

Executive Summary

As outlined in the Work Plan, activities in 2023 were based on the strategic principle that system approaches deliver more effective outcomes than a focus on individual schools. A system-led approach is resource effective, delivers a consistent message, minimises duplication, can be contextualised in current processes and delivers a high level of accountability. It also ensures that Australian and State government priorities can be effectively addressed. A feature of achievements in 2023 was the substantial development of 'systemness' and the associated benefits of consolidation, avoidance of duplication, economies of scale and increased accountability and efficiency. 2023 demonstrated that the building of this architecture enabled schools to retain focus on their educative role. This was particularly evident in all projects, many of which reduced the burden on schools, a key Australian Government priority.

In 2023, Catholic Education Western Australia Limited (CEWA) again focused on the allocation of funds and system strategic initiatives, on the three specified priorities. Reform Support Funds (RSF) were applied across all three priorities. Activities in 2023 again built on these priorities, as well as two others that accord with the CEWA Strategic Initiatives plan and the Bilateral Reform Agreement.

There has been a significant reduction in the number of projects in 2023 and this occurred for two main reasons. Firstly, with 2023 being the final year RSF funding, it was decided to support 3 key projects which were directly aligned to the 3 key program priority areas. These 3 projects were allocated most of the funding. Two further projects addressed important aspects of improving learning and teaching in schools. The second reason for the reduction in the number of projects was that some were finalised in 2022 and were included in recurrent office budgets. Where projects moved beyond the developmental stage to full implementation, it was also decided to fund these projects from the existing budget.

The late confirmation that the program would continue in 2023 also prompted a consolidation in projects.

For 2023, the three main priority areas – and associated projects – were:

Priority Area 1 - Quality assurance, moderation and support for the NCCD on School Students with Disability

CEWA has for many years, allocated considerable resources to this area and has made considerable progress across the system. In 2023, a CEWA Team Leader and over 20.5 FTE specialist consultants supported schools on a range of matters, including assistance with the Nationally Consistent Collection for Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD). It is important to recognise that while special centres may exist in schools, a wider integration in the school community is a priority. The consultants worked successfully with school staff to ensure consistency in assessments of students and conduct moderation activities between themselves. The work of these consultants will continue to focus on the NCCD. There will continue to be a significant focus on the NCCD, involving assisting teachers of students with disability and school administrators, to understand the relevant guidelines. CEWA is confident that schools are continuing to make appropriate judgements with respect to the NCCD. Additional RSF funds were directed to enhanced data management, ensuring student records were accurate and reflecting students' assessments of categories of disability. This was outlined in the current Work Plan and RSF Strategic Plan 2019 - 2023. Synthesis of NCCD Data with the full rollout of Administration of Schools (AoS) and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Office, has enhanced data efficiency and accuracy. Significantly, these developments also enabled more agile exchange and analysis of information between schools and office. CEWA is satisfied that significant progress in this project was made in 2023 to address any issues, and to assure consistent judgements and support to students into the future. CEWA is also satisfied that judgements and support in remote schools is appropriate.

During 2023, liaison with other CEWA teams continued, including the Student Wellbeing Team, Child Safety Team and the Aboriginal Education Team. This helped to develop a more integrated and holistic approach.

Priority Area 2 - Implementation of the online delivery of the National Assessment Program

CEWA has invested considerable resources in assisting schools to prepare for the continuation of NAP online and in being one system with 100% participation online for schools. Information Communication Technology (ICT) supports in CEWA assisted schools to ensure connectivity and hardware requirements were appropriate. Centrally based specialist consultants continued to support ICT staff in schools. CEWA also used existing consultants to assist teachers in evaluating data and in planning ongoing strategies to support learning and teaching. Funding from the RSF was directed towards supporting schools through additional ICT backup and assistance as well as additional support in data basing. This applies to schools' online framework and engineering as well as technical and teacher expertise. A strong focus in 2023 was supporting results analytics and working with schools on teaching and learning practices. Several enhancements were made to data analytics approaches as well as professional learning for teachers. CEWA is particularly pleased with this important transition, which builds on the data analytics capacity. With the earlier administration of national testing and release of data, CEWA will continue to support schools in analysis and in-school strategies.

Priority Area 3 - Improving governance and financial management practices in schools.

