

Non-Government Reform Support Annual Report

2021

Independent Schools Victoria

Executive Summary

Independent Schools Victoria used the Reform Support Fund to support activities across five projects:

1. quality assurance, moderation and support for the continued improvement of the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability
2. Implementation of online delivery of the National Assessment program
3. Improved governance and financial management practices in non-government schools
4. Quality Teaching
5. Boosting Literary and Numeracy.

ISV also worked with the Victorian government in the implementation of the reforms outlined in the bilateral agreement. The work involved:

- Participation in the School Policy and Funding Advisory Council (SPFAC) and its working groups
- Sharing of data and information to assist with monitoring Victoria's state-wide performance
- Cross-sectoral school engagement on occasions.

As noted throughout this report, many activities were adapted, postponed or cancelled due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions in place in Victoria.

Major achievements under each project were:

1. ISV tailored its assistance to ensure that relevant support was provided to staff at all levels within schools – general teaching staff, individual learning needs staff, school executive leadership and school boards. This approach was designed to ensure that all relevant staff within Victorian Independent schools were aware of, and received, consistent information about the data collection requirements and its implications for schools, staff and students.
2. ISV worked closely with the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) and the Project Managers' Working Group who implement NAPLAN in each state. Direct support for schools was provided via the VCAA, but where appropriate school queries were also handled by ISV staff. During key events ISV staff visited schools and provided assistance as required.
3. ISV offered training through The Innovation Design Lab for Learning (previously known as The Development Centre) to school leaders and governing board members. This training covered areas such as board roles and performance, expectations and obligations under Australian company law, risk management, funding processes and financial responsibilities. To enable maximum attendance and to meet the needs of individual schools, the training sessions were offered at different times and were of different lengths. Many sessions were delivered online, due to the COVID-19 restrictions. A number of schools also received personalised training sessions for their boards.

isConnect has provided schools with over 750 resources in areas such as learning and wellbeing, compliance and risk, operations and finance, and communications and relationships. Users include principals, senior leaders, teachers and board members. Customer feedback has been collected and updates to the platform incorporate these where feasible.

In 2021 there were 48 schools that participated in the ISV LEAD surveys. ISV provided a service to assist schools unpack their data as needed.

4. ISV ran a number of programs and projects under the broad project title of Quality Teaching:
 - The Principals' Executive Network
 - The New Business Managers' Program
 - The Idea into Action (I2A) project
 - The Beginning Teaching Fellowship
 - Policy templates
 - The Southern Cross program
5. ISV has developed a tool to assist with the analysis of NAPLAN data across Victorian Independent Schools. The tool uses, and is limited to, data provided by the VCAA.

Progress against your strategic plan

ISV outlined in its strategic plan that we would focus on:

1. Providing direct support to schools via ISV's School Improvement Team
2. Collecting and analysing school performance data via ISV's LEAD surveys, and using this analysis to inform further activities
3. Implementing a research program aimed at validating schools' practices and informing future initiatives
4. Ongoing development of isConnect, an online resource for schools that focuses on process management and improvement
5. Continued growth and improvement of our professional learning program, especially in the areas of leadership development, governance training and online learning
6. Ongoing participation in cross-sectoral working groups, at both a state and national level.

We met all these objectives in 2021 and continue to refine and improve what and how we provide support to Victorian independent schools.

Relationship with your state and territory government

As mentioned above, ISV worked with the Victorian government in the implementation of the reforms outlined in the bilateral agreement. The work involved:

- Participation in the School Policy and Funding Advisory Council (SPFAC) and its working groups
- Sharing of data and information to assist with monitoring Victoria's state-wide performance
- Cross-sectoral school engagement on occasions.

The outcomes continue to be a work in progress as we collectively implement the reforms outlined in the bilateral agreement.

Project Report

A general statement is provided for each project.

PROJECT TITLE: Improve the quality and reliability of the NCCD collection.

Project description:

ISV has used the Reform Support Fund to assist schools in the implementation of the NCCD using a broad range of activities. Whilst presenting a consistent message, ISV tailored its assistance to ensure that relevant support was provided to staff at all levels within schools – general teaching staff, individual learning needs staff, school executive leadership and school boards. This approach was designed to ensure that all relevant staff within Victorian Independent schools were aware of, and received, consistent information about the data collection requirements and its implications for schools, staff and students.

There were seven areas of major support to schools.

1. Independent Schools Victoria continued to provide general support to all Victorian Independent schools regarding the implementation of the NCCD. This included the provision of assistance to schools where required, as well as reviewing NCCD information updates and representing Victorian Independent schools in a range of Victorian and Australian cross-sectoral groups. ISV staff:
 - attended national and Victorian meetings, both within and across sectors, to ensure that ISV and schools remained aware of the latest developments
 - liaised with Independent sector and Victorian representatives on the Students with Disability Working Group
 - liaised with representatives of the Victorian Department of Education and Training and the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria to help ensure a consistent approach to the NCCD across Victorian schools
 - liaised with representatives of Associations of Independent Schools across Australia, to help ensure a consistent approach to the NCCD across the Independent sector
 - provided advice and support to schools selected to participate in the Census Post-Enumeration Exercise, and ran information sessions in which participating schools discussed their experiences with other schools
 - collated and distributed timely information to all Victorian Independent schools
 - provided a help-desk facility that school staff could access at any time.

