances. Credit to the teacher, you have a special gift in regards to teaching!”.

Following on from the work the school has undertaken to enhance the collection and use of data there has been a refinement of the reporting process that will enhance the partnership with parents in improving student outcomes.

The resulting process is as follows:

#### **Term 1**

- three way interviews are conducted in week four to outline individual learning intentions and home support strategies in reading, writing and maths.
- teachers communicate new learning intentions and home support strategies throughout the term.
- students show parents their reflective journal with learning intentions achieved in weeks nine and ten

#### **Term 2**

- teachers communicate new learning intentions and home support strategies throughout the term
- the semester 1 report is provided to parents/carers outlining achieved learning intentions for the semester with home support strategies for their next step
- students show parents their reflective journal with learning intentions achieved in week 10

#### **Term 3**

- teachers communicate new learning intentions and home support strategies throughout the term.
- students share their reflective journal and classroom learning with their special guest during Learning Journey in week 9

- parents invited, through newsletter, to make appointment for interview with class teacher if requested
- follow up of parent feedback occurs where required

#### **Term 4**

- teachers communicate new and home support strategies throughout the term
- the semester 2 report is provided to parents/carers outlining achieved learning intentions for the semester with home support strategies for their next step
- students show parents their reflective journal with learning intentions achieved at the end of the term and reflective journals are taken home.

The new policy and procedure for the assessment and reporting policy has been reviewed and ratified by the Bonython Primary School Board. A parent consultation group was established to review the reporting process in order to improve communication of the students' learning intentions and home support strategy. Throughout this process it was considered important to:

- maintain a focus on individual student learning
- enhance communication with parents on student learning and strategies parents can use to assist their children at home
- streamline the recording of learning intentions and strategies to simplify the end of semester reports.

Seventy percent of parents attended three way interviews in term one where they were informed of their child's learning intentions in reading, writing and numeracy and were given strategies to support this learning at home. 70% of kindergarten to year 2 parents and 45% of year 3 to 6 parents attended week 10 reflective journal sharing each term. Both teacher and parental feedback was positive.

#### **Case management at Charles Conder Primary**

Charles Conder Primary is a preschool to year 6 school with a total enrolment of 406 students in 2011. There are 21 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and 72 LBOTE students at the school.

In 2011 Charles Conder Primary introduced the case management approach where each class teacher meets every fortnight with the literacy and numeracy team to discuss students' needs. Overall there was significant growth in most areas in literacy and numeracy across both years 3 and 5 cohorts and they achieved both the literacy and numeracy targets that were set.

Teachers used running records as an assessment tool to collect data about all students. This data was analysed during case management meetings throughout the term, ensuring a consistent focus on student learning. The data demonstrated improvement for all students and significant movement for many. At the start of 2011, 54% of students were reading at or above benchmark level. With a consistent focus and approach across the school, the percentage of students reading at or above benchmark level rose to 78% by the end of 2011 (see Table 4.5).

The effectiveness of Charles Conder Primary's improvement strategy could only be measured through the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data in different phases of their development. All teachers conducted a running record with individual students each term and entered levels on the whole school database. The identification of students' reading levels guided teaching practice and allowed the school to determine the steps necessary to improve student outcomes.

In interrogating the PM Benchmark for individual students, teachers used Dr Lyn Sharratt’s model of the Venn diagram to create a visual representation of each individual student’s reading progress. The literacy coordinator and the literacy coach collected copies of the Venn diagrams which provided a whole school picture and inspired the process of Putting Faces On The Data. This evidence enabled the team to set up a case management structure to focus on the needs of individual students and improve outcomes. This approach has had a number of positive effects:

- Increasing teacher awareness of each student’s reading needs.
- Aiding differentiation.
- Raising student awareness of their own progress with students setting personal goals for improvement.
- Enhanced transparency as everyone knows where every student is in relation to agreed benchmarks.
- Targeted students can be easily visually identified and supported by all.
- Consistency in case management and moderation of student achievement.
- Helping to build a culture of assessment and data collection as a process for driving teacher practice.
- Improved percentage of students reading at benchmark level.
- Providing a platform for professional conversations between teachers around catering for individual needs and differentiated reading programs.

The school’s positive results are reflected in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5: Proportion of students at or above benchmark level, by term and year level, Charles Conder Primary, 2011 (%)**

Year level	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
K	10	57	54	69
K	27	72	72	78
1	45	47	61	76
1	59	62	65	72
2	75	88	88	89
2	62	67	76	78
2	68	72	69	73
3/4	78	83	78	83
3/4	87	100	100	100
3/4	68	81	90	80
3/4	55	63	71	67
5	23	27	45	52
5	20	55	65	58
6	80	85	95	95
6	48	60	67	86
<b>School K-6</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>78</b>

## **Effective and Evidence Based Teaching of Numeracy at St Thomas the Apostle School**

St Thomas the Apostle School, Kambah, has multi-age classrooms (MACs) in years 4 and 5. Previous to the Literacy and Numeracy NP, the school had concerns about the impact of the teaching and learning of mathematics for these students. During 2011, with the introduction of the Brain Based Learning and the modified Gradual Release Model approach to numeracy, the school took the opportunity to utilise the Whole, Part, Whole experiences and target these students more specifically. Extra staff were employed for these classes. Whole, modelled instructions were given by classroom teachers and then students were segregated into groups where manageable, differentiated, guided activities were practiced and supervised by the extra teachers. Effective learning was increased as classroom and extra teachers now had the opportunity to question, guide and direct more specific learning in supervised groups. Individual applied tasks were also more successful as there were more teachers roaming the room eliciting open-ended problem solving strategies from the students in relation to their work.

