



Australian Government



SMARTER SCHOOLS NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY
LOW SES SCHOOL COMMUNITIES
LITERACY AND NUMERACY

New South Wales Progress Report 2011 (1 January – 30 June 2011)

Due 31 October 2011



Education &
Communities



Section 1 – Overview/Executive Summary of Progress	1
<i>Contribution to New South Wales priorities and reforms for schooling.....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>NSW priority target - Improved student achievements in literacy and numeracy.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>NSW priority target - More students finish high school.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>NSW priority target - High expectations for all students</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>NSW priority target - Improving teacher quality.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>NSW priority target - Options for local decision-making</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Evaluation provides a review of progress to date and informs future policy direction.....</i>	<i>10</i>
Section 2 – Improving Teacher Quality	11
Significant Achievements / Activities / Highlights – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011	11
<i>Overview</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Key achievements.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>NSW evaluation activity</i>	<i>13</i>
Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011	14
<i>Strategies to attract Aboriginal people into the teaching profession.....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Teacher professional development to respond to Aboriginal students’ needs.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Aboriginal community engagement</i>	<i>16</i>
Progress against ITQ NP Facilitation Reforms – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011	17
<i>National professional teaching standards</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>National certification of Accomplished and Lead Teachers</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Nationally consistent registration of teachers (improved mobility of teaching workforce).....</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Joint engagement with higher education providers to improve teacher quality.....</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Professional development and support for principals.....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Improved performance management and continuous improvement in schools.....</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>New pathways into teaching.....</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Better pathways into teaching</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Improved quality and availability of teacher workforce data.....</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Indigenous Education Workforce Pathways.....</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Quality placements</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>School Centres for Excellence</i>	<i>29</i>
Showcase/Exemplary Activities – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011	31
<i>Professional learning to increase higher levels of teacher accreditation.....</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Personalised learning and vocational training supports disengaged students</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Building staff capability in a rural Low SES environment.....</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>Focus on early career teachers and initial teacher education.....</i>	<i>34</i>

Section 3 – Low SES School Communities	35
Significant Achievements / Activities / Highlights – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011	35
Overview	35
Targeting student needs	35
Increasing school capacity to meet student needs.....	36
Operational support	36
Community Engagement.....	36
NSW evaluation activity	37
Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011	38
Supporting attendance through increased community engagement	38
Support provided to Aboriginal students.....	39
Building school and teacher capacity to meet the needs of Aboriginal students	41
Progress against LSES National Partnership reforms – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011	43
1. Incentives to attract high-performing principals and teachers.....	43
2. Adoption of best practice performance management and staffing arrangements that articulate a clear role for principals.....	47
3. School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility	47
4. Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities.....	49
5. Strengthened school accountability	51
6. External partnerships with parents, other schools, businesses and communities and the provision of access to extended services	52
Showcase (Case studies)	55
Improved educational outcomes for Aboriginal people: Glebe Public School.....	55
Improving Aboriginal school attendance and engagement: St Therese's Community School.....	56
Innovative programs to engage with parents and the community: Blacktown Youth College	57
Supporting students at risk of disengaging from schooling: Woodenbong Central School	58
Section 4 – Literacy and Numeracy.....	59
Significant Achievements/Highlights/Activities – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011	59
Overview	59
Cross sector collaboration.....	60
School level plans.....	61
NSW evaluation activity	61
Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011	63
Targeted literacy and numeracy programs	63
Individual reading and numeracy interventions.....	64
Aboriginal education and cultural immersion programs.....	65

Progress against L&N National Partnership reforms – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011	68
<i>Overview</i>	68
<i>Whole school or class reading programs</i>	69
<i>Whole school or class numeracy programs</i>	69
<i>Individual reading and numeracy interventions</i>	70
<i>Participation in NAPLAN 2011 assessment</i>	71
<i>Local measures for National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy</i>	71
<i>Teacher professional learning in student data analysis</i>	72
<i>Teacher professional learning in the literacy and numeracy programs</i>	73
Challenges to implementation/progress – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011	75
<i>Teachers' use of data analysis</i>	75
<i>Cultural change</i>	75
<i>Increased staff mobility</i>	75
<i>Providing continuity in reading and numeracy during the middle years</i>	76
<i>Short timeframe for Literacy and Numeracy Addendum Program</i>	76
Showcase (Case Studies) – 1 January to 30 June 2011	77
<i>Students benefit from more capable teachers</i>	77
<i>Embedding good teaching practice into the daily routine</i>	78
<i>Leaping into literacy</i>	79
<i>A significant shift in culture</i>	80
<i>Strong leadership strengthening commitment to Aboriginal education</i>	81
Sustainability	82
Section 5 – Milestone Reporting	84
Section 5 – Milestone Reporting Improving Teacher Quality NP	84
<i>Part 1 - Milestones not reported/not achieved/partially achieved in Annual Report for 2010</i>	84
<i>Part 2 - Milestones in Progress Report (Achieved 1 January to 30 June 2011)</i>	84
<i>Part 3 - Milestones that will progress through the 2011 calendar year (with no set milestone date)</i> .	85
Section 5 – Milestone Reporting Low SES School Communities NP	86
<i>Part 1 - Milestones not reported/not achieved/partially achieved in Annual Report for 2010</i>	86
<i>Part 2 - Milestones in Progress Report (Achieved 1 January to 30 June 2011)</i>	86
<i>Part 3 - Milestones that will progress through the 2011 calendar year (with no set milestone date)</i> .	87
Section 5 – Milestone Reporting Literacy and Numeracy NP	88
<i>Part 1 - Milestones not reported/not achieved/partially achieved in Annual Report for 2010</i>	88
<i>Part 2 - Milestones in Progress Report (Achieved 1 January to 30 June 2011)</i>	88
<i>Part 3 - Milestones that will progress through the 2011 calendar year (with no set milestone date)</i> .	89
Appendices	90
<i>Appendix A: NSW Centres for Excellence</i>	90
<i>Appendix B: Acronyms used in the NSW Progress Report 2011 (October 2011)</i>	94

Section 1 – Overview/Executive Summary of Progress

Contribution to New South Wales priorities and reforms for schooling

In the first six months of 2011, the three NSW Smarter Schools National Partnerships – Improving Teacher Quality, Literacy and Numeracy and Low Socio-economic Status School Communities – have continued to implement an integrated set of ambitious and cross-sectoral reforms based on sound evidence to improve education and learning outcomes for students.

The reforms align with COAG targets, the National Education Agreement, the National Partnerships Agreements and directly reflect the education priorities of the NSW State Plan, *NSW 2021; a plan to make NSW number one*.

In its State Plan, New South Wales indicates its commitment to five priorities for school education:

- our focus is to improve student achievements in literacy and numeracy which are fundamental to their later success in education, training and the workplace
- we have ambitious targets to increase the numbers of students who finish high school or its equivalent
- schools have high expectations for all students, particularly Aboriginal students and others who are challenged by a low socio-economic background
- these targets are being supported through initiatives which are significantly improving teacher quality and the capacities of teachers in all stages of their careers
- we are also providing schools with a greater level of decision making to more effectively take into account local needs and ensure that schools become a vital focal point within their communities.

The first section of this report provides an overview of progress for NSW Smarter Schools National Partnerships and has been organised to reflect these five NSW State Plan priorities. The other reporting areas required by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) for the overview on improving school attendance and closing the gap in educational outcomes for Aboriginal students are specifically addressed and covered within these NSW priority areas.

NSW priority target - Improved student achievements in literacy and numeracy

Schools participating in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy are increasingly recognised by their peers, colleagues and by local communities as having made significant progress in achieving ambitious targets in reading and numeracy. In the cross-sectoral conference in May 2011 on the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership, there were many achievements to celebrate:

- NAPLAN results for 2010 have shown an increase to 90.5% of all students at or above the national minimum standard in either literacy or numeracy (from 88.5% in 2008). This result exceeds New South Wales' 2010 performance target of 89.1%.
- within the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy, significant initiatives during the first six months of 2011 included:
 - whole school or whole class reading programs were implemented by 1459 teachers
 - whole school or whole class numeracy programs were implemented by 437 teachers
 - 4655 students attending Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership schools participated in individual reading or numeracy interventions or received Individual Learning Plans, developed in consultation with parents and carers
 - individual reading programs targeted 3285 primary students, with 868 students achieving exit goals in individual student intervention programs in reading in the first six months of 2011
 - individual numeracy programs targeted 1370 primary students, with 387 students achieving the exit numeracy goals for the *QuickSmart Numeracy* individual student intervention program in the first six months of 2011.

In the government sector, 522 schools from the National Partnership on Low Socio-economic Status School Communities (Low SES NP) and *Reform Extension Initiative* are currently implementing 646 literacy and numeracy interventions including programs such as *Reading to Learn*, *Accelerated Literacy*, *QuickSmart*, *Taking Off With Numeracy*, MULTILIT and *Focus on Reading 3-6*.

Catholic schools in the Low SES NP are also undertaking a range of literacy and numeracy intervention programs such as *First Steps In Writing*, *Reading Recovery*, MULTILIT, *QuickSmart*, *Sounds Write*, *Focus on Reading 3-6* and *Extended Mathematical Understanding*.

In the independent sector, 18 schools participating in the Low SES NP are accessing literacy and/or numeracy programs, such as MULTILIT, *Reading to Learn*, *Accelerated Literacy*, *QuickSmart*, *Learning in Early Numeracy* and *Learning in Numeracy*.

NSW priority target - More students finish high school

Increasing school attendance is a fundamental prerequisite to lifting students' levels of attainment, engagement and improving rates of retention to the end of high school or its equivalent.

Initial data provided in the NSW 2010 Smarter Schools National Partnerships Annual Report previously indicated a small increase in average student attendance in schools participating in the Low SES NP in 2009 and 2010. It must be noted that many of the National Partnership initiatives are still at a relatively early stage and that expectations that school attendance should significantly and immediately rise are not appropriate at this stage of reporting.

Schools are however seeking to continue the rising trend by providing relevant and engaging programs that meet the needs of young people who might otherwise have left school.

Underpinning the effects on student engagement and attendance are initiatives (detailed in later sections of this report) which improve the availability of high quality teaching, particularly in our most challenging schools. Of particular note here are initiatives to attract excellent teachers for our students through a range of teacher education scholarships, support for quality teachers across the sectors, and improved professional development for school leaders and teachers.

Literacy and numeracy programs detailed in the Literacy and Numeracy and Low SES National Partnership chapters are also expected to have a significant impact, as they target those students most in need of skills and support within schools as well as successfully engaging the wider community in all aspects of schooling.

Other initiatives to improve student attendance include:

- schools participating in the Low SES NP are implementing pastoral care and mentoring programs to reinforce expectations to students about engagement, behaviour and attendance. For example, a number of Catholic schools have established a designated attendance officer to follow up with parents about student absences
- the involvement of parents, carers and the Aboriginal community has been central in providing consistent messages to young people about the importance and value of attending school and achieving higher levels of education. To reinforce this, Aboriginal Elders and community members provided classroom support in 108 Low SES NP government schools in 2011, with some Catholic schools providing mentoring to Aboriginal students with significant patterns of non attendance and behaviour issues
- parents and carers' involvement in developing and monitoring Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) also made a positive contribution to attendance rates
- government schools are implementing transition programs from preschool to kindergarten and from Year 6 to Year 7 as well as utilising explicit attendance reward programs and programs such as Positive Behaviour for Learning
- three independent schools catering to students who have disengaged from mainstream schooling are providing either breakfast or lunch for students, resulting in an increase in attendance rates as well as students engaging more positively in learning activities
- independent schools are helping to establish a routine of attendance through acknowledging student achievements, with programs such as "student of the week" and providing rewards such as vouchers or canteen credits as a first step.

NSW priority target - High expectations for all students

As a priority for all NSW schools, the NSW State Plan notes our continued high expectations for those students most challenged by their personal circumstances, including low socio-economic status, disability and locations in rural and regional areas, by providing systemic and locally tailored support.

The strength of the Low SES NP is in the flexible range of initiatives that can be undertaken to directly address areas of need identified through analyses of whole school circumstances including rigorous student outcomes data. This NP enables schools to have realistic and high expectations for all students in participating schools through initiatives that have focused on areas including professional development for teachers, the needs of individual learners and effective partnerships with local communities and universities.

While initiatives specifically focused on supporting Aboriginal students are summarised separately below, highlights relating to the whole target group of low SES school communities (detailed further in the three later Partnership-specific sections) include:

- professional learning for teachers in the areas of English as a Second Language, literacy and numeracy
- extensive leadership development programs
- innovative strategies to support recruitment in schools that are remote or difficult to staff
- use of Individual Learning Plans and establishment of homework centres
- assistance for refugee students including alternative timetabled curriculum, support for Arabic-speaking mothers to engage in their daughters' education in Australia and additional academic mentoring
- student wellbeing initiatives
- extensive collaboration with local communities and universities to improve the quality of teaching
- parent education classes and parent drop-in centres.

Closing the gap for Aboriginal students

The imperative to close the gap in educational attainment for Aboriginal students also underpins activity across the three Smarter Schools National Partnerships which together contribute to two of the six *Closing the Gap* targets to:

- halve the gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in reading, writing and numeracy by 2018
- halve the gap for Indigenous students in Year 12 (or equivalent) attainment rates by 2020.

The Literacy and Numeracy NP is a significant contributor to these goals. Relevant highlights from this Partnership include:

- 14.6% of 2010 NSW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary school students¹ were enrolled in the 147 schools participating in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy in the first six months of 2011
- NAPLAN results of students attending these schools show an increase in the percentage of Aboriginal students at or above the national minimum standard from 74.9% in 2008 to 79.7% in 2010 in the 'focus domain' selected by the school (either literacy or numeracy). The 2010 result is well in excess of New South Wales' performance target of 76.2%
- a comparison of schools' results in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy Assessments in 2009 prior to commencement and the third assessment in August 2010 which occurred sixteen months later showed that the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in numeracy achievement had decreased in schools that chose to focus on numeracy
- the fourth and final round of assessments for the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy schools was conducted during August 2011. Results of the fourth round will be reported in New South Wales' COAG Reform Council Performance Report in November 2011.

The Improving Teacher Quality NP also supported significant initiatives in this area, including:

- a total of 104 teacher education scholarships awarded in the government sector to Aboriginal teacher education students and those intending to teach in schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments
- 14 designated Aboriginal school and administrative support staff positions filled in government schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments from January to June 2011
- courses for executive, principals and other staff to enhance the learning outcomes of Aboriginal students across all sectors
- provision of literacy training in disadvantaged communities
- promotion of the University of NSW's Year 7 science and engineering program and its winter school to Aboriginal students, supported by the Independent Schools Centre for Excellence
- cultural awareness training for staff and secondments to areas of high Aboriginal enrolments.

¹ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school student enrolment data is collected annually and will next become available in December 2011.

Within the Low SES School Communities Partnership, 32.8% of the 2010² NSW Aboriginal and Torres Strait school student population were enrolled in schools participating in the Partnership in the first six months of 2011.³ Initiatives related to closing the gap for Aboriginal students have included:

- engagement with parents and carers, and explicit plans to engage the Aboriginal community in effective partnerships
- tailored support provided through Personalised Learning Plans and literacy and numeracy interventions, as well as homework centres which have been particularly effective in small and isolated schools
- innovative initiatives to address local student needs, for example the implementation of the *Paakantji Language and Cultural Program* by the Wilcannia Forbes Diocese, using local Aboriginal culture as a bridge to learning through the teaching of Paakantji language, field trips and the use of learning materials tailored to the local area
- teacher professional development and additional staff resources, including school learning support officers and community engagement officers.

NSW priority target - Improving teacher quality

While significant achievements in relation to closing the gap for Aboriginal students are noted separately above and in the later more detailed chapters on each of the National Partnerships, other highlights relevant to this State priority for the first half of 2011 include:

Highly Accomplished Teachers and equivalents⁴

Highly Accomplished Teachers (HAT) positions (and equivalents for the independent and Catholic sectors) recognise and reward high performing teachers. In addition to the 106 HATs or equivalents employed in 2009 and 2010, 120 new HATs and equivalents were employed in New South Wales in the first six months of 2011, including:

- 82 HATs in government schools within Centres for Excellence, schools participating in the Low SES NP and the *Reform Extension Initiative*
- 38 teachers fully accredited at Professional Accomplishment level in the independent sector.

² Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school student enrolment data is collected annually and will next become available in December 2011.

³ Please note that these figures do not include schools participating in the two year Low Socio-Economic School Communities NP Reform Extension Initiative.

⁴ Highly Accomplished Teachers and equivalents are employed on a temporary basis, reflecting the fixed term of the Smarter Schools National Partnership funding. Appointments of HATs should not be interpreted as the number currently active in schools, which may vary due to staff mobility and the temporary nature of employment conditions.

Centres for Excellence

Across the three sectors, 47 Centres for Excellence are currently operational. They include:

- 35 Centres for Excellence in government schools
- 11 Catholic Centres for Excellence
- the Independent Schools Centre for Excellence, based within the Association of Independent Schools of NSW. (AIS).

In the government sector, strategies to support the transition from the Improving Teacher Quality NP of the first tranche of Centres for Excellence (which are scheduled to conclude at the end of 2011) are being developed to enhance sustainability where possible.

Centres for Excellence are engaging with university partners through a range of initiatives to improve teacher quality through enhanced professional experience placements, reciprocal professional learning and knowledge sharing. Universities are also supporting teachers to build their capacity to supervise and mentor teacher education students.

Teachers from Centres for Excellence are also providing valuable contributions to university pre-service teacher training courses, as well as working closely with partner universities to develop new ways of selecting and placing internship students, trialling merit selection processes to increase the focus on quality teaching for both students and supervising teachers.

Council for Deans of Education

The NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) and the Council for Deans of Education have formed a working group to ensure a shared understanding of issues arising in the school and tertiary sectors, particularly with regard to the Commonwealth reform agenda.

Teacher education standards

NSW was pivotal in the development of the reform through the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs, endorsing the document *Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedure*.

The NSW DEC and the AIS will participate in trialling the use of the new *National Professional Standards for Teachers*.

New South Wales continues to support voluntary teacher accreditation at Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership levels through the NSW Institute of Teachers (NSWIT). To date, 226 teachers have been appointed as HATs⁵, Quality Teachers or were recognised at Professional Accomplishment level across the three National Partnerships.

National standards, professional development and support for principals

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership worked in partnership with nine organisations including the DEC, to undertake ten pilot studies to test the *National Professional Standard for Principals* nationally from February to May 2011.

⁵ *Highly Accomplished Teachers and equivalents are employed on a temporary basis, reflecting the fixed term of the Smarter Schools National Partnership funding. Appointments of HATs should not be interpreted as the number currently active in schools, which may vary due to staff mobility and the temporary nature of employment conditions.*

The NSW DEC offered an extensive range of leadership programs in the first six months of 2011 (detailed in the following sections), while Catholic dioceses provided professional development and support for school principals, such as attendance at DEC programs, the *Leaders Transforming Learning and Learners* project with the Australian Catholic University, a two day *Principals' Master Class* event, *Newly Appointed Leaders Program* and the three day *FranklinCovey* leadership course.

In 2011, the independent sector conducted a *Leadership Course for Newly Appointed Principals* that was attended by 16 principals. Of these, 10 were from regional schools and many were from smaller schools serving disadvantaged communities. The sector also offered ongoing professional learning through its *Masterclass* series covering topics such as schools and the law, communicating for change and assessment and student achievement.

Improved performance management and continuous improvement in schools

All sectors continue to use performance management systems to support teacher quality, through teacher professional learning and by reflection on an individual's performance and progress towards achieving organisational goals.

