



Australian Government

SMARTER SCHOOLS NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



SMARTER SCHOOLS NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY
LOW SES SCHOOL COMMUNITIES
LITERACY AND NUMERACY

Western Australia Annual Report for 2009 (April 2010)



Department of
Education



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
OFFICE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



ASSOCIATION OF
INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA (INC)

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The National Partnership Agreements on Literacy and Numeracy, Low SES School Communities and Improving Teacher Quality are collaborative initiatives supported by funding from the Australian Government, the Western Australian Government and the Catholic and Independent school sectors.

Section 1 – Smarter Schools Summary

Government Sector

In 2009, the implementation of the three Smarter Schools National Partnerships (NPs) commenced across the Department of Education. A Program Office was established to oversee the coordination, planning and monitoring of the implementation of initiatives for the National Partnerships in Department schools and where applicable, in non-government schools. It also has responsibility for monitoring of progress in reform areas requiring accountability and performance management information. A Program Board provides a governance role over the directions of the Program Office that will ensure alignment between all education reforms across public schools in this State.

Low SES School Communities National Partnership

Implementation has commenced across the first tranche of 30 public schools.

- A suite of strategies has been developed from which schools are able to select and implement.
- School plans have been submitted and provide information indicating their use of the National Partnership funding.
- The central project team is exploring the provision of incentives to attract and retain principals and teachers in low-SES schools.

Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership

Significant work has been undertaken with the 68 participating schools and their communities to ensure they will implement more powerful strategies to enhance outcomes for the students they target.

- Partnership school plans have been developed that show the selected strategies, how resources will be used and what targets are to be achieved. These Partnership plans have been integrated into individual school plans to identify improvement targets, evaluation measures, strategies and resources.
- Seven Principals were appointed for six weeks during the planning phase to support schools. Directors Schools have also been integral to planning in Partnership schools.
- A starter pack and planning support package has been developed and is available on the Department's website.

Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership

Development, planning and negotiations was undertaken across all reform areas.

- The tender process to establish the Western Australian Institute for Public School Leadership and Professional Learning has been completed.
- Negotiations are underway through interagency planning to develop incentive packages for principals and teachers in Low SES schools.
- A Service Agreement has been executed between the Department of Education and Edith Cowan University to commence the Training Schools Residency program.
- Policy development is underway to explore options to encourage Level 3 Classroom Teachers to work in low SES areas and difficult-to-staff schools.

Catholic Sector

During 2009, the Catholic Education Office WA (CEOWA) established a management and implementation structure and appointed key personnel to facilitate implementation across all three National Partnerships (NP).

All CEOWA Executive Members have been given responsibility for one of the three NPs. A manager and assistants have been appointed to oversee the effective implementation and delivery of key outcomes. All financial management protocols have been developed and an effective audit and accountability process established, including monthly financial reports.

Sixteen individual, but related projects have been developed through widespread consultation processes. Individual managers have been designated for these projects. In some cases, school-based personnel will be responsible for the management of the projects. A specialist consultant has been appointed for the Kimberley region, given that the primary focus for the Low SES School Communities NP is remote and rural schools.

Highlights of 2009 include:

Low SES School Communities National Partnership

- The appointment of an Aboriginal teacher to assist in the management of Kimberley-based projects was completed.
- A support package to assist remote schools in catering for senior secondary students was completed.
- A Kimberley-based literacy consultant was appointed and numeracy and literacy support processes commenced.
- Collection of data to enable a student tracking project in remote Aboriginal schools was commenced.
- The PATHS project was commenced, including training of school staff, with all Kimberley schools being provided with a PATHS kit.
- Operation of the Blueearth program in Kimberley schools commenced in 2009 and an evaluation undertaken indicating positive outcomes. Two South-West schools also commenced the program. Planning for an extension of the program for 2010 was undertaken.

Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership

- Schools (62) have been identified to participate in the NP.
- Five regional school-based literacy and numeracy consultants were appointed.
- Training and in-servicing of CEOWA consultants and school staff has been finalised.
- Significant progress has been made in the Year 7 - 9 Literacy and Numeracy project with five schools implementing a trial literacy program in Term 4 and a number of schools receiving support and training in numeracy-related areas.

Teacher Quality National Partnership

- An intensive training program for Mathematics and Science teachers during Terms 3 and 4 was completed.
- A partnership with Edith Cowan University for a training schools of excellence program was established.
- The selection of 35 Teacher Assistants for an up skilling program for alternate pathways into teaching was completed.
- The appointment of two school-based Assistant Principals to manage a teacher mentor project for teachers in their first two years of teaching was completed.
- The development of a large scale school improvement framework for all Catholic schools; and development of a leadership framework and program for Aboriginal teachers and leaders were progressed.

Independent Sector (AISWA)

Low SES School Communities National Partnership

- Two National Partnership Consultants (Low SES) have been appointed. One consultant is based in Perth and the other in Broome.
- Many of the schools already have programs in place to increase school attendance, student engagement and student achievement.
- AISWA is instituting a small grant scheme through the Low SES NP for these schools. The NP consultants will be central in helping schools draft grant applications that support the school plan and in ensuring that schools obtain the maximum impact from these grants, i.e. the grants lead to improved student engagement and achievement.

Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership

- Four National Partnership consultants were appointed in September 2009 and allocated to the 17 National Partnership schools.
- As expert teachers, the consultants have worked closely with school principals to identify areas of need. They have begun coaching teachers and offering on-going professional development.

- The National Partnership consultants have identified the following areas of work.
 - Assist teachers to refine their teaching in a way that challenges students and provides learning that leads to deep representation of concepts.
 - Assist National Partnership schools in developing whole school literacy and numeracy plans that result in integrated and more coherent learning across the school.
 - Support schools in preparing for NAPLAN assessments. The consultants are working with teachers to explain the concepts and learning assessed through NAPLAN and to demonstrate explicit teaching of these concepts.

Teacher Quality National Partnership

AISWA initiated professional learning opportunities, including:

- A subsidised Graduate Diploma of Education (potentially leading to a Masters), in partnership with the University of Western Australia for leaders and aspiring leaders.
- Professional learning for leaders and aspirant leaders in the South-West Region of Western Australia.
- ICT professional learning for classroom teachers addressed ICT skills and the pedagogy of ICT, to ensure implementation enhances student outcomes.
- AISWA continues to work with remote schools to encourage Aboriginal Education Workers to participate in further training either through TAFE or Murdoch University.

CROSS SECTOR COLLABORATION

Collaboration between the Department of Education, Catholic Education Office WA (CEOWA) and the Association of Independent Schools Western Australia (AISWA), has continued on at least two major levels.

A Cross Sectoral Governance Group was established in early 2009. This consists of heads of systems/sector and other key personnel. It is responsible for higher level policy decisions, finalisation and approval of the Bilateral Agreements and ongoing implementation matters.

Collaboration has occurred regularly on a manager/key consultant basis. This has focussed on sharing of projects, identification of opportunities for collaboration, discussion of reporting and policy issues, negotiation of key targets and other management issues. Collaboration, particularly where economies can be secured in areas like the Kimberley region, has also been undertaken.

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION/ENGAGEMENT

School improvement will be undertaken collaboratively by the Department of Education and the non-government sector, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, each school and school community.

Government Sector

The implementation approach aligns and integrates packages of reforms tailored for individual school/s to improve their capacity to optimise the learning outcomes achieved by students. School performance will be monitored regularly so that interventions can be modified and contextualised and support and resources deployed effectively. This has included consultation with Directors Schools, school leaders, teachers and the school community regarding their participation in the national partnerships.

A Program Board has been established to oversee the coordination, planning and monitoring of the implementation of initiatives for the National Partnerships in Department schools, and where applicable, in non-government schools. It also has responsibility for monitoring of progress in reform areas requiring accountability and performance management information.

Catholic Sector

CEOWA has undertaken a number of key consultation processes, including:

- A representative management structure has been established with key personnel identified and engaged within the Office and in regions. The role of these personnel is not only to assist in the management of projects, but also to seek feedback from all stakeholders to assist in the ongoing refinement of projects.
- Director Forums have been undertaken with all primary and secondary principals.