The promotion of targeted teaching to students, a whole school approach to good pedagogy in all classrooms, differentiated curriculum and tasks and improved pedagogical practice for MACs teachers had a positive impact. Teachers remarked on the increased student engagement, the improved rigour of the activities and the students' improved communication of their learning. Behaviour problems due to boredom decreased significantly. The articulation, metacognitive language and recording in Maths Learning Journals of student learning escalated and teaching became more student-centred as students engaged and asked more questions.

### **Maths Bags at St Thomas the Apostle Kambah**

In an effort to lift the profile and attitude of mathematics within both the student and parent body, St Thomas the Apostle Kambah introduced Maths Bags, which are sent home with students for a week at a time on alternate Mondays. Children/families are encouraged to do as much as they can and parents are asked to record the name of the activity and to make a comment and rate the activity.

This initiative was aimed at helping students to develop and consolidate mathematical concepts through a partnership between home and school using concrete materials, activities and games, to develop an enjoyment of numeracy and to see mathematical activities as fun and to develop mental computation skills in an engaging environment. They also provide parents with an opportunity to be an active and informed participant in their children's numeracy development and to support the teaching of numeracy in the school.

The outcomes of this initiative include:

- increased engagement in mathematical activities from students
- development of more fluency in mathematical concepts through activities
- differentiated curriculum and tasks
- improved pedagogical practice for MACs teachers.

Data obtained from a school survey in relation to this initiative also showed positive results. The school sent out 100 surveys to the families of Infants classes, of which 24 were returned. Results were as follows:

- 96% of respondents use Maths Magic at home
- 83% of respondents use Maths Magic as a family either regularly or sometimes
- 75% of parents responded positively with a 1 or 2 on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being Very Positive)

- 58% of parents thought their children enjoyed Maths Magic more than written homework
- 83% of respondents thought the Maths Magic games were suitable for their children

Comments received included:

- “We play against each other. Competition is a FANTASTIC incentive”.
- “We enjoy games that involve 2 or more players and are very interactive”.
- “Mum mainly plays things like Memory with the kids. Also, I make up how many they need to add or subtract for the game, what’s next...”
- “A very good concept and fully enjoyed – an excellent learning tool.”

### **Home Reading at St Michael’s Kaleen**

A significant achievement in reading involved the Home Reading Program at Saint Michael’s Primary Kaleen, and its alignment with an intensive focus in reading in school literacy blocks for years K to 6.

This school conducted an intensive audit of reading resources in 2009-10 and based on this audit, invested heavily in updating reading resources in 2011. The parent body were offered comprehensive reading workshops, Home Reading Bags were developed which held levelled home reading texts, reading diaries were introduced to facilitate regular and targeted parent/teacher communication regarding reading behaviours and progress, and selected activities were designed to reinforce the development of reading strategies and processes. The school developed a reading Wiki through their school website. Home Reading expectations were altered, allowing children to keep readers over the weekend, and increased student participation, particularly in selection of reading texts, was encouraged.

Parallel to the intensive Home Reading focus, teaching staff deepened their knowledge of the First Steps Reading pedagogical process, continued to mentor each other in programming, planning and teaching, continued to prioritise teaching time through the literacy block, and were supported in junior year levels by staffing arrangements where up to two teachers and three learning support staff were present in junior classes in the literacy block.

Strategies included:

- promoting reading as enjoyable
- communication between parents/ teachers/students with respect to literacy

Outcomes included:

- increased participation in reading activities
- development of greater fluency and comprehension.

The school’s intensive focus in the junior years can be seen in Kindergarten Assessment Data 2010 and 2011. 55% of kindergarten students were at or above reading benchmarks in 2010, while 70% of kindergarten students were at or above reading benchmarks in 2011. It has increased home school partnerships and K to year 6 focus on literacy blocks have also resulted in improvements in NAPLAN scores. In 2008, 11% of year 5 students were below reading benchmarks, in 2009, 5% of year 5 students were below benchmark, in 2010 6% of year 5 students were below benchmark, while in 2011 0% of year 5 students were below benchmark. In 2009, 5% of Year 3 students were below reading benchmarks, in 2010, 4% of year 3 students were below benchmark, while in 2011, 0% of year 3 students were below benchmark. The year 5 boys were 45 scale scores above the state average growth



in reading in 2011, while the year 5 girls were 28 scale scores above state average growth in reading in 2011. There was an increase in year 5 students who fell in the top reading bands 7 and 8 in 2011 compared to the previous year, while year 3 students had an increase in student representation in bands 4 and 6 compared to the previous year. In addition, there was marked student growth, particularly in the lower and middle bands. Over-all, the rate of school growth in NAPLAN 2011 exceeded ACT and state averages in reading.