Pathways into teaching

The DEEWR employment-based teacher education program *Teach Next* will complement the Improving Teacher Quality NP reforms to create new and better pathways into teaching.

The total number of teacher education scholarships offered in NSW during the first six months of 2011 was 487, including 300 in government schools. Details of these scholarships appear in the later section on the Improving Teacher Quality NP.

In the Catholic sector, many dioceses offered scholarships to students to enter or continue in the *Step Up Into Teaching* program, with teacher education scholarships also offered by a number of independent schools in 2011.

Teacher education internships will be undertaken in NSW in 2011 through the National Partnership in Semester 2, 2011, as part of the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership's strategies to enhance initial teacher education and raise the quality of teaching.

Improved quality and availability of teacher workforce data

The NSW DEC is represented on the National Teaching Workforce Dataset project working group, providing a robust, responsive system for the classification, collection, storage, analysis and reporting of national and jurisdictional teacher workforce data.

The NSW DEC professional learning record management system (My PL@DET) is an online enrolment system which maps and reports on the provision of professional learning programs, enrolment and participation, provides a *My Professional Learning Diary* function and has the capacity to monitor achievement of the NSWIT's *National Professional Standards for Teachers* across the Department.

Quality placements

An enhanced professional experience trial will be implemented in Semester 2, 2011 in a small number of government schools with significant Aboriginal enrolments, while in the Catholic sector some dioceses have introduced a quality mentor program for undergraduates, with some schools also providing mentoring over extended periods of up to 18 months, linked to Centres of Excellence. The independent sector continues to collaborate with universities to increase the number of professional experience opportunities in independent schools.

NSW priority target - Options for local decision-making

Flexible school organisational practices

Sustainability strategies are being explored for the 47 government schools undertaking the *Increased School-based Decision Making* pilot under the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality, with the NSW Minister for Education having committed to provide greater control over school decision-making to government school principals, teachers and school communities, following a process of consultation.

Over 300 variations to normal staffing arrangements were implemented by schools participating in the pilot in 2010.

In the Low SES NP, schools are implementing flexible school organisational practices, such as the use of new technologies, student support programs and employing additional staff to support innovative and flexible approaches to teaching and learning. Government schools in this Partnership indicated that they were implementing flexible or innovative school operational arrangements in 204 school plans.

School plans and situational analyses

New South Wales is committed to improving the accountability of schools, to better meet local needs and improve student learning. All schools participating in the Low SES or Literacy and Numeracy NPs undertake a rigorous situational analysis or environmental scan in preparation for their participation the Partnership. This data explicitly informs local school planning and target setting and plans are revised and made publicly available as part of existing school planning cycles. In 2011, government schools continue to implement strategies based on the findings of their school based evaluations and planning.

Use of data

Student performance data provides the foundation for schools' situational analyses and regular reviews of progress. To support this, teachers have received extensive professional development in the analysis of student data. In the Literacy and Numeracy NP, the online *Data Analysis Skills Assessment* tool has helped teachers identify where professional development could best be targeted to support continuous improvement.

More than 1100 teachers in the Literacy and Numeracy NP have accessed the e-learning module SMART2 to improve their data analysis capabilities during the reporting period. Teachers from schools across all sectors participating in the Low SES NP are undertaking training in data analysis training.

Evaluation provides a review of progress to date and informs future policy direction

While we are proud to report our progress and achievements to date, our commitment to relying on robust evidence to gauge impact and effectiveness and to inform future educational policy decisions for this State is evidenced by the commissioning of five state-wide strategic evaluation projects.

The focus for all five projects, guided by the NSW National Partnerships Evaluation Committee, is to examine how the reforms have improved student outcomes across all three school education sectors – government, Catholic and independent. Evaluators are examining how the reforms have been implemented, how they have interacted with the broader educational context in NSW, and to what extent we have achieved cost-effectiveness for improved student outcomes through the reforms.

Three new projects commenced in 2011:

- the impact of professional experience reform measures – undertaken by the University of New England, with the final report due June 2014 (Improving Teacher Quality NP)
- school external partnerships – undertaken by the University of Canberra, with the final report due May 2016 (Low SES NP)
- school staffing, management and accountability initiatives – led by the University of Melbourne, with the final report due November 2014 (Low SES NP)

Two other state-level evaluations commenced in 2010 and are continuing in 2011:

- the impact of the Quality Teacher, paraprofessional and Centre for Excellence initiatives – undertaken by PricewaterhouseCoopers, with the final report due June 2014 (Improving Teacher Quality NP)
- the take-up and sustainability of new literacy and numeracy practices in NSW schools – undertaken by Erebus International, with the final report due April 2012. (Literacy and Numeracy NP)

In addition, eight literacy and numeracy interventions in the government and Catholic sectors are being evaluated at a program level. Programs that have been internally developed plus the MULTILIT program will be evaluated externally.

An independent public review of the *Increased School Based Decision Making Pilot* has also been commissioned to inform policy development concerning local school-based decision-making. The pilot is being undertaken by 47 government schools.

Further details of the evaluations are provided in the 'Significant Achievements' section of the respective National Partnership chapters of this report.

Section 2 – Improving Teacher Quality

Significant Achievements / Activities / Highlights – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011

Overview

During the first half of 2011, New South Wales made substantial progress in implementing all 18 reforms of the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality.

A total of 47 Centres for Excellence are now operating across NSW. In the government sector, strategies to support the transition of the first tranche of Centres for Excellence (which are scheduled to conclude at the end of 2011) and for the 47 schools involved in the pilot of *Increased School-based Decision Making* (also scheduled to conclude by the end of 2011) are being developed. The focus of the transition strategy is on maintaining the sustainability of successful initiatives.

Bonus incentive payments were made to 12 principals of government school Centres for Excellence for the 2010 school year. Thirty five principals will be considered for the bonus payment for the 2011 school year.

The total number of teacher education scholarships provided in NSW during the first six months of 2011 was 487, including 300 in government schools, of which:

- 86 were awarded to Aboriginal teacher education students
- 107 were targeted scholarships in the areas of maths and science
- 18 scholarships were awarded in 2010 to teacher education students intending to teach in government schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments under the *Enhanced Teacher Training Program*, leading to appointments to schools in the first six months of 2011
- 19 additional scholarships under the *Enhanced Teacher Training Program* were offered in the first six months of 2011 leading to employment in government schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments in 2012.

The NSW DEC has formed a joint working group with members of the NSW Council of the Deans for Education, which aims to air and resolve concerns relating to the Teacher Quality National Partnership, and other strategic issues relating to higher education. The working group has convened twice to date and has scheduled further meetings on a six-weekly basis.

A new strategic evaluation on the quality of the practicum experience has been commissioned. The evaluation will undertake cross-sectoral analysis and will focus on the impact of professional experience reform measures provided through Centres for Excellence.

Key achievements

Initiative	Achievement to June 2011
Centres for Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 47 Centres for Excellence operational across NSW • 450+ spoke schools supported
Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) and equivalents across the Teacher Quality, Low SES NPs and Low SES <i>Reform Extension Initiative</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 107 HATs appointed to government schools (72 of which were recruited through the Low SES NP or the two year Low SES <i>Reform Extension Initiative</i>) • 38 teachers fully accredited at Professional Accomplishment level in the independent sector • 81 full or part time Quality Teachers appointed in the Catholic sector
Flexible staffing arrangements under the <i>Increased School Based Decision Making Pilot</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 300 variations to normal staffing arrangements implemented in 2010
Incentive payments to principals of 2010 Centres for Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bonus incentive payments were made to 12 government school principals for the 2010 school year. • Thirty five government school principals will be considered for the bonus payment for the 2011 school year. • In the Catholic sector, bonus payments were made during the first six months of 2011 where appropriate
Teacher education scholarships offered in schools in NSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 487 scholarships offered during the first six months of 2011
NSW schools participating in Aboriginal community engagement programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 420 NSW schools participated in Aboriginal community engagement during 2010.

NSW evaluation activity

Two state-level evaluation projects have been commissioned for the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality:

Evaluation of the impact of professional experience reform measures

This project is contracted to the University of New England and will focus on the extent to which professional experience initiatives implemented through Centres for Excellence have resulted in:

- higher quality teaching graduates
- teaching graduates better prepared to teach in challenging schools and
- improved retention of new teaching graduates (especially in challenging schools).

Work started in March 2011. The final report is due in June 2014.

Evaluation of the impact of the Quality Teacher, paraprofessional and Centre for Excellence initiatives

This project has been contracted to PricewaterhouseCoopers and will evaluate the impact, cost-effectiveness and sustainability of three initiatives:

- improved pay dispersion to reward HATs
- improved in-school support for paraprofessionals and
- excellence in school-based education and capacity building of teachers through the Centres for Excellence initiative.

Work started in August 2011. The final report is due in June 2014 and an additional sustainability report is due in August 2016.

Independent public review of the Increased School Based Decision Making Pilot

In addition, an independent public review of the *Increased School Based Decision Making Pilot* has been commissioned to inform policy development concerning local school-based decision-making. The pilot is being undertaken by 47 government schools.

Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011

Government schools participating in the *Increased School Based Decision Making Pilot* or as Centres for Excellence hub schools in the first six months of 2011 catered to 6.26 % of the 2010 government Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school student enrolments⁶ in NSW.

This represents:

- around 683 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students in metropolitan areas
- around 1861 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students in regional and rural areas
- around 141 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students in remote areas.

Although the number of Aboriginal students enrolled in the 82 government schools undertaking the above initiatives is not large, the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality is a long term strategy with eventual flow-on effects across all schools. Initiatives within the Partnership also underpin reforms within the National Partnerships on Literacy and Numeracy and Low SES School Communities in New South Wales.

As a result, improvements to teacher quality achieved within schools participating in the Smarter Schools National Partnerships are expected to affect a large proportion of Aboriginal students across NSW.

Strategies to attract Aboriginal people into the teaching profession

NSW employs strategies to support Aboriginal students and improve their outcomes by attracting Aboriginal people to the teaching profession, administrative and support roles and paraprofessional positions, and by offering opportunities for pre-service teacher education students to undertake internships and extended practicum placements in schools with significant Aboriginal populations

In the government sector, 90 teacher education scholarships were offered to Aboriginal teacher education students for the 2011 program, with 86 scholarships accepted. The increased number of scholarships on offer was a result of a high number of quality applications received.

In the Diocese of Parramatta an additional Aboriginal education worker, who is currently enrolled in a Bachelor of Education, has been provided with paid leave to attend university and participate in their practicum.

In the independent sector, the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality is supporting a program linking Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teacher education students with local Aboriginal primary school students for literacy intervention. The program will involve the teacher education students training in MULTILIT and implementing it at the school level. The sector also plans to provide financial and educational support to enable Aboriginal education workers to gain Certificate III qualifications in Education Support Services.

⁶ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school student enrolment data is collected annually and will next become available in December 2011.

Teacher professional development to respond to Aboriginal students' needs

To date, 1,489 teachers, executive, principals and other staff from government schools have undertaken 38 training courses that support the learning outcomes of Aboriginal students. Specific examples include:

- *Implementing Personalised Learning Plans for Aboriginal Students*
- *Building Cultural Competencies in Aboriginal Cultures*
- *Embedding Aboriginal Perspectives - Years 5-9*
- *Gaining a Better Understanding of our Local Aboriginal Culture*
- *Integrating ICT through Aboriginal Culture K-12*
- *Interactive Whiteboards in the Aboriginal Languages Classroom*
- *Articulating Aboriginal Cultural Immersion into Teaching and Learning*
- *The Aboriginal Education Consultative Group's three-day program of locally delivered cultural immersion*
- *Aboriginal Pedagogy Course*
- *Aboriginal Communication Course*
- *Effective English as a Second Language Pedagogies for Aboriginal Students*
- *'On Country'- Pedagogy, Practice and Policy*

The Independent Schools Centre for Excellence (ISCE) has targeted three schools with significant Aboriginal enrolments and provided additional support for teachers to meet Aboriginal students' needs. The teachers have each been provided with five days of on-site mentoring to develop their teaching strategies at Kindergarten level and in English and Aboriginal Studies. One school with high Aboriginal enrolments has purchased resources to encourage teenage Aboriginal students who may be reluctant readers. The ISCE is also planning to conduct an Aboriginal education conference in 2012.

Professional learning opportunities and cultural awareness/immersion programs have been offered for teachers in two independent schools working with Aboriginal communities. In both of these programs, Aboriginal Elders and leaders share their knowledge with non-Aboriginal teachers and current teachers of Aboriginal students share strategies with other teachers to assist them to respond to Aboriginal students' needs in their own schools.

Two independent schools are conducting more intensive Aboriginal cultural immersion programs to better understand Aboriginal culture, involving teachers living in remote communities from two weeks to secondments lasting a whole semester.

Aboriginal community engagement

The number of NSW schools participating in Aboriginal community engagement programs increased from 102 schools in 2009 to 420 schools in 2010, consisting of:

- 270 government schools, including a significant proportion of government schools participating in the Low SES NP
- 96 Catholic schools, including five schools participating in the Low SES NP
- 54 independent schools, including two schools participating in the Low SES NP.

Aboriginal Elders and community members also provided classroom support in 108 government schools participating in the National Partnership on Low Socio-economic Status School Communities in 2011.

Progress against ITQ NP Facilitation Reforms – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011

Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership reforms underpin the delivery of all three Smarter Schools National Partnerships and are reflected in reforms and performance targets included in the NSW Literacy and Numeracy and Low SES School Communities NP implementation plans.

National professional teaching standards

The *National Professional Standards for Teachers* were formally approved by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) in December 2010 and released on 9 February 2011.

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) is funding a series of pilot studies that will trial the use of the standards in existing contexts.

The NSW Institute of Teachers will investigate the integration of the national professional teaching standards with accreditation processes requiring NSW teachers' engagement in professional learning. The professional learning assists teachers to maintain their practice at the standards for Proficiency, so that they can continue to be registered (or accredited) to teach. Project activity will include mapping Institute registered professional development against the new *National Professional Standards for Teachers*.

The NSW Department of Education and Communities will participate in trialling the standards during Semester 2, 2011. The pilot project will investigate how professional learning aligns to the standards and also what strategies are required to develop teacher leadership capacity.

The Association of Independent Schools of NSW (AIS) will also partner with AITSL in trialling the use of the *National Professional Standards for Teachers* in a teacher appraisal process. The AIS is also conducting a project that involves filming teachers demonstrating the standards in the classroom.

National certification of Accomplished and Lead Teachers

Currently, New South Wales has an accreditation process for the equivalent levels to Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher.

By 30 June 2011, 895 teachers had submitted preliminary assessment applications for accreditation at levels above Professional Competence with the NSW Institute of Teachers (NSWIT).

A total of 38 independent school teachers have been awarded accreditation at Professional Accomplishment (Highly Accomplished level).

A number of teachers had also commenced full accreditation submissions by 30 June 2011, including:

- 136 government school teachers
- 15 Catholic school teachers
- 35 independent school teachers.

AITSL will take a proposal for national certification of Accomplished and Lead teachers to MCEECDYA in October 2011. NSW will transfer to a national process when AITSL principles for a common approach to certification have been agreed and adequate resources, evidence guides and procedures are developed by AITSL to support the standards.

In the meantime, New South Wales continues to support voluntary teacher accreditation at Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership levels through the NSW Institute of Teachers.

226 teachers have been employed as Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs), Quality Teachers or were recognised at Professional Accomplishment level across the three National Partnerships.

In 2009, 11⁷ Highly Accomplished Teacher equivalent staff were employed in NSW schools, including:

- two HAT sector equivalents (Quality Teacher positions) linked to Catholic Centres for Excellence
- nine Quality Teachers in other Catholic schools.⁸

In 2010, 95 new Highly Accomplished Teachers or equivalents were employed* in 2010:

- 13 HATs in government school Centres for Excellence
- two full-time HATs in government schools participating in the National Partnership on Low Socio-economic Status School Communities
- 10 full-time HATs in government schools participating in the Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities *Reform Extension Initiative*
- nine Quality Teachers linked to Catholic Centres for Excellence
- two part-time Quality Teachers in Catholic schools participating in the National Partnership on Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities
- 59 full and part-time Quality Teachers in other Catholic schools.

⁷ NSW's 2009 Smarter Schools National Partnerships Annual Report (April 2010) indicated planning was also underway in 2009 to employ 13 Highly Accomplished Teachers in government school Centres for Excellence. This eventuated in 2010.

⁸ NSW's 2010 Smarter Schools National Partnerships Annual Report (April 2011) indicated that 12 teachers in independent schools gained conditional accreditation at Classroom Professional Excellence. This figure was superseded by the same teachers achieving Professional Accomplishment in 2011.

In addition to the 106 Highly Accomplished Teachers or equivalents employed⁹ in 2009 and 2010, 120 new HATs and equivalents were employed in New South Wales in the first six months of 2011:

- 22 HATs in government school Centres for Excellence
- 14 full-time HATs in government schools participating in the National Partnership on Low Socio-economic Status School Communities
- 46 full-time HATs in government schools participating in the Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities Reform Extension Initiative
- 38 teachers fully accredited at Professional Accomplishment level in the independent sector.

HATs are required to complete a personal submission for accreditation at either Professional Accomplishment or Professional Leadership level with the NSWIT by the end of their two year appointment. They are also charged with supporting colleagues to better understand and seek higher levels of accreditation with the NSWIT as a part of their role in promoting quality teaching.

The government school sector held an induction program for 2011 HATs (including those from Low SES NP and *Reform Extension Initiative* schools) on 7 March 2011. The program included professional learning activities about the NSWIT higher level accreditation; the use of data analysis to inform teaching practice; and the development of effective relationships in a hub and spoke model.

The NSW Catholic sector has appointed personnel to higher level positions to support improved pedagogy in the classroom. These positions (equivalent to Highly Accomplished Teachers) are known by various titles depending on their diocese of appointment.

In addition to the 38 already accredited, a number of teachers in the independent sector are working towards achieving accreditation at Professional Accomplishment level this year, including six teachers in regional schools.

The independent sector also made an additional teacher accreditation grant available to schools, with 33 teachers completing courses to assist them to prepare for higher levels of accreditation with the NSWIT and the Independent Schools Teacher Accreditation Authority, and 12 teachers completing training to support New Scheme Teachers.

The independent sector also conducted a mentoring course/ induction program for mentors on 28 April 2011. Thirty mentors are working with teachers in regional, remote and hard to staff schools to improve teacher quality. A number of the mentors are already accredited at Professional Accomplishment or are working toward it.

Courses are currently provided for independent school teachers seeking accreditation at the higher levels of Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership, together with courses to assist schools to support teachers through the accreditation process at all levels. Future initiatives will be tailored to support the implementation of national standards.

⁹ *Highly Accomplished Teachers and equivalents are employed on a temporary basis, reflecting the fixed term of the Smarter Schools National Partnership funding. Appointments of HATs should not be interpreted as the number currently active in schools, which may vary due to staff mobility and the temporary nature of employment conditions.*

Nationally consistent registration of teachers (improved mobility of teaching workforce)

There has been progress on this agenda over the past few months. The two groups with responsibility for this policy, the *Nationally Consistent Registration of Teachers Working Group* and the *Nationally Consistent Registration of Teachers Policy Framework Group* have come to broad agreement about nationally consistent elements and components of teacher registration.

The agreed registration components include detail on the transition from provisional to full registration and the requirements for renewal of registration. In both cases, the groups have recommended that all registration decisions including renewal of registration should be based on the *National Professional Standards for Teachers* at the Proficient Level.