Considerable RSF funding continued to be directed to one broad activity. This embodied a risk management program, developed as a system approach to ensure that CEWA schools had a clear way of identifying operational risks, recording risks, assessing risks and planning ways to mitigate against, or solve risk issues. CEWA has commenced revision of current policies, and this continued in 2023 and beyond, as reflected in the CEWA Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023 and the Quality Catholic Education Framework. Additional focus was also placed on school audits against both CEWA policies as well as state government registration standards. A system policy suite and hub were also developed for schools. 2023 saw the ongoing integration of CEWA policies, planning and practice. CEWA is satisfied that significant progress has been made in this area which provides a basis for further development and consolidation in 2023 and beyond. Such was the success of risk and audit processes, the WA Minister for Education was prepared to further accept CEWA's processes and decided not to apply mandatory external processes in 2023 and beyond. CEWA has noted higher levels of compliance and understanding in the policy area in 2023.

Additional to the above three program priority areas, other projects support teaching and learning, with one directed towards building cultural competence related to Aboriginal students and families. A second project involved the ongoing enhancement of STEM in primary schools. These projects are consistent with the Bilateral Agreement as well as Australian Government priorities. These projects addressed equity areas and nationally important imperatives.

Progress against strategic plan

The Non-Government Reform Support Fund (NGRSF) Strategic Plan 2023 incorporates the three key priority areas described above, as well as two other initiatives, many of which build upon earlier projects and initiatives. The 2023 Work Plan reduced the number of projects for reasons discussed above. The financial summary reflects the emphasis on the 3 core activities.

CEWA'S system Strategic Plan continues to align projects to Quality Catholic Schooling, and holistic school improvement and this aligns with the NGRSF Strategic Plan.

Relationship with state and territory government

The Bilateral Reform Agreement was signed late in 2018 between CEWA, The Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia (AISWA), and the Department of Education of Western Australia (DoEWA). This followed a significant period of consultation between the three education systems and relevant officers. The priority areas for CEWA in that Agreement continued to be priorities in 2023 activities. These included:

- Addressing Closing the Gap initiatives such as Transforming Lives 2025, support for Aboriginal educators and rollout of a Cultural Security learning journey.
- NCCD for students with a disability this report highlights considerable cross-sectoral liaison and moderation activities.
- Continued roll out of NAPLAN online, with a significant movement to data analytics and associated professional learning to affect higher student outcomes.
- Recognition of and shared vision to promote STEM outcomes for students.

It is important to note that many of the planned initiatives in the current Bilateral Agreement have been completed by respective systems. Negotiations between the three systems commenced in 2023 to liaise on priorities for the new 2025 National School Reform Agreement. These discussions are ongoing and will form the basis for a new Bilateral agreement for 2025.

As well as these CEWA priorities in the Bilateral Agreement, there are many other initiatives which are being implemented across other/all education systems. CEWA has also continued to liaise with the other systems/sectors through heads of systems meetings, which include discussions of various initiatives. CEWA has also included representatives from other systems in some professional learning programs. CEWA is also provided with the opportunity to provide input, through the DoEWA, to Education Ministers' Meetings and other meetings. CEWA collaborates on programs that are common in the Bilateral Agreement.

Other practical examples include liaison cross-sectorally with NCCD consultants and officers in moderation processes – see details in table following; school audit processes and liaison with government officers in particular; close collaboration with officers at DoEWA and AISWA with respect to other non-NGRSF Projects such as ViSN; ongoing discussions regarding support for ECTs; and liaison with school psychologists across all three systems. The priorities listed above in many cases are shared by all three systems. CEWA has also shared information regarding the school leadership programs delivered. Modifications occurred as a result of discussions, specifically with the DoEWA. In respect to the STEM project, meetings were held with both other education systems regarding resource identification, including liaison with the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA). The implementation of The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) online required considerable liaison with the Department of Education. The DoEWA is now responsible for the state school audit and risk management process; liaison is ongoing and frequent. Some CEWA audit consultants were/are involved in government school audits.

Project Report

Projects have been managed by a designated CEWA Directorate and central consultants assigned to implement projects to achieve the stated outcomes. The Governance Directorate was responsible for 2 projects. In the case of the school audit and policy implementation project, a manager oversaw this piece, assisted by 3 consultants. Liaison also occurred with SIAs and ROs, as well as legal counsel. This structure remained mindful of the objectives and stated milestones. They were responsible for data and evidence collection and provided information for this annual report. As evidenced in the following table, deliverables were met and exceeded in many cases. With respect to the cultural security project, a consultant chaired a collaborative committee as well as liaising closely with the Aboriginal Education team. The central office was responsible for awarding a contract to an outside organisation for the school and office audit. The lead consultant was responsible for the collection of information for this annual report.