- Principal School Advisors have undertaken widespread consultation in metropolitan schools and regional schools.
- Standing committees of the Catholic Education Commission of WA (CECWA) including the School Resources Committee (SRC); Religious Education and Curriculum Committee (RECC); Parent Advisory Committee (PAC); and the Catholic Education Aboriginal Committee (CEAC, have provided feedback to the proposed projects).
- A consultative forum, consisting of school-based personnel, representatives from students with disabilities, Aboriginal education and rural schools, met twice in early 2009 to establish priorities, map out appropriate projects and to provide advice about the implementation of these projects.
- Further consultation has occurred regularly with peak principal groups such as the Catholic Secondary Principals Association (CSPA) and the Catholic Primary Principals Association (CPPA). Deputy and Assistant Principal associations have also been consulted.
- The Broome Regional Office and the Aboriginal K – 12 Team consulted widely with Aboriginal Teaching Assistants about their needs and the possible structure of support programs.
- Engagement has also occurred in many projects with outside organisations including three universities, the Blueearth Foundation, Principals Australia (Dare to Lead program) and the Central Institute of Technology.
- Processes for ongoing consultation and feedback exist and this will contribute to ongoing refinements in various projects.

Independent Sector

All National Partnership schools were consulted at the outset and Principals will convene in April to review progress to date and to determine future directions.

National Partnership consultants regularly meet with school leadership teams to monitor and evaluate progress and to refine their work with schools.

SCHOOL LEVEL PLANS

Schools participating in the National Partnerships will post the relevant sections of their school-level plans on the Internet.

This information will include the amount of National Partnership funding provided to each school, the reforms to be addressed and strategies implemented at the school and ultimately, the improved educational outcomes.

The template for the school level plan has been developed. Following the finalisation of the school operation plans the school level plan will be developed for the first 30 schools. It is anticipated that this information will be posted on the Internet by March 2010.

Section 2 – Improving Teacher Quality

PROGRESS STATEMENT

Government Sector

- Western Australia has initiated the **Training Schools Residency Program** that facilitates pre-service student teachers, to transition into a teaching career. The program is being conducted through the New Pathways into Teaching initiative.

As at December 2009, a Service Agreement was executed between the Department of Education and Edith Cowan University to commence the Training Schools Residency program. The program targets pre-service teachers enrolling in the Graduate Diploma of Education who achieve their teaching qualification by being placed in a school under the supervision and tutelage of an experienced and accomplished mentor teacher. The Residency program requires pre-service Intern teachers to spend substantially more time in the classroom. The program integrates theoretical learning with practical application in the classroom. Edith Cowan University facilitates the program in partnership with the Department of Education.

- Under the Better Pathways into Teaching program, the Department of Education has commenced the **Upskilling Program for School Support Staff**. Planning in 2009 focussed on ensuring that the program will provide supported opportunities to enhance the skills and competencies of teaching support staff with a view to influencing some to enrol in teacher training courses. Set to commence in Semester 2, 2010, this program will be run in Western Australia as a cross-sectoral initiative involving Government, Catholic schools and Independent schools.
- With the aim of supporting graduate teachers and providing in-class coaching for graduates from alternative, new pathway pre-service courses, Western Australia worked throughout 2009 developing a **Specialist Coaches Program**. Aspects of the Specialist Coaches Program are also in the ambit of the other two Smarter Schools National Partnerships – Low Socio-Economic School Communities and Literacy and Numeracy, notably in connection with providing support to graduates teaching in hard-to-staff schools or in challenging roles.

Specialist coaches will be trained by the Department's Professional Learning Institute to provide a network of support to graduates and to enrich their capacity in planning, assessment, classroom management, literacy and numeracy through demonstrating effective teaching practice and providing feedback to each graduate on their progress. Planning to date has focussed on a targeted cohort that includes graduate teachers comprising Education Assistants and Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers who have undertaken a Bachelor of Education Conversion Course, Bachelor of Education for early childhood education and graduates identified by principals as benefiting from specialist coaching support. Specific elements, such as training of coaches, have been finalised.

- In Western Australia, the **Level 3 Classroom Teacher program** was established in 1998 to provide recognition, reward and career pathways to keep exemplary teachers in the classroom. Assessment methodology has remained the same since the program's inception. During 2009, the Department of Education explored options of other assessment methodologies and ways to encourage Level 3 Classroom Teachers to work in low SES areas and difficult-to-staff schools. For example, during 2009, detailed policy options were developed for progressing alternative assessments, including on-site assessment, and their implications for the system and current industrial agreements. Sabbatical leave and remuneration incentives have also been considerations within planning to date.

Catholic Sector (CEOWA)

Seven discrete, yet related projects have been finalised with key personnel given responsibility for managing these projects, several of which have commenced implementation. Progress to date in relation to the seven projects is provided below:

- The **Quality Catholic Schooling – Whole School Improvement Framework** builds on an initiative being developed by the CEOWA. A project manager has been appointed, an international expert, Professor Ian Gamble engaged, a broad framework agreed upon and component and elemental writing across seven broad levels is continuing. It is anticipated that the framework will be finalised by October 2010 and schools will be implementing at least one component.
- Planning to support the **Executive Principal Project** in 2009 identified the need for an additional officer specifically to assist principals in lower SES and/or rural schools. This position will be filled during 2010.

- The **Aboriginal Leadership Project** has been scoped and blends with the existing leadership framework developed for the CEOWA. An enhancement to the Project is the introduction of the 'Dare to Lead' program. Implementation of this Project will commence in 2010 with the first 15 participants undertaking professional learning.
- The **Mentor Teacher Project** has commenced and two Assistant Principals have been engaged to support primary and secondary teachers in their first two years of teaching. Two seminars were held in late 2009 and a full program has been scoped out for 2010, including additional support for rural teachers.
- All planning in relation to the **Training Schools Project** was finalised in 2009. This work included the finalisation of an agreement with Edith Cowan University, identification of four participating Catholic schools, appointment of site directors in each school and interview and selection of participating final year pre-service students. Training was also delivered to teachers and site directors from each of the schools. Approximately 20 students will be trained in the Catholic schools involved.
- The **Upskilling Teacher Assistant (TA) Project** was designed to provide a higher level of competence to TA's as well as providing those who undertake the Diploma qualification with the possibility of a new pathway into early childhood teaching degrees. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with Central Metropolitan Institute of Technology and the program advertised. Applications indicate 30 TAs have been elected to enter the innovative program which conducts most of the training in an on-the-job context.
- The **Science and Mathematics Upskilling Project** ran a number of training sessions in 2009. A total of 8 sessions were held involving 60 teachers. Six sessions were held in regional centres. Overall, approximately 40 per cent of those attending came from other systems/sectors which illustrates the cross-system collaboration involved. The program was deemed to be highly successful in addressing obvious skills and competence shortage in these areas, especially at a senior secondary level. A program for 2010 has been mapped out to enhance the program and continue to offer opportunities in non-metropolitan schools.

Independent Sector (AISWA)

AISWA has commenced professional learning opportunities:

- A subsidised **Graduate Diploma of Education** (potentially leading to a Masters), in partnership with the University of Western Australia for leaders and aspiring leaders. AISWA is offering to partly fund participants and is also delivering a unit that deals with Administrative Leadership. This course was advertised and information provided to metropolitan schools. To date 18 teachers have expressed an interest in applying for the course. Further applications expected.
- AISWA has identified within the work of National Partnerships, Literacy and Numeracy and Low SES, that there is a need to further develop principals' **strategic and curriculum leadership skills**. The University of Western Australia Business School has been contracted to provide school leaders in these schools with professional learning in strategic leadership. AISWA's planning has been focussed on targeted Literacy and Numeracy and Low SES schools to ensure maximum impact of those Partnerships.
- **Professional learning for leaders and aspirant leaders** in the South-West Region of Western Australia has been developed and AISWA has entered into a partnership with Edith Cowan University to provide a course that examines Instructional Leadership and Change Management.
- **ICT professional learning** has been established for classroom teachers to address ICT skills and the pedagogy of ICT. This project will train school facilitators to become Mentor/Experts to train clusters of school staff in the integration of ICT into all curriculum areas and to enhance student outcomes.
- During 2009, AISWA has worked closely with remote schools to encourage **Aboriginal Education Workers** to participate in further training, either through TAFE or Murdoch University. The NP (Low SES) consultant located in the Broome Office is working closely with schools to encourage them to take advantage of this opportunity.