For all teachers entering the New South Wales workforce, proposed requirements for a national framework have already been adopted in the two substantial areas which are at the heart of this reform.

Transition from provisional to full registration

NSW uses a school-based decision process, with teachers providing multiple sources of evidence against teaching standards. Teachers are given a maximum period for meeting the standards at Competence (equivalent to Proficient level) which meets the proposed national requirements. To be eligible for full accreditation (registration), NSW teachers are also required to meet the qualifications and the English language proficiency requirements.

Renewal of registration

NSW teachers gain full registration for a defined period of time and must continue to demonstrate proficiency against the teaching standards and undertake 100 hours of professional development activities to have their accreditation (registration) renewed.

The *Australian Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs Senior Officials Committee* will consider the recommended national consistency framework at its next meeting.

Joint engagement with higher education providers to improve teacher quality

National consistency in accreditation of pre-service teacher education courses

MCEECDYA has agreed to establish national accreditation of initial teacher education programs to spell out the knowledge, skills and attributes expected of graduates of nationally accredited programs. MCEECDYA endorsed the document *Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* on 15 April 2011.

The standards describe the key features expected of high quality initial teacher education. They set out entry criteria and conditions, program structure and content, as well as expected graduate outcomes. The procedures set out a nationally consistent process for the accreditation of programs, including panel establishment and composition, assessment by these panels and the reporting of accreditation decisions.

The *Standards and Procedures* were developed through extensive national work, drawing on the expert knowledge of a number of key stakeholders and universities involved in initial teacher education. NSW was heavily involved in the development of this reform.

University partnerships

Centres for Excellence are engaging with university partners through a range of initiatives to improve teacher quality through enhanced professional experience placements, reciprocal professional learning and knowledge sharing. Universities are supporting teachers to build their capacity to supervise and mentor teacher education students through the provision of mentoring modules.

Teachers from Centres for Excellence are also providing valuable contributions to university pre-service teacher training courses, providing guest lectures and demonstration lessons. Centres for Excellence are working closely with partner universities to develop new ways of selecting and placing internship students, trialing merit selection processes to increase the focus on quality teaching for both students and supervising teachers.

A complete list of university partnerships with Centres for Excellence is provided at Appendix A.

A number of Catholic dioceses have established partnerships with universities to improve teacher quality. For example:

- development of a *Birth to 12* education program by the Parramatta Diocese Centre for Excellence and Notre Dame University
- provision of pre-service teachers with professional learning opportunities in literacy with a focus on spelling by the Diocese of Wollongong and the University of Wollongong
- Broken Bay Diocese has established a strategic partnership with the University of Auckland to mentor new principals, based on Viviane Robinson's *Leadership Dimensions*
- development the *Extended Mathematical Understanding* program by Broken Bay Diocese with the Australian Catholic University (ACU) and
- school staff from the Lismore Diocese have provided fourth year students from Southern Cross University with instruction on successful classroom behaviour management.

Seven smaller independent regional schools, serving disadvantaged communities are working together with Southern Cross University to lift literacy standards across their schools and implement a quality teaching framework in their sector.

The NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) and the Council for Deans of Education have formed a working group to ensure a shared understanding of issues arising in the school and tertiary sectors, particularly with regard to the Commonwealth reform agenda.

The Working Group will be a forum to explore opportunities to ameliorate or resolve issues, including challenges and issues arising from the Commonwealth initiatives, such as the role of the AITSL, government election commitments, the national curriculum, National Partnerships and other expectations contained in the National Education Agreement.

The working group has convened twice to date and has scheduled further meetings on a six-weekly basis.

Professional development and support for principals

National professional standard for principals

AITSL worked in partnership with nine organisations including the DEC, to undertake ten pilot studies to test the exposure draft of the *National Professional Standard for Principals* nationally from February to May 2011. Each pilot study had a specific focus, with the aim of collectively:

- testing the authenticity, usefulness and value-add of the exposure draft of the Standard for the intended purposes, with different audiences and in varying contexts
- contributing to establishing a sense of ownership and national consensus about the Standard.

Australia's National Professional Standard for Principals was endorsed by Ministers at the Standing Council of Education and Early Childhood on 8 July 2011.

Professional development and support for principals

The NSW DEC offers an extensive range of leadership programs based on *Leading and Managing the School*, the NSW DEC *School Leadership Capability Framework*, the *National Professional Standard for Principals* and the NSW Institute of Teachers' *National Professional Standards for Teachers*

In 2011, the DEC has conducted 88 courses involving 4,507 school principals that supported their professional learning aligned to key accountabilities.

In 2011, the DEC conducted two principal induction programs for newly appointed principals from both rural and metropolitan areas. The principal induction program is focused on the key accountabilities and increases their knowledge of leading educational change to enhance student learning outcomes. This is followed by local personalised support using a comprehensive suite of online and blended courses such as *Implementing the Executive Assessment and Review Schedule in Your School*.

The DEC online [Leadership toolkits](#) comprise a range of resources and a program designed to assist school leaders and have been developed to be accessed at time of need. Each toolkit supplies a range of tools or strategies that can be employed to deal with a role, decision or task related to that topic. Toolkits contain a variety of resources such as: information, readings, research articles, charts, tables, illustrations, audio, links to web resources and self reflective activities.

The *Principal Capabilities* program is a series of scenario based activities designed for use by small teams of principals at a regional level and focuses upon improving understanding of the *NSW DEC School Leadership Capability Framework*.

The *Professional Mentoring and Coaching for Success* programs have been developed for senior leaders who have extensive experience in mentoring. The program combines theory and extensive practice. Participants develop coaching skills to support colleagues and school leaders aspiring to be principals.

Catholic dioceses provide a range of professional development and support for school principals, such as:

- Four Catholic dioceses attending the NSW DEC *Team Leadership and School Improvement Program*, including some more isolated Catholic dioceses
- The *Leaders Transforming Learning and Learners* project with the Australian Catholic University, which offers opportunities for Catholic Education staff, the ACU and participating schools to share leadership strategies
- on-going professional learning for principals through a two day *Principals' Master Class* event which allows principals to learn from leading principals from both inside and outside the Parramatta Diocese.
- The Parramatta Diocese's *Newly Appointed Leaders Program* supports principals and other members of school leadership teams to implement the system leadership framework
- Mentoring new principals; training experienced principals in coaching, mentoring and working one on one; and other professional development provided by the University of Auckland in the Diocese of Broken Bay
- A three day *FranklinCovey* leadership course attended by 20 principals in the Lismore Diocese in Term 2.

In 2011, the independent sector conducted a *Leadership Course for Newly Appointed Principals* that was attended by 16 principals. Of these, 10 were from regional schools and many were from smaller schools serving disadvantaged communities.

All participants receive coaching from experienced principals who are graduates of the specialist coaching training offered through the Independent Schools Leadership Centre (ISLC) which supports the Independent Schools Centre for Excellence. A total of 29 participants have now graduated from the program, building capacity across the independent sector that will extend beyond the period of NP funding.

Principals in more remote locations have been subsidised to attend leadership programs, including funding for travel.

Further on-going professional learning for principals was offered through the ISLC *Masterclass* series covering topics such as: schools and the law, communicating for change and assessment and student achievement.

Sixteen school executives undertook the *Preparing for Principals* course this year and have had the opportunity to shadow an experienced principal as part of their leadership course. Additional leadership development programs have been offered for 26 middle leaders and 29 senior school executives who have completed courses in 2011.

Improved performance management and continuous improvement in schools

All sectors continue to use performance management systems to support teacher quality, through teacher professional learning and by reflection on an individual's performance and progress towards achieving organisational goals.

Continuous improvement

The NSW DEC has developed a range of online professional learning programs that can be accessed by teachers and school leaders that focus on continuous improvement and leading change in schools.

The DEC *Team Leadership for School Improvement K-12* is a professional learning program that focuses on the development, implementation and evaluation of whole school planning for continuous improvement in schools.

This program provides support for school teams through the process of achieving targets associated with their school's priority areas. Through participation in the *Team Leadership for School Improvement K-12* program, participants develop greater leadership capacity for guiding and managing results-focused whole school improvement.

The *Leading Action Research in Schools* program has been developed to support school teams to lead educational change in their schools. The program provides opportunities for teachers and school leaders to examine their current professional practice and make informed decisions regarding change and improvement.

The online *Feedback for Improved Performance Professional Learning* program provides advice and guidance to school leaders about feedback to support professional growth, giving and receiving feedback, using feedback for effective conversations and improved teacher quality.

The DEC is participating in a pilot project with AITSL to trial the *National Professional Standards for Teachers* to further inform the development of teacher quality and teacher leadership in government schools. The pilot project will use a participatory model to develop a sense of ownership of the standards and inform the development of processes to support capable teachers to engage in accreditation at the Accomplished and Lead stages.

The DEC is continuing to review processes to improve teacher performance management.

Professional learning

MyPL @DET indicates that during the January-June 2011 period, the NSW DEC provided the following range of professional learning:

- 4, 272 registered, non-registered and developed professional learning courses and programs on MyPL@DET
- 2, 929 professional learning sessions aligned to the *National Professional Standards for Teachers*
- 1,634 professional learning sessions incorporating the NSW DEC *Quality Teaching Model*.

The *Classroom Teacher* program was developed by the DEC and consists of 27 modules of Institute registered professional learning with each module being 2-5 hours duration. This is an innovative and flexible online professional learning program to support new scheme teachers to maintain accreditation at the key stage of Professional Competence. The *Classroom Teacher* program provides valuable resources for use in teacher induction and supports supervisors, principals and DEC school regions in guiding teacher professional learning programs.

The NSW DEC *Quality Teaching Model* is the underpinning strategy for all professional learning programs with government schools and regions.

The Association of Independent Schools of NSW is piloting a professional review and development process linked to the NSWIT standards and the newly approved *National Professional Standards for Teachers*.

Targeted, subsidised professional learning for teachers has addressed the need for courses on deeper subject content knowledge and quality teaching, delivered by endorsed providers and linked to the NSWIT professional standards.

The independent sector is on target to exceed last year's total of over 1,000 individual teachers involved in professional learning directly related to the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality. Increased uptake of travel grants for teachers in regional and remote schools has enabled them to participate more extensively in professional learning in 2011 than in 2010.

New pathways into teaching

Teacher education scholarships

Teacher education scholarships provide an annual training allowance to support students in full-time teacher education study. Scholarships are provided to students completing their HSC, tertiary students currently enrolled in teacher education courses and those who intend to enrol in teacher training after having already gained a degree or industry qualification in another field.

The total number of teacher education scholarships offered in NSW during the first six months of 2011 was 487, including 300 in government schools, of which:

- 86 were awarded to Aboriginal teacher education students
- 107 were targeted scholarships in the areas of maths and science
- 18 scholarships were awarded in 2010 to teacher education students intending to teach in government schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments under the *Enhanced Teacher Training Program*, leading to appointments to schools in the first six months of 2011
- 19 additional scholarships under the *Enhanced Teacher Training Program* were offered in the first six months of 2011 leading to employment in government schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments in 2012.

In the Catholic sector, many dioceses offered scholarships to students to enter or continue in the Step Up Into Teaching program. Many of these scholarships are for the first year of pre-service teacher education at the ACU and Notre Dame University.

Parramatta Diocese offers four scholarships to first year university students and four additional scholarships to fourth year students at ACU or Notre Dame Universities, with the intention that they will teach in the Diocese on completion of their course.

Teacher education scholarships have been offered by a number of independent schools in 2011.

Internships

Teacher education internships will be undertaken in NSW in 2011 through the National Partnership in Semester 2, 2011. Centres for Excellence are developing and implementing a range of strategies to strengthen the capacity of teacher education students prior to commencing internships, as well as developing the capacity of supervising teachers through targeted professional development in mentoring.

In the government sector, Centres for Excellence in the Hunter Central Coast region have been trialing a system of application and merit selection of intern students from the University of Newcastle. Other Centres for Excellence are utilising online learning systems, such as Moodle to develop ongoing professional learning experiences for internship students. A number of schools are implementing specific professional learning in conjunction with their university partners to strengthen the capacity of supervising teachers to mentor internship students, aligning practice to NSWIT standards.

Strategies to support internships across the Centres for Excellence are being complemented by additional activities, coordinated by the Highly Accomplished Teachers, to build capacity of teacher education students throughout their course of study. For example, shadowing programs, school context visits, “micro teaching” experiences and structured observations of experienced teachers

The Diocese of Lismore has advertised, shortlisted and selected six fourth year students from a number of universities for the *Ready to Teach* (RTT) program. RTT will place these final year students with selected high quality teachers in primary and secondary settings in a three week intensive mentoring block. The pre-service teachers will be paid for the engagement and will be expected to work alongside the class teacher on a daily basis, learning new skills and perfecting their training in a collegial and supportive environment. The mentoring aspect ensures that students always have an experienced teacher working with them in the class.

Wagga Wagga Diocese is working with Charles Sturt University staff to provide internship placements for fourth year students in Term 3, 2011 to provide undergraduate pathways to help staff in isolated and rural schools.

An additional internship for a hard-to staff school has been awarded in 2011, bringing the number of internships offered through the Independent Schools Centre for Excellence to nine. In areas of identified skill shortages, some independent schools have established enhanced, extended internships for promising school students and teacher education students.

Better pathways into teaching

Teach Next

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) employment-based teacher education program *Teach Next* will complement the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership reforms to create new and better pathways into teaching. It is anticipated that *Teach Next* will operate from 2011-12 to 2014-15 and employ 450 participants nationally. The program is targeted for non-teaching graduates seeking to commence a teaching career, through an intensive study and employment-based training program.

The DEC, as a potential employer, has indicated its interest in participating in the program and maintained involvement in initial jurisdictional meetings concerning the *Teach Next* initiative.

Pathways into teaching for Aboriginal staff

NSW continues to support a pathway into teaching for Aboriginal education officers and Aboriginal school administrative and support staff. Special leave, which is a form of paid leave, is available to eligible Aboriginal education officers and Aboriginal school administrative and support staff who are undertaking approved teacher education courses to attend compulsory residential or block attendance requirements; undertake professional experience placements; and attend graduation ceremonies.

In the independent sector, plans are underway to work with Aboriginal education workers in several locations across the state to support them to gain a Certificate III qualification in Education Support Services, providing a pathway into teaching. This follows successful implementation of this strategy in two independent schools which led to Aboriginal education workers subsequently commencing teaching qualifications.

Improved quality and availability of teacher workforce data

The DEC is represented on the National Teaching Workforce Dataset project working group. The National Dataset project aims to improve the quality and availability of teacher workforce data by providing a robust, responsive system for the classification, collection, storage, analysis and reporting of national and jurisdictional teacher workforce data. The Department is supporting the DEEWR through a range of activities with stakeholders and data custodians to develop a greater understanding of the project.

The NSW DEC professional learning record management system (My PL@DET) is an online enrolment system which has been implemented across all regions of NSW. The system:

- maps and reports on the provision of professional learning programs, enrolment and participation. The professional learning record system enables teachers to retain records of their professional learning when they move from one government school to another
- maps all professional learning captured within the system against the NSWIT standards
- provides a *My Professional Learning Diary* function which allows all staff members to manually enter details of any informal professional learning that they undertake
- has the capacity to monitor achievement of the NSWIT *National Professional Standards for Teachers* across the Department and can identify any gaps in the provision to inform future planning. *MyPL@DET* also has the functionality to electronically feed information into the NSWIT's professional learning register. In the January-June 2011 period, there were 29,905 registrations of teachers participating in registered courses.

Indigenous Education Workforce Pathways

NSW employs strategies to support Aboriginal students and improve their outcomes by attracting Aboriginal people to both the teaching profession and paraprofessional positions, and by offering opportunities for pre-service teacher education students to undertake internships and extended practicum placements in schools with significant Aboriginal populations.

In the government sector, teacher education scholarships are offered to Aboriginal students seeking to train as primary or secondary teachers. 86 scholarships were awarded for commencement in the 2011 school year, with applications for the 2012 scholarships opening in April 2011.

14 designated Aboriginal school and administrative support staff positions were filled in government schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments from January to June 2011.

In the Diocese of Parramatta, an additional Aboriginal education worker, who is currently enrolled in a Bachelor of Education, has been provided with paid leave to attend university and participate in their practicum.

In the independent sector, the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality is supporting a program linking Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teacher education students with local Aboriginal primary school students for literacy intervention. The program will involve the teacher education students training in MULTILIT and implementing it at the school level. The sector also plans to provide financial and educational support to enable Aboriginal education workers to gain Certificate III qualifications in Education Support Services.

Quality placements

An enhanced professional experience trial will be implemented in Semester 2, 2011 in a small number of government schools with significant Aboriginal enrolments. Schools participating employ either a Highly Accomplished Teacher or a teacher mentor.

The trial will provide targeted mentoring, professional learning and financial support for teacher education students to travel to regional or remote locations; additional resourcing for the school including support to connect with local Aboriginal communities; and identification of pathways to employment for participants.

The trial will be evaluated early in 2012 to determine the feasibility of extension.

Working with local universities, some Dioceses have introduced a quality mentor program for undergraduates. Some schools provide mentoring over extended periods of up to 18 months, linked to Centres of Excellence.

The independent sector continues to collaborate with universities to increase the number of professional experience opportunities in independent schools. Enhanced professional experience has been offered through ISCE internship grants which are designed to support regional and hard to staff schools.

One independent school has developed a program to provide professional development in improving approaches to teacher education placements, supported by the University of Technology, Sydney. This program is also open to other schools in the local area.

The Independent Schools Centre for Excellence has provided 47 teacher education placements in independent schools in collaboration with the University of NSW. This figure does not include the placements organised across NSW by independent schools with their own partner universities.

School Centres for Excellence

Across the three sectors, 47 Centres for Excellence are now operational: implementing their plans: developing their networks and partnerships; and supporting over 450 'spoke' schools. They include:

- 35 Centres for Excellence in government schools
- 11 Catholic school Centres for Excellence
- the Independent Schools Centre for Excellence (ISCE), based within the Association of Independent Schools of NSW.

A list of NSW Centres for Excellence is included at Appendix A.

The 35 government school Centres for Excellence are all operating as hub schools, supported by their Highly Accomplished Teachers and paraprofessionals. These centres support cluster schools to improve teacher quality through:

- coordinating professional learning aligned to teaching standards
- expanding partnerships with universities to improve the quality of the professional experience
- supporting beginning and early career teachers with quality support and supervision programs focusing on the achievement of accreditation at Professional Competence with the NSWIT. In addition to induction programs, ongoing structured supervision programs are provided
- supporting more experienced teachers to gain accreditation at higher levels with the NSWIT
- providing in class and out of class support to enable teachers to focus on teaching and learning.

DEC Centres for Excellence are funded for two years under the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality. Planning is currently underway to develop a transition strategy for schools exiting the program. A sharing and professional learning conference for the Centres for Excellence is planned for Semester 2, 2011.

Catholic school Centres for Excellence activities have included:

- establishment of a new Centre for Excellence for Professional Learning and Collaboration by Wollongong Diocese, working with four primary schools and the University of Wollongong to
 - provide professional learning for pre-service teachers and teachers within the Centre for Excellence
 - develop a 'critical friend' mentoring program within each primary school
 - establish a *Quality Literacy Teaching Mentor* program to place and support eight pre-service teachers in the four schools and enable them to access professional learning through the school's *School Review and Improvement* initiatives

- establishment of additional video conferencing facilities in the Lismore Diocese, with planning underway to include a Stage 6 online facility for physics and to further develop Stage 6 Asian language courses
- the Learning Exchange Centre for Excellence building teacher capacity in hub schools in mathematics using the *Extending Mathematical Understanding* project, with the Australian Catholic University
- a ‘whole-of-system’ conference by the Wagga Wagga Diocese Building Leadership Capacity Centre for Excellence
- employment of an additional Highly Accomplished Teacher to support student capacity building and personalised learning action research to build a learning community and enhancing evidence based teaching and formalisation of links between Charles Sturt University and Southern Cross Catholic Vocational College

More than 150 independent schools have accessed or been involved with ISCE programs over the life of the National Partnership, covering leadership development, school improvement, mentoring and building relationships.