Parents were overwhelmingly positive about the school's approach to reading, reporting high levels of satisfaction with student achievement, home school communication in reading, selection and levels of reading materials, student enjoyment and self esteem and parental support of home reading through education programs offered by the school, Reading Bags and via the school website; for example, in the use of a Wiki. Strengthening of student, parent and teacher relationships through this whole school approach in reading was frequently commented upon by parents.

Students reported increased levels of enjoyment. They appreciated the online tracking of reading through their Wiki. The students reported increased levels of satisfaction in reading choice—for both content and genre—and time provided for home reading and commented on their increasing levels of reading skills.

Teachers reported an appreciation of the intensive auditing process of reading materials, which has facilitated their ability to provide appropriate, levelled material to their students. They commented that the school Wiki has aided the development of reading strategies for senior students due to the amount of reflection of the reading process students engage in. Tracking student reading progress and student choice has been made easier through a Velcro tagging system. Improved school/home communication has alleviated misunderstandings of reading levels required for independent practice via home reading, and increased rates of homework participation and completion through clear guidelines to parents regarding their role in Home Reading. Teachers reported the visible tracking system ensures monitoring student progress in Home Reading is consistent throughout the school, while the reading log is a valuable means of home and school communication.

### **Monitoring student and School Performance in Numeracy**

St Clare of Assisi Conder's Numeracy Intervention Program (NIP) 2009-11 is aimed at increasing student concept development, student confidence and student engagement when transitioned back into the classroom, and improving pedagogical practice for NIP teachers.

It is not a set program. Specially trained teachers are asked to respond to students at their point of need. Other sources of research that inform the teachers' development of intervention strategies include research into how the brain learns mathematics, discussions of mathematical concepts that could be termed threshold concepts and existing frameworks for children's mathematical development such as the *Learning Framework in Number* from *Count Me In Too*.

Brain based research stresses the need to build lessons around knowledge of how the brain best learns mathematics and brain activity during a period of time when new ideas are being learned. In particular the NIP teachers examine connections between oral, visual and symbolic representations of mathematics, using research about brain activity related to each representation. This ensures that lessons include periods of active learning. Teachers also build on research into brain activity during a period of instruction to construct lessons that take advantage of periods of greatest and least activity.

Each 30 minute lesson is planned to follow the structure:

- short warm-up activity revising previously learnt ideas (5 minutes);
- explicit teaching (10 minutes);

- cognitive break (3 minutes);
- related practice/ Consolidation of the key idea (10 minutes);
- cognitive closure (3 minutes).

For each lesson teachers are asked to plan using a template based on a combination of ideas from Reading Recovery and the concepts of brain based learning. The template asks teachers to plan each section of the lesson, document student responses during that phase of the lesson and summarise learning.

In 2011, eight students were engaged in this program. Students were pre- and post-tested on the number strand of the Nelson Assessment Kit. Students were assessed on either the concept correct, partially correct or incorrect pre- and post-test. Result of the four NIP year 4 students and the four year 3 students who undertook the program over 12 weeks are shown in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: Student results for Number strand, year 3 and 4, St Clare of Assisi Conder, 2011**

<b>Year 3 students:</b>		
Pre-test Incorrect	74%	
Post-Test Incorrect	0.03%	Decrease in incorrect responses of 74%
Pre-test Correct	21%	
Post-test correct	72%	Increase in correct responses of 52%
<b>Year 4 students:</b>		
Pre-test Incorrect	68%	
Post-Test Incorrect	11%	Decrease in incorrect responses of 57%
Pre-test Correct	31%	
Post-test correct	65%	Increase in correct responses of 34%

### **Monitoring student and school performance in Literacy**

During 2011, all Archdiocesan schools in Literacy and Numeracy NP maintained their Reading Recovery programs, which had begun in 2010. Teachers continued training in Reading Recovery, and school networks created Reading Recovery clusters where Reading Recovery teachers, Reading Recovery tutors, school executive and CEO personnel supported and celebrated ongoing teacher development, student progress and Reading Recovery program implementation.

The Reading Recovery Program's success was influenced by Key Reform 1: Effective and evidence based teaching of literacy. Professional development in teaching reading was ongoing, where the First Steps Reading pedagogical approach was investigated; and its implementation was supported through programming and planning workshops and a teacher mentor program and this professional learning was run in parallel with the Reading Recovery teacher program. This meant staff had a sustained and in depth focus on the teaching of reading at a whole class, small group and individual level.

Strategies employed:

- Improved pedagogical practice for Reading Recovery Teachers
- Increase in student reading development

- Increase in student reading confidence
- Increase in student participation when transitioned back into the classroom.

Saint Michael's Primary Kaleen had 11 students in the Reading Recovery program in 2011, with only one referral. Of the remaining students, six were discontinued, while four had just begun the program. For these students data will be included in the 2012 reporting period. For the students who completed the program in the allocated weeks, the average rate of improvement in reading levels was by 10 reading levels. These students continued to be tracked after they were discontinued. For students who were discontinued in February, reading levels continued to increase by four to six reading levels, while those who had discontinued in June and July maintained their reading levels or increased them by up to two reading levels in the remaining 2011 period. Tracking of 2010 Reading Recovery students throughout 2011 also indicated continued progress with 80% of students continuing to improve their reading levels by three to 12 reading levels in the reporting period.