With respect to the NCCD for students with disability project, the Team Leader of that area was responsible for the implementation of objectives and reporting on deliverables. The processes put in play were overseen by this team leader and assisted by consultants in her team. The following table demonstrates achievement of stated outcomes and deliverables.

The Teaching and Learning Directorate was responsible for 2 projects. In respect to NAPLAN online, at least 8 consultants were responsible for this project, as well as technical support from the IT Team. Central staff worked closely with schools again in 2023 to ensure full online delivery. Professional learning, central and inschool, focussed on data analytics and implementation of effective teaching strategies to support teachers and students. All objectives and deliverables were met. In respect to the STEM Project, the central science and mathematics consultants liaised closely with schools to deliver all outcomes.

As noted in the introductory comments, all projects were centrally run as opposed to individual discrete school-based initiatives. This approach ensured full accountability with respect to project objectives and deliverables, as well as ensuring ongoing sustainability.

Summary of 2023 achievements

1. Project title	2. Project description and activities	3.	Expected outcomes/ Overall achievements Achieved or Not achieved	4.	Indicators of success	5. List any additional or variations of Activities undertaken/Achieved outcomes
Project 1 – Supporting NAPLAN Online Bilateral Reform Agenda Reflected in data collection, analysis and literacy and numeracy initiatives – all sectors.	Support all schools to participate in NAPLAN online, including ensuring school technical capacity, data interpretation and curriculum support. This project involves the engagement of central consultants to support schools both technically, and data analysis and curriculum planning.	•	Work with 100% of schools to ensure smooth implementation of NAPLAN online in March 2023; ensure connectivity and technical capacity – achieved. Assist all schools in timely data analysis and planning – achieved.	•	Oversee a final readiness health check by February 2023- liaise with all schools -100% achieved Report on school engagement and any issues regarding implementing NAPLAN online – report number of schools – all CEWA schools fully online - 100% achieved Consequent of the outcomes of this check, provide support to schools – report number of schools requiring support – see above - 100% achieved	All CEWA schools transitioned to NAPLAN online during 2021 and continue to participate annually. Additional to professional learning sessions outlined, several individual school NAPLAN data analysis learning events were held – these were aimed at all staff focussing on access, interpretation, and utilisation of data to improve student outcomes. In addition to school analysis, system analysis is undertaken to highlight areas of good practice and priorities for improvement. A comprehensive report was completed in 2023 and used for 2024 planning.

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				Provide central assistance/professional learning to schools in terms of data analysis and effective use of data — report number of schools requesting assistance — all schools were provided with professional learning, mainly online. In 2023, 6 centrally delivered professional learning sessions and 3 regional professional learning sessions were delivered. 3 curriculum planning workshops were also delivered to support school leaders and teachers. Sessions focussed on analysing, interpreting data and curriculum planning for learning. School Support Consultants conducted school support visits where requested - 100% achieved.	Power BI Academic Reporting applications were developed which provided schools with the platforms to undertake rigorous data analysis of NAPLAN assessment, such as NAPLAN proficiencies and item analysis.

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				•	Prepare an internal report identifying any issues in 2023 and recommendations for 2024 – report prepared – see adjoining column for main outcome - 100% achieved. Use system analytics capabilities to assist		
					schools with data analysis – report on success of this program – all schools trained in the MS Analytics program; this now routinely forms part of literacy and numeracy curriculum design - 100% achieved.		
Project 2 - Supporting schools NCCD Students with Disability Links to Bilateral Reform Agenda All sectors – reporting; evidence-based judgments; collection of data.	Activities reflect a continuation of current work in this area, involving around 20.0FTE consultants, as well as other central office support working with schools to ensure consistent decision-making regarding students with disability.	•	Continued improvement in judgments and classification of students – all schools – achieved. Ongoing awareness by principals and school leaders – all schools with eligible students – achieved.	•	Two cross sectoral moderation sessions held during 2023 – 100% achieved. Cross sectoral partnerships with DOE and AISWA to present professional learning modules relating to moderation - 100% achieved.	an Bu dis (0: pa Tw he	d moderation session with inbury school principals and sability support coordinators 1/05/23) - 10 schools / 16 rticipants. yo cross sector meetings ld. schools provided whole aff professional learning.