This includes:

- fourteen schools commencing projects to share expertise and access mentoring support to address their needs and improve student outcomes
- thirty teachers from 27 schools, predominantly beginning teachers in smaller regional schools, are receiving mentoring support. Many of the mentors are accredited at the higher levels through the Independent Schools Teacher Accreditation Authority or the NSWIT.
- work with smaller regional schools to address barriers to improving teacher quality, in response to results of the ISCE’s 2010 survey of independent school principals
- coaching and mentoring provided to new principals by experienced principals.

Ten regional video conferencing hubs have been established to provide flexible delivery of professional learning for teachers and leaders in independent schools in regional areas. These hubs will contribute to the sustainability of professional development for the sector as travel costs currently reduce access to opportunities for professional learning, mentoring and support.

Professional learning to increase higher levels of teacher accreditation

Nowra High School is a government comprehensive high school on the NSW South Coast. The school has more than 1,000 students and 100 staff. The school commenced operation as a Centre for Excellence in 2010, working with three other schools in a 'hub and spoke' model.

The school has chosen to work with experienced teachers across the cluster to increase awareness and interest in the voluntary higher levels of accreditation offered by the NSW Institute of Teachers. The long term objective of this process is to develop greater understanding of the National Professional Standards for Teachers as a tool to improve quality of teaching.

The Highly Accomplished Teacher has worked closely with regional consultants to develop comprehensive professional learning activities which allow participants to explore the links between the standards, professional learning and the accreditation process.

Centre for Excellence resources have been utilised to support the delivery of the professional learning days, allowing teachers from other schools to participate. The one day orientation course, originally designed to support Nowra High School and its spoke schools, has evolved to include schools from across the region, including schools participating in other National Partnerships.

The HAT's strong skills in delivering high quality professional learning and her personal experience in undertaking the voluntary accreditation process have contributed to the credibility of this professional learning activity.

School based evaluations indicate that participants have an improved understanding of the NSW Institute of Teachers' Professional Standards for Teachers at the higher levels of Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership. Participants also commented that the process of self analysis supported them to align their own practice against the standards and identify where the gaps were, leading to the development of targeted professional learning plans.

To date, over 50 teachers have participated in the training and a number of teachers have advised that they have commenced the voluntary accreditation process.

This professional learning activity has also led to the establishment of ongoing teacher networks, facilitated by the HAT. Using a range of communication platforms including social media, participants have developed a learning community to continue to discuss the value of professional learning plans and how to better align teaching practice to the professional teaching standards.

Personalised learning and vocational training supports disengaged students

Southern Cross Catholic Vocational College (SCCV) is a purpose built senior secondary college and a Centre for Excellence located in Burwood in Sydney.

The curriculum at the college is based around vocational training, with English as the only compulsory subject. The vocational courses offered include automotive, construction, entertainment, hairdressing, beauty therapy, media and business services. The students receive a minimum Certificate II in their vocational training and this training is recognised as part of their Higher School Certificate program.



The Prime Minister Julia Gillard visiting Southern Cross Catholic Vocational College on 4 May 2011.

Many of the students have a history of difficulties at their previous schools and have struggled to find meaningful engagement at school. Many were at risk of leaving school early or disengaging, but were attracted by the practical “hands on” nature of the curriculum at the college. The college only takes students in Year 11 or 12.

The courses at SCCV all include a major work based element to give the students practical experience in their areas of training. The school strives to personalise the learning of each student to ensure that their program is tailored to meet their specific needs and stages of development.

The school has employed a Highly Accomplished Teacher and the paraprofessional through the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality, who have chosen to focus on personalised learning and work with the staff to incorporate this philosophy into their teaching programs.

The college has also been supported by a close relationship with Charles Sturt University, which has brought close links to vocational education and experience and knowledge in personalising learning through distance education and multi-media delivery to the partnership.

The University’s School of Education in Wagga Wagga has supported a number of action research projects focusing on enhancing teaching and learning at the college.

Building staff capability in a rural Low SES environment

Wellington Christian School is a small rural school in North Western NSW, participating in the National Partnerships on Improving Teacher Quality and Low SES School Communities.

School planning involving the community and the school board identified a need to deepen staff and stakeholders' knowledge of best practice in schools, based on educational research such as Why Not the Best Schools¹⁰ by Caldwell & Harris.

The school's research identified four kinds of capital that occurs within schools – intellectual, social, spiritual and financial.

Over the past six months, Wellington Christian School has utilised the extra resources available through the National Partnerships to strengthen the school's intellectual capital, or level of knowledge and skills of staff and executive by:

- *providing appropriate venues and activities for staff to acquire and share professional knowledge*
- *developing a comprehensive and coherent plan for professional development of all staff*
- *building networks with other schools to share knowledge, solve problems or pool resources*
- *outsourcing to augment the skills of its staff where necessary.*

As part of the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality, the principal has undertaken an extensive 10 day leadership program with coaching by an experienced principal through the Independent Schools Leadership Centre.

The Partnership has enabled teachers to access to high quality professional learning, mentoring and networking opportunities through the Independent Schools Centre for Excellence.

Wellington Christian School has also been able to support a beginning teacher with five days of on-site support with programming, teaching strategies and assessment provided through the Professional Exchange and Mentoring Program.

¹⁰ Caldwell, B and Harris, J., *Why Not The Best Schools*: ACER Press (2009)

Focus on early career teachers and initial teacher education

Coffs Harbour Senior College on the NSW North Coast commenced operation as a school Centre for Excellence in 2011. The college is a part of an education campus shared with a TAFE and university, providing a unique learning environment for more than 350 Year 11 and 12 students with 39 staff.

Building on an existing partnership with Southern Cross University, the Highly Accomplished Teacher and paraprofessional have initiated a shadowing program for initial teacher education students to increase their knowledge and understanding of how professional teaching standards are applied in a 'real life' context.

The program connects initial teacher education students with experienced teacher mentors from the Centre for Excellence.

The program commenced with a pilot of 12 students, who shadowed their mentors for one day per week for six weeks.

In the evaluation of the pilot, one student commented that the program reinforced key teaching concepts and the close connections between their formal studies and real-life applications witnessed while shadowing their mentors. The ability to spend time with experienced teachers outside of the traditional 'student/supervisor' relationship was also noted as a benefit of the program.

Following the success of the pilot, a second shadowing program will expand to include the college's spoke schools, to be held in Semester 2 of 2011.

Section 3 – Low SES School Communities

Significant Achievements / Activities / Highlights – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011

Overview

At the beginning of 2011, 191 NSW schools joined the National Partnership on Low Socio-Economic School Communities (Low SES NP), including:

- 164 government schools
- 22 Catholic schools and
- five independent schools.

This brings the total number of schools participating in the four-year Low SES NP to 522.

Another 63 government schools are participating in the Low SES NP through the two year *Reform Extension Initiative* (REI), with a focus on actions that directly lift the availability of high quality teaching and students' literacy and numeracy outcomes.

While some schools are embarking on their third year of implementation and some are just beginning, schools indicate that they are experiencing significant changes and improvements arising from their participation in the National Partnership.

Targeting student needs

Highlights include:

- 646 examples of literacy and numeracy programs implemented in the government schools participating in either the Low SES NP or the REI
- Catholic schools are also undertaking a range of literacy and numeracy intervention programs such as *First Steps In Writing*, *Reading Recovery*, MULTILIT, *QuickSmart*, *Sounds Write*, *Focus on Reading 3-6* and *Extended Mathematical Understanding*
- literacy and numeracy interventions implemented in all 18 independent schools participating in the Low SES NP, including Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) to cater to individual student needs
- more than 180 government schools using ILPs to cater to individual student needs
- more than 400 government schools participating in the Low SES NP or REI implementing Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) to support Aboriginal students
- 177 PLPs consolidated for Aboriginal students in the Sydney Archdiocese
- independent schools participating in the Low SES NP with Aboriginal enrolments have been supported in developing and implementing PLPs for Aboriginal students
- 30 government schools providing alternative timetabled curriculum for refugee students
- 85 homework centres run in government schools

- four independent schools are continuing their afterschool homework or tutorial initiatives, including two homework centres established in small and isolated independent schools to support Aboriginal students to successfully complete their homework
- professional learning in English as a Second Language (ESL) pedagogy provided to teachers in 39 government schools.

Increasing school capacity to meet student needs

Highlights include:

- 72 Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATS) employed in government schools through the Low SES National Partnership or the two year Low SES *Reform Extension Initiative* (REI)
- all 63 REI schools have access to a HAT
- additional teaching and non-teaching staff have been employed in all three sectors to allow school leaders, executive and teachers to lead or participate in professional learning
- More than 300 government schools participated in leadership development programs
- professional learning in Aboriginal cultural awareness/immersion and strategies to develop family and community partnerships provided to government school teachers
- 108 Aboriginal staff employed as either school learning support officers or community engagement officers in government schools
- appointment of ten experienced specialist staff in independent schools in the areas of ESL, literacy and numeracy
- innovative strategies and incentives employed by the Catholic sector to support recruitment in schools that are remote or difficult to staff, such as flexible salary packages, rental assistance and housing support for positions in remote schools.

Operational support

Highlights include:

- use of university partnerships to improve the quality of teaching, including 96 government schools
- use of new technologies by all sectors, such as laptops, interactive whiteboards and videoconferencing to combat isolation, including 327 government schools
- 204 government schools implementing flexible or innovative school operational arrangements.

Community Engagement

Highlights include:

- 366 government schools explicitly identifying strategies to consult or collaborate with their local communities in their school plans
- Aboriginal Elders and community members providing classroom support in 108 government schools

- innovative community engagement initiatives in the Catholic sector such as:
 - a program to develop Arabic-speaking women's capacity to engage in their daughters' education in Australia
 - in-class support to students from a refugee background through additional academic mentoring provided by volunteer retired teachers
 - the *Paakantji Language and Cultural Program*, which uses local Aboriginal culture as a bridge to learning through the teaching of Paakantji language, field trips and the use of learning materials tailored to the local area
- 303 parent education classes in government schools
- 29 parent drop-in centres or cafes in government schools
- student wellbeing initiatives in schools in all three sectors to build resilience, promote healthy eating, engage disengaged students and improve transitions and promote healthy relationships.

NSW evaluation activity

Two state-level evaluation projects have been commissioned for the National Partnership on Low SES School Communities.

Evaluation of school external partnerships

This project has been contracted to the University of Canberra's Faculty of Education and will evaluate the effectiveness and long-term impact of school external partnerships on school and post-school outcomes for students in disadvantaged schools.

Work started in August 2011 and the final report is due in May 2016, with an additional sustainability report due in June 2017.

Evaluation of school staffing, management and accountability initiatives

This project has been contracted to the University of Melbourne's Centre for Research on Education Systems and will evaluate the extent to which schools in low SES communities in NSW have demonstrated improvement in:

- attracting and retaining high quality teachers
- accountability
- leadership capacity
- whole school engagement and
- flexibility in staffing practices.

The relative impact of incentives in relation to student outcomes, and their cost-effectiveness, will be a particular focus.

Work started in August 2011 and the final report is due in November 2014.

Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011

Low SES NP schools are implementing a range of support processes and programs to close the gap in educational outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, through integrated solutions involving:

- engagement with parents, carers and the Aboriginal community
- tailored support provided through Personalised Learning Plans and literacy and numeracy interventions
- innovative initiatives to address local student needs
- teacher professional development and
- additional staff resources

32.8% of the 2010¹¹ NSW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school student population was enrolled in schools participating in the National Partnership on Low SES School Communities in the first six months of 2011.¹²

This represents:

- around 4,887 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students in metropolitan areas
- around 9,521 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students in regional and rural areas
- around 1,794 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students in remote areas.

Supporting attendance through increased community engagement

Government schools are working with the community to support attendance and 83.5% indicate they are employing explicit strategies to engage the Aboriginal community in their local areas, including liaising with local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups.

Range of strategies to engage Aboriginal students

Cowra Public School has employed an Aboriginal community member to conduct a learning program on Aboriginal values, cultures and beliefs targeted at boys who are at risk of becoming disengaged from school in Stages 2 and 3. Cowra Public School will also participate in a middle schools writing project with other local schools and the 8 Aboriginal Ways of Learning pedagogies program, led by an Aboriginal teacher as part of the Aboriginal Teacher Leadership Project. The school is also supporting Yalbalinga Pre-School by inviting staff to join their professional learning sessions.

¹¹ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school student enrolment data is collected annually and will next become available in December 2011.

¹² Please note that these figures do not include schools participating in the two year Low Socio-Economic School Communities NP Reform Extension Initiative.

Aboriginal Elders and community members provided classroom support in 108 government schools in 2011.

Activities in the Catholic sector to specifically support attendance and engagement of Aboriginal students include establishing an Aboriginal parent committee in some schools; mentoring of Aboriginal students who have significant patterns of non attendance and behaviour issues; and even providing personal fitness training sessions to develop students' self esteem at La Salle College in Bankstown.

An independent school has employed a paraprofessional specifically targeted at supporting Aboriginal students. This staff member is working with students' families to improve student attendance and deepen the school's relationship with the Aboriginal community.

Support provided to Aboriginal students

Personalised Learning Plans

Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) support teachers to tailor teaching and learning to the needs and abilities of individual students and set authentic learning goals for Aboriginal students.

Schools report that Personalised Learning Plans are contributing to improved attendance, increased parental engagement in school education and broader Aboriginal community engagement.

The government sector develops and maintains PLPs for Aboriginal students, including 398 Low SES NP and REI schools making explicit reference to implementing PLPs into their school plans for 2011.

PLPs are also used extensively to guide and support Aboriginal students' learning throughout Catholic schools. For example, in the Sydney Archdiocese, PLPs were consolidated for 177 primary Aboriginal students during January - June 2011. 73 secondary Aboriginal students received PLPs in Term 1 in schools that joined the Low SES NP this year.

All Low SES NP independent schools with Aboriginal enrolments have received support in creating and revising PLPs for each Aboriginal student. In one independent school, staff members are working to integrate PLPs more directly in their lessons.

Literacy and numeracy intervention programs

Government schools are implementing a range of tailored learning programs to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for Aboriginal students as identified in school situational analyses. This includes teacher professional learning to support implementation of these programs.

Of the 522 government schools implementing literacy and numeracy interventions as part of the Low SES NP or REI, 181 schools are implementing *Accelerated Literacy*, which is a mainstream research-based pedagogy that has been demonstrated to accelerate improvements to the literacy outcomes of Aboriginal students.

Professional development in literacy to support Aboriginal student outcomes

75% of La Perouse Public School's 50 students are Aboriginal. The National Partnership on Low SES School Communities has enabled the school to employ a part time assistant principal teacher mentor to support the implementation of the Accelerated Literacy program in classrooms and purchase Accelerated Literacy resources. All of the school's staff have developed a professional learning plan and participated in Accelerated Literacy training.

Government schools are also implementing other literacy and numeracy programs, for example:

- Northlakes High School is using Low SES funds to train an Aboriginal school learning support officer to deliver the *QuickSmart Numeracy* program to targeted Aboriginal students
- Wellington Public School has purchased additional *Reading Recovery* resources and provided professional learning focussed on quality teaching for all support staff and classroom tutors.

Catholic sector schools are implementing a range of literacy and numeracy intervention programs for Aboriginal students. For example:

- Aboriginal students in the Wilcannia Forbes Diocese are supported by *First Steps Reading and Writing*, *First Steps Maths*, MULTILIT and individualised programs. This approach has been developed in consultation with external professionals focusing on speech and language and behavioural/emotional support
- the Archdiocese of Sydney has
 - implemented MULTILIT in response to student needs identified as part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student data collection
 - trained two Aboriginal parents to administer the MULTILIT program and to work in the classroom with teachers
 - implemented other Indigenous literacy and numeracy projects and the *Early Bird Reading Project*
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel Primary school at Waterloo has established a parent drop-in centre, which provides training in literacy programs to parents so they can engage in classroom activities with students.

In the independent sector, programs such as *QuickSmart* and MULTILIT have been implemented to support Aboriginal students. An Aboriginal staff member in one of the independent schools participating in the Low SES NP has also undertaken a Certificate III in the *A Writing Approach to Reading* (WRAP) literacy program.

Other student support programs and resources

Other support provided to Aboriginal students includes:

- expansion of student mentoring and leadership opportunities for Aboriginal students at Cowra High School, including the *Girri Girri Sports Academy* program
- developing preschool to kindergarten transition programs using Aboriginal staff in government schools
- after school supervision centres at two small and isolated independent schools, providing an environment in which Aboriginal students are able to successfully complete their homework and develop time management skills
- provision of incentives for attendance by a number of schools, as well as breakfast and lunch programs
- establishment of a school clothing pool to enable students to participate more fully in school activities. (St Mary's Bowraville, St Joseph's Primary School Coraki)

Building school and teacher capacity to meet the needs of Aboriginal students

Teacher professional learning

Government schools have provided professional learning opportunities for teachers including:

- Aboriginal cultural awareness/immersion programs for staff in selected schools participating in the Low SES NP
- developing family and community partnerships
- developing staff knowledge of the NSW DEC *Aboriginal Education and Training Policy*.

Examples of professional learning programs in independent schools include:

- the use of the *8 Aboriginal Ways of Learning* to frame the development and implementation of curriculum in an Aboriginal primary school
- professional development to increase awareness of the implications of auditory and visual impairment, provided to teachers of an independent North Coast school.

Employment of Aboriginal paraprofessionals and education support workers

Almost 110 Aboriginal staff have been employed as either school learning support officers or community engagement officers in government schools in 2011.

Funding available under the Low SES NP has also been used to employ other staff to:

- facilitate professional learning focused on quality teaching for Aboriginal students; deliver speech therapy; and ensure that each Kindergarten class now has a full time school learning support officer (Wellington Public School)
- Implement a program on Aboriginal values, cultures and beliefs for boys in stages two and three who are at risk of becoming disengaged from learning (delivered by an Aboriginal community member at Cowra Public School)
- support the implementation of the *Accelerated Literacy* program (assistant principal teacher mentor at La Perouse Public School)
- support initiatives to increase teacher quality through professional learning, such as the use of SMART data, *Accelerated Literacy*, quality teaching, writing, higher order literacy skills, boys' education, visual literacy, brain research, differentiated curriculum and making numeracy relevant (Woodenbong Central School)
- work intensively with students' families to lift student attendance and enhance Aboriginal community engagement (paraprofessional at an independent school)
- provide improved parental engagement (home liaison teacher's aide at Saint Mary's Bowraville).

Please note that further quantitative information is not available for the period from January to June 2011. This information will be provided in New South Wales' Smarter Schools National Partnership Annual Report for 2011.

Progress against LSES National Partnership reforms – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011

Analysis of school plans for 2011 indicates a range of strategies being implemented to improve outcomes for students in Low SES NP schools. Strategies include teacher professional learning, team teaching and mentoring, employing additional teaching and support staff, providing intensive targeted support for students and teachers and providing extra support for teachers to develop additional teaching and learning programs and assessment tasks.