Saint Matthew's Primary Page also continued to monitor discontinued student progress in 2011 and to take new students into the 2011 Reading Recovery program. Of the students in 2010, average progress on the Reading Recovery program was an increase in reading levels by 12, while monitoring of their progress throughout 2011 indicated that by term 2, reading levels continued to improve, with average progress up by more than nine reading levels. For the students who discontinued in 2011, rates of progress during the program was an increased average of 13 reading levels, while tracking of these students for six months during 2011 demonstrated a continued improvement in reading levels by seven.

Saint Thomas Aquinas Primary, West Belconnen had eight students in 2010, with average progress while on the program showing an increase of over 10 reading levels. In addition to quantitative data, there appeared to be numerous benefits for parents, staff and students.

Parents and teachers have made numerous positive comments about the Reading Recovery series of lessons and the assistance offered and given to at risk students identified in kindergarten and year 1. Observation Reading Recovery discontinued students demonstrated that they continued to make progress in reading, with an average improvement rate of approximately seven reading levels. For the eight students in Reading Recovery in 2011, average improvement throughout the period prior to discontinuation was almost nine reading levels. These students will continue to be monitored in 2012.

- Survey assessments.
- All the students love coming to the lessons and many more ask when can it be their turn.
- From the year 1 teachers' perspectives, appreciation has been expressed regarding the support and encouragement from another professional source and assistance provided for the students through the one-to-one lessons.
- All parents of Reading Recovery students have indicated appreciation of the time, encouragement and support they have received through the program in helping their child becoming a reader and writer. In all cases the parents were aware that their child was not progressing prior to Reading Recovery at the rate of an average year 1 student and were appreciative of the benefits of the Reading Recovery intervention program.
- Student Assessment whole school decisions have involved increased use of Running Records, South Australian Spelling & BURT Word List to inform teaching and monitor student progress.
- The school has implemented a tracking system of all the students' reading levels (kindergarten to year 6) and these are updated regularly by the classroom teachers. This has led to greater

teacher awareness

## **Independent Schools**

### **Orana**

Orana is an independent, co-educational and non-denominational school set in 13 hectares of unique, natural landscape in the ACT. It was founded in 1981 and has developed in size and reputation with 640 students currently enrolled from preschool to year 12.

As well as providing a challenging and stimulating environment for the study of a complete range of subjects from preschool to year 12, Orana strives to nourish the intellectual, emotional, physical and spiritual development of its students.

Orana's educational philosophy is inspired by the work of Rudolf Steiner, the Austrian-born scientist, philosopher, artist, and educator and focuses on the growth and development of the whole child. There are over 40 Steiner schools in Australia alone. In addition there are an increasing number of state schools which have incorporated Steiner classes and streams into their mainstream programs to meet the demand from parents.

The Literacy and Numeracy NP reforms enabled the school to focus on literacy achievements for students in a refined and specific manner. Literacy and numeracy is taught through an integrated curriculum at Orana Steiner School. Designated literacy and numeracy lessons allow class teachers to work through a variety of models to respond to the diversity of needs within each class. Approaches include:

- co-teaching to provide small group learning within the classroom and to implement specific literacy or numeracy strategies for the whole class (e.g. guided silent reading, read and re-tell, First Steps Reading and First Steps Writing)
- implementing literacy and numeracy programs that target specific areas for individual students or small groups of students. Programs include Reading Link, Multilit Reading Tutor Program (Multilit), Count Me in Too, Alpha To Omega, Reading Eggs, spelling conferences, Magic Words
- consultation to devise inclusive curricula and differentiated materials for students with additional needs
- student progress in the areas of literacy and numeracy is monitored regularly through standardized diagnostic instruments for students in classes 3 to 7 including Neale Analysis of Reading Ability, TORCH, PAT Maths, NAPLAN and the South Australian Spelling Test
- peer tutoring, older class buddies, or volunteer support (arranged by the class teacher) may also be used to assist children's reading development.

The assessment program is facilitated by Learning Support staff each year in classes 3 to 7. Results are kept in a central location in the school and are used to identify students requiring additional support. Teachers are also provided with a copy of class results to assist them with their programming.

Multilit has been introduced in 2011 for students in classes 3 to 6 at Orana Steiner School through funding acquired through the Literacy and Numeracy NP. Multilit incorporates the major recommendations for effective reading instruction from the Australian Government's 2005 report, *National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy*. Multilit aims to improve the literacy skills and life opportunities of low-progress readers through a focus on phonics (word attack skills), sight words recognition and supported book reading in a one on one situation. Multilit is being implemented in seven classes from term 2 by six staff members who have participated in the Multilit Reading Tutor Program Workshop.

Student progress was individually recorded in a way that makes it easy to monitor the child's progress. Most students provided with this instruction made significant progress in reading. Class 3 students will continue to be targeted with this program to ensure that their confidence and skills are up to grade level by class 4.

## **Sustainability**

### **Public Schools**

In 2011 all schools had a field officer whose role is to work on reform areas in line with identified school needs, the school National Partnership Plan, and school operational plans. As part of this planning the field officer and schools consider the sustainability of any programs. Where possible programs are being integrated into business as usual for schools. Old practices are being replaced by new practices, innovations are becoming normal practice and staff expectations of their role are morphing to suit new conditions.

As part of their 2012 planning schools are being asked to look at the sustainability of their practices and how the Literacy and Numeracy NP initiatives can become part of their core business. Many of the innovations have been well received and have impacted noticeably on student outcomes.