MILESTONES AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Milestones and performance indicators presented in the agreed Final Implementation Plan and Bilateral Agreement for period to December 2009 have been reached. Across the State, a focus has been on leadership.
- Through the Department of Education, by December 2009, 34 Independent Public Schools (IPS) were established. Principals of IPS will receive comprehensive induction courses, additional administration resources, ongoing central system support and access to leadership development programs.
- In 2009, the Department progressed work to establish the Institute of Educational Learning and Leadership, which includes the Western Australian Academy of Government School Leadership (the Leadership Academy). The Academy's programs will complement and articulate with activities of the new Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership. Programs will be accredited and interface with post-graduate qualifications.
- The Department will provide professional development of aspirant principals with priority given to developing the capacities of potential and existing leaders in challenging circumstances. The Department will continue to provide leadership programs focusing on supporting existing and aspirant leaders, with targeted programs for women in leadership and Indigenous leaders. These programs will fall under the Institute.
- CEOWA expanded the Executive level mentoring (Executive Principal) Program with a focus on country and remote areas. This program provides in situ mentoring support to principals to assist in the whole school improvement process and the responsibilities of the four Executive Principals have been expanded to include NP responsibilities.
- The expansion of the Leadership Framework for Catholic Schools - 'Quality Catholic Schools' commenced in 2009 and will continue in 2010 through a series of professional workshops and professional development activities.
- Trialled in 2009, AISWA extended and refined the School Leadership series of workshops. The workshops support school leaders and aspiring leaders and a focus in 2010 will be to take these to rural and regional areas. Negotiations were undertaken with the University of Western Australia and Edith Cowan University to develop a program of school leadership workshops that would articulate with post graduate and masters courses and thus provide credit towards higher degrees. Negotiations with UWA and ECU were also undertaken to devise an independent school Graduate Diploma and Masters Program that is tailored to the needs of leaders in the non Government sector. An Expression of Interest was sent to schools inviting school leaders or aspiring leaders to participate in either of the University Link programs which will commence during the 2010 school year.

IMPLEMENTATION OR IMPACT ISSUES

- **Industrial relations – Government sector**
In relation to public schools, current workforce policies and practices need to be refined/amended to align to the reform initiatives, including those relating to transfers, incentives to attract and retain high quality leaders and teachers to difficult-to-staff schools, additional teacher classifications, permanency, Principal contracts, re-deployees, performance management and school support staff. An industrial relations strategy is being developed to address these challenges.
- **Planning timelines**
Planning in general was hampered by the seven week school closure over December/January which made it difficult to finalise some of the agreements with schools and other training providers. The holiday period meant that in some cases, full training of site directors and teachers in the Training School project were delayed.
- **Project synergies**
An ongoing challenge has been to develop projects that not only address school needs, but compliments existing school initiatives and do not lead to tensions or overlap. This is an ongoing problem, particularly in Kimberley schools where many of the separate NP projects exist and where there are many other State, Commonwealth and system led imperatives in action.
- **Professional learning**
Providing professional learning to non-metropolitan schools is a challenge. In particular the remoteness of some schools makes it difficult to ensure sustained learning. This issue is being addressed by arranging localised professional learning.

ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS STUDENTS AND/OR TEACHERS

Western Australia is addressing the educational outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students using a coordinated and targeted approach across mainstream and specific programs and strategies. Western Australian implementation plans for national partnership agreements include a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, disadvantaged schools, students not meeting minimum standards in literacy and numeracy, and students whose first language is not Standard Australian English.

Western Australia has established a Cross Sectoral Governance Group to facilitate the planning and implementation of National Partnerships. The Group will focus on strategies linking government and non-government school sectors to maintain a strategic approach and reduce duplication of effort.

A five year Aboriginal education strategy has been developed for government schools in Western Australia. This strategy is aligned with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014. The priority areas are: readiness for formal schooling, attendance, literacy and numeracy, and attainment of a Year 12 certificate or Certificate II qualifications. Clear performance indicators and strategies have been developed across the priority areas. The strategy is based on the premise that high expectations for improvement should be built into planning and program delivery. Working in partnership with other agencies and industry will be essential in addressing the complex issues that can act as barriers to learning. Improved outcomes will be achieved through a better connection between families, caregivers, communities and schools, quality leaders and effective teaching.

Government, Independent and Catholic school sectors support the actions under each domain of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014 and, wherever possible, will encourage and support schools to incorporate key actions into their whole school planning processes.

Through the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership specifically, Western Australia has developed:

- improved in-school support for teachers through the allocation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officers to schools with high Indigenous populations;
- leadership support and training programs for existing and aspirant Indigenous leaders and non-Indigenous teaching staff aspiring for promotion;
- the establishment of the Institute of Educational Learning and Leadership which will focus on leadership in Indigenous education;
- mentoring support for new teaching graduates with a focus on Indigenous teachers; and up-skilling of Education Assistants and Aboriginal Education Assistants in schools in the Kimberley region.

GOOD PRACTICE

- The **Training Schools** Project is innovative within Western Australia and is being implemented across sectors. The Department has been working with Edith Cowan University to provide the Training Schools Residency Program that will target pre-service teachers enrolling in the Graduate Diploma of Education. Drawing on the experience of a training school model underway at Kingston Primary School in the State's south-west, pre-service teachers are being placed in schools under the supervision and tutelage of experienced and accomplished mentor teachers. The Residency Program requires pre-service Intern teachers to spend substantially more time in the classroom. The program integrates theoretical learning with practical application in the classroom.

A particular good practice element is the benefit which accrues to both the trainees and the school staff. Site directors and mentor teachers receive specialist training. Schools will also negotiate professional development support from the university such as behaviour management practices, assessment expertise, differentiated teaching etc.

It is anticipated that this model will be expanded to include other universities and to develop schools of excellence where the partnership between the tertiary provider and the school is consolidated and exchange of expertise occurs. Further enhancements which may reflect best practice opportunities will include expansion to include rural and remote schools which will provide unique opportunities for trainees to be immersed in the teaching challenges in remote area schools – an area of particular challenge in Western Australia.

- The **Quality Catholic Schooling – Whole School Improvement Framework** has been developed from widespread local input and builds on models of best practice used internationally and elsewhere in Australia. An internationally acclaimed consultant, Professor Ian Gamble has assisted in overseeing the project.

The framework establishes 24 key components of school improvement with a seven point rating scale. It is not developed as an inspectorial model, rather an opportunity for schools to undertake critical conversations about their school, its current performance and an opportunity to map a process for school improvement. As such, it also provides a common basis for schools to conduct conversations with each other and share experiences.

A further best practice element of the framework is that it has been developed through the collaborative discussions of over 150 teachers who bring practical criteria and descriptions to the components and the ratings. Preliminary work has been shared with the Department of Educational Services and with the Department of Education in Western Australia. The opportunity for cross-system sector conversations and discussions is a particular strength of this project, and highly consistent with National Partnership strategic outcomes.

- **Teacher Assistant training** through the CEOWA, represents a highly innovative model where each participating Teacher Assistant is assessed by the partner Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and a personalised training program is developed. This program will be dependent on the competencies and existing qualifications held by the Teacher Assistant.

Assessment will occur largely in the workplace and the teacher within the school, plays an important role in gathering evidence for sign off by the RTO. Particular features of best practice include, the on-the-job approach to training; the development of personalised individual training programs; the involvement of the classroom teacher in a training partnership with the Teacher Assistant; the existence of several Teacher Assistants in each school (up to 7) which provides an opportunity for sharing ideas; and the scaffolding of learning to underpin ongoing training to the diploma level.

It is hoped that those Teacher Assistants who complete the Diploma course, will be provided with accelerated entry prospects for a Degree course in early childhood teaching. Negotiations are occurring with universities to assure entry and advanced standing arrangements.

Section 3 – Low SES School Communities

PROGRESS STATEMENT

From 2010 to 2015, 99 Government, 27 Catholic and 25 Independent schools, will participate in the National Partnership; each for a four-year period.

Government Sector

Planning

During 2009, the Government Sector undertook research and analysis to develop the strategies within the key reform areas, appropriate planning processes for schools, consultation with stakeholders and consideration of all costs.