1. Incentives to attract high-performing principals and teachers

The major focus of this reform is to increase the availability of high quality teaching in the State's most disadvantaged schools. In New South Wales, the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality underpins the delivery of both the Literacy and Numeracy and Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnerships through initiatives to raise the quality of the teaching workforce.

Highly Accomplished Teachers and equivalents

The appointment of Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) and their non-government equivalents in Low SES schools is a key strategy from the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality to retain our best teachers in classrooms. These specialised positions have a reduced teaching load to provide time to mentor and support their colleagues to develop as quality teachers.

Sixteen HATs were appointed to schools participating in the four year National Partnership on Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities in 2009 and 2010.

Ten HATs were appointed to schools participating in the government sector's two-year Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities REI in 2010 and an additional 46 new HATs were employed in REI schools in the first six months of 2011.

This brings the total number of HATs employed in the government sector to 72.

All 63 REI schools have access to a HAT.

HATs and equivalents are involved in a range of activities including:

- classroom demonstrations
- observing classes
- team teaching
- supporting new teachers and more experienced teachers to apply for accreditation
- professional development.

For example:

- Northlakes High School's HAT has focused on providing individualised professional learning for teachers and classroom management and engagement
- Wollongong Diocese has employed the equivalent of 2.5 Teacher Educators (Highly Accomplished Teacher equivalents) across three schools to support whole school professional learning

- Waratah West Public School has employed a HAT who is implementing and coordinating a whole school focus on literacy and providing professional development for staff in best practice professional learning based on the NSW DEC *Quality Teaching Model*.

Leadership development

The Low SES NP has contributed to school leaders' awareness and appreciation of the variety of professional learning available. As a result, school leaders are more actively seeking suitable professional learning for their teachers and themselves.

Leadership capacity development is recognised as central to the improvement of schools.

A total of 304 government schools have participated in leadership development programs in 2011. The vast majority of government schools undertook the *NSW DET Analytical Framework for Effective Leadership and School Improvement in Literacy and Numeracy*[®] and the *Team Leadership for School Improvement* programs.

In the Catholic sector:

- Wollongong Diocese has promoted leadership team engagement through the *Leaders Transforming Learning and Learners* (LTLL) program with their tertiary partner, the Australian Catholic University. This involves developing individual professional learning plans, development for all teachers and executive in the schools, close performance management of early career teachers and the establishment of a mentoring program for all teachers across three schools, facilitated by two Teacher Educators (Highly Accomplished Teacher equivalents)
- Wilcannia Forbes Diocese has continued to participate in the LTLL program in order to embed and sustain good practice in educational leadership
- the Parramatta Diocese has allocated an assistant principal to a coaching role within Low SES NP schools and developed school implementation plans with clear goals on leading numeracy
- all staff in the five Low SES NP schools in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga participated in the school *Leadership Development Program* to build capacity as leaders.

In 2011, two independent school principals undertook the 10 day *Leadership Foundation Program for Newly Appointed Principals*, which includes leadership coaching by an experienced principal.

Staff coaching and mentoring

Mentoring and team teaching structures are being employed throughout the sectors.

These include matching aspiring executive with experienced executive at other schools to increase the numbers of school leaders in particular areas and releasing school executive to provide teachers with focused, individualised professional learning in areas such as leadership development.

In government schools, executive teachers and HATs visit classrooms to monitor and plan professional development opportunities for staff, demonstrate or team teach with teachers to build their curriculum and pedagogical knowledge and understanding and explicitly support and develop new scheme teachers to ensure success in the classroom and assist with accreditation.

Principals, HATs and executive are demonstrating good practice in classroom management and teaching and learning strategies and are supporting teachers to embed this into their own teaching and learning practice.

For example:

- Wilcannia Forbes Diocese has implemented a mentoring program with a focus on best practice and building leadership capacity
- Northlakes High School has established a dynamic National Partnership team to support teachers' professional learning and classroom management and engagement as well as students and parents, consisting of their Highly Accomplished Teacher, an educational paraprofessional and a school learning support officer. The educational paraprofessional provides ongoing training and support to school learning support officers and teachers in SMART data analysis
- Waratah West Public School has allocated mentors to new scheme teachers, who work together with the HAT in team teaching situations, modelling and evaluating best practice
- three independent schools have provided specific subject mentoring to four teachers in Semester 1 of 2011 through the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality. At least two other independent schools are planning mentoring or other school relationship projects for Semester 2.

Employment of additional teaching and non-teaching staff

Additional teaching and non-teaching staff have been employed in many 2011 Low SES NP schools, to provide additional executive positions, additional time for executive, teachers and school leaders to lead professional learning, or to enable the release of teachers from face to face teaching in order to participate in professional learning, program development and leadership programs.

Examples include:

- Lismore Diocese, which has employed an additional 0.3 full time equivalent staff member at St Joseph's Primary School Coraki to work with individual staff in professional development and to coordinate the Low SES NP activities
- appointment of an additional six leaders of pedagogy and a literacy support teacher in Sydney Archdiocese's 2011 secondary Low SES NP schools
- employment of a range of experienced specialist staff in the areas of ESL, literacy, numeracy, learning support teachers and leaders of professional development in the independent schools joining the Low SES NP in 2011. Ten additional positions have been filled to date.

Teacher and executive professional development

Government schools are implementing a wide variety of strategies relevant to local contexts to ensure the availability of high quality teachers and leaders.

In the government sector, principals are ensuring that conditions are in place to facilitate differentiated professional learning for executive and teachers. Principals are working with school executive teams to provide teachers with the appropriate knowledge and skills to implement strategies to improve outcomes for all students. This includes development of individual teacher professional learning plans, and teachers working with mentors/coaches to set goals, develop strategies and evaluate professional growth.

School executives have been released to provide teachers with professional development in focused numeracy and literacy intervention programs, and the use of data to inform teaching and learning.

For example:

- St Johns Park High School in South Western Sydney region is implementing a professional learning program for the executive team in coaching and mentoring, protocols, literacy, numeracy and ICT programs to further support classroom teachers implementing and evaluating new approaches
- Banora Point High School in the North Coast region is implementing an executive professional learning program which identifies individual professional learning needs for executive. The program is led by the principal and includes in-school leadership development sessions, induction of new executive as they are appointed and the *Team Leadership for School Improvement* program.

In the independent sector, increased numbers of schools are instituting a structured, personalised, planned approach to support teacher professional growth.

Details of professional learning in data analysis can be found under Reform 4: Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities.

Attracting principals and teachers to remote or difficult to staff schools

The Catholic sector has employed innovative strategies and incentives to support recruitment to schools that are remote or difficult to staff.

One diocese provided a flexible salary package to employ a high-performing principal and redeployed two highly experienced leaders to the principal and assistant principal roles in another such school to mentor the existing leadership team and support the building of capacity through NP initiatives. The diocese also provided rental assistance for these positions due to remoteness of school.

Another diocese provides housing support for the principal and an enhanced induction program.

Wilcannia Forbes Diocese has produced a promotional DVD package for two school communities to attract graduating teachers and interns in Low SES NP schools. The DVD offers an introduction to the school, the culture and the nature of the learner as children begin their formal education.

Armidale Diocese has successfully raised the profile of school staff recruitment in the area of Mungindi by increasing both the size of job advertisements and the number of publications, as well as advertising both within and beyond Mungindi. This enhanced strategy was supplemented by the provision of housing support for the principal and an enhanced induction program.

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

All government schools follow agreed processes for performance management through the *Teacher Assessment and Review Schedule* (TARS), the *Executive Assessment and Review Schedule* (EARS) and the *Principal Assessment and Review Schedule* (PARS). The TARS and EARS processes are school based performance management processes and the PARS process includes school education directors visiting schools at least once each term.

Catholic sector schools implemented a range of diocese-specific performance management and staffing arrangements according to their specific contexts and needs, including:

- a personnel performance planning and review process linked to annual improvement plan and professional learning plans for staff around identified teaching goals
- targeted school goals for improved student outcomes and a new leadership team model focused on teaching and learning to strengthen the educational leadership of the school.

For example, Wollongong Diocese has introduced a rigorous assessment of teachers through the Catholic Education Office's *Professional Development Planning and Review* process.

Independent schools manage school-based performance management and staffing arrangements within the school in response to local needs.

3. School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility

Schools are using the additional resources provided through the Low SES NP to implement a range of flexible organisational practices, including using new technologies, establishing partnerships with universities, providing student support programs and employing additional staff to support innovative and flexible approaches to teaching and learning.

Government schools indicated that they were implementing flexible or innovative school operational arrangements in 204 school plans.

Use of new technologies

In the government sector, 327 schools reported accessing new technologies as part of the Low SES NP.

Schools are ensuring that staff members are supported in the implementation of these new technologies in the classroom with differentiated professional learning, covering the use of hardware such as laptops and interactive whiteboards. Professional learning activities are often jointly delivered to communities of government schools.

Catholic sector schools are similarly drawing on new technologies and providing on-going training and support for staff in their use. This includes:

- consolidation of ICT resources in the Wilcannia Forbes Diocese to better equip students for the digital world and enhance their engagement in learning
- installation of video conferencing facilities in a Catholic school in Walgett to address the challenges posed by distance and provide support for teacher professional development
- establishment of video-conferencing in three schools in the Wollongong Diocese to share and access professional learning and resources for teachers across stages, such as mentoring, hold community leadership meetings, build teacher networks and school clusters and pool expertise across schools.

- Two independent schools have employed specialist staff to support teachers in the use of technology within the classroom to better meet the diverse needs of students.
- Other independent schools have explored exemplary practice in using technology to develop and share teaching strategies, resulting in a growing sophistication in the use of technologies such as interactive whiteboards and Moodle. One isolated school is currently investigating teleconferencing options to allow for more flexible professional development options for teaching staff and to better engage students in learning.

University partnerships to encourage school innovation

Collaborative school-university partnerships are a key cross-sectoral strategy to expand the use of innovative pedagogy and raise the overall quality of teaching in Low SES NP schools.

University partnerships have been established in 96 Low SES NP government schools. Independent and Catholic sector schools are also establishing links to universities aimed at introducing new and innovative teaching practices.

For example:

- a large, independent metropolitan school, Al Noori Muslim Primary School in Greenacre, has established a link with the University of Sydney to provide staff professional development in literacy
- Parramatta Diocese is partnering with Australian Catholic University lecturer, Dr. Toni Noble, to implement student resilience strategies from the program *Bounce Back*.

Further details of university partnerships can be found under Reform 6: External partnerships.

Collaboration across primary and secondary schools

Government schools are building partnerships across primary and secondary schools to develop expertise in middle years teaching and learning. Teachers in high schools and feeder primary schools are collaborating in planning strategies and professional learning to improve outcomes for students.

For example:

- Cabramatta Public School is undertaking combined meetings with the executive and school learning support team leaders at Cabramatta West Public School and Cabramatta High School to analyse SMART data, share resources and plan joint strategies around teaching and learning
- Chester Hill High School has developed a partnership with Newcastle University, Sefton High School and Birrong Girls High School to provide professional reading, action research and the ongoing development and enhancement of teaching and learning programs that embed the NSW DEC *Quality Teaching Model*
- the Cessnock Community of Great Public Schools' Aboriginal education committee is continuing to coordinate a professional learning program to share effective practices for engaging Aboriginal students. The 16 schools collaborate with and report at Korreil Wonnai Aboriginal Education Consultative Group meetings on Aboriginal education initiatives across the network of schools.

4. Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities

Professional learning in data analysis

Teachers in the government sector are undertaking training in data analysis so that whole school and individual teacher planning identifies the most appropriate strategies for each student, particularly those who are most in need of support.

Catholic schools have provided whole school professional learning in the analysis and use of student performance data. For example:

- introduction of the *Tony Ryan Digital Pedagogies* program in four schools in the Sydney Archdiocese and the provision of professional learning in understanding SMART data and developing individual educational plans for students at risk
- professional learning to improve teachers' ability to gather and to use student assessment and data by the Wollongong Diocese, to help teachers identify individual students and class needs and design and implement individual reading intervention plans. This included professional learning in *Focus on Reading 3-6* and preparing to implement *Taking Off With Numeracy* and ESL pedagogy
- implementation of professional learning cycles in the Wilcannia Forbes Diocese focusing specifically on areas identified during the situational analysis. Teachers undertake lesson observations with opportunities for feedback and staff reflection at the end of professional learning cycles, with a focus on building teacher capacity and improving student outcomes.

Staff have received SMART data training in all independent schools that joined the Low SES NP in 2011. Schools continuing in the Low SES NP are maintaining their focus on developing the skills of school leaders and teachers in analysing and using NAPLAN data to monitor, inform and advance student learning in literacy and numeracy.

Further details of teacher and executive professional development can be found under Reform 1: Incentives to attract high-performing principals and teachers.

Literacy and numeracy intervention programs

Schools are implementing whole school and individual literacy and numeracy intervention programs. These programs may be centrally developed or locally developed to best meet the needs of students in the local context.

In the government sector, 522 Low SES NP and *Reform Extension Initiative* schools are implementing 646 instances of literacy and numeracy programs including *Reading to Learn*, *Accelerated Literacy*, *QuickSmart*, *Taking Off With Numeracy*, MULTILIT and *Focus on Reading 3-6*, with some schools implementing more than one program.

Catholic sector schools are also undertaking a range of literacy and numeracy intervention programs. Examples include:

- *First Steps In Writing* implemented by Wagga Wagga Diocese
- Armidale Diocese is expanding the use of *Focus on Reading* and MULTILIT, introducing the *QuickSmart* program and developing a focus on inquiry learning
- introduction of the *Sounds Write* literacy program by the Lismore Diocese at Coraki and *Focus on Reading 3-6* at Bowraville. Stage 3 students from Coraki and Bowraville are also undertaking the *QuickSmart* numeracy program

- Parramatta Diocese has implemented *Extended Mathematical Understanding*, an intervention for Year 1 students that requires specialist teacher training.

All 18 independent school plans indicate that schools are accessing literacy and/or numeracy programs. Schools have continued to evaluate and monitor the progress achieved through targeted literacy and numeracy interventions. These programs have also increased the professional expertise of teachers. Schools in the second year of the Low SES NP are reporting that targeted professional development for teachers in literacy and numeracy and targeted interventions at student level, particularly MULTILIT, are having an impact on student achievement.

Individual Learning Plans

Many schools across all sectors, including 184 government schools, include explicit references in their school plans to the use of Individual Learning Plans to cater to individual student needs.

Homework centres

85 government schools indicated in their school plans that they were operating homework centres in 2011, up from 33 in 2010. Other schools are establishing learning centres and expanding senior study opportunities.

In the Sydney Archdiocese, the *Homework Plus Project* provides students with teacher-supervised time to complete homework and assessments in a structured and conducive environment.

Four independent schools are continuing their afterschool homework or tutorial initiatives.

Meeting the needs of ESL students

Low SES NP schools continue to employ a range of strategies to support English as a Second Language (ESL) background students.

The government sector is providing explicit professional learning in ESL pedagogy in 39 schools, with many of these implementing the *Teaching English Language Learners* program to develop a shared, consistent knowledge and understanding of how students acquire a second language.

Four government schools are employing an assistant principal ESL. Two of these schools are continuing strategies implemented under the Successful Language Learners project. Strategies include employing an assistant principal ESL to:

- provide professional learning in language, literacy and numeracy and appropriate ESL pedagogy
- provide professional learning in the use of ESL Scales to assess students' learning needs
- guide programming and assessment of all ESL students' progress on *ESL Scales* once per semester.

The *Homework Plus Project* in the Sydney Archdiocese provides tutorials on the principles of differentiated learning to meet the diverse literacy needs of targeted learners including ESL students.

Meeting the needs of refugee students

Schools are implementing a range of strategies to support refugee students to improve student attainment. Thirty government schools indicated that they were providing alternative timetabled curriculum for refugee students. For example, one high school is working with Charles Sturt University to provide tutors to support targeted refugee students.

Parent cafe builds community engagement

One high school is employing a community liaison officer to work with the head teacher for student support to identify and support high needs students in the intensive English centre and continue to track, support and assess these students in mainstream classes.

This school also provides a parent café to encourage parents and caregivers from a range of cultural groups to feel welcome at the intensive English centre and partner primary schools.

5. Strengthened school accountability

Schools in all three sectors undertake a rigorous situational analysis in preparation for their participation in the Low SES NP. Schools new to the Partnership in 2011 conducted situational analyses that evaluated internal and external data sources, such as student performance and achievement, attendance, retention, staff profile, teacher and parent surveys and focus groups. This data explicitly informs school planning and target setting.

The situational analysis process in government schools is strategically supported by the Department of Education and Communities' central and regional offices through workshops, support documents and professional learning.

For government and independent schools continuing in the Low SES NP in 2011, a revised situational analysis has provided schools with data to report against their progress towards achievement of school targets. Annual revision of the situational analysis helps schools to evaluate the effectiveness of their strategies, allowing them to refine, discontinue or introduce new strategies as required.

In the government sector, school plans are endorsed by school education directors and approved by regional directors, based on the findings of schools' situational analysis and appropriate selection of strategies to respond effectively to local needs.

In the Catholic sector, strategies are being implemented at diocesan level to strengthen school accountability. For example:

- Lismore Diocese has engaged the University of Southern Queensland's *Innovative Designs for Enhancing Achievement in Schools* program team to conduct the situational analysis process and provide professional development of staff in Low SES NP schools in the region
- Parramatta Diocese introduced a parent representative group with representatives from each grade, who meet with the principal twice a term to discuss, review and plan school directions and initiatives
- Wollongong Diocese has introduced external evaluation in two schools, whole school strategic planning through development of school review and improvement plans and publication of the annual school report including an update on progress against the school review and improvement targets.

In the independent sector, the targets and indicators of school plans have become more specific, clear and focused as schools in their second year of the Partnership revise their existing school plans. This has increased independent schools' capacity to monitor the effectiveness of the strategies and the implementation of their plans.

At the end of each term, all independent schools conduct a formal review and submit a report on the expenditure of the funds and the progress in relation to the reforms or strategies implemented. This process was suggested by the schools as a structure to support their own management and monitoring at school level and has provided schools and the National Partnership coordinator with an early warning regarding potential issues that may impact on the successful implementation of the plan. Each school's National Partnership coordinator visits the school two or three times per term, providing another level of ongoing monitoring and support.

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

Parent, carer and community engagement

The range of external partnerships emerging as the Low SES NP continues to expand.

Government schools are implementing a variety of strategies to initiate or further develop partnerships with parents, other schools, businesses and communities, and provided 505 explicit references to strategies to engage with local communities in their school plans including:

- 303 parent education classes or parent sessions
- 108 Aboriginal Elders and community members providing classroom support
- 366 schools explicitly identifying strategies to consult or collaborate with their local communities in their school plans
- 29 drop-in centres or parent cafes.

Parental engagement in students' learning

Cabramatta Public School employs three ethnic aides to assist in developing parental involvement. The school offers parent education classes on a range of issues to help parents and carers engage more fully with their child's learning at school and at home.

Catholic sector schools are implementing a range of strategies to build partnerships with parents and communities and provide access to extended services, as illustrated by the following examples of activities at diocesan level.

The Sydney Archdiocese implemented the following community engagement strategies:

- *The Bridge*, a program to develop Arabic-speaking women's capacity to engage in their daughters' education in Australia, (Mary Mackillop College Wakeley)
- *Mercy Connect*, which provides in-class support to students from a refugee background through additional academic mentoring provided by volunteer retired teachers. (Our Lady of the Rosary Fairfield and St Joseph's Belmore)

The Wilcannia Forbes Diocese is implementing the *Paakantji Language and Cultural Program*, which uses the local Indigenous culture as a bridge to learning through the teaching of Paakantji language, field trips and the use of learning materials tailored to the local area.