The continued COVID-19 outbreak in 2021 limited the extent to which ISV could liaise with other organisations outside of the Victorian Independent sector, but increased the volume of work with Victorian Independent schools, as we assisted the schools to understand their evolving obligations

2. ISV conducted 12 workshops across Victoria that were specifically focused on NCCD moderation. These workshops were open to all staff from Victorian Independent schools. 333 school representatives from 124 schools participated in these sessions. Numbers were significantly higher than anticipated, both because schools that had been focusing on moving to remote learning in 2021 were able to focus on responding to the NCCD, and because schools were reporting greater numbers of eligible students as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown. ISV was particularly pleased that more schools are sending multiple representatives to network and moderation sessions, as it demonstrates that schools are undertaking a team-

based approach to completing the NCCD. Participants in the moderation workshops were provided with an overview of the 2021 requirements and examined case studies in groups. As in 2019 and 2020, ISV did not offer cross-sectoral moderation sessions. This was both because the needs of staff in the different sectors still require different approaches to be most effective and because of the logistical difficulties of running workshops during COVID-19 lockdowns. ISV still hopes to offer cross-sectoral and cross-jurisdictional moderation in the future, as staff in all Australian schools become familiar with the NCCD. But this will be a slower process to establish.

3. Network meetings were arranged to offer teachers who work with students with individual learning needs the opportunity to meet their counterparts in other schools, and to discuss important issues. Network meetings were also run alongside moderation workshops to maximise effectiveness. ISV had hoped to move back to face-to-face meetings in 2021. Three such meetings were held in May and June 2021 before Victoria went back into lockdown. All subsequent meetings were conducted virtually. The main items of the meetings were evidence requirements of NCCD, the NCCD audit process, NCCD case studies, and how schools managed the workload associated with the NCCD. Schools were also encouraged to discuss some of the broader ramifications of the NCCD, such as its interface with the Disability Discrimination Act. We also ran five workshops in which schools that participated in the Census Post-Enumeration Exercise outlined their experiences to other schools. Participants in the Census Post-Enumeration Exercise workshops were able to consider and discuss the implications of the NCCD evidence process for their schools, as well as best practice approaches to evidence collection and documentation. ISV also recorded all five of the Census Post-Enumeration sessions, and recorded interviews with two other participants in the Post-Enumeration exercise, so that other Victorian Independent school staff could access the content. ISV has received strong feedback from schools of the benefits of recording these sessions, and based on this feedback, will continue to make recording available to all schools on an on-going basis.
4. Each year, ISV conducts an NCCD data benchmarking project. The aims of the project are to investigate schools' data for each of the years from 2015 to:
 - determine the extent to which school responses are changing from year to year, and whether there are any patterns in this
 - work out the extent to which an 'average' school could be said to exist for NCCD purposes
 - identify schools that did not fit the pattern of an 'average' school
 - work with these schools to determine whether their data represented a genuine difference in their student cohort or a misunderstanding of the NCCD
 - assist schools that might need further support in applying the NCCD guidelines on a consistent basis
 - establish whether schools that had received support through ISV in previous years had demonstrated a change in their data for 2021.

In 2021, ISV particularly focused on the extent to which NCCD data supported the anecdotal evidence that the COVID-19 lockdown had resulted in a significant increase in the incidence

of students needing support for social/emotional disorders and the adjustments being made in schools to address these students' needs.

5. In addition to the 'help desk' and information-sharing services that ISV provided to all Victorian Independent schools in 2021, ISV identified schools and groups of schools that needed extra direct support. Initial contact was made with 50 Independent schools in 2021, whereby the schools were provided with their benchmarked data, and an offer was made to go through the data in depth with them. 19 Independent schools expressed an interest in having further conversations about their benchmarked data in 2021. In addition, based on data that individual schools had received, three groups of schools expressed an interest in undertaking joint discussions – 15 Lutheran schools, six Seventh-Day Adventist schools and 11 Special Assistance Schools. Finally, three individual staff in schools requested direct, one-on-one support to address school-specific issues. ISV staff talked through each school or group of schools' data with key staff from the school(s) and worked with them to identify the causes of any issues with their data. The focus was on working with a broad range of staff within and across schools, to ensure a consistent understanding of the NCCD. This assistance was predominantly provided to schools by phone or Zoom as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. ISV also provided assistance specifically targeted at senior leaders in schools – both principals and business managers – to ensure that schools' senior staff were able to provide the necessary leadership and support for teachers and individual learning needs staff. To evaluate the effectiveness of this process, ISV also assessed the impact on 2021 NCCD data for those schools to whom we provided direct support in 2019 and 2020. Our hypothesis was that schools that were able to explain their NCCD numbers in 2019 and 2020 would see less variation in their 2021 NCCD data, while schools that agreed that they had inconsistent data in 2019 and 2020 would move closer to the sector benchmarks in 2021. As in 2020, this hypothesis proved to be correct in 2021.

Finally, we ran two information sessions that focused on the NCCD and the funding arrangements for students with disability in Victorian schools and that targeted staff new to the role of administering the program in their school. 104 staff from 46 schools attended one or both of these sessions.

6. ISV's suite of professional learning activities in 2021 sought to address not just the direct data collection requirements of the NCCD, but also the premise on which the NCCD is based – how do schools identify students with disability and then make educational adjustments so that these students cannot just access education but also flourish? Focus areas of the professional learning were:
 - how schools can support students with dyslexia and dyscalculia. 118 staff from 40 schools attended at least one of six whole-day seminars that looked at various aspects of dyslexia and dyscalculia.
 - how to take effective case notes and undertake effective record keeping. 67 staff from 50 schools attended one of two workshops on the topic.
 - supporting school staff who do not possess formal qualifications in counselling but whose role involves providing emotional support to students. 25 staff from 15 schools attended this one-day workshop.

ISV had intended to run at least three workshops in our 'Moving Forward' professional learning series in 2021. This series of workshops is designed to improve the expertise of classroom teachers and individual learning needs staff in identifying and supporting the needs of students, by inviting allied health professionals to discuss particular aspects of disability and their impact on students. These sessions require face-to-face contact for maximum benefit. As a result of the lockdown in Victoria following the COVID-19 pandemic, these sessions were cancelled in 2020. In 2021, only one session could be held before Victoria re-entered lockdown. 35 staff from 22 schools attended the session that address how staff could manage inattention and behavioural issues in class.