Examples of practices that have traction across the system and will be sustained include:

- Putting Faces On The Data
- data walls
- assessment and student data tracking processes
- case management
- instructional leadership.

### **Catholic Systemic Schools**

The school Agreed Practice in timetabling Literacy Blocks, adopting the First Steps Reading approach and mentoring staff is self sustaining. Relationships of increasing levels of trust and expertise have been built across the teaching staff, which should be sustainable despite teacher turnover given the approach has been school wide since 2009.

The whole system advocacy of the First Steps approach in reading and writing allows for teacher movement, where the same pedagogical approach is supported through system wide professional support and networks via Literacy Contact Days.

Funding and resourcing of Reading Recovery has expanded beyond Literacy and Numeracy NP schools due to the value of the program evidenced through both quantitative and qualitative data. Increasing understanding of the program and reported levels of success are prompting more principals to consider resourcing and staffing the program.

The Gradual Release of Responsibility is a system wide approach for both literacy and numeracy given the research based pedagogical approach. Ongoing professional development, centrally and within schools, is being provided across the system. Effective resources are being purchased for all schools within the system, and ongoing professional development within the Literacy and Numeracy Contact system enables further investigation and promotion of effective pedagogical practices and resourcing.

Targeted assessment and programming and teaching based on analysis of assessment has resulted in increased levels of student achievement through Reading Recovery and the Numeracy Intervention Program, which has led to increased teacher understanding in the importance of assessment and the analysis of assessment to informed teaching decision making. This is being communicated through Running Record and SENA training across the system, particularly through Kindergarten Assessment and Year 1 Observation Assessment professional learning days offered for all regions in March and again in November and December system wide.

Resourcing decisions in staffing and funding for the Reading Recovery program across the system have benefited a number of schools outside the National Partnership school cluster, with increasing levels of program awareness and levels of success.

Agreed Practice in timetabling, programming, assessment and pedagogy in Literacy and Numeracy NP schools indicate heightened awareness by school executive of effective measures that can be implemented to facilitate school change in literacy. This has led to updating school policy which, in the cycle of school renewal, will extend beyond the Literacy and Numeracy NP timeline.

The mentor program in literacy, through professional learning, professional support and increased professional relationships based on increased levels of trust, has created an understanding of the need for a learning community and recognition of staff expertise. These relationships have strengthened within schools, within clusters, across Literacy and Numeracy NP schools and other schools and across regions through the Reading Recovery tutor network, the Literacy Contact Days, and networks among principals, assistant principals and literacy contact officers.

## Section 5 – Research and Evaluation

### Research

#### Public Schools

In late 2010 a review of the field officer program was conducted by Kaye Lowe, Associate Professor UC. The review gathered information through interviews with field officers and principals and was released in March 2011. The review contained recommendations for 2011 that included:

- increased opportunities to network with other field officers
- further clarity around roles
- additional support for the use of data
- review of delineation between the roles of field officers and literacy and numeracy coordinators
- exploration of sustainability after field officer positions cease at the end of 2012.

#### Evaluation

All of the recommendations were accepted and have been addressed in 2011 as can be seen through the evidence provided in this report. Further reviewing is planned for 2012.



## Section 6 – Milestone Reporting

## Improving Teacher Quality NP

### Part 1 - Milestones not reported/not achieved/partially achieved in Progress Report for 2011

Milestone (States/ territories may wish to identify whether the milestone relates to all sectors or a particular sector within their jurisdiction).	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>
N/A			

### Part 2 - Milestones in Annual Report - Achieved 1 January to 31 December 2011

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>
Acceptance of Annual Report for the 2010 calendar year (due 31 March 2011)	Completed. Report submitted.		
Initial Better Pathways training program implemented	The ACT is participating in the development of the national Better Pathways training program, Teach Next. The jurisdiction has indicated its intention to place up to six participants from the first cohort in ACT public schools.	Timing of the program is now linked to the progression of the national initiative.	The ACT continues to participate in discussions and development of the program with DEEWR for implementation during 2012.
Workforce data collection tool contributing data to national data sets	Phase one of the Staff Integrated Management System (SiMS) has been launched and planning for Phase two functions and roll out has commenced. Phase 2 is to be re-scoped to support implementation of the Empowering Local Schools National Partnership.  Development of the Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) business system has taken into account the requirements of a	Timing of the data collection is linked the development of and agreement to the national collection parameters.  Need to expand current system development to support implementation of Empowering Local Schools National Partnership reforms	Data will be provided to the national data set following the finalisation of collection parameters and the instigation of national data collection processes.  Empowering Local Schools National Partnership funding to expand system development to support both national