Wollongong Diocese is planning a raft of initiatives to begin 2012 to improve parental engagement, including:

- setting goals in the *School Review and Improvement* plan to lift parental expectations for their children's learning in three schools
- offering parent education classes to inform community about National Partnership initiatives such as *Focus on Reading 3-6* in two schools
- providing a play group for pre-school children in one school to improve school transitions.

Independent schools have engaged with their communities at varying levels through the following activities:

- encouraging parental participation in school life
- improved communication to develop a greater community understanding and support for intervention programs and future directions of the school
- literacy and numeracy workshops for parents in a number of schools
- provision of childcare in one school to allow parents to participate in school activities
- provision of resources in a relevant community language to parents in another school
- a monthly family luncheon to develop a strong connection between the school and families or carers of students who have been disengaged in education.

Student wellbeing initiatives and access to extended services

School plans indicate that 193 government schools are implementing explicit student well-being initiatives including the *Positive Behaviour for Learning* program, programs for building emotional intelligence, providing learning centres for disengaged students, healthy eating programs and breakfast clubs, transition programs and resilience building programs.

Examples from the Catholic sector include:

- whole school professional learning in student wellbeing and implementation of the *Positive Behaviour for Learning* framework (three schools from the Wollongong Diocese)
- implementation of *Sing and Grow*, a national music therapy project which aims to improve outcomes for young children, through prevention and early intervention work with families with complex needs (Our Lady of the Rosary, Fairfield)
- the Wilcannia Forbes Diocese has implemented a range of student wellbeing initiatives, including:
 - a wellbeing framework that includes restorative practice and counselling support to promote healthy relationships for learning and for life
 - play based learning and a structured playground program to promote language development and authentic engagement in learning
 - nutrition programs for students and families to promote healthy living.

The Wilcannia Forbes Diocese has also engaged an educational psychologist to work with students and staff to deepen the understanding of the nature of the learner to develop more effective teaching practice.

Bathurst Diocese has engaged a speech pathologist to work with infants classes to enhance early literacy acquisition to lift results for identified students.

One third of the independent schools have strategies in the school plan to explicitly target student well-being e.g. healthy eating and breakfast programs, resilience and outdoor adventure programs.

University partnerships to support student transitions

Schools across the three sectors continue to develop links with universities focused on raising students' transition rates to university through a range of programs and activities.

These include building supportive relationships with university students and staff, tutoring, mentoring programs and parental involvement.

High expectations for every student

Auburn North Public School is working with the University of Sydney to increase parents' and students' expectations that each student will achieve their personal best. The school leadership team is undertaking action research into educational systems and school leadership programs in other countries. The school is providing access to online learning resources for students and parents outside school hours through the school library website.

Further details of university partnerships can be found under Reform 3: School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility.

Showcase (Case studies)

Improved educational outcomes for Aboriginal people: Glebe Public School

Glebe Public School is situated in the centre of a large public housing estate in the inner Sydney suburb of Glebe. The school is supported by funding from the Priority Schools Program and the Schools in Partnership program and joined the Low SES NP in 2009.

A significant number of Aboriginal families live in the area and the current Aboriginal student population is 31 per cent of the total enrolment. The student population is also made up of 50 per cent of students from a language background other than English. The student mobility rate for the last five years has been over 50 percent.

The school has strong links with local community groups such as the Inner City Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, the Glebe National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Planning Committee, the City of Sydney Council, the University of Sydney's Koori Centre, Glebe Police, local pre-schools and the Aboriginal Medical Service.

The situational analysis process has guided the school's planning to increase Aboriginal student attainment. Analysis of the NAPLAN data revealed that the mean scores for all students, including Aboriginal students, were below the region and the State. In addition, the school was overrepresented in the two bottom bands and underrepresented in the proficient bands in NAPLAN assessments.

Through the National Partnership, Glebe Public School has integrated a range of strategies to support Aboriginal student achievement, including:

- *Best Start entry-to-school assessment data, NAPLAN data, in-school reading records and writing samples used to improve literacy achievement*
- *systematic K-6 assessment in reading*
- *all staff members continuously supported in a targeted, well-coordinated professional learning program which includes analysis of SMART data*
- *successful implementation of Accelerated Literacy*
- *a strategic reduction in class sizes in stage 2*
- *dedicated English group time in all classes K-6, supported by the English as a Second Language staff, the support teacher learning assistance team and Aboriginal parents and community members acting as in-class tutors as part of the Winanggaay program*
- *the Quality Teaching Framework and principles of consistency of teacher judgement being consolidated through planning, evaluation and programming days*
- *the facilitation of a Headstart transitions program to support entry into school and transitions from Year 6 to Year 7.*

School based data indicates improvements in attendance rates and literacy and numeracy results for Aboriginal students in the NAPLAN 2010 assessments.

Teachers report that the trend is continuing this year, based on classroom literacy and numeracy assessments.

Improving Aboriginal school attendance and engagement: St Therese's Community School

St Therese's Community School caters for students from Kindergarten to Year 2 and is situated in Wilcannia, a remote town in Western NSW. Almost all of the 30 students are Aboriginal.

Some students in Wilcannia face challenging situations within the home setting and teachers often suffer the secondary impacts of this while providing pastoral care and support to their students. In response, the school has made student and teacher wellbeing a central focus, as well as engaging students with a poor attendance record.

National Partnership funding has provided St Therese's School with extra time and resources to develop a wellbeing framework, which delivers tangible support for students, parents and teachers to address attendance, engagement and improved learning outcomes. The school has employed the following strategies:

- *the wellbeing framework including restorative practice and counselling to foster healthy relationships for learning and for life*
- *teacher professional learning in the Calmer Classrooms model that deals with the effects of trauma on a child's learning and development*
- *professional learning on how to help students to work through loss and grief in a supportive environment, delivered by a teacher and Aboriginal education worker and the Seasons for Growth program*
- *external professional support services including*
 - *planning with the local Wilcannia child and mental health team ongoing visits by an educational psychologist to assess, observe and work with students and staff to develop the most effective practice*
 - *regular access to counselling for staff*
 - *access to a paediatrician once a month for students and families*
- *further development of the Paakantji Language and Cultural Program*
- *implementation of a support program to help parents to develop their parenting skills.*

Progress and changes that have been observed include the following:

- *school attendance has improved from 78% in 2010 to 82% for the first half of 2011*
- *behavioural referrals to the principal are down by 60%*
- *students are opening up and sharing more about the issues that impact on them, and are more engaged in class and are more willing to learn new concepts*
- *increased parental involvement and engagement to support students*
- *increased teacher skills and capacity to teach and support Aboriginal students and improved capacity to manage daily challenges.*

Innovative programs to engage with parents and the community: Blacktown Youth College

Blacktown Youth College, an independent community college in Western Sydney, caters to teenagers who have become disengaged from education. Students are referred to the college by parents, local high schools, juvenile justice systems and individual caseworkers. Since its establishment in 1997, the student population has grown from ten students to around 100. 32 per cent of the students are Aboriginal.

Student engagement, attendance and literacy and numeracy needs are the main challenges that the college is working to address.

Family or carer involvement has been identified as an important element in supporting these students to re-connect and maintain an ongoing engagement in learning. Aboriginal Elders and artists are an integral part of the learning community of the college, attending lunches, assemblies and providing support in cultural activities. Every second Thursday morning, eight to ten parents or carers attend sessions at the college with teachers and the school counsellor on how to guide and support their child or access various community programs and services. For example, parents were invited to join a weekly Quit Smoking program provided by a community organisation at the start of Term 1.

In the first two terms, these sessions have informed parents about maths strategies, teen issues, nutrition and healthy lifestyle and teenage sexual health.

On average, thirty parents attend free monthly luncheons for the whole school community, building closer connections between families, the local community and students. Students have been active in preparing, serving and clearing the food and parents, staff and students sit together to share a meal and chat. Some of the dishes have been so popular that these healthy recipes have been circulated in newsletters.

At the end of each term, the whole school community assembles to acknowledge the progress the students are making in improving their attendance and their learning.

Twenty seven students were proud recipients of the official college “hoodie” at the Term 2 NAIDOC assembly. The development of a college jersey was a suggestion made by the students and they were actively involved in its design, resulting in a hoodie which features the school motto, “Hope through Change”.

To be awarded the hoodie, students have to meet a combination of attendance, learning engagement and learning improvement criteria, and receiving one is a significant step and acknowledgement of a student’s major re-engagement with learning.

Supporting students at risk of disengaging from schooling: Woodenbong Central School

Woodenbong Central School is a government K-12 school located on the Far North Coast of NSW which draws students from nearby rural and semi-rural areas. The school has an enrolment of 239 students, 32 per cent of whom are Aboriginal. The school has been supported by funding from the Schools in Partnership initiative, the Country Area Program and the Priority Schools Program. The school joined the Low SES NP in 2010.

An initial situational analysis showed that while secondary attendance in Years 7 to 10 was higher than other schools in the region, the school was still below the state average for these years and the school's Year 11 and 12 attendance was below both the region and state.

Woodenbong Central School has chosen to focus on improving attendance and performance, community engagement and teacher professional learning, while building students' understanding of the connections between school and meaningful employment.

A variety of opportunities have been created with outside partnerships to broaden the horizons of students and highlight the importance of gaining an education. For example:

- *a partnership with Southern Cross University and the local Githabul Aboriginal people to create a film and television project for students in the middle years, titled Muli Vision, which involves university staff coming to the school and the students travelling to the university 115 kilometres away.*
- *links with Griffith University and the University of Queensland's school programs, where students get the opportunity to experience university life for a few days*
- *some students are now considering the possibility of an academic career for the first time and even more students are now discussing the possibility of attending university*
- *a partnership with Federal government employment agency Nortec, focusing on cultural ties*
- *sourcing of vocational training and traineeships to suit the individual needs of their students, including traineeships in pharmacy retailing and aged care and TAFE VET courses including automotive, plumbing and horticulture*
- *a partnership with Spotless Industries to provide hospitality training for students has resulted in students travelling to Brisbane to cater for the State of Origin games. For an isolated school, this opportunity to apply skills learned in training is invaluable*
- *a Girls in Science NSW award for astronomy which provided a two year scholarship for a senior student*
- *another senior student was selected to travel to Canberra as part of the National Constitution Convention.*

The Low SES NP funding has enabled the employment of additional staff to support increased teacher quality using SMART data, Accelerated Literacy, quality teaching, writing, higher order literacy skills, boys' education, visual literacy, brain research, differentiated curriculum and making numeracy relevant.

Section 4 – Literacy and Numeracy

Please note: This chapter represents New South Wales' final narrative report for the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy. As a result, the Literacy and Numeracy chapter contains additional sections to fulfil reporting requirements of the Smarter Schools National Partnerships Annual Report for 2011, due in April 2012.

Significant Achievements/Highlights/Activities – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011

Overview

As we approach the conclusion of the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy, the 114 NSW government schools, 26 Catholic schools and seven independent schools are systematically addressing the challenges posed by the Partnership's three mandatory reform elements:

1. effective and evidence-based teaching of literacy and numeracy
2. strong school leadership and whole-school engagement with literacy and numeracy and
3. monitoring student and school literacy and numeracy performance to determine where support is needed.

Schools are now enthusiastically embracing the opportunity to improve their practice.

Participating schools have implemented school-wide cultural change by engaging staff in professional learning and elements of specific leadership programs, leading to new ways of teaching and increased teacher confidence and capabilities.

Whole school professional learning in reading and numeracy interventions has rapidly altered teaching practice in classrooms to make learning strategies more explicit and provide high quality teaching that addresses student needs.

The program facilitators and in-school literacy and numeracy leaders have led this process while driving and supporting the changes in reading and numeracy practice.

Significant initiatives during the first six months of 2011 included:

- whole school or whole class reading programs were implemented by 1459 teachers
- whole school or whole class numeracy programs were implemented by 437 teachers
- 4655 students attending Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership schools participated in individual reading or numeracy interventions or received Individual Learning Plans, developed in consultation with parents and carers
- individual reading programs targeted 3285 primary students, with 868 students achieving exit goals in individual student intervention programs in reading in the first six months of 2011
- individual numeracy programs targeted 1370 primary students, with 387 students achieving the exit numeracy goals for the *QuickSmart Numeracy* individual student intervention program in the first six months of 2011.

Schools have used school, class and external test data to inform cyclical processes of planning, monitoring and review to build their knowledge and understanding of 'what works'.

More than 1100 teachers accessed the e-learning module SMART2 to improve their data analysis capabilities during the reporting period. Teachers are using data to address individual student needs, particularly those of students at risk of not meeting national minimum standards and data is also being used to track students' progress.

Teachers are now seeing significant results being achieved. Schools participating in the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership are increasingly recognised by their peers, colleagues and by local communities as having made significant strides forward to achieve ambitious targets for reading and numeracy.

2010 NAPLAN results have shown an increase to 90.5% of all students at or above the national minimum standard in either literacy or numeracy (from 88.5% in 2008). This result exceeds New South Wales' 2010 performance target of 89.1%.

Teachers are reporting that they are reflecting on and discussing successes and challenges more often and solving teaching problems collaboratively for the benefit of every student.

At a school level, principals are saying, "This is a different school. It is a happier place to work, in which to teach and learn."

Students are saying, "I can read that," "When I read I make pictures in my head," "I'm faster now," and "I can use different strategies to add bigger numbers."

An additional 15 government primary schools, four government secondary schools, one Catholic primary and two independent schools completed a one year *Literacy and Numeracy Addendum Program*, which also concluded in June 2011.

St Columban's Primary School Mayfield and St Andrew's Cathedral School – Gawura Campus also participated in the reform activities listed above. (*For further information on the status of these schools, please refer to Appendix C, page 110 of New South Wales' Smarter Schools National Partnerships Implementation Plan.*)

Cross sector collaboration

The cross-sectoral NSW National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy Implementation Working Group met regularly in the first six months of 2011 to ensure that the reform activities were fully supported through the agreed implementation model.

The conference *Celebrating Success; Embedding Change* supported the dispersion of good practice across NSW schools participating in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy.

For two days in May 2011, teachers from all sectors gathered to learn from and share with other schools undertaking reading and numeracy intervention programs, team leadership and data analysis processes. More than 330 participants from schools, regions, dioceses and sectors took part in 34 workshops, sharing 59 poster presentations.

A suite of cross-sectoral reading, numeracy, leadership, student data analysis and assessment programs designed specifically for this Partnership is now fully developed and in its final implementation and evaluation phases. These high quality research-based programs may be accessed by non-Partnership schools through regional, diocesan and sector support where existing resources are available. However, it is clear that the support provided to schools participating in the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership cannot be replicated in non-Partnership schools without significant additional funding.

School level plans

Each participating Partnership school has a school level plan which is publicly available as part of existing school planning cycles. The plans identify National Partnership investment at the school level and the National Partnership activities being implemented linked to the NPLN reforms. Each plan shows a clear line of sight to reform activity and accountability.

NSW evaluation activity

Evaluation of the take-up and sustainability of new literacy and numeracy practices in NSW schools

One state-level evaluation project has been commissioned for the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy.

This project has been contracted to Erebus International and will evaluate:

- the adoption, effectiveness, and sustainability of new literacy and numeracy programs
- the impact on student outcomes in literacy and numeracy
- the impact on instructional leadership capacity
- the cost-effectiveness and
- the scale of the reform/s adopted.

Work started in March 2011. The final report is due in April 2012 and an additional report on sustainability issues is due in December 2013.

Literacy and numeracy program evaluations

The National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy Cross-sectoral Implementation Working Group has selected literacy and numeracy programs being implemented by eight or more schools in New South Wales to be evaluated.

The NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) will evaluate the following externally developed literacy and numeracy programs:

- *Reading to Learn*
- *Accelerated Literacy*
- *QuickSmart Numeracy*
- Individual Learning Plans.

Programs that have been internally developed plus the MULTILIT program will be evaluated externally. Following a restricted Request for Proposal process, Urbis Pty Ltd was engaged to undertake the program evaluations of:

- *Focus on Reading 3-6*
- *Mindful Learning, Mindful Teaching*
- *Taking Off With Numeracy*
- MULTILIT.

The program level evaluations are overseen by a Program Evaluation Reference Group, made up of officers from the NSW DEC, the Catholic Education Commission NSW, the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group and an independent academic expert.

Evaluation plans for each of the programs have been developed and approved by the Reference Group.

Urbis and DEC staff have met with the designers of the eight programs to gain an in-depth understanding of the intended outcomes of each program.

Data on each program was sourced and analysed during January and February 2011. NAPLAN, local measures, *Data Analysis Skills Assessment* and *NSW DET Analytical Framework for Effective Leadership and School Improvement in Literacy and Numeracy*[®] data will also be accessed.

Teacher survey instruments and interview questions were developed and school-based interviews and focus groups are being undertaken from April – August 2011.

Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011

14.6% of the 2010 NSW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary school student population¹³ was enrolled in schools participating in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy in the first six months of 2011.

This represents:

- around 1,531 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students in metropolitan areas
- around 2,526 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students in regional and rural areas
- around 219 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students in remote areas.

Targeted literacy and numeracy programs

New South Wales has achieved strong results in lifting Aboriginal student attainment through the use of targeted literacy and numeracy programs that address students' needs.

NAPLAN results of students attending schools participating in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy show an increase in the percentage of Aboriginal students at or above the national minimum standard from 74.9% in 2008 to 79.7% in 2010 in the 'focus domain' selected by the school (either literacy or numeracy). This result is well in excess of New South Wales' performance target of 76.2%.

A comparison of schools' results in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy Assessments in 2009 prior to commencement and the third assessment in August 2010 which occurred sixteen months later showed that the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in numeracy achievement had decreased in schools that chose to focus on numeracy.

The gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students remained at a similar level in schools participating in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy that focused on reading. However, it is worth noting that the gap did not increase for any of the cohorts tracked, contrary to the general trend for the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students to increase as students get older.

While Aboriginal students' specific learning requirements need to be addressed, it is important to recognise that many of their needs are similar to those of other students. The reading and numeracy programs provided through the Partnership emphasise the need for explicit teaching that responds to the identified needs of individual students, rather than relying on teacher assumptions about learning patterns or anticipated levels of achievement for a particular group of students.

Aboriginal students who are at risk of not meeting the national minimum standards have been provided with access to individual intervention programs like MULTILIT, *QuickSmart Numeracy* and *Taking Off With Numeracy*.

¹³ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school student enrolment data is collected annually and will next become available in December 2011.

Combined strategies to address Aboriginal students' learning needs

In South Western Sydney, 38 Aboriginal community members have been trained as tutors in individual student interventions.

Students' Personalised Learning Plans are updated fortnightly in line with the teaching and learning program. Teachers also use SMART2 e-learning package to analyse Aboriginal students' NAPLAN results, and other data sources to plan appropriate teaching and learning strategies to move all students along the literacy and numeracy continuum.

Individual reading and numeracy interventions

Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) in reading and numeracy are developed and implemented for students identified as being at risk of achieving at or below the national minimum standard in reading or numeracy.

In 2010, 1584 Aboriginal students who were at risk of not meeting the national minimum standards had ILPs in reading or numeracy integrated into their Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs). PLPs are targeted to Aboriginal students and may incorporate an Individual Learning Plan if required.

In the first six months of 2011, more than 1900 Aboriginal students participated in individual reading or numeracy interventions or received ILPs.