In the same way, the COVID-19 lockdown once again forced ISV to cancel our proposed sessions on the interface between English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EALD) and disability and the use of Information Technology to support the NCCD. With regard to the interface between EALD and disability, ISV instead assessed funding applications from schools for support under the Victorian *State Support Services* program. Where we identified schools that were reporting significant numbers of students who required Speech Therapy support, and who came from an EALD background, we provided the schools with the support of a Speech Therapist, who was able to work through the key issues directly with the individual schools. Eight schools received this support in 2021. With regard to the use of IT to support the NCCD, this was included as one of the topics discussed in network meetings, with schools being encouraged to share best practice.

ISV had identified the need to assist schools in making teacher judgements about how best to support the additional needs of students with disability. This led to the introduction of ISV's Student Assessment Project between 2015 and 2017. The aim of the project was to provide schools with a suite of tools and professional learning opportunities, developed in conjunction with allied health professionals, to assist teachers to identify students with additional needs, and how to implement targeted teaching strategies to meet those needs in the classroom. In 2021, ISV continued to undertake work on a project to develop an easy-to-use tool for individual classroom teachers to record the details and evidence of adjustments that they were making for students. This tool will assist schools in maintaining documentation about the adjustments made for individual students, thus assisting consistent decisions regarding the inclusion of students in the NCCD. The tool has been developed in conjunction with both allied health professionals and Individual Learning Coordinators in a number of schools, to ensure that it meets the practical needs of schools. Our initial aim had been to launch the tool in 2021. However, initial testing with school representatives suggested that significant improvements could be made to the tool. This included changing the form of the tool from an Excel spreadsheet to an online tool, and amending the language used within the tool to make it more consistent and user-friendly for school staff who did not come from a clinical background.

Qualitative feedback from schools participating in each of the above areas was gathered. Methods included evaluation forms and surveys. Additionally, quantitative data was collected, including such things as the number of participants at meetings/workshops, data capture of phone calls, and the number of meetings attended. Each of these areas has had its programs for the future informed by this feedback.

PROJECT TITLE: Implementation of online delivery of the National Assessment program

Project description:

ISV worked closely with the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) and the Project Managers' Working Group which implements NAPLAN in each state. Each of these groups has included representatives from other sectors and government agencies. Additionally, ISV worked closely with ISA and representatives from interstate associations of independent schools. During these meetings discussions are participated in and feedback is provided for both independent and other schools in Victoria and across Australia.

Direct support for schools has been provided via the VCAA, but where appropriate school queries were also handled by ISV staff. During key events, staff visited schools.

From time to time schools request members of ISV's School Improvement Team (SIT) to assist with analysing NAPLAN data. The number of requests has reduced over time indicating that the assistance provided by the SIT has meant more schools have been able to analyse their data on their own.

PROJECT TITLE: Improved governance and financial management practices in non-government schools.

Project description:

ISV created additional modules and continued to offer online governance training for school leaders and governing board members in 2021. This training covered areas such as board roles and performance, expectations and obligations under Australian company law, risk management, funding processes and financial responsibilities. Less obvious areas of governance were also covered such as delineation between strategic and operational matters. Participants were able to complete the online governance course at their own pace. Individuals were able to provide feedback through an online survey form upon completion of the course. The information from these surveys helps to modify the content and method of delivery for the following year. Participants are invited to suggest additional ideas which may be incorporated in future sessions or may prompt development of additional support materials. A twilight video conference was held on Governance and Risk Management in Schools to address governance principles and risk management, risk management framework and structures, risk management strategies and implementation tips. The session was recorded and accessed afterwards by a number of registrants who were not able to participate in the conference. Only a limited number of schools received personalised training sessions in 2021 due to pandemic restrictions and personal safety for our presenters.

ISV provided a "helpdesk" facility providing answers to queries regarding governance issues. Where ISV was unable to provide the best information, schools were provided with contact details for third party organisations. In some areas there are "frequently asked questions". ISV has prepared documents to provide information to address these and this process is continuing. Some of these documents are in print, whilst others are provided via ISV's dynamic online platforms, isConnect and isComply, using the principles of Process Management.

isConnect has provided schools with over 750 resources in areas such as learning and wellbeing, compliance and risk, operations and finance, and communications and relationships. Users include

principals, senior leaders, teachers and board members. Customer feedback has been collected and updates to the platform incorporate these where feasible.

In 2021 there were more than 52,000 page views in isConnect by ISV Member Schools and more than 4,900 active users.

In 2021 there were 48 schools that participated in the ISV LEAD surveys. ISV provided a service to assist schools unpack their data as needed. Based on feedback from schools which implemented the LEAD surveys, ISV continued to improve the reporting modules and how schools can access and analyse their data.

PROJECT TITLE: Quality Teaching

Project description:

ISV ran a number of programs and projects under the broad project title of Quality Teaching:

1. The Principals' Executive Network provided opportunities for new principals to develop their leadership skills while improving their knowledge of compliance and statutory requirements. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the program was mainly conducted online via Zoom and some of its aspects were modified.
2. The New Business Managers' Program provided an opportunity for new business managers, finance managers and accountants to gain a deeper understand of their role in a school environment.
3. The Idea into Action (I2A) project is a multi-year research project. At the completion of the project at the end of 2021, empirically based frameworks and models were produced that identify and evaluate approaches to the challenge of supporting ideas into action as well as a set of action strategies and tools for supporting ideas into action.
4. The Beginning Teaching Fellowship provided targeted professional learning, support and advice so that the classroom readiness of beginning teachers increased. Within-school mentors of beginning teachers were provided with additional support, so that they had a greater capacity to support future beginning teachers.
5. Policy templates – ISV continued to develop and publish a range of model policies and guidance material for schools. In the latter part of 2020, ISV commenced work on a new online platform, isComply, which supports schools in managing their compliance and reporting requirements. This platform was made available to schools from March 2021.
6. The Southern Cross Program had teams from four schools work on projects. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the program only went ahead in the second half of 2021 and the Program was delivered online.
7. Principal Learning Forums – these are Principal only learning events, enabling Principals to learn with the best and connect with Principal colleagues.