	national data set. The ACT continues to be part of national discussions to determine the parameters of data collection for the national data set.		partnerships.
Graduates allocated to the ACT from the second cohort of New Pathways program placed in ACT schools	Completed. Five Associates from the Teach for Australia program have been placed in ACT public schools.		
Mentor teachers taking part in University of Melbourne training and network developed	Completed. Mentor teachers completed their training with the University of Melbourne during semester 1 and the mentor network has been established.		
Acceptance of Progress Report for 2011 on activities occurring over the period Jan-June 2011	Completed. Report submitted.		
Teacher Quality Institute established	Completed. Legislation for the TQI came into effect 1 January 2011.		
ACT teacher education courses accredited through Teacher Quality Institute	The TQI is legislated as the ACT teacher education course accreditation provider. Twelve ACT representatives have been trained in the national accreditation process for teacher education programs	No demand for teacher education course accreditation.	Nationally consistent processes developed and trained assessors available.
Additional School Centres of Teacher Education Excellence established and operational	Completed. The Down South program, a partnership between the Australian Catholic University and St Mary McKillop College was established in January 2011. Construction of the University of Canberra and Education and Training Directorate joint venture InSpire Centre was completed in November 2011 and the building is now in use.		
Placement of Indigenous education worker graduates into ACT schools	Completed. One indigenous student accepted a placement in an ACT public school during her final year of study in 2011, working one day a week to gain		

	additional experience.		
--	------------------------	--	--

## Section 6 – Milestone Reporting

## Low SES School Communities NP

### Part 1 - Milestones not reported/not achieved/partially achieved in Progress Report for 2011

Milestone (States/territories may wish to identify whether the milestone relates to all sectors or a particular sector within their jurisdiction).	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>
N/A			

### Part 2 - Milestones in Annual Report - Achieved 1 January to 31 December 2011

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>																																													
Acceptance of March 2011 Annual Report for the 2010 calendar year (due 31 March 2011).	Accepted	Achieved																																														
Schools have reached their school-based literacy and numeracy targets for 2010.	<p>Partially achieved Achievement in 2011 NAPLAN against school targets.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>School Name</th> <th>Year Level</th> <th>Domain</th> <th>Target</th> <th>School Mean</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Charnwood Dunlop</td> <td>3</td> <td>Reading</td> <td>398 ± 30</td> <td>382.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Charnwood Dunlop</td> <td>3</td> <td>Writing</td> <td>397 ± 20</td> <td>382.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Charnwood Dunlop</td> <td>3</td> <td>Numeracy</td> <td>377 ± 24</td> <td>369.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Charnwood Dunlop</td> <td>5</td> <td>Reading</td> <td>478 ± 24</td> <td>501.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Charnwood Dunlop</td> <td>5</td> <td>Writing</td> <td>467 ± 18</td> <td>489.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Charnwood Dunlop</td> <td>5</td> <td>Numeracy</td> <td>464 ± 20</td> <td>482.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Richardson</td> <td>3</td> <td>Reading</td> <td>356 ± 34</td> <td>334.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Richardson</td> <td>3</td> <td>Writing</td> <td>366 ± 28</td> <td>316.2</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	School Name	Year Level	Domain	Target	School Mean	Charnwood Dunlop	3	Reading	398 ± 30	382.2	Charnwood Dunlop	3	Writing	397 ± 20	382.3	Charnwood Dunlop	3	Numeracy	377 ± 24	369.9	Charnwood Dunlop	5	Reading	478 ± 24	501.3	Charnwood Dunlop	5	Writing	467 ± 18	489.3	Charnwood Dunlop	5	Numeracy	464 ± 20	482.5	Richardson	3	Reading	356 ± 34	334.6	Richardson	3	Writing	366 ± 28	316.2	The schools were working on reform activities including student engagement, attendance and teacher efficacy that may not be reflected in short term improvements in student results due to their long term nature.	Programs to support improvements in student outcomes, including the continuation of field officer positions, are ongoing in schools.
School Name	Year Level	Domain	Target	School Mean																																												
Charnwood Dunlop	3	Reading	398 ± 30	382.2																																												
Charnwood Dunlop	3	Writing	397 ± 20	382.3																																												
Charnwood Dunlop	3	Numeracy	377 ± 24	369.9																																												
Charnwood Dunlop	5	Reading	478 ± 24	501.3																																												
Charnwood Dunlop	5	Writing	467 ± 18	489.3																																												
Charnwood Dunlop	5	Numeracy	464 ± 20	482.5																																												
Richardson	3	Reading	356 ± 34	334.6																																												
Richardson	3	Writing	366 ± 28	316.2																																												

	Richardson	3	Numeracy	369 ± 26	318.7		
	Richardson	5	Reading	459 ± 26	473.0		
	Richardson	5	Writing	449 ± 22	434.9		
	Richardson	5	Numeracy	457 ± 20	461.7		
	Florey	3	Reading	410 ± 24	417.5		
	Florey	3	Writing	418 ± 20	417.9		
	Florey	3	Numeracy	391 ± 22	407.4		
	Florey	5	Reading	502 ± 20	489.7		
	Florey	5	Writing	493 ± 20	489.1		
	Florey	5	Numeracy	494 ± 20	490.0		
	Kingsford Smith	3	Reading	392 ± 20	418.7		
	Kingsford Smith	3	Writing	401 ± 17	406.7		
	Kingsford Smith	3	Numeracy	369 ± 20	378.2		
	Kingsford Smith	5	Reading	477 ± 18	467.3		
	Kingsford Smith	5	Writing	463 ± 20	474.2		
	Kingsford Smith	5	Numeracy	469 ± 16	464		
Schools have developed a process for tracking student achievement against school-based literacy and numeracy programs.	All schools have a process for tracking student achievement against school based literacy and numeracy programs. All schools report on their progress towards targets in their Annual School Board Reports.					Achieved	
Strategies for parent engagement and community partnerships have been developed.	All schools have developed a raft of strategies for parent engagement and community partnerships.					Achieved	
Acceptance of Progress Report on activities occurring over the period Jan-June 2011.	The Progress Report for Jan-June 2011 was accepted					Achieved	
After-care programs in place to meet school community needs.	Schools have programs in place to suit their school context and need.					Achieved	