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Links to RSF and AG priorities Quality assurance, moderation, and support for improvements for students with disability.		Outcomes for students involved improve through the implementation of the most appropriate programs – potentially all schoolsachieved and ongoing.	 2 x Network meetings for key staff in 109 primary schools;-27 secondary schools and 27 composite schools - 100% achieved. Support visits and PL for 13 Kimberley schools – also provided to principals and coordinators – 100% achieved. NCCD Webinars conducted to support consistent decision making and appropriate program implementation. Webinar recorded and posted on CEWA Teams, for staffs' ongoing reference - 100% achieved and ongoing. Quantitative review of categorisations; qualitative information re; consistency -100% achieved. Input into the refinement of CEWA AoS regarding recording and reporting of NCCD collection – 100% achieved. 	All CEWA schools' systemic data analysed to examine school trends and variations, as well as comparisons between like schools, dioceses and region – data shared with schools and acted on. Refinements implemented where required – all NCCD are recorded on AoS or school information systems at the school level. AoS has been rolled out to all CEWA schools, which has significantly enhanced efficiencies and agility in terms of shared information and evaluation.

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				•	Assist CEWA Digital Technology team to provide training sessions on the extraction of NCCD reports from AoS and upload to SchoolsHUB – 100% achieved. Support to schools for post enumeration – 100% achieved and ongoing.		
Project 3 - Policy Development and Risk Analysis Links to the Bilateral Reform Agreement Mirrors many of the actions under 'New Public-School Review Process' for public schools, page 6. Key CEWA requirement under the government System Agreement.	In 2024, CEWA will continue to implement an improved model of compliance; allowing schools to undertake modules to meet standards (rather than a full audit once every five years). This approach has been approved by the Department of Education.	•	Revised school audit process to assure school compliance with the State System Agreement and other national and state regulatory frameworks - achieved. System policies and governance structures ensure policies and procedures are contemporary and comply with existing and changing education and regulatory frameworks – reviewed in 2023 and achieved. CEWA-developed OneNote module to support schools in understanding the requirements – developed in 2023-achieved; ready for implementation.	•	Reports from external school audit consultants; quantitative and qualitative information re activity and any issues with school compliance – all processes followed in 2023 - 100% achieved. Training school auditors: workshops held with key CEWA staff including SIAs and ROs; meetings held with school principals; 2 workshops and 20 key CEWA staff involved - 100% achieved. Minimum of 35 CEWA schools to be audited in 2023. 35 were audited but 14 follow up visits – 100% achieved.	co po ev scl Sci - c an scl thi tin scl mo	e audit of 35 schools is nsistent with existing dicies of auditing schools ery 5 years –159 CEWA hools. hool audit process reviewed data can now be collected d analysed prior to the hool visit and triangulated; is has reduced the necessary ne in the school. In addition, hools will undertake a codule approach to mpliance in accordance with CE.

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		•	CEWA able to assure appropriate compliance to state government in terms of System Agreement – all schools achieved.	•	One extraordinary compliance assessment taken to follow up on noncompliant practices within a school – 100% achieved.		
		•	CEWA policies revised to meet system and external requirements, especially with the progressive roll out of CEWA Incorporation - achieved.	•	Online Teams meetings to support principals in understanding new and changed policy requirements – 100% achieved – principal meeting agendas once per term.		
				•	Feedback from government agencies indicates confidence in CEWA compliance processes – the Minister decided not to conduct external audits in CEWA schools in 2023; 5 routine matters were followed up in 2022; this indicates confidence in CEWA's processes. Department of Education further provided support for CEWA's revised model and indicated a longer-term registration agreement - 100% achieved.		

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Project 4 – Cultural Competency Links closely to Closing the Gap bold aims; the Bilateral Agreement; and the Mparntwe Declaration on Australian schooling	CEWA has initiated work on a Cultural Security Framework, including the development of a cultural security learning journey. The focus is on creating a culturally secure system for Aboriginal staff and students. The learning journey will be specifically tailored to CEWA's needs. An initial equity audit will inform the development of the subsequent training component.	•	Increase cultural awareness in school and office staff — target by end of 2023, subject to program finalisation — program not yet rolled out, but specific focus on relevant activities and celebrations, including CEWA's RAP which has occurred — achieved. Increase responsiveness to the practices, values, needs and aspirations of Aboriginal staff and students — achieved and ongoing. Develop a CEWA cultural security training component to fit specific system needs and align more closely with existing initiatives such as Transforming Lives 2025 — not achieved. Attract and retain increased numbers of Aboriginal students and staff — aim 10% increase in staff — ongoing.		Number of CEWA staff engaged in the online survey component of the Cultural Security equity audit; breakdown by school type; broad feedback received – aim is 12 schools and around 150 staff – Report fully completed during 2022 – 10 schools were eventually involved with the external consultant - 23 office staff; 11 Aboriginal staff; 100 school staff; full review of CEWA practices and policies is underway in 2023, with implementation of relevant aspects of the audit recommendations - 50% achieved.	The results of the Cultural Security Audit were presented to the Executive Team and subsequently short-term actions were identified and allocated to respective Directorates. A budget of \$25,000 was allocated to develop a CEWA bespoke learning journey, as well as \$25,000 to develop a Library of Voices: Authentic, context-specific Acknowledgment of Country with each school, which will be incorporated in the school's Faith Story and Witness Component. In the absence of a Team Leader Aboriginal Education, progress has slowed down and is anticipated to pick up in 2024 once the new Team Leader has been appointed.