PROJECT TITLE: Literacy and Numeracy Predictive Analytics Platform

Project description:

In line with the Australian Government's focus on literacy and numeracy, and to better understand the plateauing of Australia's performance on national and international assessments, ISV has embarked on a pilot project to help schools better understand their student performance data. This was done through the development of an analysis platform for independent schools that combines NAPLAN and progressive achievement data alongside wellbeing data to enable schools to better predict student performance and better identify appropriate intervention strategies.

We commenced the pilot project in 2021 with a small number of schools, working closely with them to uncover the challenges relating to data integration at independent schools. We found that while schools are awash with data, there are often not the skills and capabilities available to integrate the various reporting platforms together to provide clean and consistent data to teachers. From the initial scoping sessions and consultations, we have focused on the development of a platform that allows schools to seamlessly extract and transform data from various platforms for analysis. In time this analysis can be used to predict student achievement.

The development work for this platform will commence in 2022, due to the loss of a key staff member at ISV delaying the project.

In addition, we have focused on the delivery of training on data and analytics for schools. Through our consultations with pilot schools, one issue became increasingly apparent across all schools, no matter their size or background. The consistent message we heard was that data literacy, the ability to read, write, analyse and argue with data, was extremely variable across schools and generally poor.

Throughout 2021 we designed and developed an asynchronous course for all staff in independent schools designed to improve data literacy. The course has five modules for staff at independent schools to explore:

1. **Introduction to data literacy:** This module is designed to introduce data literacy and why it is important. Users can learn about how data analytics can be applied to identify business problems and opportunities, and they can learn about these concepts and their roles in this data-driven world.
2. **Working with data:** This module is designed to help users gain an understanding of data, learn about different types and attributes of data, and how data is prepared for analytics.
3. **Data visualisations:** This module is designed to help users understand the key concepts concerning data visualizations and provide a brief overview on different types of visualization that can be applied based on the datasets.
4. **Deriving insights from data:** This module is designed to showcase scenarios where we can utilize data to discover useful insights to make better decisions. Users will gain an understanding of the process of data analysis (e.g., identifying problems, preparing datasets, applying visualisations and statistics, and how to interpret useful insights).
5. **Solving problems through analytics:** This module explores data storytelling which allows one to bring data to life and apply context to what could be seen as complicated. Users will learn

about what data storytelling is, why it is important, and how to become better at data storytelling.

More than 50 per cent of the content was completed in 2021, with the remaining scheduled for completion and testing in 2022. The program will be made available to schools in 2022.

Training will also be developed to ensure internal staff, teachers and school leaders can make the most of the platform.

The pilot project will see ISV work with a small number of pilot schools to develop a reporting application for improved analysis within schools concerning literacy and numeracy that puts analysis of school-level records at the fingertips of teachers. ISV will also develop an online training module for using the system.

Summary of 2021 achievements

1. Project title	Project description and activities	2. Expected outcomes/ Overall achievements Achieved or Not achieved	3. Indicators of success Add the target % achieved	List any additional activities or variations to agreed activities and/or any additional information on outcomes or achievements
<p>Project 1. Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability</p>	<p>1. General support for NCCD</p> <p>a. Dedicated ISV staff will:</p> <p>i. Facilitate network meetings with school staff</p> <p>ii. co-ordinate cross-sectoral moderation sessions</p> <p>iii. respond to queries from schools.</p> <p>iv. forward documentation to schools.</p> <p>2. Network/moderation meetings</p> <p>a. ISV will run a series of network meetings for individual learning needs staff in schools across Victoria.</p> <p>b. Schools will be provided with updated information about the NCCD, as well as being offered a forum to discuss how they are implementing the NCCD, and the challenges that they face in doing so.</p> <p>c. Moderation will incorporate real, challenging de-identified case studies as moderation exemplars.</p>	<p>Each of the seven activities has been listed separately below.</p> <p>Activity 1 Assist schools to accurately interpret the guidelines for gathering data to improve its validity and reliability.</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Activity 2 Improved consistency of understanding and application of the NCCD between schools.</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Provision of information to the Schools Policy Group about legitimate areas of confusion or interpretation in the existing guidelines for schools.</p> <p>Achieved</p>	<p>Each of the seven activities has been listed separately below.</p> <p>Activity 1 Short term: Support provided to all 230 Victorian Independent schools</p> <p>100% achieved</p> <p>Long term: ISV anticipates that the importance of this general support will not change over time. Increased confidence in school staff in providing accurate, reliable NCCD data.</p> <p>Our long-term goal to improve the accuracy and reliability of NCCD data remains a work in progress, but data reliability and accuracy continues to strengthen over time.</p> <p>Activity 2 Short term: At least 12 network meetings will be conducted in 2021, including moderation components.</p> <p>100% achieved</p> <p>Representatives from 100 Independent schools will participate in at least one network meeting in 2021.</p> <p>100% achieved</p> <p>Long term: ISV anticipates that, as the NCCD becomes a stable and established data collection, the urgency of this project will reduce.</p> <p>There will be reduced variation in schools' NCCD results from year to year as a result</p>	<p>Activity 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the long-term, ISV needs to ensure that schools continue to see moderation, both within schools, sector-based, cross-sectoral and cross-jurisdictional as an important part of the on-going implementation of the NCCD. Our goal is to continue to increase the number of schools participating in sector-based forms of moderation in the future, and to expand moderation to include schools from other sectors and jurisdictions. • ISV was able to achieve its major short-term goal for network meetings in 2021. We hoped to have attendees from at least 100 schools in 2021. • 333 staff from 124 schools attended 12 network meetings in 2021 • ISV was not able to coordinate cross-sectoral moderation in 2021, both as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the different needs of staff in each sector for support. • ISV's long-term goal is to reduce the need within network meetings to focus on the implementation of