Directors Schools were pivotal in supporting principals to develop National Partnership School Operational Plans. As each Director had different numbers of schools involved in the Low SES Agreement and the needs and contexts of each school area diverse, each Director's level of engagement also differed. As a guide, Directors Schools were involved by supporting principals with implementation of their self-assessment process prior to planning and supporting schools to review disaggregated school and student performance data and identifying targets that reflect high expectations for student learning.

The implementation approach aligns and integrates packages of reforms tailored for individual school/s to improve their capacity to optimise the learning outcomes achieved by students. School performance will be monitored regularly so that interventions can be modified and contextualised, and support and resources deployed effectively. The following planning approach was undertaken for the first 30 schools to commence in Semester 1, 2010:

- negotiated an agreement with Directors Schools, school leaders, teachers and the school community regarding their participation in the project.
- developed a plan to specify how clusters of schools would work together and integrated relevant information into the operational plan for each school, incorporating:
 - context;
 - achievement data;
 - the new strategies to be implemented in 2010;
 - improvement targets and milestone measures to monitor progress; and
 - the budget, staff requirements and overall costings for the National Partnership allocation and school contribution towards the reforms.

A suite of strategies from which participating schools can select was developed. Strategies are varied and include such things as: a focus on literacy and/or numeracy, extended service school models, smaller classes sizes, extended school hours and whole school planning. They are contextually appropriate for the schools into which they will be implemented.

Some schools have taken the opportunity to work collaboratively. Gilmore College, Medina Primary, Calista Primary and Orelia Primary are part of the Kwinana Federation and have joined forces to implement strategies across the cluster which will deal with a number of complex challenges across the community faced by disadvantaged students.

Schools have welcomed the opportunity to plan for extensive improvements through the National Partnerships and although implementation is in its early stages, the Department of Education is anticipating that positive outcomes will be achieved by:

- developing incentives to attract talented principals and teachers to low SES communities;
- developing innovative solutions to improve student achievement including hours of school operation and extended services;
- extending partnerships with parents, business and the community;
- implementing recognised literacy and numeracy teaching programs and supporting their teachers to deliver them;
- narrowing the achievement gap for Aboriginal students;
- monitoring the progress of their students and gather data on the effectiveness of their strategies; and
- participating in research and external evaluations of innovative practice.

Schools have received individualised support and tailored planning support for implementation. A Low SES Team has been put in place to undertake comprehensive planning guidance through central and district officer support.

Operation Plans were submitted in December 2009 and provide information indicating how they will use Partnership Schools' resources and capitalise on these by co-investing existing school resources.

Participating schools are being provided additional support and resources and are expected to participate in research and external evaluations of innovative practice. To further support schools, existing policies are being refined to provide enhanced flexibility.

Projects

- The Department has commenced scoping the extent to which greater differential remuneration could improve the **attraction, retention** and therefore the distribution of highly skilled principals and teachers amongst schools in low SES school communities. The proposal outlines:
 - an attraction payment upon signing a performance agreement; and
 - a retention payment, subject to satisfactorily meeting the terms of their performance agreement and completion of each 12 month period.

Negotiations are underway with state agencies to utilise provisions under existing legislation and regulations.

- Planning and mapping of current **extended service school models** is underway to highlight the types of services available and being utilised in government schools, specifically those services being offered by external agencies. The project team will explore ways to complement and extend school level actions to approaches that can lift learning outcomes and improve student wellbeing. In particular brokering a range of services for students and families, including co-location of some services like early childhood facilities, linking employment services to schools and referring parents to parenting and family support programs to enable them to better engage with their children's education.
- The **Kimberley District** is implementing a **seven point plan** to achieve the following:
 1. Every Kimberley school has a 0-3 program accessible to all children.
 2. All secondary schooling in the Kimberley is delivered through the larger high school campuses.
 3. The TAFE experience is embedded in every Senior Secondary School program.
 4. There a strong focus on improving literacy and numeracy levels for all Kimberley students.
 5. School/Community partnerships that describe relevant and achievable goals are underpinned by explicit mutual obligations.
 6. Kimberley schools are staffed by quality leadership, teaching and support staff.
 7. There is a commitment to build strong interagency collaboration in sustainable ways.

Strategies to achieve the seven point plan involve implementing a system of clustering schools to improve staffing and educational outcomes through sharing resources and developing common approaches that will be valuable for those students who are transient.

For example the Fitzroy Valley consists of a cluster of seven government schools. The transient nature of students has resulted in these schools working together to develop consistency and continuity in learning programs. These schools have a high population of Aboriginal students , and / or children with English as a second language' and they consistently achieve below the nation minimum standard in numeracy. The schools have an unrelenting approach to literacy and numeracy which aims to halve the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.

The Valley Literacy and Numeracy strategies will provide students and teachers with access to specialist teachers working across Fitzroy Valley Schools. There is also the opportunity for teachers to utilise appropriate data collection to further develop their understanding of student needs.

Catholic Sector

Seven discrete, but related projects have been developed after extensive consultation with stakeholders. The focus during 2009 was on 13 Low SES Kimberley schools in terms of planning and proposed implementation for 2010.

Most of the seven projects were scoped and planned during 2009 with limited implementation. However, the following was achieved:

- Significant progress was made with the **Senior Secondary Support Project**. In consultation with stakeholders, a file has been produced with a range of sample courses, programs and procedures required to enrol students in more formal senior secondary studies, primarily with the Curriculum Council of Western Australia. St Mary's College in Broome has agreed to act as a mentor and point of contact for the six remote schools with secondary tops. Most of the schools have commenced implementing a small range of senior secondary programs and have commenced enrolling students accordingly.
- In terms of the **Tracking Students Project**, negotiations have occurred with the Curriculum Council of WA to allocate a unique identifier to every student in the Kimberley region from Kindergarten. Demographic details for students have been collected and verified. Before numbers are allocated, CEOWA are awaiting further news regarding the nature of the national unique identifier arrangements to be developed following COAG's agreement in principle in December 2009. In this project, negotiations have occurred with the Department of Education where a similar project is being piloted. Eventually, it is intended to provide a consistent approach across the Kimberley region and across all schools.
- The **Up Skilling Aboriginal Teaching Assistant (ATA) Project** has been scoped out with an emphasis on classroom support in literacy and numeracy and professional training. An Aboriginal consultant to work from the Broome Office has been appointed and the needs of ATAs identified.
- The **Extending the School Day Project** has been scoped and discussed with Kimberley school principals. This will focus on activities which are conducted either/both before and after school and where teachers, ATAs or outside community members are paid to deliver a program that links in some way to key aims and outcomes of the school. This will be fully implemented in May 2010.
- The **PATHS Project** has commenced. All Kimberley schools have a PATHS kit and further mentor support and training will commence in 2010. Negotiations commenced in 2009 regarding the appointment of a PATHS consultant to service the Kimberley schools (this appointment was confirmed in early 2010).
- The **Extension of the Blueearth Project** has been scoped and negotiated with the Blueearth Foundation with an expansion to the four west Kimberley Schools as well as extended visits to all schools, especially the desert schools. In addition, the program has been further extended to include 10 low SES schools in the Perth and Bunbury dioceses. Negotiations with schools and the trainers were finalised in 2009 in preparation for extension of the program in 2010.
- The **Literacy and Numeracy Project for Kimberley Schools** has been scoped and existing regional consultants have been placed as 'case managers'. These consultants have been trained in data analysis and work with schools to develop and implement school based literacy and numeracy plans. Intervention and support strategies commenced late in 2009.

Independent Sector

- Two National Partnership Consultants (Low SES) have been appointed. One consultant is based in Perth and the other in Broome. The consultants have worked closely with schools to identify areas of need, which are broadly:
 - assistance with understanding the skills assessed through NAPLAN and with helping students negotiate the tests;
 - assistance with curriculum development and whole school planning;
 - access to school psychology services;
 - assistance with accessing community links;
 - provision of professional learning in teaching practices that lead to improved student learning; and
 - support for those areas where there is an identified lack of resources and limited access to support.
- School attendance – schools reviewed their existing strategies and identified impediments to achieving their goals. A lack of resources and access to support were the key issues. For example, they lack funds to access speech therapists, or to provide remedial teaching for individual students or to work with the school community to ensure regular school attendance. Planning has commenced to overcome these.
- AISWA will be instituting a small grant scheme through the Low SES NP for their schools. The NP consultants will be central in helping the schools draft grant applications that aim to support the school plan and in ensuring that schools obtain the maximum impact from these grants, i.e. the grants lead to improved student engagement and achievement.