## Section 6 – Milestone Reporting

## Literacy and Numeracy NP

### Part 1 - Milestones not reported/not achieved/partially achieved in Progress Report for 2011

Milestone (States/territories may wish to identify whether the milestone relates to all sectors or a particular sector within their jurisdiction).	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>
N/A			

### Part 2 - Milestones in Progress Report - Achieved 1 January to 31 December 2011

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>
N/A			

Clause 20 of the Low SES School Communities NP provides for reporting on outcomes for identified cohorts, where possible and appropriate. Identified cohorts include Indigenous students, students with a disability, students with other additional learning needs, students from a non-English speaking background, refugees and homeless students.

A separate Excel spreadsheet is provided for the provision of data.

Performance indicators and measures from Low SES School Communities 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 School Communities NP schools had a new principal appointed in 2011. One appointee is an experienced principal who transferred into the position and the other two are in their first principal appointment. The recruitment process for these positions attracted high quality applicants. This is an indication of the interest of school leaders across the system in the reform driven activities of the four Low SES School Communities NP schools. Deputy Principal and School Leader C positions advertised in these schools in 2011 also attracted substantial numbers of high quality applicants.

To support the principals, meetings continue to be held twice a term to allow sharing of strategies being implemented in the schools, and discussion of activities with central office staff and school network leaders. Field officers continue to meet with the project coordinator and Literacy and Numeracy Section staff once a term for professional learning to support them in their roles. They also meet once a term, as system literacy and numeracy leaders, with literacy and numeracy coordinators from all preschool to year 10 schools to build knowledge and capacity across the system.

In the ACT all teachers have a four year teaching degree. In the four Low SES School Communities NP schools, a the following proportion of teachers also have post graduate qualifications:

- Richardson Primary: 10%
- Charnwood Dunlop Primary: 36%
- Kingsford Smith Primary: 43%



- Florey Primary: 10%

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

### Actions and strategies

- Flexible staffing arrangements

### Outcome

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

Principals at all Low SES School Communities NP schools were offered increased flexibility in filling vacant positions in their schools to ensure vacancies were filled quickly and by suitable people.

As part of the ACT School Improvement process parent, student and staff satisfaction data, such as that shown in Table 8.1, is collected. This information is reported publicly in Annual School Board Reports. All schools use parent, student and staff surveys as a means of collecting data.

**Table 8.1: Proportion of parents who agree or strongly agree with the statement “Overall I am satisfied with my child’s education at this school”, by school, 2010 and 2011 (%)**

School	2010	2011
Richardson Primary	97	93
Kingsford Smith Primary	65	83
Charnwood Dunlop Primary	81	85
Florey Primary	83	88

**Table 8.2: Matched student reading and numeracy NAPLAN results, by school and ACT system, increase from year 3 2009 to year 5 2011 (%)**

	System increase	Charnwood Dunlop Primary	Richardson Primary	Florey Primary	Kingsford Smith Primary
Reading	81.2	84.9	82.1	71.2	94.5
Numeracy	93.9	112.4	93.1	102.3	102.4

\*Writing could not be compared as there was a change from narrative to persuasive writing in the NAPLAN writing task.

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.

### 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 8.3a: Proportion of staff responding “agreed” or “strongly agreed”, by statement and school, 2010 and 2011 (%)**

	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	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
<b>Richardson School</b>	82	75	88	80	100	95	94	80	88	100	76	75	71	80
<b>Kingsford Smith</b>	53	67	71	77	66	70	54	69	61	82	53	84	75	82
<b>Charnwood Dunlop</b>	41	80	50	80	68	77	50	64	77	92	64	80	82	80
<b>Florey</b>	76	71	82	67	88	83	88	77	88	87	65	64	88	72

Source: Staff Satisfaction Survey 2010 and 2011

**Table 8.3b: Proportion of staff responding “agreed” or “strongly agreed”, by statement and school, 2010 and 2011 (%)**

	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.	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
<b>Richardson School</b>	96	96	92	92	92	88	84	92
<b>Kingsford Smith</b>	87	97	59	78	71	82	76	78
<b>Charnwood Dunlop</b>	85	97	85	93	93	97	96	93
<b>Florey</b>	96	96	92	83	92	88	92	96

Source: Staff Satisfaction Survey 2010 and 2011

**Table 8.4a: Proportion of students responding “agreed” or “strongly agreed”, by statement and school, 2010 and 2011 (%)**

	I have a say in the things I learn		I enjoy learning at this school		I am doing work that interests me	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
<b>Richardson School</b>	78	61	85	76	76	81
<b>Kingsford Smith*</b>	44	41	69	57	55	50
<b>Charnwood Dunlop</b>	57	98	90	96	59	96
<b>Florey</b>	62	86	69	76	71	79

Source: Student Satisfaction Survey 2010 and 2011

\*Note: Kingsford Smith is a P-10 school and results reflect the inclusion of a secondary cohort who generally respond more critically on these questions.