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	<p>3. Data quality assurance</p> <p>a. ISV will analyse previous years' NCCD data, to develop benchmarked guidelines for schools about the likely characteristics of an 'average' school's NCCD data.</p> <p>4. Direct support for schools</p> <p>a. This will include:</p> <p>i. Acting as a conduit of information for Victorian Independent schools on the NCCD</p>	<p>Activity 3 Identification of the causes of variation in NCCD data, and the extent to which these are impacting on schools' NCCD reporting.</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Activity 4 Improved consistency of understanding and application of the NCCD within and between schools.</p>	<p>of the movement to the new data collection.</p> <p>Activity 3 Short term: ISV identifies and works one-on-one with at least ten schools to analyse their NCCD data.</p> <p>100% achieved</p> <p>Long term: ISV anticipates that, as the NCCD becomes a stable and established data collection, the project can continue, but its urgency will reduce.</p> <p>Reliable and stable benchmarks will be developed and maintained, against which schools can compare and analyse their own results.</p> <p>Activity 4 Short term: ISV will identify and work one-on-one with at least ten schools to analyse their NCCD data.</p>	<p>the NCCD. While the knowledge and awareness of school staff is showing continuous improvement each year, we believe that this goal will be difficult to achieve until the specific, detailed queries being raised by schools can be resolved and agreed upon by a central body.</p> <p>Activity 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ISV worked with 54 schools in 2021 to analyse their NCCD data, either as individual schools or as groups of schools. We will continue to monitor changes in schools' NCCD numbers to evaluate the longer-term impact of the assistance. ISV believes that a statistical benchmarking approach is valid for analysing NCCD data in schools. Data analysis between 2018 and 2021 shows that NCCD data in Victorian Independent schools is stable at the macro-level. While data remains more variable at the school level, the amount of variability seems to be decreasing. More time is required to establish the extent to which this school-level variability is a natural product of students' changing needs, or still in part a reflection of misunderstandings about the NCCD. ISV believes that a large part of school-level variability stems from changes in key staff within schools. As the data process becomes more embedded in schools, we will continue to work to assess the volatility of NCCD data across time within schools. We will also look at within-school data variation, for instance across campuses and between primary and secondary levels, as this continues to be a significant source of variance in schools – particularly where different staff are responsible for different parts of schools. <p>Activity 4 104 staff from 46 schools attended sessions targeted at school staff new to the NCCD.</p> <p>In the longer-term, as more schools receive support, and in conjunction with the other elements of ISV's NCCD strategy, we expect that this increased understanding of the NCCD</p>

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	<p>ii. The provision of ‘help desk’ advice and support to schools</p> <p>iii. Working directly in schools with individual learning needs staff, school leadership and whole-school groups to ensure consistency of understandings and application of the NCCD</p> <p>iv. The development of support materials such as flow charts and process maps.</p> <p>5. Professional learning</p> <p>a. ISV will run professional learning sessions for schools, looking in depth at issues such as:</p> <p>i. The interface between English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EALD) and Disability</p> <p>ii. Identifying imputed disabilities where students also come from an EALD background.</p> <p>iii. Identify how IT systems can be used to support schools in the implementation and administration of the NCCD</p> <p>b. ISV will also provide an introduction to the NCCD for new staff in schools.</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Activity 5 Schools are better able to distinguish between different causes of educational disadvantage for students with additional needs.</p> <p>Reduction in the incorrect inclusion and exclusion of students with EALD and/or trauma in the NCCD.</p> <p>Schools are better able to assess how they can integrate the NCCD into their usual classroom practice, to ensure that the NCCD supports educational outcomes for students.</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Activity 6</p>	<p>Schools will have process outlines to assist them in meeting NCCD requirements.</p> <p>Schools will have additional resources to identify SWD.</p> <p>100% achieved</p> <p>Long term: ISV anticipates that, as the NCCD becomes a stable and established data collection, the project can continue, but its urgency will reduce.</p> <p>There will be reduced variation in schools’ NCCD results from year to year as a result of the movement to the new data collection.</p> <p>Activity 5 Short term: Representatives from 50 Independent schools will attend professional learning opportunities.</p> <p>100% achieved – but in a different format (refer to next column)</p> <p>Long term: ISV anticipates that, as the NCCD becomes a stable and established data collection, the project can continue, but its urgency will reduce.</p> <p>The identification of students with disability to be included in the NCCD will become increasingly accurate.</p> <p>The work required by schools to implement the NCCD will become integrated into normal school practice.</p> <p>Activity 6 Short term:</p>	<p>within schools will extend to an improved consistency of understanding between schools.</p> <p>Activity 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ISV was not able to offer all of the professional learning opportunities in 2021 that we had hoped. Several more interactive sessions could not be run once Victoria re-entered lockdown. With the cancellation of face-to-face professional learning activities, we had to change some of the topics covered to provide sessions that could be conducted virtually. Overall, 210 representatives from 83 schools attended workshops and seminars. In the longer term, we would expect to see schools better able to identify the complex needs of students and meet those students’ educational needs. <p>Activity 6</p>