MILESTONES AND MEASURES

School plans have been developed, in collaboration with school communities, for all participating schools and appropriate support provided to ensure appropriate strategies to meet local needs are in place and supported, along with projects costed and resources allocated. The Department of Education and CEOWA have specifically focussed its planning across remote schools with an emphasis on the Kimberley region.

AISWA has worked closely with its Aboriginal Schools in 2009 and a school engagement consultant based in Broome, is working with schools in the Kimberley and Pilbara. It is anticipated that this support will be extended to 15 rural and metropolitan schools in 2010, facilitated by a Perth based engagement consultant.

IMPLEMENTATION OR IMPACT ISSUES

- The remote nature of the Kimberley region will continue to pose a number of implementation issues.
- The educational challenges faced by West Australian schools serving low SES communities are acute. In many cases, staff's capacity to tackle the complex and multi-layered challenges is lacking. These schools are more likely to be staffed by inexperienced teachers, are subject to higher rates of staff turnover and find it difficult to attract relief teachers.

Retention of motivated staff is critical to school performance and relies upon effective leadership from the principal. The principal also plays a key role in encouraging growth in the school, increasing capacity of staff, providing opportunities to access professional development, providing mentoring and support to the school, and engaging with the school community.

The significant and important role high-quality principals and teachers play in improving student learning is widely acknowledged in international and national research literature. As a consequence this is a key reform within the National Partnership Agreements for both low SES communities and improving teacher quality, as is the capacity to attract and retain high performing teachers and principals to Low SES schools. The implementation of these strategies has been hampered by the industrial relations issues, at a Department and state level, such as changes to legislation and regulations.

- Projects need to align with each other, with current school initiatives and with State, Commonwealth and other system initiatives. Kimberley schools may find it challenging to absorb the range of initiatives and to implement these in an effective and sustainable manner.
- The diversity and size of the schools in this partnership has impeded implementation. Schools may be very remote; very small schools (with only two or three teachers) with particular religious or educational philosophies; or schools with a high proportion of ESL/ESD students.

ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

There are a total of 28, 069 students in participating schools for this national partnership. Of these, 9,844 or 35.07 percent are Indigenous. Western Australia will implement a mix of system, local and school based strategies in which the specific needs of Indigenous students have been incorporated.

The 'Closing the Gap' and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan (Draft) provide the basis for all planning across all sectors in Western Australia.

A particular issue is the concentration of low SES school communities in the Kimberley region and other remote and very remote areas. These schools have predominantly Aboriginal populations. By having a strong targeted regional and cross-sectoral focus, a cohesive approach to address the needs of Aboriginal children in this State will be provided.

Specific initiatives include:

- the appointment of Aboriginal consultants to work closely with the Aboriginal Teaching Assistants;
- adoption of a diverse approach, addressing important outcomes such as engagement, attendance, health and welfare issues, literacy and numeracy levels and overall teacher quality;
- the provision of cultural awareness training for staff working in Indigenous communities;
- development of a range of local strategies, specifically targeting Indigenous students and those who will be teaching them, identified in the Planning Pack resource package for public schools; and
- Strong and Smarter Professional Learning (SSPL) in the Kimberley, which aims to effect sustainable change in schools to achieve positive educational outcomes for Aboriginal children on key indicators. Derby DHS is leading a Smarter Schools Learning Community Project and has brought together four schools as a hub, namely Fitzroy Valley DHS, Looma RCS, Bayulu

Section 4 – Literacy and Numeracy

PROGRESS STATEMENT

Government Sector

The National Partnership Agreement for Literacy and Numeracy has provided 68 Department of Education Partnership Schools a significant opportunity to generate improvement beyond that which has previously been possible. Schools planned to achieve improvements by adjusting existing literacy and numeracy strategies to make them more effective, and by implementing new and more powerful strategies, tailored to suit the context of their school and the learning needs of their students.

The unifying aspects of research that underpin the Department's approach to achievement of the three key reform areas, and the subsequent improvement in literacy and numeracy student learning outcomes are:

- having a high level of expectation and teacher efficacy
 - focusing on what matters most, with a real emphasis on literacy and numeracy, so the basics of all future learning are achieved
 - using data to drive improvement
 - using a case-management approach
 - building teaching and leadership expertise
 - ensuring structured and explicit teaching to ensure all students succeed
 - building and maintaining a culture of sharing and responsibility
 - tailoring initiatives to the overall direction of the school.
- **Alignment of school operation plans to the National Partnership Agreement**
A significant factor in establishing a basis for improving literacy and numeracy standards in the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership Schools was the engagement of schools and their communities in the development of school plans.
 - Two Consultant Principals, appointed using State funding for a period of 12 months from the commencement of Term 4, 2009, and five Support Principals, appointed for six weeks during the critical planning phase, provided quality support to the sixty-eight schools to develop National Partnership Plans. The Consultant and Support Principals assisted schools to devise plans, within the context of the existing school plan and operational plans, to address the broad strategies detailed in the Agreement and to meet the Department's expectations for National Partnership schools.
 - Directors Schools were pivotal in supporting principals to develop National Partnership School Plans. As each Director had different numbers of schools involved in the National Partnership Agreement for Literacy and Numeracy and the needs and contexts of each school area diverse, each Director's level of engagement also differed. As a guide, Directors Schools were involved by supporting principals with implementation of their self-assessment process prior to planning and supporting schools to review disaggregated school and student performance data and identifying targets that reflect high expectations for student learning. Support was also given in their selection of evidence-based strategies that will have maximum impact to support their teachers and students to improve literacy and/or numeracy and facilitating schools to work together and to share lessons learnt in implementing literacy and/or numeracy strategies.
 - **Provision of planning support**
In addition to support provided from Director Schools and District Principal Consultants, support in the development of the National Partnership Plans, School Plans and operational planning, including the negotiation of improvement targets and the selection of evidence-based strategies, was provided by the Consultant Principal or Support Principal attached to each school. These principals also supported the school self-assessment process by facilitating the analysis of disaggregated school and student performance data and assisting with the identification of key improvement areas in literacy and/or numeracy.

The following activities occurred between September and December 2009.



- **Starter Pack and presentation**

A National Partnership Literacy and Numeracy Starter Pack was developed by the Curriculum Support team and distributed to all schools to support them in developing their National Partnership School Plan.

- **Website**

Information about the National Partnership Agreement for Literacy and Numeracy and support resources such as the Starter Pack, Planning Support Package and a PowerPoint presentation used in school and district briefings, were published on the Primary Directorate's website.

- **Quality assurance and collation of information from National Partnership Plans**

On receipt of the completed school plans on 30 November 2009, the Consultant Principals and Support Principals commenced a quality assurance process. Quality assurance included:

- alignment of planned strategies to the three National Partnership Agreement reform areas
- alignment of planned strategies to the Department's expectations for National Partnership schools
- appropriate budgeting of the notional funding allocation received
- appropriateness of documentation for publication.

- **Procurement of Service Providers**

In order to support the strategies the DoE has established a panel of pre-qualified providers who are able to either provide existing numeracy and literacy strategies/courses or new courses that have a strong evidence base. Schools will have access to these strategies/courses and providers through a 'Pick and Buy' process in accordance with the buying rules.

Preparation of documents for this tender was completed in Terms 3 and 4 of 2009.

Catholic Sector

Significant progress has been made in this National Partnership. Two key projects are operating.

- **Literacy K – 7 Project**

A complete analysis of school NAPLAN data was undertaken during mid 2009 and a number of schools with higher numbers of students at or below benchmarks in Years 3, 5 and 7 literacy and numeracy were identified. Additional weighting was given to Year 3 data in consideration of the schools to be supported.

A key implementation decision was to support schools in a regional model. Four regions were identified and these included 62 K – 7 schools; Broome (4 schools); Bunbury (24 schools); South Metropolitan (17 schools); North and Central Metro (17 schools). In establishing the regions, schools which had significant numbers of students at or below benchmarks were mixed with some schools that had above-benchmark results. This provided opportunities for mentor

and collegiate support across all schools.