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			Commencement of the development of the training component; feedback from stakeholders – reference group and sample of about 50 school staff – at this stage the components of the School Audit are being processed to decide the best way forward; a framework has been developed – approximately 20% achieved, as a model was developed but limited work was produced.	CEWA continues to provide information and training on cultural security for existing and new staff using existing resources. This occurred in mandatory induction programs for new staff, and ongoing work of the Aboriginal Education Team in schools, incorporating the AITSL Indigenous Intercultural Development Toolkit; specialist induction for Kimberley school staff; and cultural security training for all staff in Aboriginal boarding facilities.
			 Anecdotal and other evidence regarding the developmental processes have on schools, and in particular Aboriginal students, including those in boarding facilities – CEWA conducted a full research review of Boarding schools in 2022 which canvassed all boarding students, parents, teachers, and origin schools. 	

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			This was funded independently of NGRSF, but nevertheless provided important information and background. The results were presented to National conference and NIAA - 100% achieved	
Project 5 - Support for Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) Links to Bilateral Reform Agreement STEM priority – all sectors – involving STEM skills; professional learning; targeted programs for low SES schools; endorsed and other resources; age- appropriate pedagogies. National government priority.	This project aims to increase the profile of, and student participation in STEM, particularly in primary schools and in smaller secondary schools where the range of STEM subjects might be more limited. It will involve centrally employed STEM consultants working with schools.	 Raise profile of STEM in schools, particularly in primary schools – aim to liaise with all primary schools – achieved. Increase exchange of information across schools – achieved. Raise knowledge and capacity of teachers re; STEM, particularly in primary schools – achieved. Increase access to STEM subjects on the Virtual School Network (ViSN) for CEWA schools – target 10% enrolment increase - subject increase not achieved; enrolment increase - achieved. 	 Consultants deliver professional learning for primary and secondary teachers working in STEM, particularly in primary schools – target all primary schools – 28 schools across 3 dioceses were heavily engaged; networks were established, involving 498 teachers - 100% achieved. Schools share their learning on STEM initiatives through networks and showcases – 3 network meetings, 3 showcases held in Perth, Geraldton and Katanning - 100% achieved. 	CEWA was represented at a national STEM Showcase event – Catholic Network Australia STEM MAD (Making a Difference). 15 schools across 3 CEWA dioceses participated in the CNA STEM MAD competition. 2 schools were announced as winners and 8 schools announced as finalists during the national online awards. 4 CEWA primary schools participated in Makers Empire STEM Program, which culminated in an online showcase. 10 CEWA primary schools competed at the annual CEWA SciTech Challenge Day.

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			 STEM resources shared using digital platforms – CEWA consultants sourced, collated and shared quality STEM resources within the STEM, Science and Numeracy teams and via SharePoint sites -100% achieved. 3 CEWA low SES primary schools were selected and competed in the National Maker's Empire/Andy Thomas STEM Space Program. 1 school was announced as a WA finalist and attended the National Showcase event in Adelaide.
			 STEM resources developed in line with the following models; design thinking; engineering process; SciTech problem-based pedagogy; solution fluency with a strong focus on STEM Skills and Capabilities - 100% achieved. 14 primary schools and 3 secondary schools presented projects at CEWA STEM Showcases. Additional schools attended as incursion opportunities.
			 Professional learning delivered to Geraldton, Bunbury and Perth Dioceses, one day in terms 1,2, 3 - 100% achieved.
			STEM subjects available through ViSN - quantitative data - there was a 10% enrolment increase – this involves Year 11 and 12 students only - 100% achieved.

2023 Budget Expenditure

Project Activities	Reform Support Funding
NCCD	
NCCD	\$314,803
NAPLAN Online	
NAPLAN	\$1,209,280
Improving governance and financial management	
Schools compliance audit	\$371,245
Other state and system initiatives	
Cultural Security Framework	\$104,129
Support for STEM	\$173,043
Administration of Projects	\$0
TOTAL	\$2,173,000