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	<p>6. Student Assessment</p> <p>a. ISV will provide consultants from both health and education backgrounds to support schools. The consultants will assist schools in identifying the needs of individual students with additional needs, applying strategies and resources to assist students.</p> <p>b. ISV will also run several 'Moving Forward' professional learning sessions for classroom teachers and individual learning needs staff to improve their expertise in identifying and supporting the needs of students.</p>	<p>Better awareness by classroom teachers, school leadership and other staff of students with disability.</p> <p>Achieved (partially)</p>	<p>Three 'Moving Forward' professional learning sessions will be run across Victoria.</p> <p>33% achieved</p> <p>The Student Assessment Tool will be launched to schools</p> <p>0% achieved</p> <p>Long term: While having an immediate impact on the quality of NCCD data, ISV believes that this project will have a roader and longer-term benefit for schools.</p> <p>Schools will feel better able to identify students with disability and the adjustments required to meet their individual needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISV's short-term goal was to include 20 schools in the consultancy program, and to run three 'Moving Forward' sessions. • We were not able to meet the goal of the consultancy program. Only one session was able to take place before the remained for the program had to be cancelled because of COVID-19 restrictions. • ISV also continued to make available to schools a series of podcasts from previous years' 'Moving Forward' sessions. • ISV continued to work in 2021 on our Student Assessment Tool, but the tool was not launched, as planned. Our initial testing with school representatives indicated that additional work needed to be done to make the tool useful for staff. Testing also showed that an online tool would be more flexible for schools than the Excel tool that we had previously envisaged. • Our long-term goal is to provide better access for schools to specialist health and educational services, particularly where the school is geographically remote from those services.
<p>Project 2. Online delivery of the National Assessment program</p>	<p>1. General support</p> <p>a. In Victoria, the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) is directly responsible for managing the process of moving to NAPLAN online. This includes acting as the 'help desk' for schools from all sectors.</p> <p>b. ISV will have staff members fully involved in this priority area. ISV has membership of the VCAA Steering Committee and OAWG's Project Managers' Working Group. Schools are strongly encouraged to participate in NAPLAN online. ISV directs all school queries directly to the VCAA to ensure consistent communication.</p> <p>2. Data analysis and targeted support to schools.</p> <p>a. ISV will analyse schools' NAPLAN performance for 2021 with the assistance of the VCAA NAPLAN Data Service.</p>	<p>Activity 1 Increasing the number of Victorian Independent schools involved in NAPLAN online at an appropriate stage in the transition.</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Activity 2 Identification of the extent to which NAPLAN online alters students' NAPLAN results.</p> <p>Achieved, although not many schools engaged with this work due to the ongoing challenges of COVID-19 during 2021</p>	<p>Activity 1 It was difficult to set targets for 2021. However, ISV understands that an increased number of independent schools participated in the online assessments.</p> <p>Activity 2 Short term: ISV will analyse the NAPLAN data of all Victorian Independent schools that participate in NAPLAN online in 2021.</p> <p>Long term: While having an immediate impact on the implementation of NAPLAN Online, ISV</p>	<p>Activity 2 Due to the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was difficult to engage schools in this work</p>

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			<p>believes that this project will have a broader and longer-term benefit for schools once all schools have moved to online testing.</p> <p>ISV will be able to develop a range of targeted improvement strategies, informed in part by NAPLAN analysis.</p> <p>Partially achieved</p>	
Project 3 Governance and financial management	<p>1. Governance training</p> <p>a. ISV will offer training for school leaders and governing body members specifically on governance and financial management. They will be offered both in-school and out-of-school times (in the evening and on weekends) to suit governing body members.</p> <p>b. In-school consulting services will be provided based on the results of governance surveys that ISV will administer (these surveys will be industry benchmarked). These consulting services will provide for individual interventions for governing bodies.</p> <p>2. Governance help desk</p> <p>a. ISV will provide a governance 'help desk', where schools are able to seek information and guidance about governance related issues.</p>	<p>Each of the five activities has been listed separately below.</p> <p>Activity 1 Governing body members having a deeper understanding of their role and their schools' financial position. This should result in better decision making by governing body members.</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Activity 2 Schools will be able to resolve their issue by having accessed the help desk. Targeted assistance is provided to schools as a result of the help desk.</p> <p>Achieved</p>	<p>Each of the five activities has been listed separately below.</p> <p>Activity 1 Strong support of subsidised governance and financial seminars and workshops, as demonstrated by the number of participating schools (expect at least 30 participants to attend the short seminars and at least 70 participants at the weekend residential programs).</p> <p>It's difficult to put a percentage figure on this – see comments in next column</p> <p>Improvement in governing body members' understanding of their role and their schools' financial position, as demonstrated by the results of pre and post surveys of attendees at seminars and workshops.</p> <p>It's difficult to put a percentage figure on this – see comments in next column</p> <p>Activity 2 At least twenty schools and governing body members accessing the help desk.</p> <p>100% achieved</p>	<p>Activity 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance Online Course (3 modules) – 45 people trained • Governance and Risk Management in Schools Video Conference twilight session– 33 participants. • 2 x Personal School Board Session – 19 board members trained. • Numerous enquiries and calls from various school representatives <p>Activity 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On average a board member or school senior representative contacted ISV weekly to obtain advice on the following topics: ○ School Constitution ○ Compliance ○ Principal Reviews/Appointments ○ Board Structure ○ Sample Policies