Four regional support consultants were appointed to work with these schools and an existing consultant in Broome is being used to support the four selected schools along with other Kimberley schools. The focus of this NP is on developing consistent classroom practice and implementing research based intervention programs in literacy and numeracy. In particular, Reading Recovery and Extending Mathematical Understanding are emphasised, given the demonstrated success of these programs in Catholic schools.

This NP links closely to the Low SES Literacy and Numeracy NP which offers additional intensified support. Intensive training of the regional consultants, as well as other key staff in schools, has been finalised in 2009. This included specialised training in data analysis and how this could be reflected in school planning and support strategies.

Support for the 62 schools commenced in Term 4 of 2009 and is continuing. This support consists of a range of strategies including school visits, opportunities for schools to visit - and be visited by - other schools and the opportunity to develop special school support projects which could be funded. Central to all support has been assistance in developing a detailed school literacy and numeracy plan which is heavily data-driven and which will be included in the NP School Level Plans. Documentation was in place by the end of 2009 with implementation of plans scheduled for 2010.

- **Literacy 7 – 9 Project** - five schools were involved in piloting the 'Words Their Way' package in partnership with the University of Western Australia. A total of 20 teachers from these schools were involved and the focus was on remedial and functional literacy as well as extension strategies in Year 8. As a result of this pilot, teachers reported that the underpinning processes were highly effective and were keen to consolidate on the pilot in 2010. Planning has been undertaken to expand the implementation to 12 schools and approximately 80 teachers, with at least one school planning a whole of school approach.
- **Numeracy 7 – 9 Project** - commenced in 2009 with the first stages involving a scoping of the Mathematics outcomes and content as well as up skilling of Year 7 teachers in mathematics concepts and content. The third phase of the Project will commence in 2010 and will involve a range of school support strategies for mathematics. These could include in-school support, external professional development, mentoring from other schools etc.

Independent Sector

- Four National Partnership consultants were appointed in September 2009 and allocated to the 17 National Partnership schools. The consultants reviewed literature of effective and literacy and numeracy teaching and developed papers to frame their work (Attachment 1).

As expert teachers, the consultants have worked closely with school principals to identify areas of need. They have begun coaching teachers and offering on-going professional development.

The National Partnership consultants have identified the following areas of work.

- Assist teachers to refine their teaching in a way that challenges students and provides learning that leads to deep representation of concepts. Many of the schools in the National Partnerships are already working very hard to improve the performance of their weakest students. However, an analysis of the NAPLAN data indicates that these schools are not extending their more capable students.
- Assist National Partnership schools in developing whole school literacy and numeracy plans that result in integrated and more coherent learning across the school.
- Support schools in preparing for NAPLAN assessments. The consultants are working with teachers to explain the concepts and learning assessed through NAPLAN and to demonstrate explicit teaching of these concepts.

MILESTONES AND MEASURES (TARGETS FROM 2011)

The provision of support in developing school plans was the cornerstone of work in 2009, with all participating schools developing plans that indicate all relevant sections as per the NP requirements. All will be ready or are ready for publication by April 2010.

CEOWA has developed two programs; Literacy and Numeracy K – 7 and Literacy and Numeracy 7 – 10. Both programs, and in particular the K–7 program, are providing intensive intervention and support to those schools which

have higher numbers of students who are at or below national benchmarks in NAPLAN literacy and numeracy tests in Years 3, 5 and 7. The K–7 program uses a regional support approach across 62 Catholic primary schools. The 7–10 program focuses on a smaller number of pilot schools, initially with a focus on upskilling.

In Independent schools in 2009, work in the Literacy and Numeracy NP commenced in 17 schools with large numbers of students at or below benchmark.

- Over 600 school leaders and teachers participated in workshops on interpreting NAPLAN data and using the data to inform classroom practice and school initiatives; and in professional learning on the explicit teaching of skills and concepts assessed in NAPLAN.
- Approximately 100 school leaders and teachers have been involved in whole school planning.
- Over 200 teachers participated in professional learning related to effective and evidence based teaching; and on differentiating the curriculum.
- 20 teachers have been supported with and coached in classroom management skills.
- Approximately 30 teachers have been involved in collaborative coaching.
- Partnership meeting for schools involved in WOMBAT, implementation of WOMBAT testing and analysis of data commenced.

IMPLEMENTATION OR IMPACT ISSUES

- The full impact of many of the initiatives funded through this NP will generally take longer to produce significant improvements than the reward funding timeline which occurs with the NAPLAN testing in May 2010. This has created a conundrum in trying to balance medium term sustainable improvement with short term measures aimed at improving NAPLAN results to secure reward funding.
- As with other NP areas, an ongoing challenge is to ensure that literacy and numeracy strategies are consistent with other NP initiatives. The synthesis of whole school improvement processes – and the conversations which need to occur in this respect – are equally critically to the successful implementation of sustainable and effective literacy and numeracy strategies.
- School leaders in the Literacy and Numeracy schools, will need to be supported in strategic leadership and curriculum leadership of their schools. This will be addressed through the Teacher Quality partnership in 2010, thereby maximising the impact of the reform in the Literacy and Numeracy partnership schools.

ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

Government Sector

The rigorous process used to support schools in the development of their Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership School Plans described above, provided the opportunity for principals to identify cohorts of indigenous students in their schools and to identify evidence-based strategies that will improve the literacy and numeracy learning outcomes of their students, and subsequently enable them to achieve the improvement targets identified within their plans. These include selection of the Reading to Learn program, the identification of professional learning about ESL/ESD strategies, mentoring through a Literacy Coach, and extension of programs offered through a Rebound Centre that focuses on re-engagement of disengaged students, particularly Indigenous boys.

In order to use data to drive instruction and select resources and appropriate strategies, Partnership Schools throughout the planning process, and particularly those with indigenous students, were encouraged to use a strong case-management approach. Key messages communicated about how this could be achieved include:

- setting realistic targets for the next stage of learning
- identifying and planning learning and teaching support to help students achieve their literacy and/or numeracy targets and learning goals, and to overcome barriers to learning
- being inclusive of students' cultural, social and academic considerations
- encouraging all teachers in the school to take collective responsibility for all Indigenous students
- ensuring consistent review of the data and updated information on students' progress
- ensuring diagnostic and formative assessment tools are in place that allow all staff to monitor student progress throughout the year
- using data to inform the 'next steps' for meeting the needs of each student and 'next steps' for meeting the professional development needs of the teachers within the school.

Interventions to address the specific learning needs of students experiencing difficulty in literacy and/or numeracy should be evidence-based, data driven, individually targeted, systematic and intensive. Intervention approaches do not necessarily require one-to-one instruction.

Catholic Sector

The proportion of Aboriginal students in Catholic schools across the state is approximately 3.7% and this is well exceeded in the sample of 62 schools in the Literacy and Numeracy NP. Further, four schools (Sacred Heart School, Beagle Bay; St Mary's College, Broome; Holy Rosary School, Derby and Djarindjin Lombadina Catholic School) are receiving specialist literacy and numeracy support. The enrolment in these schools is 1 069, and the majority of students are Aboriginal.

The four Kimberley schools are supported in literacy through this NP as well as further intensified support through the Low SES NP. The focus of this NP is on developing consistent classroom practice and implementing research based intervention programs in literacy and numeracy. In particular Reading Recovery and Extending Mathematical Understanding are emphasised given the demonstrated success of these programs in Catholic schools. The specific outcomes for Aboriginal students will be reflected in final reporting for 2010.

GOOD PRACTICE

Government Sector

The support resources prepared and used to support principals to develop their Literacy and Numeracy School Plan all reflect best practice. These include:

- Data Analysis Templates
- National Partnership Literacy and Numeracy Starter Pack
- Planning Support Package.

Catholic Sector

The regional support model where consultants work with, and in, schools to assist improvements in literacy and numeracy is seen to be a model of good practice which should produce enduring improvement. It is based on sound internationally recognised professional development principles including in situ teacher to teacher support; opportunities to receive mentor teacher support; high quality training of consultants and key teachers in schools; data informed decision making and planning; and a model embedded within a whole school improvement approach.

The support strategy in Kimberley schools also includes use of Reading Recovery – which has already produced outstanding results in 2009. A strong feature of the model adopted by CEOWA has been specialised training of regional consultants and key school staff in data analysis and use. This has occurred in partnership with The University of Western Australia.