Individual Learning Plans / Reading or Numeracy Interventions	Number of Students
Total number of students	4655
Number of Aboriginal students	1927

Please note that the above figures are provided by schools and may vary from national data collections.

Key markers of student progress reflect timely interventions

The North Coast Region has committed to provide PLPs for all Aboriginal students in all schools participating in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy.

Teachers have increased their knowledge and understanding of key markers of student achievement and the sequence of these markers through professional development in the Taking Off With Numeracy and Focus on Reading 3-6 interventions.

This understanding has resulted in teachers becoming more capable of identifying student learning needs and intervening with timely and explicit teaching strategies to support the progress of Aboriginal students.

Professional learning and community engagement to support PLPs

Two schools in the Wilcannia-Forbes Diocese are undertaking specific professional learning for all staff to support the development and implementation of PLPs for all Aboriginal students.

Additional resources have assisted teachers with the implementation of PLPs and Aboriginal education workers have also facilitated community involvement in the PLP process.

PLPs address challenges at home as well as learning needs

Personalised Learning Plans are being developed for all the Aboriginal students in the schools participating in this National Partnership in the Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn. The PLPs not only address the learning needs of the students but also focus on behaviour and any social issues that may be evident either in the school and at home.

Each student not making regular progress is provided with an individual reading program and Indiji Readers are used in classrooms. Teachers have been invited to the forthcoming professional development Interactive Numeracy workshop, especially those with Aboriginal students in their class.

Developing student strengths through Personalised Learning Plans

Teachers in the independent schools have become more engaged in the ILP and PLP process. Teachers in participating independent schools have made the development of students' strengths a key focus in the development of PLPs, as well as addressing areas of need. Meeting with Aboriginal students' parents or care givers has also been integral to the process of making PLPs work.

Teachers regularly review students' ILPs to inform decision making and update them.

Aboriginal education and cultural immersion programs

More than 360 school teachers and executives participated in local Aboriginal cultural immersion activities in the first six months of 2011.

These activities include in-the-field experiences conducted in collaboration with local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups and school-based professional learning for participants to integrate local Aboriginal cultural knowledge into teaching and learning in a school context.

Teachers in South Western Sydney Region schools have access to the wiki as a resource following their cultural immersion program.

<http://8ways.wikispaces.com/Sydney%2C+Campbelltown+East>

Community engagement supporting Aboriginal student needs

St Francis of Assisi Primary School is working with the diocesan education officer to improve the school's relationship with the local Aboriginal community and address Aboriginal student learning needs.

Strategies employed include:

- *a whole staff in-school workshop to explore Aboriginal pedagogies*
- *follow-up stage meetings*
- *culturally appropriate resources to support the teaching of Aboriginal education*
- *professional development and mentoring in Indigenous protocols, understandings and perspectives.*

A number of staff participated in 'in-school' workshops on cultural awareness and one staff member has undertaken an Aboriginal cultural immersion program.

The school has identified the need to continue their professional learning to improve their local cultural knowledge.



Embedding local Aboriginal cultural knowledge in literacy lessons at St Francis of Assisi Primary School, Warrarong

Our Mob's Deadly Town

Tarrawanna Public School has actively pursued strategies to increase Aboriginal students' engagement and attendance as a means to lift student attainment.

Strategies include:

- *teacher professional development, including a locally delivered Aboriginal cultural immersion program*
- *Personalised Learning Plans for all Aboriginal students*
- *community engagement*
- *Aboriginal sport and cultural activities.*

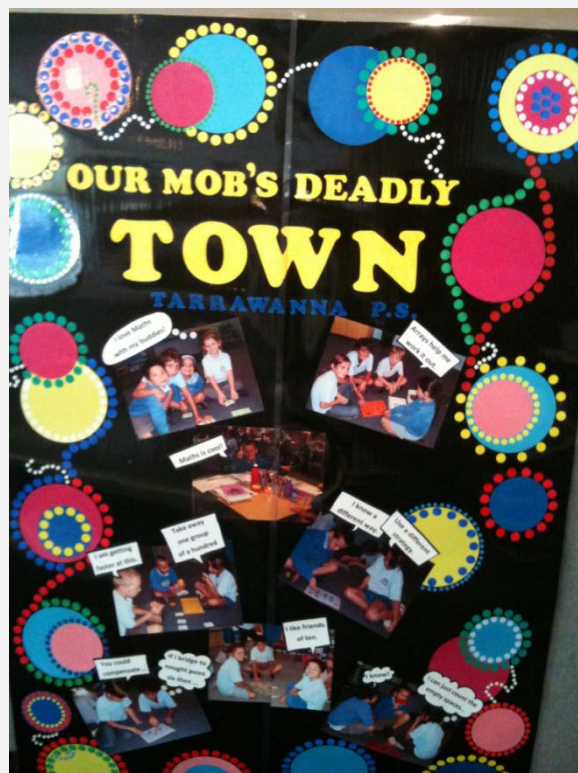
Approximately 10% of students are Aboriginal and a number of Aboriginal teachers hold executive positions in the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group.

The staff have implemented strategies through various programs to recognise Aboriginal culture and reinforce high expectations of the students.

The school has introduced Indigenous games into the school sports program, involving all students at the school.

One of the school's Aboriginal teachers co-planned and delivered a cultural immersion program and provided an overview of the NSW DEC Aboriginal Education and Training Policy; how to develop Personalised Learning Plans effectively; teaching strategies; and implications for student learning.

According to the principal of Tarrawanna Public School, the Aboriginal cultural immersion program has been instrumental in facilitating an atmosphere that is "authentic, not tokenistic" that both recognises Aboriginal culture and reinforces high expectations.



Tarrawanna Public School's poster presented as the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy May Workshop

Progress against L&N National Partnership reforms – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011

Overview

The systemic reforms implemented through this Partnership have highlighted how whole school change can be achieved even within the relatively short timeframe for this Partnership.

The reforms have resulted in the development of teachers' collective responsibility for students' literacy and numeracy learning.

School leadership teams in the government, Catholic and independent sectors have encouraged teachers to acknowledge their own accountability and take responsibility for student performance and whole school improvement. Teachers are linking teaching practice to student achievement data and student engagement more consistently and a school culture is emerging where classroom doors are open for peer critique, reflection and collaboration.

Creating a culture of evidence-based decision making

Teachers are developing an improved understanding and use of the literacy and numeracy continuum to inform teaching and learning in eleven schools in the South East Illawarra region, resulting in differentiated lessons which match individual student needs and sharing and collaboration between staff and schools.

At Bellambi Public School, an in-school numeracy leader has reformed school-based professional development, creating a culture of professional dialogue, reflection on student achievement, teaching practice and effective methods of delivering lessons. The school reports that professional development is more cohesive due to the school's strategic focus on the Taking Off With Numeracy (TOWN) program.

Cyclical teaching and learning plans

Nineteen government schools in South Western Sydney Region have adopted two weekly cyclical teaching and learning plans as part of a strategy to increase student achievement. These plans explicitly address individual group and whole class learning needs linked to explicit instruction in the whole school intervention programs of Focus on Reading 3-6, Accelerated Literacy and TOWN.

Better student outcomes by increasing students' personal responsibility

Two schools from the Canberra Goulburn Diocese, St Gregory's and St Joseph's Primary Schools, are using rotational activities to support guided reading and numeracy and encourage students to gradually assume more responsibility for their own reading.

The schools report that the students now actively ask to participate in the activities and students are engaged in each stage of the process from modeling, sharing and guiding to applying. Embedding the model through a staged process has improved student outcomes and has sustained the teacher's engagement in the key National Partnership reforms.

Individual learning plans support strategies to address student needs

The seven independent schools involved in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy have made significant progress in monitoring student literacy and numeracy needs.

Each school identified those students 'at or below the minimum standard' and developed an individual plan for each of these students to specifically address their needs in literacy or numeracy. Teachers have monitored and maintained the individual learning plans on a regular basis in consultation with parents, teachers and paraprofessionals.

Schools have focused on translating teachers' knowledge and skills in literacy or numeracy interventions into classroom practice and the whole school approach to reading or numeracy.

Whole school or class reading programs

Whole school or whole class reading programs were implemented by 1459 teachers in NSW schools participating in the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership during the first six months of 2011:

Reading programs – Whole class/school (Jan - June 2011)	No. of Teachers	No. of Schools
<i>Focus on Reading 3-6</i>	426	37
<i>Accelerated Literacy</i>	463	30
<i>Reading to Learn</i>	176	21
<i>Mindful Learning: Mindful Teaching</i>	174	8
<i>First Steps Literacy 2nd Edition – Reading</i>	17	5
<i>English as a Second Language</i>	203	1

Whole school or class numeracy programs

Whole school or whole class numeracy programs were implemented by 437 teachers in NSW schools participating in the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership during the first six months of 2011:

Numeracy programs – Whole class/school (Jan - June 2011)	No. of Teachers	No. of Schools
<i>Taking Off With Numeracy</i>	361	41
<i>Count Me In Too</i>	16	1
<i>Learning in Numeracy K-8</i>	8	1
<i>First Steps Numeracy</i>	17	1
<i>Numeracy Matters</i>	35	1

Individual reading and numeracy interventions

All schools identified students who were at risk of achieving at or below national minimum standards in the first six months of 2011 and developed an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for each of these students.

As a result, 4655 students attending Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership schools participated in individual reading or numeracy interventions or received ILPs during the first six months of 2011.

Students were also provided with access to an individual student reading or numeracy intervention programs in many cases, such as MULTILIT, *QuickSmart Numeracy* or *Taking Off With Numeracy*, where indicated in school plans.

Individual reading programs

Individual reading programs were implemented by 102 NSW schools participating in the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership during the first six months of 2011, targeting 3285 primary students.

In the first six months of 2011, 868 students achieved exit goals in individual student intervention programs in reading.

Although schools' formal participation in the National Partnership concluded on 30 June 2011, schools will continue to work with the students targeted to achieve exit goals, where these are a feature of the program being undertaken.

Individual reading interventions (Jan - June 2011)	No. of Schools	Students targeted	Students completed
<i>MULTILIT</i>	78	1717	736
<i>Individual learning plans in reading (may include other literacy intervention programs)</i>	7	1032	61
<i>Mindful Learning: Mindful teaching</i>	8	267	
<i>First Steps Reading</i>	2	86	
<i>Working Out What Works</i>	2	68	33
<i>Supporting individual readers</i>	1	39	
<i>Reading Tutors</i>	1	26	24
<i>QuickSmart Literacy</i>	1	22	
<i>Reading for Students at Risk</i>	1	16	14
<i>LEXIA</i>	1	12	

Individual numeracy programs

Individual numeracy programs were implemented by 45 NSW schools participating in the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership during the first six months of 2011, targeting 1370 primary students.

In the first six months of 2011, 387 students achieved the exit numeracy goals for the *QuickSmart Numeracy* individual student intervention program.

Likewise, although schools' formal participation in the National Partnership concluded on 30 June 2011, schools will continue to work with the students targeted to achieve exit goals, where these are a feature of the program being undertaken.

Individual numeracy interventions (Jan - June 2011)	No. of Schools	Students targeted	Students completed
<i>Taking Off With Numeracy</i>	27	862	
<i>QuickSmart Numeracy</i>	14	387	387
<i>Numeracy Matters</i>	1	64	
<i>Low SES Numeracy Pilot</i>	1	23	
<i>Individual learning plans in numeracy (may include other numeracy intervention programs)</i>	1	17	
<i>First Steps Numeracy</i>	1	17	

Participation in NAPLAN 2011 assessment

All National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy schools participated in the NAPLAN 2011 assessment. The results are due to be released by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations in September 2011.

Performance against the mandated NAPLAN targets will be reported in the COAG Reform Council Performance Report in November 2011.

Local measures for National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy

All schools participating in the two year National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy will complete the collection of performance data for the three Local Measures where the collection of data is relevant to their program participation:

- National Partnership Literacy and Numeracy Assessment
- Data Analysis Skills Assessment
- Analytical framework to support school improvement in literacy and numeracy.

The fourth and final round of assessments for the National Partnerships on Literacy and Numeracy schools was conducted in the 147 schools during August 2011.

Performance against the local measure targets will be reported in the COAG Reform Council Performance Report in November 2011.

Teacher professional learning in student data analysis

More than 1100 teachers accessed the e-learning module SMART2 to improve their data analysis capabilities during the reporting period.

Teachers have used results of the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy Assessment and other student data to track and monitor students' progress. The analysis of data has led to the implementation of Individual Learning Plans for students at or below national minimum standard in Years 3-6, as well as students deemed at risk of falling below national minimum standard.

Data analysis to match learning plans with students' needs

At Chertsey Public School, stage teams analyse relevant student data to help build quality teaching programs that match students' learning plans to their needs at a class level and individually.

One stage team provided professional learning in the SMART2 e-learning package to their K-6 colleagues to allow them to develop programs and strategies to address students' needs across the primary years.

Teacher confidence in data analysis enhanced by dialogue

At a regional level, schools in the New England area report that the use of student performance data has been significantly enhanced through dialogue between schools arising from the regular information provided by the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy Assessment.

Teachers' ability and confidence to interpret and use this information has improved following completion of the SMART2 e-learning course and other professional learning activities informed by the Data Analysis Skills Assessment.

Teachers have accessed a range of professional learning with an explicit focus on using student performance data to inform teaching and learning. For example, in two programs specifically developed for this Partnership, *Taking Off With Numeracy* (TOWN) and *Focus on Reading 3-6*, teachers have reported that professional learning in the use learning continuums had a significant impact on students' achievement when built into teaching practice.

Teacher professional learning in the literacy and numeracy programs

Reading

Teachers report that their engagement in professional learning significantly challenged and changed the way they taught reading across the suite of whole class reading programs.

Strategies learned include:

- explicit teaching of comprehension strategies and vocabulary strategies
- professional dialogue to discuss and critique their reading programs and expectations of student achievement in reading
- monitoring students' progress in comprehension using a comprehension continuum
- observing students using metalanguage in reading lessons
- relying more on student self-direction as students demonstrate increased skills and the confidence to guide the reading process themselves

Teachers are also observing a significant improvement in students' skills in 'unpacking' even difficult and dense texts, resulting in increased student satisfaction due to increased understanding.

Numeracy

The TOWN program provided schools with quality assessment tasks which supported teachers to identify the initial level of students and their place on the numeracy continuum. This process supported teachers to develop a better understanding of the numeracy requirements of the current syllabus and as a result, teachers were able to:

- plan quality teaching and learning tasks
- differentiate learning tasks to meet the specific needs of individual students
- develop skills in observation of student achievement for assessment of and for learning.

The public display of student numeracy performance data is helping school communities to integrate systematic tracking of student progress with planning for student improvement, including learning interventions and differentiating teaching to meet identified student needs.

These "data walls" also engaged students by providing a clear indication of how they were progressing through the numeracy continuum.



Professional learning for school leadership teams

The impact of professional learning in leadership programs is intimately connected to the level of commitment of school leadership teams. The impact has been widespread but most significant in schools where the implementation has been thoughtful, planned and explicitly linked to the whole school literacy or numeracy program.

Most schools report signs that lifting staff capability at all levels has increased staff willingness to accept responsibilities beyond their own classroom. Engaging in leadership programs has increased staff understanding of the impact of leadership on whole school planning, teaching practice and student achievement and has resulted in focused discussions about student learning and strategies for improvement at a whole school level.

Public display of numeracy performance helps to improve student outcomes

Committed leadership teams delivered the Team Leadership for School Improvement Program to the entire staff of Wingham Public School and Wauchope Public School.

Teachers' trust and openness has been expanded through strategies like lesson study and public display of performance data. There is now a willingness to share practice and exchange critical feedback using the elements of quality teaching to reflect on teaching and learning.

The public display of numeracy performance on school walls has helped teachers to make a collective commitment to improving student outcomes.

Self-sustaining leadership community of schools

The Diocese of Parramatta designed and implemented Mindful Learning: Mindful Teaching with the University of Sydney. The Diocese has implemented the program as both a whole school professional learning focus and as an individual intervention targeted at students requiring additional support in reading comprehension.

Together, the leadership teams of eight schools have developed a self-sustaining leadership network of schools, creating a collegial professional learning community that works and learns together.

Each school team has engaged in professional reading to understand the processes involved in reading comprehension and how to achieve improved comprehension through effective classroom practice.

In the independent sector, the Association of Independent Schools of NSW facilitators have provided leadership teams with support, guidance and strategies to work towards sustaining the gains and maximising the opportunities that the schools have encountered during their participation in the Partnership.

Challenges to implementation/progress – 1 Jan to 30 June 2011

Strategies identified in the 2010 New South Wales Annual Report have resolved many of the identified challenges.

Teachers' use of data analysis

Teachers' initial reluctance to engage in data analysis has been largely resolved with the introduction of the SMART2 e-learning tool and through explicit instruction in workshops conducted by regional/sector literacy and numeracy leaders. Navigation through the software has been improved and has resulted in increased teacher engagement with data analysis.

Cultural change

The challenge of bringing about cultural change and influencing teaching practice has required persistence and clear and consistent messages by sector program facilitators and school executives. The success of this strategy and others is evidenced in the case studies included in this report.

Increased staff mobility

Teacher, executive and classroom leader mobility is an ongoing challenge. Professional development of staff in this National Partnership has created new challenges as these staff are often promoted into more senior roles.

The strategies to address this issue are ongoing, as outlined below:

- ensuring that succession planning is in place by training teachers to take over the role of classroom literacy and/or numeracy leaders
- building the capacity of teachers as curriculum and pedagogical leaders with proven expertise in the whole-school reading and numeracy programs
- forward planning to employ casual staff for blocks of time to improve continuity in classrooms and to address the short supply of casual teachers in rural and remote locations
- addressing high staff turnover through the Lead Teacher and executive working in close partnership with the education services team at the Catholic Education Office, providing professional learning and support cycles of action learning and
- provision of professional development for independent schools during school holidays and on Saturdays throughout the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy, to address a short supply of relief teachers.

Providing continuity in reading and numeracy during the middle years

Some schools have faced challenges in providing continuity of instruction and consistent teacher assessment of reading and numeracy skills during students' transition from stage 3 to stage 4 as students move into secondary school.

Strategies to address this included:

- the exchange of student achievement data between partner secondary schools and primary schools to build consistency of teacher judgement of the reading and numeracy continuums for students across stages 3 and 4
- holding information sessions to inform parents of efforts to improve continuity of support and assessment to encourage heightened expectations for students as they move into stage 4
- provision of professional learning around the focus area to all teachers in stage 4 for K-12 independent schools. Teachers are accessing resources used in the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy by their primary colleagues. Planning has occurred to ensure students are tracked and monitored as they progress to stage 4.

Short timeframe for Literacy and Numeracy Addendum Program

The one year time frame for the 22 schools participating in the one year Literacy and Numeracy Addendum Program to implement reforms constitutes a significant challenge to long term sustainability.

For example, in one secondary school, some teachers and faculties are attempting to teach reading explicitly as part of their lessons. These teachers report some improvement in student engagement and students' ability to answer questions from text books, undertake reading for assignments and complete tasks which require sustained reading.

However other teachers are still developing their understanding of reading and comprehension and have not yet integrated these changes into their teaching practice.

Teachers' overreliance on resources to engage students is a major challenge that schools are working to address.

Showcase (Case Studies) – 1 January to 30 June 2011

Students benefit from more capable teachers

Both students and teachers have experienced a major lift in performance since Warilla Public School joined the National Partnership.

“We’d always done literacy well but we knew there was a better way of approaching numeracy and Taking Off With Numeracy (TOWN) gave us that,” the principal said.