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	<p>3. Development and publication of governance resources.</p> <p>a. ISV intends developing and publishing resources to assist schools with financial management and benchmarking.</p> <p>b. ISV will also provide tools to enable schools to analyse and benchmark their financial and performance data.</p> <p>4. Interactive online communication tool (isConnect)</p> <p>a. ISV will continue to develop an online communication tool to provide school leaders and governing body members with information that helps support them in the core business of running a school. This includes the development of the extensive School Process Architecture (the SPA) and our work to ensure that schools understand and use the SPA.</p> <p>b. The online information will be accessible at all times. ISV will work with designers in the development of this tool and online applications.</p> <p>c. ISV will evaluate the tool's use to inform future provision and support for schools.</p>	<p>Activity 3 Governing body members making better and more strategic decisions.</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Activity 4 School leaders and governing body members having instant and easy access to high quality information so that they can make better decisions.</p> <p>Achieved</p>	<p>Activity 3 At least 25 schools and governing body members accessing the resources.</p> <p>100% achieved</p> <p>Activity 4 At least 50 schools signing up to use the online tool.</p> <p>100% achieved</p> <p>Increasing numbers of 'hits' and 'page views' by leaders and governing body members, particularly with content related to governance and financial management practices.</p> <p>100% achieved</p>	<p>Activity 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional resources were updated for school board members and senior school staff to access in 2021 via isConnect and isComply, with a focus on school compliance with VRQA minimum standards. The Governance, Compliance and Risk areas of isConnect had more than 2,000 users having over 4,000 views <p>Activity 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every Victorian independent school has signed up as an active school account to isConnect and by the end of 2021 there were more than 4,900 active individual users registered. This was an increase from 3,500 at the end of 2020. There are over 750 resources and pieces of content available to schools, accessed anywhere, anytime, on any device across the 6 key areas of the School Process Architecture – Vision & Strategy; Governance, Compliance & Risk; Learning & Wellbeing; Facilities, Operations & Finance; People & Culture; and Communications & Relationships.
Project 4 Principals' Executive Network	<p>ISV will deliver a residential program for new principals. The program will consist of four sessions over a twelve-month period and will cover a range of leadership, governance and managerial topics. ISV will continue to provide ongoing support for principals in the first three years of their principalship, which will involve sponsoring Principals to undertake the Deloitte Courageous Principals Residential program coaching sessions provided by accredited coaches as well as mentoring from experienced principals.</p>	<p>New and inexperienced principals being better prepared to carry out their role.</p> <p>Principals having access to ongoing support and networking platform.</p> <p>Achieved</p>	<p>At least 10 new principals participating in the program.</p> <p>100% achieved</p> <p>New and inexperienced principals feeling better prepared to carry out their role, as demonstrated by the results of pre and post surveys.</p> <p>100% achieved</p> <p>New principals feeling connected to colleagues from other schools.</p> <p>100% achieved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the residential aspect of the program was not able to occur in full. However, 21 new principals participated in the online Zoom program and 14 principals attended the end of year face to face 2 day residential. Experienced presenters, including statutory authorities familiar with the requirements of schools, provided new principals with information and support with a focus on leading an accountable and effective organisation. New principals were provided with tools including program references to the Australian Professional Standard in leading performance development of their teachers as well as leading teaching and learning in their schools. New principals also explored the art and science of leadership and strategies to better equip them with managing change. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, new principals were matched with an accredited ISV Coach in place of their

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				<p>peers as part of the peer coaching session and connected throughout the year via Zoom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the extension to the program where new principals were previously matched with an experienced principal from an independent school to coach for continued support in their second year of principalship was not implemented. • The post-survey results showed 100% found the sessions very relevant and met their needs in their role and extended support to meet COVID-19 challenges as a new principal, with requests for follow up. Extended coaching opportunities with ISV accredited Coaches have been provided on request.
Project 5 New Business Managers' Program	ISV will deliver a two-day program for new business managers. The program will cover a range of leadership and managerial topics.	New business managers being better prepared to carry out their role. Achieved	At least 10 new business managers participating in the program. 100% achieved Participants feeling better prepared to carry out their role, as demonstrated by the results of pre and post surveys. 100% achieved	
Project 6 Idea into Action (I2A)	The program, in conjunction with Harvard University, will support leaders in harnessing rich ideas and turning them into action.	The creation of empirically based frameworks and models will be produced and continually added to that identify and evaluate approaches to the challenge of supporting ideas into action as well as a set of action strategies and tools for supporting ideas into action. Achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2021, the project continued working on three extensive case studies with schools tracking the implementation of a major change initiative, testing and providing regular feedback on the I2A tools and frameworks. • There are five broad tools and five targeted tools included in the I2A Toolkit, with new tools added in 2021 that continue to be tested as part of the Case Studies • In addition to the three extensive case study schools, in 2021 tools and frameworks from the Reach Front continued to be prototyped with two additional schools for data collection. <p>100% achieved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During 2021, three packs of Reach Front tools and frameworks were being tested and trialled by two Independent Schools. This trial had some interruption due to continuing intermittent lockdowns and periods of remote learning. • Schools met with ISV and researchers regularly to give feedback and suggestions on the use of the tools and frameworks with students. • The ongoing development, testing and refinement of I2A tools for the Eco Front continued in 2021 with the three Case Study Schools who are conducting extensive case studies tracking the implementation of a major change initiative, testing and providing regular feedback on the I2A tools and frameworks for the Eco Front. These case studies are due to be documented in 2022.
Project 7 Beginning Teaching Program	In line with the Australian Government's focus on quality teaching, ISV will continue a project that establishes a mentoring relationship between beginning teachers and experienced teachers (fellows). The	Beginning teachers will be better prepared when they transition to the proficient teacher level.	Short term: At least 30 beginning teachers in 15 schools will participate in the project.	Short term: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 40 beginning teachers in 12 schools participated in 2021.