The 'Words Their Way' project adopted in the Literacy 7 - 9 project has received strong support from the five schools involved in 2010. The planned expansion in 2010 is reflective of this support. This project is a program developed and implemented in partnership with The University of Western Australia.

Independent Sector

Research shows that top performing schools and systems assist their teachers to become highly effective instructors and they put in place targeted support to ensure every child is able to benefit from excellent instruction. Research examining effective teachers shows that highly effective teachers provide challenge for all of their students; they continually assess and provide feedback; they include all students and do not allow any student to opt out; and they are highly responsive and use their students input to maximise teaching.

AISWA has used the research to structure and inform school intervention strategies. The National Partnership consultants are assisting teachers to become effective practitioners. That is, that the teachers provide explicit instruction, continually assess and respond to students' learning needs, differentiate the curriculum and challenge their students.

Section 5 – Other evidence

Part A: Evaluation, scoping, research and case studies

Government Sector

- The **Strong and Smarter Professional Learning (SSPL)** started in the Kimberley in mid 2009 with a professional learning based on a research approach developed by Dr Chris Sarra when he was principal at Cherbourg State School in Queensland. Smarter Schools Learning Community believes working as a hub using strategies grounded in research will have far reaching sustainable outcomes for Aboriginal children than working in isolation.

The purpose of the Smarter Schools Learning Community Projects is to effect sustainable change in schools to achieve positive educational outcomes for Aboriginal children on key indicators. Although early days yet, the hub has singled out the following priorities to bring about educational reform. They are:

- Attendance;
- Literacy;
- Numeracy;
- Community School Partnership Agreements;
- Selection of quality teachers;
- Sustainable change to withstand "dips" in schools and remotes when teachers and leaders leave; and
- Early Years.

Working as a Smarter Schools Learning Community will strengthen work relationships between the schools to achieve desired outcomes. This way of working will attract interest from the research arm for the Strong and Smart Institute so further strategies are based on research.

Derby DHS is leading a Smarter Schools Learning Community and has brought together 4 schools as a hub. These schools are Fitzroy Valley DHS, Looma RCS, Bayulu RCS and Halls Creek DHS.

- The seven Fitzroy Valley schools have combined their low-SES National Partnerships funding to develop a **Fitzroy Valley Numeracy Project**. The project builds on the successful Valley Language and Literacy Program that produced a marked improvement in 2009 NAPLAN results, particularly in the early childhood years.

The research undertaken through this initiative has allowed schools to make long-term plans to develop a strategic approach to mathematics teaching and learning. The schools have every confidence that the research and shared approach to funding and professional learning will improve teacher quality and student results.

Participating teachers and AIEOs highlighted the quality of the professional learning and the opportunity to engage in a mathematics program (GiRN) that has previously been restricted to larger schools.

Catholic Sector

From the projects commenced during 2009, formal feedback has been received from some.

- For the teachers involved in the **Science and Mathematics Up skilling** project under the Teacher Quality NP, evaluation instruments were completed and have been processed. Feedback indicates that there was a high level of satisfaction amongst participants; many indicated that the training also enhanced their prospects for being allocated upper secondary classes.
- The **Bluearth** program has been evaluated by the Bluearth Foundation. Additionally, the CEOWA has conducted an evaluation of the program in the Kimberley schools during 2009. This covered teachers and students and has provided positive feedback about the program.
- The CEOWA is also able to provide detailed data relating the effects of **Reading Recovery** and **Extending Mathematical Understanding** in Kimberley schools. These early intervention programs have generally produced significantly higher comparative levels of literacy and numeracy.
- A short evaluation of the 'Words Their Way' program which was piloted in 5 schools in 2009 as part of the **Literacy 7 – 9** program, was also undertaken. This program was developed and implemented by the University of Western Australia. Subsequent to the positive feedback, a decision was made to extend the program to more schools in 2010. A more comprehensive evaluation will occur later in 2010.

- The model used to support Kimberley schools with senior secondary age students is also a useful case study. A procedures and resource file has been produced, and a sustainable partnership with St Mary's College in Broome has been established. Already, remote schools are enrolling students with the Curriculum Council and delivering some senior secondary programs.

Overall, CEOWA has developed detailed evaluation and feedback processes for each individual project. This includes all relevant demographic data as well as satisfaction surveys from schools and participants.

Independent Sector

See framing papers used to guide National Partnership Literacy and Numeracy Partnership initiatives, Attachment 1.

The following informal case studies provide an indication of the work being undertaken under National Partnerships in AISWA schools. An evaluation report will be provided in the 2010 Annual Report.

Case Study 1

Type of school: K-12, Christian ethos
School Location: Metropolitan, in large growth area
Number of students: 962

An analysis of the NAPLAN data highlighted that although the school means were comparable to similar schools, the student distribution was concentrated around the average. Consultations with staff revealed that teachers were not familiar with the skills assessed in NAPLAN, particularly in numeracy and that much of the teaching relied on text books.

The NP consultant provided professional learning for the staff about NAPLAN. Arising from the Professional Learning, the teachers are trialling the following strategies. These strategies draw heavily on the research that shows that if students are provided the opportunities to talk about their learning and to verbalise their thought processes, they develop deep representation of concepts.

Year 3

- Teacher 1 is working with students on interpreting word problems and on getting students to create questions from their general numeracy learning.
- Teacher 2 is using small group discussions to assist students in interpreting word problems questions and strategies for solving them.

The teachers will be looking to draw on each other's strategies if they prove effective.

Year 5

- All Year 5 teachers are using journals. As students interpret word problems they are required to record their thinking by:
 - paraphrasing the question in their own words
 - listing the steps needed to solve the problem
 - calculating the answer
 - making explicit the mathematics needed to solve the problem using the correct language.
- A pre- and post-assessment will be used to ascertain the amount of growth in student performance in relation to word problems.

Case Study 2

Type of school: K-12, Christian ethos
School Location: Metropolitan
Number of students: 2517

The school leadership team identified that in general, the teaching was not extending many students. Students who are academically at risk are well supported by school programs and although the school has a Gifted and Talented program, the leadership team felt the middle group of students was being overlooked.

The NP consultant worked with the leadership team to analyse and interpret the NAPLAN data and to evaluate current teaching practices.

The consultant identified the following areas of weaknesses:

1. There was a lack of explicit teaching in some classrooms.
2. Very few teachers were differentiating their teaching to cater for different abilities in the class.
3. Teachers were not informally assessing students and adjusting their teaching programs to meet specific learning needs.

The NP consultant has provided: professional learning to the staff; demonstration lessons; and has observed and coached teachers.

One of the school leadership team wrote:

"I have walked around today and seen teachers clearly defining (on the board) learning objectives for the lesson, the laminator is flat tack getting traffic light resources through and learning keys are around classes. All signs that our teachers are embracing the ideas you are presenting them and the work you are doing in our school is having a real impact on teaching practice. "

Part B1: Western Australia - Milestone Reporting
Annual Report 2010
(See Completion guide for notes)

| Milestone | Detail of achievement* |
|---|--|
| Teacher Quality | |
| Training Schools Residency Program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Agreement signed by Department of Education and Edith Cowan University to implement the Training Schools Residency Program. (D) • 13 schools identified to place 70 Diploma of Education pre-service teachers. (D) • 13 Site Directors appointed; all whom are highly accomplished teachers. (D) • 70 mentor classroom teachers appointed to partner each Intern on a one-on-one relationship to supervise, coach and tutor residency interns in classroom teaching practice. (D) |
| Up skilling School Support Staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings held with Catholic Education Office WA to share information on the strategy to support School Support staff to acquire qualifications that lead to achieving a teaching qualification. • Up to 30 education assistants commenced the Teacher Assistant Up Skilling project to complete a Diploma qualification. This upskilling program will commence in February 2010. (C) • The NP Low SES consultant continues to work with remote schools to encourage AEWs to take part in further training. Up to 5 Aboriginal Education Workers enrolled and/or commenced further training. (I) • AISWA undertook negotiations with Murdoch University to provide a pathway for further training and longer term degrees in education. Expressions of Interest were sent to schools with AEWs inviting participation in the Certificate III or IV or Degree programs designed for delivery to remote communities. (I) |
| Specialist Coaching | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning related to intensive training finalised. (D) • CEOWA Specialist Coaches initiative. (C) • Commenced implementation of EPICT (European Pedagogical ICT Licence) - with 14 teachers who will become facilitators at their schools to up skill a group of teachers in the school setting. (I) |
| Level 3 Classroom Teacher Program (D) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Options for trialling alternative assessment methodologies have been developed. (D) |
| Mentor / Expert Teacher Program (C) (I) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 teachers undertook training sessions in upskilling in Science and Maths teaching. Six of these were held in regional centres. (C) • Three Information and Communications Technology (ICT) mentors and expert teachers have been trained to work with cluster schools. (I) • 41 teachers have undertaken ICT training in cluster groups. (I) • 150 teachers are currently undertaking ICT training. (I) |
| Incentives package developed, including agreement regarding industrial conditions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiations commenced between the Department of Education and Departments of Commerce, Treasury and Finance and Premier and Cabinet. (D) |
| Principals professional development / Flexibilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary planning commenced in relation to Sister Schooling guidelines. (D) • 34 Independent Public schools have been established. (D) • IPS school principals are provided targeted support in relation to enhanced |