In 2011 parent groups and committees were active throughout the schools. They contributed 1260 hours at Charnwood Dunlop Primary, 1,700 hours at Florey Primary, 1,063 hours at Kingsford Smith Primary and 120 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 e.g. Harmony Day, sporting carnivals, uniform shop homework club and reading with students. At Florey Primary parents spent over 100 hours listening to reading, and at Charnwood Dunlop Primary parents contributed 120 hours at the breakfast club and 80 hours at the homework club.

**Table 8.4b: Proportion of students responding “agreed” or “strongly agreed”, by statement and school, 2010 and 2011 (%)**

	<b>I have opportunities to be involved in school activities</b>	
	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Richardson School</b>	85	81
<b>Kingsford Smith</b>	81	73
<b>Charnwood Dunlop</b>	83	93
<b>Florey</b>	87	81

Source: Student Satisfaction Survey 2010 and 2011

**Table 8.5: Student attendance, by year level, school and ACT system, 2010 and 2011**

<b>Year level</b>	<b>Richardson School</b>		<b>Kingsford Smith</b>		<b>Charnwood Dunlop</b>		<b>Florey</b>		<b>ACT system</b>	
	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
K	92.6	97.4	91.8	90.5	93.0	90.8	92.8	90.3	94.0	92.8
Year 1	93.1	98.2	92.9	90.1	92.6	93.9	91.3	92.6	94.0	93.3
Year 2	92.0	97.8	91.9	93.4	93.3	91.6	93.6	91.0	94.0	93.3
Year 3	93.6	98.5	93.1	92.1	95.1	92.1	91.9	92.2	94.2	93.5
Year 4	94.3	98.2	91.8	93.5	93.4	92.5	94.1	92.0	94.1	93.2
Year 5	91.8	99.2	95.1	91.8	95.0	91.8	95.0	92.8	94.0	93.1
Year 6	92.1	98.7	89.8	91.7	89.6	90.8	93.4	93.8	93.2	92.8
Average K-6	92.8	98.3	92.4	91.9	93.1	91.9	93.2	92.1	93.9	93.1

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.

## **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.

In 2011 a major focus was on knowledge and capacity building of field officers in Low SES School Communities NP schools, and literacy and numeracy coordinators across all public preschool to year 10 schools. Field officers met once a term for focussed professional learning to support their role. Literacy and numeracy coordinators met once a term for professional learning often facilitated by field officers. A program of readings and collegiate discussion formed the basis of the capacity building strategy. Professional learning provided by national and international literacy and numeracy experts was available for coordinators, field officers and school leaders, with targeted sessions for school principals.

The literacy needs of specialised groups such as ESL, refugee and Indigenous students were addressed through the provision of specialised professional learning for teachers. School-based personalised learning plans for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and individualised learning plans for children identified as being at risk in their learning provided differentiated learning plans tailored to individual student need. Resources are provided to schools to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students based on population, identified student needs, requests from principals and School network Leader recommendations. In 2011 these resources were provided directly to schools in the form of staffing points.

All four schools have 15 hour preschool programs. Kingsford Smith also has a Koori Preschool on campus.

**Table 8.6: Proportion of students responding “agreed” or “strongly agreed”, by statement and school, 2010 and 2011 (%)**

	I have a say in the things I learn		I enjoy learning at this school		I am doing work that interests me	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
<b>Richardson School</b>	78	61	76	76	76	81
<b>Kingsford Smith*</b>	44	41	58	57	55	50
<b>Charnwood Dunlop</b>	57	89	70	96	59	96
<b>Florey</b>	62	64	78	74	71	66

Source: Student Satisfaction Survey 2010 and 2011

\*Note: Kingsford Smith is a P-10 school and results reflect the inclusion of a secondary cohort who generally respond more critically on these questions.

## **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.

Cohorts of students with particular needs have been identified, e.g. Sudanese refugees in two schools who have been supported to increase their engagement with school to allow for learning. Professional learning continues to be provided for teachers of high need students to differentiate the curriculum and deliver appropriate programs.

Homework and breakfast clubs supported by parents and outside agencies such as Red Cross and local community groups and churches continue to run in schools to support students. Koori and Sudanese parents support homework clubs in their schools.

## **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 continued to engage with the school community and in particular their parent body through activities such as:

- information sessions on school programs
- events that showcase student work
- whole school community events such as welcome barbecues at the start of the year, Grandparents Day and school assemblies
- homework and breakfast clubs attended or run by parents

Schools have also worked with outside agencies to provide a range of services to their school community. The Community Services Directorate has worked with schools to provide student support such as speech therapists, and to run the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) process that provides information for schools to design their early childhood programs.

A large number of the parents/carers at these schools have no post secondary education and so few children aspire to tertiary education or professions due to the lack of role models amongst their immediate family members. Through a memorandum of understanding, CIT has provided opportunities for students and parents to engage with post secondary educational opportunities and pathways.

CIT has also run Try A Trade days for students where CIT staff come and talk to the students about a variety of trades and they get to dress up and role play as a tradesperson. They have also run some parent programs that offered parents a chance to talk to CIT staff about their possible pathways into further training and employment. This partnership will continue to be expanded in 2012.