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	<p>fellows work with the beginning teacher and their in-school mentor to provide professional support and advice.</p> <p>Participating beginning teachers also receive targeted professional learning and networking opportunities.</p> <p>ISV will collaborate with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) in the delivery of the program.</p>	<p>Within-school mentors of beginning teachers will have a greater capacity to support future beginning teachers.</p> <p>Achieved</p>	<p>100% achieved</p> <p>Long term: ISV will undertake an evaluation of the participants in this project, to determine the extent to which they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better prepared to work in schools • More likely to remain in the profession • Better prepared when completing their Evidence of Professional Practice for full registration via the VIT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31 mentors were part of the program in 2021. • 20 mentors participated in the ISV Mentoring program. <p>The short term follow up survey results in summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All participants felt the sessions with the ISV Fellow were beneficial. • The opportunity to discuss challenges in the role was of great benefit. • The opportunity to ask questions about classroom practice was appreciated by all. • Specific knowledge and understandings that they felt applied directly to their role as a beginning teacher was advice on Classroom layout, Explicit Teaching, Organisation and Administration, Resources, Behaviour Management, Planning, Reporting and Assessment advice. • Many also felt it helped them understand the Independent Sector in more detail. • Although the program was online, face to face connections were possible when COVID-19 restrictions were lifted. The mentors noted that a network for Mentors would be a good idea. <p>Long term: ISV undertook an evaluation survey of the participants in this program. The results showed that the teachers not only found the program very beneficial, but they also gained confidence in classroom practice and built on their knowledge through professional readings and practice that were provided. Feedback from the Mentors was also very positive, particularly concerning VIT information and guidance.</p>
Project 8 Principal Wellbeing Project	ISV has conducted extensive research into the wellbeing of principals. This project will provide ongoing support for principals as a result of this research.	<p>Principals feeling better equipped to cope with the challenges of their role.</p> <p>Achieved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 10 principals participating in the program • Principals feeling better prepared to carry out their role, as demonstrated by the results of pre and post surveys. <p>100% achieved</p>	The twenty-one participants in the New Principals' Program were able to access the Mindful Leading Program. In addition, online wellbeing sessions were offered to all Principals.
Project 9 Policy templates	Development of a series of model policies and accompanying documents to support schools.	<p>Schools having an improved policy framework.</p> <p>Achieved</p>	<p>An increased number of model policies available for schools.</p> <p>100% achieved An increased number of schools accessing the policies, as measured by the number of times the documents are downloaded.</p> <p>100% achieved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISV produced an additional 18 policy documents. These consisted of model policies as well as guidance material. • Schools accessed these documents via isConnect. • In the latter part of 2020, ISV commenced work on a new online platform, isComply, which supports schools in managing their compliance and reporting requirements. The new platform was launched in March 2021.

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Project 10 Southern Cross - STEM focus	ISV to deliver facilitated training on using process management tools to develop and improve STEM approaches.	Improved provision and implementation of STEM in schools. Achieved	At least 15 schools participating in the program. 27% achieved	Due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, ISV was not able to offer this face-to-face program in 2021. However, four schools participated in an online program during the second half of 2021.
Project 11 Literacy and Numeracy Predictive analytics Platform	In line with the Australian Government's focus on literacy and numeracy, and to better understand the plateauing of Australia's performance on national and international assessments, ISV will develop and pilot an analysis platform for independent schools. The platform combines NAPLAN and progressive achievement data alongside wellbeing data to enable schools to better predict student performance and better identify appropriate intervention strategies. Training will also be developed to ensure internal staff and teachers and school leaders can make the most of the platform.	The pilot project will see ISV work with a small number of pilot schools to develop a reporting application for improved analysis within schools concerning literacy and numeracy that puts analysis of school-level records at the fingertips of teachers. ISV will also develop an online training module for using the system. Achieved (partially) The pilot is progressing but was delayed, first because of COVID-19 restrictions, then because of the loss of a key staff member from our project team. The data course will be completed in 2022.	The implementation of the pilot program. Development of the predictive analytics platform for internal and external use. 25% achieved The development of an online training module for the use of the platform. 50% achieved	Implementation of this project was severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. The schools that had agreed to take part in the pilot project could not find time to dedicate to this initiative due to the significant impact of the restrictions and the project was delayed. Eight schools were then identified to pick up the project again in 2021. These schools are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girton Grammar School • Presbyterian Ladies' College • Balcombe Grammar School • Aitken College • Christian College Geelong • Tintern Grammar • Mentone Grammar • Beaconhills College <p>However, as we were about to commence the project, we lost our data and analytics expert staff member at ISV, due to the competitive nature of the technical employment market. While we were able to replace the resource reasonably quickly, unfortunately, we have had a number of schools pull out of the project due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19. We are now working with four schools and will commence the development aspect of this project in 2022.</p> <p>We have also begun development of the first training package around data literacy, which is a prerequisite for users of the tool. We had hoped to have this finished in 2021, however, the loss of our staff member and the impact of COVID-19 also meant that this project was delayed. We were able to complete 50 per cent of the course and are on track to complete this in 2022.</p>

2021 Budget expenditure

Project Activities	Reform support funding
NCCD	
Staff costs/Contractors	\$328,981
Travel	\$6,021
Professional Learning sessions	\$2,695
Research	\$8,732
Consultancy	\$221,489
NAPLAN Online	
Staff costs/Contractors	\$186,861
Travel	\$1,520
Research	\$60,358
Improving Governance	
Staff costs/Contractors	\$787,351
Travel	\$8,119
Professional Learning sessions	\$211,400
Development of Resources	\$129,332
Research	\$54,237
Interactive tool - content	\$145,763
Quality Teaching	
Principals' Executive Network	\$126,759
New Business Managers' Program	\$26,179
Idea into Action	\$510,058
Beginning Teaching Fellowship	\$41,887
Principal Wellbeing Project	\$209,436
Policy Templates	\$125,661
Southern Cross - STEM Focus	\$240,851
Boosting Literacy and Numeracy	
NAPLAN Research Project	\$184,698
Administration fee at 6% of Reform Funds	\$201,610
TOTAL	\$3,820,000