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| | <p>operational flexibility. (D)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Executive Principal Project provides in situ mentoring support to principals to assist in the whole school improvement process. The responsibilities of the four Executive Principals have been expanded to include NP responsibilities. (C) • Leadership Strategy commenced. (C) • Partnership established with two universities to provide customised leadership professional learning for AISWA schools. 25 teachers/school leaders have nominated to participate in the courses beginning in semester 2, 2010. (I) |
| Low SES | |
| School Plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 operational school plans have been developed and endorsed by the Department of Education. • 23 operational school plans have been developed and endorsed by the Catholic Education Office WA. • 10 metropolitan and nine Aboriginal Independent school communities have been developed and endorsed by the Association of Independent Schools of WA. |
| Literacy and Numeracy | |
| School Plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 68 school plans have been developed and endorsed by the Department of Education. • 62 Catholic school plans have been developed and endorsed by the Catholic Education Office WA. • 17 school Literacy and Numeracy school plans have been developed and endorsed by the Association of Independent Schools of WA. |

IMPROVING NUMERACY OUTCOMES

What does the research tell us about improving numeracy in schools?

Research indicates that individual teachers are the greatest significant factor in determining student achievement¹. Further to this Alistair McIntosh² identifies the following key aspects for improving numeracy in schools.

1. Develop students' conceptual understandings.
2. Help students connect existing mathematical understandings to new learning and to real life situations.
3. Enable students to communicate mathematical processes through describing their actions, explaining their thinking and justifying their findings.
4. Assist students to consolidate their understandings.
5. Coordinate mathematical learning within and between classes, year levels and across the school.
6. Create a community where mathematical learning is appreciated and fostered.

The National Numeracy Review³ highlights in its recommendations the importance of teacher pedagogical content knowledge and supported professional learning in order to improve numeracy in schools.

How can teachers maximise opportunities to improve numeracy outcomes?

Based on the research, teachers need to:

- use materials appropriately to develop students' conceptual understanding
- provide opportunities for students to make connections to their prior knowledge and to real life scenarios
- develop programs that encourage the consolidation of mathematical concepts
- encourage communication in maths and help students to make their thinking explicit
- create a culture of learning in which neither teacher nor student is afraid to take risks, make mistakes or express their thinking.

Schools can maximise opportunities to improve numeracy outcomes by coordinating a whole school approach to the teaching of mathematics.

What can the *National Partnerships Consultancy* team offer?

The National Partnership Consultants are able to help teachers interpret and plan from their NAPLAN Numeracy results. They are also able to support teachers in:

- using strategies to make the mathematics explicit to their students
- drawing out and elaborate students' thinking
- using a range of different types of tasks (games, real-life problems and extended investigations)
- providing activities that help students consolidate their mathematical understandings
- developing open-ended questions and tasks as a means of exploring the extent of students' understandings
- planning across classes, year levels and the whole school.

The Consultants are well placed to provide demonstration lessons or to co-teach with teachers. These scenarios allow for coaching, discussion of and reflection on the ways in which teachers can have the greatest impact on student achievement.

¹ Hattie, J. (2003, October). *Teachers make a difference: What is the research evidence?* Paper presented at the Australian Council for Educational Research Annual Conference on Building Teacher Quality, Melbourne

² McIntosh, A. (2002) *Principles for Improving Numeracy in Schools*. retrieved from <http://www.itag.education.tas.gov.au>

³ Human Capital Working Group, Council of Australian Governments. (2008). *National Numeracy Review Report*, Canberra.

IMPROVING LITERACY OUTCOMES

What does research tell us about effective readers?

There are two complementary aspects to reading:

- Reading fluency (underpinned by phonological awareness, alphabetic principle and vocabulary knowledge)
- Reading comprehension (oral and written)

Research shows reading fluency is one of the defining characteristics of good readers, and a lack of fluency is a common characteristic of poor readers. Further, the research shows that a lack of reading fluency is a reliable predictor of reading comprehension problems.⁴

Whilst helping students to develop reading fluency is essential, research also shows that if students are to become effective readers, it is important to teach them productive reading behaviours.⁵

What is reading fluency?

Fluent reading comprises of three key elements:

- *Accurate* reading of connected text
- Reading at a *conversational* rate
- Reading with appropriate *prosody* or expression

Each aspect of reading fluency has a clear connection to text comprehension.

Without accurate reading, the reader will have no access to the author's intended meaning, and inaccurate word reading can lead to misinterpretations of text.

Poor automaticity in word reading or slow, laborious movement through text taxes the reader's capacity to construct an ongoing interpretation of text. Poor prosody can lead to confusion through inappropriate or meaningless groupings of words, or through inappropriate applications of expression.

How can teachers tackle poor reading fluency?

There are several research-based recommendations for how to provide reading instruction to build reading fluency.

- Model fluent oral reading using teacher read-alouds.
- Provide direct instruction and feedback to teach decoding of unknown words, correct expression and phrasing, the return-sweep eye movement, and strategies fluent readers use.
- Provide oral support and modelling for readers using assisted reading, choral reading, paired reading, audiotapes and computer programs.
- Provide students with plenty of materials at their independent reading level to read on their own.
- Offer many opportunities for practice using repeated readings of progressively more difficult texts.

What are productive reading behaviours?

Productive reading skills involve evaluating and assimilating information whilst reading. Research has found that good readers:

- have clear goals in mind for their reading, and constantly evaluate whether the text, and their reading of it, is meeting their goals
- typically look over the text before the read, noting such things as the structure of the text
- as they read, they frequently make predictions about what is to come
- read selectively, continually making decision about what to read carefully, what to read quickly and so on
- they construct, revise and question the meanings they make
- they determine unfamiliar words and concepts in the text and deal with inconsistencies or gaps as needed
- they draw from, compare and integrate their prior knowledge of the material in the text
- when reading narrative, good readers attend closely to character and setting
- when reading expository texts good readers frequently construct and revise summaries.

⁴ Hudson, R. F., Lane, H.B., & Pullen, P.C. (2005). Reading Fluency assessment and instruction: What, why and how? *International Reading Association*. (pp 702 – 714).

⁵ Duke, N.K., and Pearson, P.D. (2002). Effective Practices for Developing Reading Comprehension in *What Research Has to Say About Reading*. International Reading Association

How can teachers improve reading comprehension skills?

Each of the strategies used by a good reader needs to be explicitly taught.

- The teacher should provide an explicit description of the strategy and how it should be used.
- The teacher and/or student should model the strategy in action.
- The teacher use the strategy collaboratively with the student.
- Whilst guiding practice, the teacher should gradually allow students to use the strategy independently.

What else can teachers do?

Research shows that teachers need to set up a supportive classroom context in which:

- a great deal of time is spent reading
- there is plenty of discussion of words and their meanings
- there is high quality talk about texts
- students are able to read real texts for real reasons and
- students experience reading a wide range of text genres.

How can the *National Partnership* consultancy team support teachers in their teaching of Reading?

In addition to helping teachers interpret and plan from their NAPLAN reading results, AISWA's consultants can:

- provide advice on assessing students' reading fluency
- recommend strategies and help establish initiatives that will increase students' fluency
- recommend approaches for the teaching of productive reading skills.

AISWA's consultants are well placed to provide demonstration lessons or to co-teach lessons. These scenarios allow for discussion of and reflection on the ways teachers can have the greatest impact on student learning.