To improve learning outcomes, teachers changed their teaching practice, including becoming more collaborative in planning, using more explicit, targeted and structured teaching practices, and sharing their successes. Teachers now apply consistent approaches to the teaching of all students, especially students at risk of not meeting minimum standards.

The strong imperative to improve teaching practices and the speed of the rollout were challenging for some staff initially. Teachers were taken out of their comfort zone when the rollout of TOWN began, with some saying they were given little choice over their participation. The transition to new teaching practices was eased by:

- *feedback, reflection and a systematic approach to planning*
- *a process that was transparent, articulated and made sense to teachers*
- *the level of accountability and support provided by local National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy Program Facilitators, who kept everyone on track*
- *a noticeable improvement in the quality of teaching as teachers’ understanding of different aspects of TOWN improved.*

Teachers’ confidence in numeracy has been increased right across the school. MySchool data indicates that the school has experienced a steady improvement in results over the past three years across most areas of NAPLAN, in particular for numeracy and results achieved by students not meeting national minimum standards. Reading and numeracy results demonstrate significant gains for matched students.

While conceding they still have a way to go, the principal argues that the changes the school has made are increasing staff skills and will assist each student to fulfill their learning potential. The school is planning to transfer the skills and strategies they have embedded from K-6 cross other key learning areas at the school.



Teachers and students at Warilla Public School engaging in TOWN learning activities.

Embedding good teaching practice into the daily routine

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Mt Druitt is part of a network of nine schools focusing on improving the comprehension skills of all students.

Classroom practice across Years K-6 has been enhanced by professional development for all staff, which was selected in response to needs identified by analysing student and staff data.

The leadership team has taken a prominent role in working collaboratively with all staff to develop and embed good teaching practice around reading comprehension.

Professional reading has become an integral part of not just staff meetings, but also leadership team meetings. Regular professional learning conversations have also led to the development of agreed practices in the teaching of reading.

Teacher Educators (Highly Accomplished Teacher equivalents) work alongside staff to deepen teachers' knowledge of comprehension and help them to reflect on their own and their peers' practice to integrate good practice teaching techniques into their daily practice.

Teachers now participate regularly in peer observations across K-6 followed by a group debrief session, where they identify positive features of the lesson and share ideas to further improve teaching practice.

School development programs delivered by the University of Newcastle have provided Sacred Heart with precise and objective criteria to observe what happens in the classroom, centred on the type of questions students are asked and techniques to improve students' inference and evaluative skills through better questioning.

Whilst initially some teachers experienced some trepidation in opening their doors to their colleagues, the tide has now turned. Teachers now volunteer to have their lessons observed with enthusiasm, knowing that the feedback they receive will provide useful suggestions to further improve the comprehension of their students.

Teachers at Sacred Heart are extremely positive about the impact of the professional development:

"In terms of high expectations I've realised it is important for all students to participate in challenging work...from now on I will utilise 'think – pair – share' and similar activities to stimulate more higher-order thinking."

"After watching another teacher today, I can see the value in being more direct with students about the purpose/focus of lesson. I am going to try this."

"Thank you. For me this was an amazing, uplifting experience. I planned an activity using the NSW DEC Quality Teaching Model and the students' learning exceeded my expectations."

Leaping into literacy

Unity Grammar College is an independent school in South Western Sydney. The school commenced student intake in 2008 and the school population is growing rapidly, particularly in students from low socio-economic backgrounds.

Data analysis highlighted areas of learning growth and areas of need. Due to the school's recent establishment, teachers were not accustomed to accessing and utilising their students' performance data to plan learning strategies. Using their recently acquired skills and knowledge, teachers are now turning the data into strategies that inform their practice.

The Reading to Learn program has been used as a key strategy to improve student literacy levels under the National Partnership. Ongoing professional development has afforded teachers the opportunity to:

- *gain experience in pedagogically sound, research-based strategies focused on improving students' literacy outcomes*
- *develop a meta-language that supports their professional dialogue*
- *promote the delivery of quality classroom practice and*
- *increase their confidence in approaching pedagogical change.*

Demonstrated student literacy improvements are reflected in NAPLAN, baseline assessment data, and students achieving their exit learning goals in the MULTILIT program.

Teachers have reported significant improvement in student confidence, participation in literacy-based activities and focused dialogue about reading. Students' volume of reading has also increased.



Teacher reflection has become common practice at Unity Grammar and teachers are asking themselves, "How can we continue to better ourselves?" They are more confident in teaching reading and have developed consistent approaches to the teaching of reading in their school.

A significant shift in culture

Prior to joining the one year Literacy and Numeracy Addendum Program, Nuwarra Public School in South Western Sydney found it difficult to encourage collaboration and trust between teachers.

According to the principal of Nuwarra Public School,

“One of the biggest benefits of National Partnerships funding has been that it has bought us time – time to reflect on our practices, find and evaluate appropriate resources, analyse data and develop improved strategies. We have had the time to focus on improvement and develop strategies to be proactive rather than reactive”.

These strategies include:

- *use of the literacy learning continuum*
- *mandatory presentation of data at whole school planning meetings to assist teachers to identify students who are at risk of not meeting minimum standards*
- *comparing student reading levels from late 2010 against reading levels for late 2011*
- *more emphasis on sharing the learning goals of Individual Learning Plans with the students*
- *time for teachers to engage in feedback sessions one on one with the students*
- *displaying student performance targets on classroom walls each term and*
- *a team leadership course for the executive.*

There has been a significant shift in the culture of the school at all levels – staff, students and community. By changing in organisational culture, the relationships between staff have also changed. Judgment has been replaced by collaboration and honesty. This, in turn, has brought colleagues together in a collective effort to lift school performance.

The school now has a clear and defined vision for the future and is working to embed new practices and mindsets in the school culture.

Strong leadership strengthening commitment to Aboriginal education

Bourke Public School is located 380 km north-west of Dubbo in Western NSW. The school has a population of over 200 students, 75% of whom are Aboriginal. Support from the National Partnerships on Low SES and Literacy and Numeracy has helped the school to provide extra programs to support their students.

Under the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership, the school has employed an Assistant Principal Literacy to lead teachers and support staff in the implementation of whole school Reading to Learn literacy strategy and individual reading interventions such as MULTILIT.

The school has three tutors implementing MULTILIT on a daily basis. Most students at risk of not meeting minimum standards have made significant progress in MULTILIT and teachers are reporting that their word attack and sight words skills have improved noticeably.

The Assistant Principal Literacy position also provides leadership support to staff through lesson demonstrations, providing in-depth in-school training, assisting with programming and planning, as well as monitoring student progress and success.

The school's executive has led school professional development in literacy with a focus on using the NSW DEC Quality Teaching Model to guide programming and planning and developed a professional learning calendar for 2011 with a focus on the Team Leadership for School Improvement program.

New teachers to Bourke Public School have participated in an Aboriginal cultural immersion program, which was followed up with whole school professional learning in embedding Aboriginal content in teaching and learning.

Staff also engaged in an introductory module on Aboriginal culture delivered by consultants from the Bangamalanha Centre, Dubbo and a workshop focused on increasing teachers' understanding of the NSW DEC Aboriginal Education and Training Policy.

School leaders provide ongoing support to staff in the areas of Aboriginal pedagogies using 8 Aboriginal Ways of Learning as part of in-school training, staff meeting refreshers and open dialogue at stage meetings.

This professional learning has given staff a deeper understanding of Aboriginal content and pedagogies and enabled Bourke Public School to strengthen its commitment to Aboriginal education. Teachers in turn report feeling more confident in working with Aboriginal knowledge and developing quality teaching and learning programs that meet Aboriginal students' needs.

Sustainability

At the conclusion of the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy, schools will continue to:

- maintain the rigour of internal planning processes, informed by school-wide data analysis processes
- support all teachers to regularly access and utilise SMART2 data tools to evaluate how well their teaching strategies are meeting the specific learning needs of their students
- timetable support for mentoring, peer observation and videoing lessons within existing school resources
- induct newly appointed school executive, teachers and non-teaching staff fully to understand the school's goals and processes for continuous improvement in literacy and numeracy
- engage teachers in professional learning to share expertise in the analysis of student work and monitoring of achievement through student and school data
- increase the level of community involvement in schools' reading and numeracy programs
- improve continuity of literacy and numeracy teaching through the use of student literacy and numeracy achievement monitoring and tracking tools
- improve continuity of literacy and numeracy teaching and assessment across stages through teacher conferencing to handover student data from year to year
- engage stage 4 teachers in professional development where applicable
- maintain networks across sectors/systems.

School sectors will endeavour to continue the work commenced by the previous literacy and numeracy coordinators to:

- maintain systems for self-evaluation and continuous improvement
- conduct cyclical situational analysis
- develop transparent and accountable whole school improvement plans
- promote school uptake of whole school reading or numeracy programs
- review reading and numeracy processes, policies and planning against high expectations and standards for achievement
- monitor achievement across all stages of schooling, based on the use of student data
- support schools to take a team leadership approach and engage in capacity building programs where available
- capitalise on opportunities for schools to share the success of the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy model with other schools where possible.

The quality of a school's capacity to self-assess and critically reflect on current literacy and numeracy practice is dependent on school leadership engaging with targeted and rigorous strategies such as the *NSW DET Analytical Framework for Effective Leadership and School Improvement in Literacy and Numeracy*[®]. Mobility of executives also places this process at risk as continual reengagement with school self evaluation relies on maintaining executive skill levels.

Schools and sectors have indicated that the following strategies may be put at risk without the assurance of additional funding resources:

- provision of individual student intervention programs like MULTILIT, *QuickSmart Numeracy*, interventions that rely on trained staff who cannot be substituted with volunteers or community members
- regular and ongoing mentoring and professional dialogue to support tailored provision of literacy and numeracy strategies to meet individual and class needs
- further training by in-school facilitators in the whole-school reading and/or numeracy program beyond that provided by sectors' limited existing resources
- release for in-school classroom leaders to lead school-based professional learning and provide direct support to teachers in their classrooms in targeted reading and numeracy strategies
- maintenance of the high level of program integrity achieved under the National Partnership when accredited reading and numeracy teachers transfer out of the school, especially in difficult to staff locations.

Section 5 – Milestone Reporting

Section 5 – Milestone Reporting

Improving Teacher Quality NP

Part 1 - Milestones not reported/not achieved/partially achieved in Annual Report for 2010

Milestone <small>(States and territories may wish to identify whether the milestone relates to all sectors or a particular sector within their jurisdiction).</small>	Detail of achievement against milestone	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why.	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe)
	Quantitative and Qualitative	Qualitative	Quantitative and Qualitative
Not applicable – New South Wales achieved all milestones specified for the annual report for 2010.			

Part 2 - Milestones in Progress Report (Achieved 1 January to 30 June 2011)

Milestones	Detail of achievement against milestone	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why.	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe)
	Quantitative and Qualitative	Qualitative	Quantitative and Qualitative
2010 Centres for Excellence: 0 bonus incentive payments made to principals where appropriate	Bonus incentive payments were made to 12 principals of government school Centres for Excellence for the 2010 school. In the Catholic sector, bonus payments were made where appropriate.	Not applicable	Not applicable

Part 2 - Milestones in Progress Report (Achieved 1 January to 30 June 2011)

Milestones	Detail of achievement against milestone Quantitative and Qualitative	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why. Qualitative	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe) Quantitative and Qualitative
NSW has revised its implementation plan for 2012	NSW will provide an addendum to the implementation plan containing additional and updated information for 2012.	Not applicable	Not applicable

Part 3 - Milestones that will progress through the 2011 calendar year (with no set milestone date)

Milestone	Detail of achievement against milestone Quantitative and Qualitative	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe) Quantitative and Qualitative
All NSW milestones are linked to set milestone dates, as identified in the revised implementation plan.		

Part 1 - Milestones not reported/not achieved/partially achieved in Annual Report for 2010

Milestone (States and territories may wish to identify whether the milestone relates to all sectors or a particular sector within their jurisdiction).	Detail of achievement against milestone	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why.	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe)
	Quantitative and Qualitative	Qualitative	Quantitative and Qualitative
All new and continuing schools have published their 2011 school plan on the school's website by the end of Term 1	Completed by all relevant schools	Not applicable	Not applicable

Part 2 - Milestones in Progress Report (Achieved 1 January to 30 June 2011)

Milestones	Detail of achievement against milestone	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why.	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe)
	Quantitative and Qualitative	Qualitative	Quantitative and Qualitative
All continuing schools have completed an annual school report which includes National Partnership activity for the previous year	Completed by all relevant schools	Not applicable	Not applicable
Reform Extension schools have employed a Highly Accomplished Teacher	All 63 <i>Reform Extension Initiative</i> Schools have access to a HAT.	Not applicable	Not applicable

Part 2 - Milestones in Progress Report (Achieved 1 January to 30 June 2011)

Milestones	Detail of achievement against milestone Quantitative and Qualitative	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why. Qualitative	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe) Quantitative and Qualitative
NSW has revised its implementation plan for 2012	NSW has agreed with DEEWR to provide an addendum to the implementation plan containing additional and updated information for 2012.	Not applicable	Not applicable

Part 3 - Milestones that will progress through the 2011 calendar year (with no set milestone date)

Milestone	Detail of achievement against milestone Quantitative and Qualitative	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe) Quantitative and Qualitative
All NSW milestones are linked to set milestone dates, as identified in the revised implementation plan.		

Part 1 - Milestones not reported/not achieved/partially achieved in Annual Report for 2010

Milestone (States and territories may wish to identify whether the milestone relates to all sectors or a particular sector within their jurisdiction).	Detail of achievement against milestone	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why.	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe)
	Quantitative and Qualitative	Qualitative	Quantitative and Qualitative
Not applicable – New South Wales achieved all milestones specified for the annual report for 2010.			

Part 2 - Milestones in Progress Report (Achieved 1 January to 30 June 2011)

Milestones	Detail of achievement against milestone	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why.	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe)
	Quantitative and Qualitative	Qualitative	Quantitative and Qualitative
Schools implement strategies/programs identified in their school plan to improve student literacy and numeracy achievement	Completed by all relevant schools	Not applicable	Not applicable
Students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 participate in NAPLAN 2011 assessments	Completed by all relevant schools	Not applicable	Not applicable

Part 3 - Milestones that will progress through the 2011 calendar year (with no set milestone date)

Milestone	Detail of achievement against milestone Quantitative and Qualitative	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe) Quantitative and Qualitative
New South Wales has achieved all facilitation milestones identified for 2011 and 11 out of 12 targets linked to reward payments.		

Appendices

Appendix A: NSW Centres for Excellence

	Centre for Excellence	Partnering Universities	Location
Association of Independent Schools of NSW	Independent Schools Centre for Excellence	University of New South Wales Independent schools work with 16 different NSW universities.	The secretariat is based at the Association of Independent Schools in Sydney. Activities occur across NSW
Catholic Education Commission of NSW¹⁴	Building Leadership Capacity	Charles Sturt University	Wagga Wagga
	Building Teacher Capacity in the Secondary School Setting	To be determined	St Joseph's High School Aberdeen
			St Paul's High School Booragul
	Collaborative Teacher Inquiry	University of Newcastle	St. Paul's Catholic College Manly
	Learning Exchange	University of Western Sydney	Mt Druitt
	Online Education Centre	Southern Cross University	Lismore-based 'virtual' centre with the ability to reach into every diocese in NSW
	Outside the Bellcurve	To be determined	Our Lady of Mercy College Parramatta
	Partners 4 Learning	To be determined	'Virtual' centre based in Sydney at the Council of Catholic School Parents NSW/ACT

¹⁴ Please note that St Catherine's Catholic College in Singleton was a Centre for Excellence for one year only during 2010.

	Centre for Excellence	Partnering Universities	Location
Catholic Education Commission of NSW	Professional Learning and Collaboration *	University of Wollongong	Nazareth Catholic Primary School, Shellharbour City St Paul's Primary School, Albion Park St Peter and Paul Primary School, Kiama Stella Maris Primary School, Shellharbour
	Southern Cross Catholic Vocational College	Charles Sturt University	Burwood, Sydney
	St Augustine's	University of Newcastle Australian Catholic University	St Augustine's Parish Primary School (Narromine)
	Sustainable Learning Centre	To be determined	Holy Family Primary School Merewether Beach
NSW Department of Education and Communities	North Ryde Public School	Macquarie University	Northern Sydney
	Epping Boys High School	Macquarie University University of Sydney	
	Sydney Secondary College – Leichhardt Campus *	University of Sydney University of NSW	Sydney
	Carlingford West Public School	University of Technology Sydney, Macquarie University	Western Sydney
	Colyton Public School *	University of Western Sydney, University of Technology Sydney	
	Macarthur Girls High School	University of Western Sydney	
	Westmead Public School *	University of Western Sydney	

	Centre for Excellence	Partnering Universities	Location
NSW Department of Education and Communities	Bankstown Girls High School *	University of NSW University of Newcastle	South Western Sydney
	Beverly Hills Girls High School *	University of Sydney	
	Bonnyrigg Heights Public School *	University of Western Sydney	
	Burwood Public School *	University of Technology	
	Homebush West Public School *	University of Sydney	
	Lansvale Public School	University of Western Sydney,	
	Macquarie Fields High School	University of Sydney	
	Chatham High School *	University of Newcastle	North Coast
	Gulmarrad Public School *	Southern Cross University	
	Coffs Harbour Senior College *	Southern Cross University	
	Heaton Public School *	University of Newcastle	Hunter/Central Coast
	Morisset Public School		
	Merewether Public School		
	Tighes Hill Public School *		

	Centre for Excellence	Partnering Universities	Location
NSW Department of Education and Communities	Warialda High School *	University of New England Southern Cross University	New England
	Quirindi High School *	University of New England University of Newcastle	
	Oxley High School	University of New England	
	Barellan Central School *	Charles Sturt University	Riverina
	Temora High School		
	Narrandera High School *		
	Eden Marine High School	University of Wollongong	Illawarra/South East
	Keiraville Public School *		
	Narooma High School *		
	Bega High School *		
	Nowra High School		
	Blayney High School *	Charles Sturt University	Western NSW
	Coonabarabran High School *	University of New England	
	Mudgee High School	Charles Sturt University	

Appendix B: Acronyms used in the NSW Progress Report 2011 (October 2011)

ACU	Australian Catholic University
AIS	Association of Independent Schools of NSW
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
DEC	NSW Department of Education and Communities
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
EARS	Executive Assessment and Review Schedule
ESL	English as a Second Language
HAT	Highly Accomplished Teacher or sector equivalent
ILPs	Individual Learning Plans
ISCE	Independent Schools Centre for Excellence
ISLC	Independent Schools Leadership Centre
Low SES NP	National Partnership on Low Socio-economic Status School Communities
LTLL	Leaders Transforming Learning and Learners program
MCEECDYA	Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs
MULTILIT	Making Up for Lost Time in Literacy program
My PL@DET	NSW government online professional learning record management system
NAIDOC	National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NP	National Partnership
NSW	New South Wales
NSWIT	New South Wales Institute of Teachers
PARS	Principal Assessment and Review Schedule
PLPs	Personalised Learning Plans, targeted to Aboriginal students
REI	National Partnership on Low Socio-economic Status School Communities Reform Extension Initiative
RTT	Ready to Teach program
SCCV	Southern Cross Catholic Vocational College
SES	Socio-economic Status
SMART	School Measurement, Assessment and Reporting Toolkit
TARS	Teacher Assessment and Review Schedule
TOWN	Taking Off With Numeracy program
WRAP	A Writing Approach to Reading program

